

Rome, Roma 1999



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 Sixteenth Session • Cent seizième session • 116° período de sesiones

Rome, 14 – 19 June 1999

VERBATIM RECORDS OF PLENARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

Rome, 14 – 19 juin 1999

PROCÈS-VERBAUX DES SÉANCES PLÉNIÈRES DU CONSEIL

Roma, 14 – 19 de junio 1999

**ACTAS TAQUIGRÁFICAS DE LAS SESIONES PLENARIAS DEL
CONSEJO**

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**NINTH PLENARY MEETING
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(19 June 1999)

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COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixteenth Session Cent seizième session 116º período de sesiones
Rome, 14 – 19 June 1999 Rome, 14 – 19 juin 1999 Roma, 14 – 19 de junio de 1999
FIRST PLENARY MEETING PREMIÈRE SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE PRIMERA SESIÓN PLENARIA
14 June 1999

**The First Plenary Meeting was opened at 10.10 hours
Mr Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding**

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

**Se abre la primera sesión plenaria a las 10.10 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo**

CHAIRMAN

Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the First Meeting of the Hundred and Sixteenth 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 III 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 116/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 we move to the Agenda, allow me to extend a warm welcome to the Director-General and to the new incoming Council Members, Austria, Hungary, Madagascar, Morocco, Nigeria, Paraguay, Qatar and Spain, as well as to all delegates and observers. I am particularly heartened to see a number of Ministers in the room.

LE DIRECTEUR GENERAL

Merci M. le Président de bien vouloir me passer la parole. Je voudrais juste souhaiter la bienvenue à tous les délégués qui sont venus participer à cette session du Conseil. Cette réunion est extrêmement importante. D'abord pour des raisons historiques: c'est la réunion qui prépare la dernière Conférence de ce siècle et la dernière Conférence du millénaire. Mais c'est aussi la réunion au cours de laquelle vous allez discuter de la vision de l'Organisation pour le prochain millénaire. Tirant les leçons de plus de cinquante années d'existence, vous allez devoir, naturellement dans le cadre des statuts de l'Organisation et des directives du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation, nous donner vos orientations sur les actions que nous aurons à mener pour répondre aux priorités et aux exigences du développement agricole et du développement de la sécurité alimentaire des différents États Membres. Vous aurez aussi à discuter du Programme de travail et du budget pour le prochain biennium. Vous savez tous les conditions difficiles dans lesquelles nous avons eu à opérer au cours des cinq, bientôt six dernières années, au cours desquelles les ressources de l'Organisation ont diminué. Certes, ceci est une tendance générale au niveau du système des Nations Unies. C'est une tendance générale de l'aide au développement, mais il n'en demeure pas moins vrai que nous devons travailler avec des ressources plus limitées au moment où on nous demande de faire plus et mieux.

Nous avons essayé de répondre à ces attentes et à ces exigences, mais il va de soi qu'il y a des limites à ce que l'on peut faire avec moins, surtout lorsque l'on constate que la FAO est l'Organisation qui a fait le plus de sacrifices dans ce domaine sur l'ensemble du système des Nations Unies. Nous avons d'ailleurs fourni aux Comités du programme et des finances un document des Nations Unies, pas de la FAO, qui atteste de cela. J'ose donc espérer que vous examinerez avec toute l'objectivité et toute la lucidité qui sied aux représentants de nos États Membres les problèmes auxquels nous aurons à faire face pour répondre à vos besoins et vos souhaits, mais dans la limite de nos ressources et des ressources que vous mettez à notre disposition.

Je voudrais encore une fois vous souhaiter la bienvenue dans ce Siège de la FAO qui est votre Organisation, en espérant que le séjour à Rome en cette période estivale vous permettra d'avoir le cadre agréable nécessaire à la réflexion.

I. INTRODUCTION - PROCEDURE OF THE SESSION**I. INTRODUCTION - ORGANISATION DE LA SESSION****I. INTRODUCCIÓN - CUESTIONES DE PROCEDIMIENTO**

1. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable (CL 116/1; CL 116/1-Add.1; CL 116/1 (a); CL 116/INF/1; CL 116/INF/1-Rev.1; CL 116/INF/6)

1. Adoption de l'ordre du jour et du calendrier (CL 116/1; CL 116/1-Add.1; CL 116/1 (a); CL 116/INF/1; CL 116/INF/1-Rev.1; CL 116/INF/6)

1. Aprobación del programa y el calendario (CL 116/1; CL 116/1-Add.1; CL 116/1 (a); CL 116/INF/1; CL 116/INF/1-Rev.1; CL 116/INF/6)

CHAIRMAN

Our first item in this Session is the Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable as set out in documents CL 116/1 and CL116/1-Add.1, CL 116/1(a), and CL 116/INF/1 Rev 1. I am sure all the documents are with you now. Document CL 116/1 contains the Provisional Agenda as circulated to Council Members with the invitation to this Session. CL 116/1-Add.1 includes an additional Sub-item entitled: *Arrangements for Appointing the Director-General*, proposed by Australia, Canada, Germany, United Kingdom and United States of America for discussion under Item 21, which is Other Constitutional and Legal Matters.

I should also like to point out that a new Sub-item *Application for Membership of the Organization* should be added to the Agenda also under Item 21, since the Director-General has received an Application for Membership from Niue, as indicated in document CL 116/20.

A further Item *Appointment of Chairman of the Appeals Committee* has been added to our Agenda under Any Other Matters as Sub-item 23.1. Finally, Item 7.1 should be deleted as the Committee is not yet ready to make recommendations on the *Margarita Lizárraga Medal*.

Ladies and Gentlemen, perhaps I should go over the amendments one by one and request your endorsement in each case.

The first item refers to the original Agenda CL 116/1 and its proposed addendum CL 116/1-Add. 1 *Arrangements for Appointing the Director-General*.

Does Council wish to endorse?

Vincent KIRABOKYAMARIA (Uganda)

Mr Chairman, on behalf of the Uganda Delegation I would like to ask you to give an opportunity to Her Excellency, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso, Chairperson of the African Group at FAO, to deliver a special message from the Group to the Council on the subject of the adoption of the addendum you have just mentioned.

Mme Béatrice DAMIBA (Observateur du Burkina Faso)

Le Groupe africain, par ma voix, voudrait tout d'abord vous exprimer son plaisir de vous revoir présider les travaux de cette session du Conseil qui aura à se pencher sur des questions très importantes de la vie de notre institution commune, la FAO. Permettez-moi ensuite d'exprimer le point vue du Groupe africain sur la proposition d'inscription du point 21.2 *Mesures prises pour la nomination du Directeur général* contenu dans le document CL 116/1 Add.1, en additif à l'Ordre du jour du Conseil. Au plan de la forme, la demande d'inscription de ce point supplémentaire, la lettre datée du 14 mai 1999 répond au délai de 30 jours prévu par l'article XXV 7(b) du Règlement général de l'Organisation. Toutefois, la lettre demandant au Secrétariat de préparer un document de recherche sur ce point est seulement datée du 31 mai 1999 et a été reçue au Secrétariat de la FAO le 1er juin 1999, alors que la présente session du Conseil s'ouvre le 14 juin 1999. Ceci pourrait poser quelques difficultés pour la disponibilité de documents et leur examen.

En tout état de cause, le Groupe africain, dans son ensemble, n'arrive pas à comprendre l'urgence et la précipitation qui s'attachent à l'examen de ce point proposé. En effet, le Conseil de la FAO a fixé au 8 avril 1999 la date limite pour le dépôt des candidatures au poste de Directeur général de la FAO, à partir et dans le cadre des dispositions qui régissent actuellement la nomination du Directeur général de la FAO. La question est maintenant de la compétence de la Conférence de la FAO, qui, lors de sa trentième session du 12 au 23 novembre 1999 procédera à cette nomination. Les choses nous semblent donc très claires à ce jour.

Tous les États Membres composant le Groupe africain ont toujours apporté leur contribution à tous les débats dans les organes et instances de la FAO et sont prêts à le faire pour tout point qui viendrait à être soumis à discussion pour peu qu'ils en soient saisis à temps, document à l'appui, pour s'y préparer, y compris en consultant leurs capitales. Ceci n'est pas le cas pour le présent point dont la documentation dite d'information, qui ne saurait être perçue que comme un support à la demande d'inscription, vient tout juste de nous être distribuée pour étude, analyse et réaction officielle des gouvernements. Vous voyez que le temps est insuffisant, il n'y a pas de délai.

Ici nous avons en mémoire les sages paroles du Représentant de l'Allemagne qui, au nom de l'Union européenne à l'époque, mettait en garde contre l'examen des points sans que la documentation fût disponible bien à l'avance. Un certain document officieux aurait circulé seulement auprès d'un nombre limité de représentations, ce qui contrevient à l'esprit de transparence et d'universalité qui devrait prévaloir pour une question aussi sérieuse.

Au total, le Groupe africain constate que le moment choisi, la veille de l'élection d'un Directeur général, question que le Conseil de la FAO a fini de traiter, est inopportun, que les trente jours soient respectés de justesse, donc au dernier moment, et que, de ce fait, la documentation, qui n'est du reste que d'information et qui vient de nous être distribuée ce matin, ne pourrait permettre une étude. Toutes choses qui amènent le Groupe africain à demander le report de l'examen, au plus tôt à l'année prochaine, du point 21.2 figurant au document CL 116/1-Add.1.

L'adoption de l'Ordre du jour provisoire par le Conseil devant se faire par décision conformément à l'Article V.5 de l'Acte constitutif de la FAO, le Groupe africain espère que les Membres du Conseil voudront tenir compte de ces observations dont il est convaincu de la pertinence.

Chao TIAN TONG (Thailand)

Mr Chairman, distinguished Members of the Council, I am speaking on behalf of the developing economies of Asia.

Mr Chairman, please accept our sincere welcome on being back in the Chair to conduct this important Council Session.

On the proposed Provisional Agenda under discussion, CL 116/1-Add.1, the developing economies of Asia would like to support the Africa Group which have demonstrated concern over the introduction of an item on Agenda regarding *Arrangement for Appointing the Director-General*. As pointed out by the Africa Group, the developing economies of Asia are not entirely adverse to an open transparent and meaningful discussion on this issue at an appropriate time. However, in the backdrop of an ongoing election campaign, the developing economies of Asia believe that the subject would neither receive prior consideration nor objective treatment. Moreover, it would also not be fair to the candidates seeking election for us to consider altering the rules when the campaigns for election are already underway. The developing economies of Asia, therefore, join the Africa Group in opposing the inclusion of this item on the Agenda.

G. Anthony BEATTIE (United Kingdom)

Allow me to respond, as one of the proposers of this agenda item, to the points that have just been made by my distinguished colleagues from Burkina Faso and Thailand. The proposal to include this agenda item was submitted by the due deadline. The source of the proposal was clear from the Agenda notice circulated by the Director-General on 27 May.

As has already been said, a paper has been fairly widely circulating in Rome over the last few weeks which deals with the substance of the issue. As is I think known to most people in this room, the core of the proposal relates to term limits. That is an issue well known to the Governments represented in this room. It was an issue raised in the UN Secretary-General's introduction of his Track-Two Reform Programme two years ago where he said that he was in favour of term limits. It is an issue that has been under, and is under, active debate in other UN capitals. Specifically it is an issue, a live issue, in relation to WIPO, ILO, WMO and Unesco.

CHAIRMAN

We should steer away from discussing the substance of this proposed item. It is now just to decide whether or not we are going to add this item to the Agenda or postpone it. Please keep to the agenda item that we are proposing, not the substance of the proposal.

G. Anthony BEATTIE (United Kingdom)

Mr Chairman, thank you for your guidance. That is precisely what I am trying to do. I am explaining why the proposed agenda item is not a novelty to the Governments represented in this room. I believe that that is an important part of the case for having it considered at this Council this week.

A factual background paper has been produced by the Secretariat and it is available to Members of Council. The proposers of this initiative are ready to circulate, at short notice, a specific proposal and some options for discussion. That proposal amounts to no more than two pages and is, I suggest, very easily assimilated.

Finally, it is being proposed that this item should be discussed on Friday morning. That allows three working days for Members of the Council to consider the paper that has been produced by the Secretariat this morning and to look at the paper that will be produced by the proposers of this initiative. I have every confidence that the Council, between now and Friday morning, can grasp the issues involved and come to a debate on Friday morning ready to have a useful discussion about the issues. I therefore propose that the Provisional Agenda should include this item.

Ahmed Suleiman AL-AQUIL (Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of) (Original language Arabic)

We would like to express our satisfaction at seeing you in the chair this morning and wish you every success this week.

We do not want to repeat what the representative of Burkina Faso said nor what the representative of Thailand said. We very much appreciate what the representative of the United Kingdom said. Nevertheless, this is a matter of significant importance and calls for discussion with our capitals before we discuss it in Plenary. We discussed it in our group last week. We do not think that this is the best possible moment to raise the issue, and we would like discussion of the item put off until the next Session of the Council if possible.

Melaine OULD MOCTAR NECHE (Mauritania) (Original language Arabic)

I would like to congratulate you as well, and say how glad we are to see you in the Chair today. We would also like to thank the Secretariat for the quality of the documents they have submitted to us for this Council session.

Now I would like to express support for what the representative of Burkina Faso said on behalf of the Africa Group.

Mohammad Saeed NOURI-NAEENI (Iran, Islamic Republic of)

Mr Chairman, I would also like to join other colleagues in welcoming you to the Chair again.

To be very brief, the proposed issue is a highly political and a highly technical one and, before consideration and discussion, both aspects need to be discussed in capitals. Unfortunately enough time has not been made available for us to reflect the views of the capitals and be ready for discussion. I therefore fully support what has been said by the Africa Group, Asia Group and the

Near East Group Chairpersons. My delegation supports those statements and asks the Council not to include this item on the Agenda.

Paul ROSS (Australia)

Australia, as one of the proponents of this item, feels the need to speak. We very much appreciate the interest that countries here have shown in this issue. We agree it is an important issue but we would also like to point out that it is not a new issue. It is an issue that is receiving attention across the UN System, and we did make our request for the inclusion of this item in accordance with the General Rules of the Organization and within the timetable that was set. We very much share the interest of countries in seeing an open and transparent discussion of this item. As has already been stated, an information paper is available and an additional paper will be circulated shortly which provides further information on the topics that we hope could be addressed under this item.

One of the reasons for us wanting to have this matter discussed now is because we did recognize that there is an election to take place later this year. We did not want this to be seen as a political issue. We see it as an important issue for good governance for this Organization, and the very fact that there is a contest for the Director-General position makes it a useful time to be discussing this issue now. So we would urge Members to accept our proposal, and allow this matter to be discussed. We are not seeking to pre-empt the outcome of that discussion, we are merely seeking as full and active Members of this Council, to have the opportunity to discuss this issue now.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

Mr Chairman, let me begin by saying, on behalf of my delegation, how pleased we are to see you again in our midst and to see you in the Chair, and how much we look forward to your guiding our deliberations through this week.

You have asked that delegations be brief and speak simply to this particular issue. Canada also supported the document that went forward to the Director-General requesting that this be put on the Agenda. The reason it is important that this Council address this issue is that if Conference is going to deal with this in November, then Members must be made aware of that sometime in July. The rules and regulations are quite clear. Putting it off until a subsequent Council meeting would not meet that particular deadline, and we feel that it is important that this be dealt with at this particular Council.

We recognize the fact that some information has just been made available but, on the other hand, Members were advised during the month of May that this would be on the Agenda. We have noted that it is proposed to be discussed on Friday, which gives Members time to review the document, consult their capitals and seek guidance. As my colleagues have noted, this is not a new issue, and capitals should be ready to provide advice on the issue of term limits.

Thirdly, it is important that this be discussed now. The reason why it came up at the last minute was that we do, in fact, have a competition -- as my colleague from Australia pointed out -- and we feel that, if there is a competition for the position of Director-General, all of the candidates must be very clear on the terms of the competition and the terms of the appointment. We feel that it would be most unfair on the winning candidate to come along two years later and change the terms of that appointment. It would be much better to make it known before the competition that the membership wishes to impose term limits or to have two terms, or whatever the membership decides but, it would be most unfair to come along two years into a person's mandate and say "Now we have elected you, we want to change the terms under which you have been elected". So, for that reason, we feel that it is important that it be discussed at Conference in November. In order to do that, we must discuss it this week at this Council.

Mame BALLA SY (Sénégal)

Depuis votre élection à la tête de ce Conseil, nous avons noté pour nous en féliciter votre grande sagesse qui s'inspire de celle légendaire du prestigieux continent, l'Asie, dont vous êtes originaire, pour conduire cet organe dans ses travaux de la manière la plus efficace et efficiente possible.

Aujourd'hui, vous aurez besoin, de cette sagesse pour nous éviter un débat, non seulement long et inutile, puisque dès le départ, notre Conseil se voit déjà confronté à un problème d'adoption d'un Ordre du jour provisoire qui n'aurait assurément posé la moindre difficulté si nous n'étions pas saisis d'une proposition d'inscription d'un point supplémentaire intitulé *Mesures prises pour la nomination du Directeur général*.

Face à l'examen de cette proposition, la question est moins de s'interroger sur sa conformité avec les dispositions pertinentes du Règlement général, mais plutôt de se prononcer sur son opportunité et sur sa pertinence. La proposition est-elle légitime? Sûrement, puisque chaque État Membre a le droit absolu de proposer n'importe quelle question à l'examen du Conseil parce qu'il lui trouve un certain mérite. Est-elle conforme aux dispositions pertinentes du Règlement général de la FAO? Bien sûr que oui, puisque nous l'avons vu et lu: les alinéas 7b) et 7c) de l'Article XXV du Règlement général offrent une telle possibilité à tout membre du Conseil.

Cette proposition est-elle opportune? De mon point de vue, j'en doute très sérieusement, car le Règlement général de la FAO comporte bien des règles claires et précises pour la nomination du Directeur général. Certes, toutes les règles sont perfectibles et sont donc susceptibles d'amélioration, mais une telle démarche, pour autant qu'elle se voudrait sincère, désintéressée et objective, devrait obéir à certains critères et considérations écartant toute supputation pernicieuse et toute intention malveillante. Il se trouve que dans ce contexte actuel, il est plus que attendu du Conseil une attitude de recherche d'une amélioration sensible du fonctionnement de l'Organisation pour lui permettre de s'acquitter au mieux de sa noble mission, celle de sauver des populations confrontées avec le spectre de la famine et de la malnutrition, en lui donnant des moyens financiers conséquents de nature à aider à la mise en œuvre efficace des programmes nécessaires. Le sort de ces populations dépend moins des procédures de nomination d'un Directeur général que des compétences et des capacités de ce dernier, ainsi que de la volonté des Pays membres nantis de leur manifester une solidarité beaucoup plus agissante et significative.

Cette proposition est-elle pertinente? Certainement pas, car conformément à la Déclaration de Rome et au Plan d'action adopté lors du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation, ce Conseil devrait être plus concerné par des millions de femmes, d'hommes et d'enfants qui meurent chaque jour.

Monsieur le Président, ce n'est pas opportun, donc je conclus en disant que, en voulant éviter de parler de règles deux ans après la nomination d'un Directeur général, je trouve qu'il est beaucoup moins élégant d'en parler à huit mois de sa nomination. Pour cette raison, j'appuie la déclaration du Président du Groupe africain, du Proche-Orient, de l'Asie et souhaite qu'on mette fin à ce débat et qu'on procède à l'adoption formelle de ce point suivant les processus de décision du Conseil.

Ms Hedwig WÖGERBAUER (Austria)

I want to express how much the Austrian delegation appreciates having your guidance, Mr Chairman, through the meeting.

The Austrian delegation wants to be brief and support what was said by the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada. Austria wants to see Item 21.2 included on the Agenda.

James W. SCHROEDER (United States of America)

I also wish to be brief. The United States of America fully concurs with, and supports, the statements made by the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada. We think this issue is important. It is timely and there will be full opportunity for discussion and debate on Friday. Therefore, we strongly support that this item be included on the Agenda.

Marek GRELA (Poland)

I am going to be very brief. I would just like to support the proposal of the United Kingdom and other delegations which have given support to this position.

Lyall W. SMALL (Barbados)

Mr Chairman, first of all let me also pay my compliments to you on your chairmanship. I would like to be very brief in indicating that I support the position that has been put by Burkina Faso, Thailand and the others who have been against adding this agenda item.

Vincent KIRABOKYAMARIA (Uganda)

I would like to inform many of our colleagues that this document that we are talking about -- it must be realized -- has been received and seen for the first time by many delegations. The very fact that we are being asked to look at it until Friday, and discuss it, shows that it is appreciated that some people may indeed not have seen it before, and this is their first time to be able to look at it and study it. It presumes that these people will be in a position to have contacted their capitals and, having had the people in their capitals sit down and discuss this issue, to give news back by Friday. Why the pressure?

It is the feeling of my delegation to concur with the request by Burkina Faso.

Mario MOYA PALENCIA (México)

Habíamos tomado en el seno del GRULAC el acuerdo de que ninguno de sus miembros haría comentario alguno, pero ya que el distinguido colega de Barbados expresó su legítima opinión, en este caso me voy a permitir yo también hacerlo en nombre de mi país.

A mí me interesa introducir un elemento del que no se ha hablado hasta ahora, puesto que estamos en un punto de vista procesal. Pero éste tiene que ver con el proceso más que con el fondo de la proposición, México podría unirse a un consenso sobre el fondo de la proposición, si ésta viniera apoyada por un consenso y después de que hubiese una discusión amplia, oportuna, con los documentos necesarios y con las consultas que tenemos que hacer con nuestras capitales. Pero el problema es que el Consejo aprobará esta inclusión ahora y discutirá este tema y que se llevará a la Conferencia en donde estará como punto importante el proceso de elección del nuevo Director General, habiéndose presentado ya como candidato a re-elección el Director General actual y habiendo otro candidato, viciaría esa elección y crearía un ambiente nada adecuado para que esa elección se realizara; la realizaremos los Estados Miembros de la FAO, como deben realizarse las elecciones en las mejores condiciones posibles.

Creo, por lo tanto, que no siendo un asunto de poca importancia podríamos y deberíamos tratarlo en el futuro y cuanto antes mejor, debiera eliminarse como pide el Grupo Africano y el Grupo de países en desarrollo de Asia y otros oradores, debiera eliminarse este tema de las labores de nuestro Consejo porque no es el momento oportuno y éste es uno de los temas que deberán resolverse por consenso porque debemos tener mucho cuidado en como se realiza en la próxima Conferencia en la que va a haber elección, elección del Director General.

P. W. MISIKA (Namibia)

Mr Chairman, speaking for the first time, Namibia would like to join all other delegates who have spoken before us in welcoming you and congratulating you for being in the Chair once again.

The Namibian delegation, noting the need for consultancy, for transparency and democracy and recognizing that the issue of the nomination of candidates for the post of Director-General is a political one, fully endorses and supports the position put by the Africa Group and the spokesperson of the Far East that this issue should be postponed because, although understanding and sharing the positions of the proposers of this document, it is very clear that it will not be possible for some Member Nations to be in a position to consult with their political leaderships back home in order to take and advise a well-informed decision on this issue.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

Creemos que todos oímos la intervención que hizo el Director General de la FAO a comienzo de esta reunión, en situando la importancia de este Consejo. Creo que los Consejos de la FAO siempre son importantes, pero por las razones que él manifestaba tiene una motivación más.

Nosotros estamos oyendo hablar de un documento y ese documento yo no lo poseo, lo he mandado a buscar y me traen otro documento, o sea que estoy oyendo hablar de un documento que no tengo en la mano. Si no lo tengo, la Cancillería tampoco lo tiene, pero es que ese documento es nada menos en el que está basado la modificación de los Textos Fundamentales de la FAO. Yo diría que aquí hay muchos colegas que se han pronunciado siempre en esta misma dirección.

Los Textos Fundamentales tal vez necesitan modificación, pero necesitan más que esa modificación. Nosotros creemos que incluir el tema en este período de sesiones es muy prematuro. Lo decimos muy honestamente y, si estábamos convencidos antes, después de oír a la Representación de México, estamos más convencidos aún. Esto necesita un tiempo de profundidad, de análisis. Es muy peligroso que los Estados aquí presentes vayamos a aprobarlo, incluir una cuestión que nuestras capitales no conocen, porque no lo conoce ni esta Representación que está haciendo uso de la palabra en este momento.

Como pasaron las cosas, ahora es muy difícil hablar y leer al mismo tiempo. A mí me entregaron un papel el viernes, ese papel decía solamente una frase. Después en un pasillo me dijeron que no solamente era esa frase sino que habían quince páginas.

Nuestra delegación no puede de ninguna manera aprobar e incluir un tema que desconoce.

CHAIRMAN

I will give the floor to one more delegate, Nigeria, and then I think it is time for us to take a decision. There are two Observers that also want to have the floor. I think it is useful to also hear them, but after that we will have to take a decision on this.

Gabriel S. AKUNWAFOR (Nigeria)

Mr Chairman, I wish to join others in congratulating you on being in the Chair this morning.

Initially we were prepared to listen to what has been said, especially after the presentation made by the leader of the Africa Group. However, with the way the discussion was going, we felt we should come in and bring in some clarification. There is no need for us to polarize the issue at this stage, because FAO has a long lifespan and we are not going to end with this Session.

As I speak, I have not seen this document, and I came from my capital prepared for this Council on a certain number of issues which were put before me. I cannot see myself rushing back to my Mission to send a quick message to my capital that an issue has been introduced, and that I need instructions.

So I think that we should approach this issue in a mature manner and accept the fact that if we do not discuss it at this Session, we still have other sessions at which to discuss it. In any case, there is no reason why we are rushing. At the United Nations, issues come up, they are discussed and nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. Why are we now trying to bulldoze, to push delegations to discuss an issue that can still come up tomorrow? I do not see the urgency. There is no life or death situation connected with this particular issue.

So, Mr Chairman, I wish to appeal to you to exercise your good judgement and let us proceed, because we cannot act on a document that we do not have. We have limits to our competence.

Alejandro MEJÍA FERRETTI (Observador de Nicaragua)

Nicaragua solamente quiere señalar un aspecto de fondo y que es muy importante. El tema que se ha planteado tiene un valor específico, estamos hablando de plazos y cuando se establecen plazos en todo organismo de decisión política y económica, sus efectos pueden ser positivos o negativos.

En ese sentido la proposición hecha por este grupo de países y que está siendo ajustada a los textos fundamentales en cuanto a su Carta Constitutiva y procesal, no veo ninguna razón para que no pueda ser incluido el mismo en esta Sesión. El debate de la profundidad del mismo puede en su futuro decidir; no hay razón como para postergar una iniciativa de esta naturaleza. Si hay otros asuntos más importantes dentro de la Organización que se han discutido y se han analizado aun contra el tiempo, porque una cosa tan fundamental y de orden como la actual no puede ser considerada.

Mi delegación considera que este tema puede perfectamente ser incluido en futuros debates, sin postergarlo.

Point of Order

Point d'ordre

Punto de orden

Júlio C. GOMES dos SANTOS (Brasil)

Le pido disculpas por pedir este punto de orden tan bruscamente. A mi me gustaría saber del Consejero Legal si es permitida la opinión de observadores en materia constitucional a los que no son Miembros del Consejo. Si es permitido me callo, si no yo pido que no se considere la observación del delegado de Nicaragua.

LEGAL COUNSEL

The *Adoption of the Agenda*, which is the item that you are discussing right at the moment, is a matter for the Members of the Council. The Chairman has opened the floor and asked for opinions from Observers. However, the main decision as to the adoption of the Agenda is a matter for Members of the Council.

CHAIRMAN

I do think that we have to push on and we have to come to a decision on this matter, on whether or not we are going to include this item in the present Council, or oppose its inclusion.

Of course, there is still an opportunity to have general agreement on this but, if not, then the only way that I can see for us to arrive at a decision is through a show of hands. Those will be tallied by the Secretariat. I think, Legal Counsel, it is still proper that we have a decision by a show of hands.

LEGAL COUNSEL

Perhaps it is necessary to clarify the legal situation first so that you know what you are voting on, if I may be so bold as to suggest this.

The first thing to say is that there was a request to add an item to the Provisional Agenda that was in accordance with the Rules, and therefore the item is on the Provisional Agenda. The Provisional Agenda, which includes this item, is a proposal, if you like, for the Agenda. What you have now is an amendment to that proposal to delete this item from the Provisional Agenda. Therefore, if you do have a vote, the vote is whether you should delete this item from the Provisional Agenda.

I wanted to make that clear so that you know what the proposal is.

CHAIRMAN

I hope it is clear that it is already in the Provisional Agenda, and now what we are voting for is whether or not we are going to delete this item from the Provisional Agenda.

Vote

Vote

Votación

CHAIRMAN

I now call on the Secretariat to report on the results of the voting.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

For deletion the votes are 30, for retaining the item the votes are 13 and for abstention the votes are 5.

CHAIRMAN

The item is deleted from the Provisional Agenda.

Point of Order

Point d'ordre

Punto de Orden

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

Thank you very much, Mr Chairman, for allowing me to take the floor. I simply wanted to explain the reason why Canada abstained on that particular vote. We abstained because we do not believe that issues such as this should be settled by a vote. We believe that they should be settled by consensus. This is not the kind of Body that normally takes its decisions by vote, and we very much object to the procedure that would see us go to a vote on this sort of matter.

I think there was a very clear division of opinion and perhaps other ways could have been found to provide guidance to the Bureau. So, for that reason Mr Chairman, I just wanted to explain why Canada abstained although, as Members know from the document that was circulated, Canada is one of the sponsors of this resolution. We continue to support the resolution but we chose to abstain from the vote for those reasons.

Enrique A. PAREJA (Argentina)

Mi delegación, visto que es la primera vez que interviene, quisiera enviarle nuestras felicitaciones y asegurarle toda nuestra cooperación durante esta Sesión del Consejo.

Deseamos explicar la abstención, como posición de nuestra delegación, y para ello quisiera hacer tres comentarios: en primer lugar, nuestra abstención obedece a la decisión, entiendo general, del Grupo Latinoamericano y el Caribe de no participar y de no tomar posición definida, tanto en un sentido como en otro en la inclusión o no de un punto específico en la agenda. El segundo comentario que quiero realizar, es que, obviamente, hay una biblioteca de Alejandría a favor y otra biblioteca de Alejandría en contra, en lo que se refiere a la terminología de los argumentos jurídicos o legales para rechazar o retener un tema en la Agenda.

Creo que es una obligación de todos nosotros ser abiertos y transparentes y, por qué no, discutir, intercambiar ideas y adoptar decisiones en base al consenso que se obtenga de este Consejo. Nosotros no habríamos tenido ningún temor en entrar en la discusión y recoger las inquietudes de otros Estados Miembros para conducir mejor esta Organización. Por esta razón, quisiera que mi declaración de explicación de voto quede debidamente registrada en esta Sesión del Consejo.

CHAIRMAN

I think we still have that decision, namely that we will delete the item proposed, and it is so decided.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

CHAIRMAN

I will now go to the second item proposed, that is, the *Application for Membership in the Organization*. This is a much simpler item for us to decide on, again the second item is the addition of *Application for Membership in the Organization*. This is Item 21.

Does the Council wish to endorse?

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

CHAIRMAN

And third, *Appointment of Chairman of Appeals Committee*, the addition of an item *Appointment of Chairman of Appeals Committee*.

Does the Council wish to endorse this?

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

CHAIRMAN

And finally, deletion of Item 7.1 on the *Margarita Lizárraga Medal*.

Does the Council wish to endorse?

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

CHAIRMAN

The Agenda as amended is adopted.

With respect to the timetable you have in document CL116/INF/1-Rev 1, we would suggest that the addition on *Application for Membership in the Organization*, Sub-item 21.2. be taken right after Item 20. The Sub-item on *Appointment of Chairman of the Appeals Committee* will also be taken on Friday morning, under Item 23 *Any Other Matters*. I think we can decide on that. Is this acceptable? Thank you.

So, the Timetable is amended and adopted.

8. Report of the Fourteenth Session of the Committee on Forestry

(Rome, 1-5 March 1999) (CL 116/8; CL 116/INF/18)

8. Rapport de la quatorzième session Du Comité des forêts (Rome, 1er-5 mars 1999)

(CL 116/8; CL 116/INF/18)

8. Informe del 14º período de sesiones del Comité de Montes (Roma, 1-5 de marzo de 1999)

(CL 116/8; CL 116/INF/18)

8.1 Venue of the Twelfth World Forestry Congress (CL 116/8-Sup.1; CL 116/8-Sup.2)

8.1 Lieu du douzième Congrès forestier mondial (CL 116/8-Sup.1; CL 116/8-Sup.2)

8.1 Lugar de celebración del XII Congreso Forestal Mundial (CL 116/8-Sup.1; CL 116/8-Sup.2)

May I now turn to Item 8.1 *Venue of the Twelfth World Forestry Congress*. As you know, the Committee on Forestry did not make a recommendation and the Council will have to decide at this Session on the site of the next World Forestry Congress which will be held in the year 2003. Two countries, namely, Guatemala and Canada, have kindly offered to host the Congress.

Now, last Thursday I consulted the Chairpersons of the Regional Groups on how to handle this item, and we came to the conclusion that a full debate at the Council may not yield the desired results. Therefore, in order to facilitate the decision by Council, when the item comes up next Thursday afternoon, I would suggest that a small Contact Group be established as soon as possible. The Contact Group would be open to Council Members and Observers. I suggest that it be chaired by one of our Chairpersons not belonging to either of the Regions to which the candidate countries belong.

If you agree to this proposal, we will proceed in the following manner. In order to ensure a balanced regional representation Members and Observers wishing to participate should contact the Chairperson or the Regional Group to which they belong. The Group should be kept small and therefore, I suggest that each Region nominate two members only. The Chairperson of the Group will report to the Council on Thursday afternoon on the outcome of the discussions.

If a consensus has been reached on one of the candidatures, the Council will adopt it without further discussion. If there is no consensus, the matter will be put to the vote by secret ballot immediately, and again without discussion. Is this proposal acceptable to the Council?

Júlio C. GOMES dos SANTOS (Brasil)

Nosotros una vez tuvimos la oportunidad, en una reunión del COFI, de repetir las palabras de Clemenceau cuando decía que "la guerra es algo muy importante para estar a cargo de generales". La creación de un Grupo de Contacto para decidir una cuestión tan importante como ésta no nos parece apropiada. Y ahora no hablo en nombre de Brasil, hablo en nombre de la delegación que me dio el GRULAC. Con todo el respeto por su análisis del problema y su conclusión de que debía crear un Grupo de Contacto, yo creo que este asunto no puede estar en manos de dos representantes de Grupos Regionales, de dos generales de cada Grupo, para ser tratado. Y si no se llega a un consenso, como no se va a llegar, ésto no puede ser ampliamente discutido en la Plenaria simplemente en una votación secreta.

Canadá, uno de los patrocinadores de la propuesta de limitación de los quehaceres y la reelección del Director General, pidió un Punto de Orden para decirle a usted que la votación que hizo en la Plenaria, sobre la propuesta de sacarla de la Agenda, merecía otro tratamiento. Yo, sin entrar en el mérito de esta cuestión, pero simplemente para dar un ejemplo de lo que acabamos de ver, me siento muy a gusto para decirle lo mismo al revés.

Señor Presidente, no son tres o cuatro candidatos, son dos candidatos. Con todo el respeto, un Grupo de Contacto se constituye para facilitar la vida de la mesa y de la Plenaria para que se llegue a dos, pero nunca para decidir entre dos, cuando sabemos que no habrá consenso. Así, señor Presidente, este asunto es de tal importancia que se buscó este consenso en el COFO y no se obtuvo. Por este motivo, se recomendó que el Consejo lo decidiera; entonces pienso sinceramente que constituir un Grupo de Contacto sería dar marcha atrás, pero más atrás aún del COFO.

Señor Presidente, son dos candidatos; que se debata ampliamente aquí en este Consejo, las razones por las cuales legítimamente Canadá y Guatemala anhelan y aspiran la sede de este Congreso.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

Thank you very much, Mr Chairman, for recognizing Canada on this particular issue. I think your proposal is a sound one in many ways, but I would only question the timing. I would think that the proposal to form a Contact Group is one that is very useful when it is clear that there is division or a number of wide views on the floor and views need to be narrowed down. I would hope that we would be able to reach a clear consensus during our debate on Thursday.

As the Honourable Representative of Brazil mentioned, Canada is one of those candidates and we would certainly wish to be able to fully and actively support Canada's campaign for this particular Congress during this week. It is our earnest hope that our efforts will be fruitful, and that we will in fact be able to convince 48 additional Members of Council that Canada is the appropriate venue. But we feel that we should make that point during the debate, and not refer to a Contact

Group. If the debate on Thursday proves inconclusive, we still have a couple days and it may be appropriate, at that time, once specific points are clear to use a Contact Group to define those specific points.

Dato' R. VENGADESAN (Malaysia)

I tend to agree with the observation made by certain distinguished delegates that it would be a more appropriate and beneficial exercise if the Plenary were to hear the views through a general debate on the merits of both countries which are candidates. Because, to limit it to a Contact Group would, in my view, tend to circumscribe the whole decision-making procedure. So I believe that there is some merit in opening the debate for the respective countries to advance their candidatures on the merits of choosing the venue for the Congress in the year 2003.

CHAIRMAN

Unless the Contact Group has the unanimous support of the Council membership, it will not be effective. Therefore, I think we will still go on and debate this in the full Council on Thursday.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

CHAIRMAN

I now take this opportunity since we are going to go back to Thursday's, among others, debate on the Venue of the Forestry Congress, to call upon your cooperation in keeping to the Timetable and enabling us to start our meetings on time.

I would now like to ask the Secretariat to report on what kind of arrangements have been made, if we have to go on in the afternoon/evening.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

The arrangements are reflected in the Timetable which has just been approved. The Provisional Timetable foresees that the sessions starting on Wednesday will go on after 17.30 hours, if required.

In other words, we will not organize an evening session as such but, at the discretion of the Chairman, in the light of the progress on the debate, the Chairman will continue the debate without interruption to save time. This will not take place on Tuesday, but as of Wednesday. Even this evening, it might be possible that the debate will have to be prolonged.

VI. OTHER MATTERS

VI. QUESTIONS DIVERSES

VI. OTROS ASUNTOS

- Tribute to the Memory of Ambassador Jai Kumar Atal of the Republic of India

(Chairman of the Appeals Committee)

– Hommage à la mémoire de M. Jai Kumar Atal, Ambassadeur de la République de l'Inde

(Président du Comité de recours)

– Homenaje a la memoria del Embajador Jai Kumar Atal, de la República de la India

(Presidente del Comité de Apelaciones)

CHAIRMAN

It is with deep regret and sadness that I must draw your attention to the death in Jaipur, Rajasthan, on 31 May 1999, of His Excellency Ambassador Jai Kumar Atal of India. Ambassador Atal has been associated with the Appeals Committee for almost a quarter of a century. He was appointed in 1975 First Alternate Chairman and in 1983 he was nominated Chairman of the Committee. Does the distinguished Representative of India wish to take the floor?

Kalarickal P. FABIAN (India)

Mr Chairman, since it is the first time that the Indian delegation is speaking, I should like to let you know how pleased we are to see you where you are.

Now, about Ambassador Jai Kumar Atal. It has been said that a long life is a gift of God, but a full and fruitful life is your own doing. This saying applies in full to the late Ambassador Jai Kumar Atal, who was affectionately known as "Rajah Atal" in Jaipur, Rajasthan, and among his numerous friends within and outside India, including Italy. Atal means "the immobile"; that is the meaning of the Hindi word in English and applies to a person who, having taken a decision, does not vacillate or prevaricate.

Rajah Atal had a long life spanning, and in fact extending over, the short twentieth century which, according to historians, ran from 1914 to the end of the Cold War, with the collapse of communism. He was born in 1914, the year the First World War broke out. He joined the Indian Civil Service in 1937, two years before the Second World War began, and he embarked on his diplomatic career in 1950, when the clouds of the Cold War had already started to darken the geopolitical horizon. One of India's ablest Ambassadors, Rajah Atal has represented his country in Ethiopia, Greece, Yugoslavia, Italy and Pakistan. After retirement from the Indian Civil Service, he started another career on assuming office, in 1975, as First Alternate Chairman of the Appeals Committee of FAO. In 1983, Rajah Atal became Chairman of the Appeals Committee and held that position till he left for his heavenly abode.

In Ambassador Atal, we had a second Daniel come to judgement. Indeed he was Atal, the immobile, taking his decisions and delivering his rulings without fear or favour and entirely based on justice and a deep-rooted sense of fairplay.

I have had the privilege of meeting Ambassador Atal a couple of times: he was the embodiment of courtesy, good manners and nobility of character. His philosophy was that life is like a mirror: we get the best results when we smile. He once told me that the things in life that count most are the things that cannot be counted. I remember his calling on me last year in my office and I went down to see him off. He had come with his grandson in a Volkswagen, much older than his grandson, and I still remember the sprightly manner with which he got into the car, waved goodbye and sped away.

Blessed by God right from his birth, Rajah Atal drank to the lees from the cup of life. He did a lot of good to a lot of people and he did no harm to anyone. Oh sweet prince, you shall be truly missed but we shall remember you, as long as there is breath in us, as a human being beloved of God and of his fellow beings.

CHAIRMAN

May I ask the Council to join me in observing one minute of silence in memory of His Excellency Jai Kumar Atal of India.

One minute of silence

Une minute de silence

Un minuto de silencio

2. Election of Three Vice-Chairpersons, and Designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee (CL 116/INF/9)

2. Election de trois Vice-Présidents et nomination du Président et des membres du Comité de rédaction (CL 116/INF/9)

2. Elección de tres Vicepresidentes y nombramiento del Presidente y los Miembros del Comité de Redacción (CL 116/INF/9)

CHAIRMAN

We now move to Item 2, *Election of Three Vice-Chairpersons and Designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee*.

Following consultations among the Regional Groups, we have the following proposals for the three posts of Vice-Chairperson, namely, Ms Birgitte Möller Christensen of Denmark, Mr Adnan Bashir Khan of Pakistan and Mr Luis A. Wagner of Paraguay.

If there are no objections, I wish to congratulate the three Vice-Chairpersons on their election.

For Members of the Drafting Committee, the following delegations were proposed: Australia, Brazil, Cameroon, Cuba, France, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Poland, Qatar, South Africa, Thailand, United Kingdom and United States of America.

I understand that the Committee will designate the Chairperson from among its Members. Are there any objections?

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

21. Other Constitutional and Legal Matters

21. Autres questions constitutionnelles et juridiques

21. Otros asuntos constitucionales y jurídicos

21.1 Invitations to Non-Member Nations to Attend FAO Sessions (CL 116/LIM/2)

21.1 Invitation d'États non membres à assister à des réunions de la FAO (CL 116/LIM/2)

21.1 Invitaciones a estados no miembros para asistir a reuniones de la FAO (CL 116/LIM/2)

CHAIRMAN

We now come to Sub-item 21.1: *Invitation to Non-Member Nations to attend FAO Sessions*. The document is CL 116/LIM/2.

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 11 May 1999, subject to approval by the Council. Council approval is sought to admit the Russian Federation as an Observer at the Hundred and Sixteenth Session of the Council.

CHAIRMAN

Can I take it that the Council approves the request of the Russian Federation to attend the present session as an Observer?

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

CHAIRMAN

Paragraph 5 of the document lists for information those Non-Member Nations that have participated in FAO meetings since the last Session of the Council. Unless someone wishes to speak on this subject, we will proceed to the next item on our Agenda.

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

16. FAO Strategic Framework 2000-2015 (Version 3.0) (CL 116/4 (paras 6 to 13); CL 116/12; CL 116/14 (paras 7 to 17); CL 116/16 (paras 4 to 10))

16. Cadre stratégique de la FAO 2000-2015 (Version 3.0) (CL 116/4 (paras 6 to 13); CL 116/12; CL 116/14 (paras 7 to 17); CL 116/16 (paras 4 to 10))

16. Marco Estratégico de FAO 2000-2015 (CL 116/4 (paras 6 to 13); CL 116/12; CL 116/14 (paras 7 to 17); CL 116/16 (paras 4 to 10))

CHAIRMAN

We now come to item 16, *FAO's Strategic Framework 2000-2015 (Version 3.0)*, found in document CL 116/12.

As you will recall, Version 3.0 of the Strategic Framework is before us following examination of Version 1.0 at our last session in November 1998. Version 3.0 incorporates inputs from the Technical Committees: CCP, COFI, COFO and COAG. This Version contains, in particular, refined Vision and Mission Statements, a set of proposed Corporate Strategies and attendant Strategic Objectives to address Members' needs, six strategies to address cross-organization issues and an additional Part III, dealing with the Implementation Programme for the Strategic Framework.

We also have the benefit of the views of the Programme Committee and the Joint Meetings of the Programme and Finance Committees, and their respective Reports.

I now give the floor to Mr Wade to highlight the main issues that arose during our debate and to answer our questions.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation)

Our feeling was that an introduction on this item was not necessary, as you already have the full paper, and you also have the comments of the Programme Committee and of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees when they met in May. If I may pass the floor back to you, I think we have saved some time in avoiding an introduction at this time.

Victor Manuel REBOLLEDO GONZÁLEZ (Chile)

Por ser primera vez que mi delegación hace uso de la palabra ante el Consejo, permítame desearle el mayor éxito en la alta responsabilidad de dirigir nuestros debates y a continuación quisiera solicitarle que se conceda el uso de la palabra a la delegación de El Salvador que, a nombre del Grupo Latinoamericano y el Caribe, expresará nuestras reflexiones y consideraciones entorno al Marco Estratégico de la FAO.

Sra. María Eulalia JIMÉNEZ DE MOCHI ONORI (Observador de El Salvador)

Permítame en primer lugar expresarle nuestra satisfacción por verle nuevamente presidir nuestros trabajos. Felicitamos asimismo a los tres vicepresidentes que acabamos de elegir. Hago uso de la palabra a nombre del Grupo Regional de América Latina y el Caribe, con la finalidad de dar a conocer al 116º Consejo la posición común del Grupo Regional que represento sobre la Tercera Versión del Marco Estratégico.

En primer lugar, deseamos destacar la labor de la Secretaría por haber materializado la Resolución 6/97 por la cual se estableció el proceso de discusión del Marco Estratégico. Sin duda alguna el trabajo paciente y laborioso que ha venido realizando la Secretaría ha permitido contar con un documento que va reuniendo los elementos relevantes que deberá poseer un documento de trascendental importancia como éste, puesto que guiará la labor de la Organización durante un amplio período de tiempo.

Creemos oportuno reiterar las anteriores declaraciones del Grupo Regional de América Latina y el Caribe efectuadas en el seno de esta Organización y que consideramos pertinentes para la Tercera Versión. No obstante lo anterior, deseamos completar algunos aspectos de este proceso de elaboración del Marco Estratégico llamando la atención de la Secretaría y de este honorable Consejo sobre ciertos elementos que estimamos básicos para alcanzar un mejor resultado de la última versión del mismo. Entendemos en toda su extensión el esfuerzo y el compromiso desplegado por la Secretaría en la búsqueda de un documento que refleje de manera equilibrada tanto las trascendentales responsabilidades que emanan de los Textos Fundamentales de la Organización como asimismo los compromisos, responsabilidades y aspiraciones que los Estados Miembros tienen con la Organización. Pero de igual manera estamos convencidos que el proceso de aplicación debe ser liberado por los Estados Miembros, catalizando un alto nivel de compromiso político al Marco Estratégico y para tal efecto se estima fundamental que los Estados Miembros en la última fase de elaboración del mismo participen activa y decididamente. Ello requerirá que los Estados Miembros tengan un espacio de diálogo directo que permita asumir los compromisos gubernamentales permitiendo reafirmar la trascendencia política que todos y cada uno sus Estados Miembros le asignan a los elementos contenidos en el documento de planificación de largo plazo.

Lo anterior es especialmente importante dada la trascendencia del tema y del impacto que éste tendrá en los documentos de programación y en las actividades futuras de la Organización las cuales deberán ser orientadas por las estrategias definidas por el propio Marco Estratégico.

De igual manera pensamos que esta forma de ver esta última fase del proceso está en completa armonía con el esfuerzo emprendido para la definición del Marco Estratégico como fuera considerado por la Resolución 6/97 aprobada por la Conferencia pasada. La única manera de contribuir decididamente en el buen trabajo de la Secretaría es que los Estados jerarquicen acciones, definan por consenso los criterios de pluralización facilitando así la toma de decisiones por parte de la Organización. Sólo los Estados Miembros pueden prestar tan crucial ayuda a la Secretaría puesto que en definitiva constituyen este forum intergubernamental denominado Organización para la Alimentación y la Agricultura.

En este sentido el Grupo Regional de América Latina y el Caribe acentúa la importancia de contar con la Cuarta Versión con anticipación suficiente a fin de recibir las correspondientes instrucciones de nuestros respectivos países y efectuar los aportes pertinentes. Sobre el particular no nos cansaremos de subrayar la crucial importancia de los compromisos contraídos en la Declaración de Roma sobre la Seguridad Alimentaria y Plan de Acción de la Cumbre. Estos documentos, aprobados por la gran mayoría de los Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno del planeta, son la base conceptual y política para cualquier esfuerzo de planificación de mediano y largo plazo en esta Organización.

El día de mañana se nos pedirán respuestas si fuimos capaces o no de alcanzar el desafío formulado por la Comunidad Internacional de reducir el número de personas desnutridas a la mitad de su nivel actual no más tarde del año 2015 y no si elaboramos un Marco Estratégico 2000-2015 más o menos eficiente.

Deseo, al finalizar mi intervención, poner en conocimiento del Consejo que el Grupo Regional de América Latina y el Caribe, teniendo presente las ideas antes formuladas, se encuentra trabajando en el Marco Estratégico y que entregará lo antes posible el aporte a la Secretaría para que éste sea considerado de manera extensiva en la Cuarta Versión del documento bajo discusión.

TANG ZHENGPING (China) (Original language Chinese)

We would like to begin by congratulating you on being elected to the Chair of this Council Session.

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the three Vice-Chairman too upon their election.

Coming now to the matter under discussion, the *Strategic Framework for FAO 2000-2015 (Version 3.0)* was drafted after consultation with the various partners. It is the outcome of many consultations, and many FAO services have been involved in its drafting. Part III on the Implementation Programme for the Strategic Framework completed the Strategic Framework more satisfactorily better in our opinion. We feel that it is a Strategic Framework and therefore, sure to be more concise and if need be, have explanatory notes annexed to it.

After having carefully looked at the structure of the the document, my delegation would like to make several comments: First of all, with respect to the Overall Strategic Framework, my delegation has noted that in the fifth line, of the fourth paragraph, which is the sixth line of the English text, there are in brackets the words "excluding China". Now basing itself on its most recent statistics provided by the Government, my delegation requests that the contents of these brackets be removed. We would also like to add that the figures given by the World Bank on our GDP seem to be exaggerated and far exceed our Government's figures. We would like to inform that fruitful consultations are taking place between the competent authorities of my Government and the World Bank. I am sure that problem will be settled very soon.

Secondly, with respect to Common Objectives under Strategies, we would like to say that the objectives set at the elimination of Hunger and Malnutrition and Access to Food should constitute the main objectives of our Organization in the fifteen years to come. In fact, this ought to be the very core of the Strategic Framework as it is on the basis of this core that FAO should build up its cooperative strategies so it can play an essential role in attaining this outstanding objective.

Thirdly, in our efforts to promote the Overall Strategy to increase the amount of food we could, perhaps, insist on a development extension of agricultural techniques. FAO should perfect a corresponding measure designed to promote and encourage technological assistance to developing countries so that mechanisms for technical cooperation may be set up in a spirit of complementarity, thus, enhancing FAO's comparative advantage and role in this area.

Fourth, with regard to strategies to Address the Intersectoral Needs throughout the Organization, we think that FAO should display its advantages in the provision of technical assistance and personnel. When deciding on key areas, it should determine how many experts should be sent to help the poor with technological knowledge. When considering its human resources, it should perfect mechanisms to make better use of these very human resources.

As regards the Implementation Programme for the Strategic Framework, we feel that the Medium-Term which covers a six year period and a biennial Programme of Work and Budget makes it possible to combine the general objectives with flexible implementation. This is reasonable, but we wonder whether it isn't too long a period of time to wait, that is, six years before being able to make any modifications to the Medium-Term Plan. We have also noted that the Implementation Reports and Evaluation Reports carried out once every two years will make it possible for us to pinpoint any problems that might arise in the implementation of the programmes in good time and, in fact, serve to improve implementation.

Moreover, we feel that the qualitative and quantitative analyses are there to complement each other and that it might be therefore possible to combine these two Reports in to one.

Just before I conclude, I would like to repeat that the implementation of the Strategic Framework for the years 2000 to 2015 is extremely important in attaining the objectives set by the World Food Summit. Consequently, My country is prepared to work together with other Member Nations to achieve this objective and to make its contribution.

Chao Tiantong (Thailand)

Thank you, I am speaking on behalf of the Developing Countries of Asia.

The developing countries of Asia are pleased with the improvements that have been made to the Strategic Framework, as found in Version 3.0, through an interactive process undertaken with FAO's Membership and Partners.

We very much appreciate the inclusion of the Regional Perspective as found in Annex IV which highlights key Regional Priorities and Strategy Elements specific to the region. As for the Asia Region priorities, there should be a further re-ordering and more comprehensive forecasting. These priorities are useful to the Strategic Framework because they help define the issues in FAO's workscope in the long-term, until the year 2015.

Similarly, the Strategic Elements need to be refined to clearly reflect their relevance to the Corporate Strategic Objectives.

The developing countries of Asia are also of the opinion that to apply gradings to Strategic Objectives will not adequately satisfy the diverse needs and priorities of the wildest regions, and therefore should not be used. The criteria for priority-setting which has been developed are a sufficient guide, and should also be useful when allocating resources at the programming and budgeting levels.

Bhaskar Barua (India)

May I take this opportunity to congratulate you on being once again in the Chair, and I am sure will have a very fruitful session.

I feel confident that the Members of the Bureau will help you ably in accomplishing this difficult task.

I also congratulate the three Vice-Chairpersons who have been elected.

I now wish to compliment the Secretariat for producing an excellent document which ably reflects the various views expressed in several fora on the Strategic Framework of the FAO. The improvements made in Version 3.0 of the document are commendable, both in terms of precision and lucidity, as well as in terms of including certain issues which are important to developing countries in the present environment and for the future.

The overall structure of the document is quite satisfactory. In Chapter I; the Commitment of the World Food Summit with the goal of halving the number of hungry poor in the world by the year 2015, has been noted as a point of reference for action by national Governments and the International Community. FAO Conference Resolution 6/97 which is the basis for FAO embarking on the formulation of Strategic Framework reaffirms this commitment. We see a crucial linkage between the two. We believe that the Strategic Framework for FAO should help translate the commitments of the World Food Summit into reality.

A realistic assessment of the resources required by the Global Community to achieve this target is a primary and an essential step in this direction. I am confident that FAO will undertake this exercise in line with similar efforts made in achieving the goals of universal access to education and reproductive and child health services. It would be appropriate to include this assessment in Chapter I. Since agricultural development is the key to alleviating rural poverty, FAO's role in this task also needs to be more clearly defined. Similarly, the estimated funding required for the efforts of FAO could be indicated.

We strongly support the existing order in which the Corporate Strategies are outlined in Chapter II. In our comments, on the earlier Version, we had emphasized that FAO strategies should be closely linked to the major trends identified in the external environment. Our major recurring theme, in the trends identified, was the likely increase in the inequality of access to income, food and technology.

This should be the central theme in forming the Corporate Strategies. Strategy A talks about poverty eradication and ensuring equity in access to resources. We would like to emphasize a need for clear and practical strategies regarding rainfed and marginal areas inhabited by resource-poor farmers. Characterized by poor credit flow, and low-input availability, their poverty is a vicious circle and their environment continues to be technology neutral.

The Government of India has launched one of the biggest schemes for Rainfed Agriculture in the country, but the challenges are enormous. FAO could play a crucial role in providing technical assistance to achieve vital technological breakthroughs in such areas.

We would like to flag the problems associated with attracting youth to agriculture in developing countries.

FAO's continued assistance in policy formulation and in implementing pilot projects will grow in importance to developing countries.

We would like the Strategy Elements in Corporate Strategy A to be more focused and the existing ones more condensed. This would give a clear agenda for action plans to be drawn in the medium term.

My delegation is happy to see that our suggestion on the role envisaged for FAO in announcing the capacity of developing nations to cope with the liberalization of trade in agricultural products has found place in Corporate Strategy B.

The Corporate Strategy of FAO proposed in this regard, however, falls short of our expectations. We would like FAO to assume the role of an advocate, on behalf of the developing countries, particularly to counter any measures emanating from other than purely trade-related concerns. Moreover, the concerns of food security of the local populations and the importance of maintaining production of food grains within the country for this purpose needs to be brought home. FAO has a crucial role to play in this regard.

We would like to support all Strategies intended to make FAO strive for excellence in areas of its competence and technical strength. FAO should seek special funds for such activities if they are not supported under the Regular Programme.

We also support the Strategies of broadening partnership and alliances within the UN System. My delegation would like some concrete things to happen in this field. Perhaps, such an alliance can best be forged in agriculture and some pilot projects could be taken out. The evaluation of these projects would be reviewed by the membership.

Turning now to the Regional Perspectives for Asia and the Pacific, while the regional priorities identified in the document refer to issues relating to preparedness for a New World Trade Order, we would like issues affecting plant protection and quarantine and food quality control to be adequately addressed in the Corporate Strategies, especially as regard capacity enhancement of the developing countries in these areas.

Other policies which seem to have escaped attention in the regional perspectives for Asia and the Pacific are those aimed at assisting these countries in the choice and use of technologies for diverse production systems to take advantage of opportunities and equal regional differences, and provide demand-driven agricultural support services. These will immensely help the farmers in enhancing their income levels and in raising their standards of living.

CHAIRMAN

Thank you very much. Again I would like to appeal that our interventions be brief, and no doubt there will be written versions that will be handed over to the Secretariat.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Nos da mucho gusto verlo presidir de nuevo los trabajos de este Consejo que tendrá a su consideración importantes temas como éste con el cual iniciamos los debates de fondo.

Ante todo queremos suscribir el discurso pronunciado por la distinguida representante de El Salvador a nombre del Grupo de Países de América Latina y el Caribe. La elaboración del Marco Estratégico de la Organización es, sin duda, uno de los ejercicios de mayor trascendencia de los últimos años. Los acuerdos a que lleguemos en ese documento tendrán un impacto relevante en todas las actividades de la FAO. En tal sentido, mi delegación ha contribuido de manera propositiva en todas las fases de este ejercicio. Toda vez que el principal compromiso lo asumirán los Países Miembros, consideramos que este es un momento oportuno para que se brinde un espacio a nuestras naciones, con objeto de que puedan contribuir de manera directa a la definición de la Versión final del documento.

Reconocemos y valoramos el importante esfuerzo que ha hecho la Secretaría por presentarnos una Tercera Versión del texto; creemos que ésta puede servir de base a una negociación directa entre los Estados Miembros sobre aspectos que, estimamos, no están aún debidamente reflejados con los términos más idóneos. A continuación me referiré a aspectos concretos del documento que deberían ser considerados, algunos de los cuales ya mi delegación ha planteado desde la Primera Versión.

En primer lugar, el esquema conceptual de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación debe constituir el eje central de la Estrategia; en tal sentido, juzgamos que la Primera Estrategia debería leer solo: "contribuir a la seguridad alimentaria y a la erradicación de la pobreza rural". Toda vez que lo estimamos, este es el principal objetivo que debe seguir la Organización. Si bien la participación en la emergencia constituye una actividad significativa de la FAO, ésta no debe plantearse como una de sus prioridades, ya que no lo contempla su mandato por lo que puede quedar incluida en otra parte del texto. Nos preocupa, en tal sentido también, un enunciado sobre las emergencias relacionadas con recursos naturales, debido a que la misma podría conllevar, por lo menos conceptualmente, serias implicaciones sobre cuestiones de soberanía de los países en esta materia.

En la Segunda Estrategia, relativa a los Marcos Reglamentarios, nos preguntamos sobre las consecuencias a una referencia al área de silvicultura frente a los debates que tuvieron lugar en la Reunión Ministerial de Actividades Forestales y a la luz de las discusiones que, sobre el particular, se realizan en el grupo intergubernamental respectivo establecido por la Comisión de Desarrollo Sostenible.

La ausencia más notable en el documento se refiere, sin duda, a una mención de las actividades de cooperación técnica de la Organización. Consideramos que, frente al mandato expreso de la FAO, el tema merecería que se le dedicara toda una estrategia; este es un elemento en el que mi delegación, al igual que otras muchas, han reiterado desde el inicio de este proceso. Nos preocupa también que elementos fundamentales como el desarrollo rural queden diluidos en el documento, o que se les de un tratamiento similar al de otros temas de menor importancia. Consideramos, de igual manera, que la formación de recursos humanos debería ser destacada con mayor énfasis. Se podría igualmente abundar en los objetivos, enfoques y acciones de la Estrategia "D" sobre la prevención y combate de los incendios forestales, siniestros que están acelerando los procesos de desertificación en varios países. En relación con las Estrategias Regionales, estimamos que su elaboración debe corresponder a los propios países, por lo que un marco adecuado para su debate y consenso podrían ser los propios Grupos Regionales de la Organización.

El Marco Estratégico constituye un documento político de fundamental importancia y, por lo tanto, debe ser objeto de un amplio acuerdo y consenso de todos los Estados Miembros de la Organización. Con el mismo ánimo constructivo con el que participó mi país en las negociaciones del Plan de Acción de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación deseamos contribuir también en este ejercicio. Consideramos que, una negociación directa entre los países miembros sería una fórmula adecuada para concluir estos trabajos con un nivel decidido de compromiso político que debe respaldar a este documento.

Kyeong-Sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

Mr. Chairman, I congratulate you on your excellent chairmanship in adopting the Agenda of today.

My delegation commends the Secretariat for developing Version 3.0 of FAO Strategic Framework, as this updated version seems to properly address the various comments and concerns expressed by the many distinguished delegates at the relevant FAO meetings. Compared to the earlier versions we consider that the Corporate Strategies are organized in this Version in such a way as to better embrace the needs of Member Nations. We are of the view that this Strategic Framework as a whole is well prepared to increase coherence among the sub-objectives and the sub-elements under each Corporate Strategy Objective. We appreciate that the Secretariat now provides us in this Version with strategies to address the cross-organizational issues, as well as the Implementation Programme for Strategic Frameworks, as requested in Conference Resolution 6/97, and an outline of overall features of the new programming and budgetary process in relation to the strategic orientation of FAO's programmes and activities. We agree with the statements made in paras 135 and 149 that in the Strategic Framework it is difficult to prioritize the 12 Strategic Objectives, and the importance of the priorities come into play at the resource allocation stage, which occurs first in the development of the Medium-Term Plan.

However, I would like to make some comments about criteria for priority-setting in para 151. I believe that FAO's projects should avoid duplication with activities of other international institutions and build, design and implement them in a cost-effective manner in accordance with the criteria approved by the Council at its Hundred and Tenth Session.

Concerning these criteria, the emergency programme of FAO aid projects includes non-food items while WFP also covers non-food items with its emergency operations. Its Special Operations is the project to support only non-food items. In this context, I would like to call into question this duplication, with a similar activity between two organizations. Another example of duplication concerns the nutritional information collection projects implemented through three different projects in FAO, namely through nutrition assessment, the FIVIMS and the Global Information Early Warning Systems. However, I was somewhat surprised that the information on the number of undernourished people is different according to each source. I would therefore like to propose that all nutrition assessment project be incorporated within a single project. If this is impossible, there should however only be one set of information on the undernourished.

Concerning the goal of the WFS Plan of Action, I would like to make another proposal which is that the medium-term goals to reduce the number of chronically-undernourished should be designated in the Medium-Term Plan of the Implementation Programme for the Strategic Framework. As we know well, reducing the number of chronically-undernourished people by half by no later than 2015 is the most important goal of the World Food Summit Plan of Action. However, the world food security situation has not improved, as is described in para 12 of the CFS Report where the number of countries facing food emergencies at the end of 1998 (according to figures given in mid-March 1999) stands at 37 or 38. In order to achieve the goal of the WFS Plan of Action, we therefore need to add the goal of reducing the number of undernourished people to the Medium-Term Plan.

Regarding FAO resources, it is desirable that FAO should further strengthen cooperation with international financial institutions such as World Bank, as well as with the private sector. In this context, the Strategy Elements of paragraph 103 (e) are meaningful, but I think that the detailed methodological strategy for the strengthening of cooperation should be established in advance. The importance of the private sector is increasing, therefore the definition among the similar concepts should also be made clear. Therefore, I would like to propose that the relationships with the Civil Society Organizations, NGOs and the private sector described in paras 171 and 172 should be discussed and clearly established in this session of Council or in the coming Conference.

Finally, I would like to invite special attention to paragraph 100 concerning broadening partnerships and the strategy to address further strengthening the links and the potential for synergy among the Rome-based Organizations, FAO, WFP, IFAD and IPGRI. In order to strengthen the substantial cooperation, it is very important that from the planning stage there should be coordination among the headquarters of each organization. In the implementation stage, the role of field coordinators should be emphasized. My delegation has proposed several times the creation of standing committees related to the Alliance between food and agricultural development, as proposed by the Italian Representative. Through this strategy I believe the duplication of activities among the Organizations can be avoided and the implementation of projects can be made more cost-effective. Enhanced relationships between the Organizations could lead to participation of the interested private sector donors in the projects and result in promotion of their contributions. In the context of participation of private donors, I would like to ask the Secretariat to further strengthen the budget and the number of staff in the unit dealing with these matters.

Ms Birgitte Møller Christensen, Vice-Chairperson of the Council, took the Chair

Mme Birgitte Møller Christensen, Vice-Président du Conseil, assume la présidence

Ocupa la presidencia, Señora Birgitte Møller Christensen, Vicepresidente del Consejo

Klaus GARCKE (Germany)

I am speaking on behalf of the European Community and its Member States. I have to add that the whole European regional group supports this statement.

We are taking the floor to provide concrete and constructive suggestions for the further work on the Strategic Framework in the context of the current challenges and evolutions in all sectors covered by FAO's mandate. Our work on this important document will have to take into account the objectives of reduction of poverty, hunger and malnutrition and the impact of globalization.

We consider Version 3.0 a real improvement on the previous one in terms of clarity and consistency between the different elements of the framework. In our interventions in previous FAO meetings, we had also asked for the new Version to be more concise and less descriptive. This, however, has not been accomplished. Once more, we wish to emphasize the necessity that the Strategic Framework Version 4.0 will begin with an Executive Summary in which FAO's main priorities will be presented, as established in Resolution 6/97 on strengthening the FAO 2000 Project.

A Strategic Vision is still missing in Version 3.0. Its main weakness is that no choices are presented yet, and there was no hint of what FAO could be doing more and what it could be doing less. This Version is more like a catalogue explaining the different FAO actions than a strategic paper with options and alternatives. For FAO's Strategic Framework the past and future development of the share of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, respectively, in total employment and Gross Domestic Product in Member Nations are central trends which must be taken into account.

A major improvement we expected to see in Version 3.0 was a clear statement of the criteria for priority-setting at the level of actions and outputs. Paragraphs 94, 151 and 152 in Version 3.0 should be developed along these lines. Such criteria must form the key link between the Strategic Framework, the Medium-Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget. It is important that the Strategic Framework itself should provide a ranking of the Strategies and Objectives of FAO based on the same criteria.

Considering the challenges and constraints which FAO is facing, the Members will have to make choices both between and within Strategies that will be reflected in the Strategic Framework at the time of approval during the FAO Conference in November 1999. The main criterion for priority-setting must be comparative advantage. FAO's comparative advantage lies primarily in those tasks for whose fulfilment FAO has a unique position in relation to national and other international agencies, that is FAO's normative activities supported by complementary field activities as both are mutually supportive.

The last Council gave guidance on these issues. However, this has not been adequately reflected in Version 3.0. For instance, the elements explaining the comparative advantage, as contained in paragraphs 154 to 163, are extremely general and could be applied to any other international organization. In order to serve as essential criteria for decision-making, the elements in the present text must be linked more closely to the Strategies of the Organization, in particular in those fields of activity where FAO has technical leadership and is the Centre of Excellence. To reach this, a definition of FAO's level of excellence and comparative advantage should be given at the beginning of the text of each Strategic Objective. In Version 3.0, this is sometimes the case but this is not done systematically.

Setting priorities in this document would also have consequences for the arrangement of the sections in Chapter II, Corporate Strategies. Sections E and B, which deal tasks for whose fulfilment FAO is in a unique position in relation to other international agencies, should precede the sections A, C and D which are more technical and where there are several actors in those fields.

In the context of setting priorities, I would like to mention the areas of FAO's work in the field of agriculture and rural development, forestry and fisheries that are of high priority in the view of the European Union: information work and promotion of research on food and agriculture, forestry and fisheries; international forum for discussion and agreements; standard-setting activities, in particular under Codex Alimentarius and the International Plant Protection Convention; activities concerning the role of women in agriculture, which should be translated into a more extensive and mainstreamed integration of gender issues in FAO's activities, and socio-economic and gender issues in rural development; assessment, conservation and sustainable management of natural resources for food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries; assistance to developing countries and countries in transition with regard to drafting sectoral policies including supporting, in the framework of the appropriate international organizations, the preparations for the forthcoming agricultural trade negotiations; work on emergencies including forest fires, encompassing preparedness, early warning and rehabilitation within the Organization's Mandate; implementation of the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*; and regional activities such as combatting animal and plant diseases where activities are need in several countries.

The Strategic Framework would gain in strength if it contained clear and short indications on the possible ways and means to reach the Strategic Objectives. What are FAO's internal capacities? Which methods should be applied?

In particular, the document still lacks sufficiently clear recognition of the fundamental review efficiency and internal bureaucracy that are required. Problems like improving management information systems, overcoming cumbersome administrative procedures, encouraging decision-making, initiative by middle management, improving planning and programme monitoring should be addressed. The Strategy Outline in paragraphs 110 to 112, which deal with human resource management and management systems, needs to be expressed in much more concrete terms. The tools for implementing the Strategic Objectives, for example workshops, training courses, conferences, data collecting and analysis, should also be given. Without the tools, words like "promoting" are not concrete enough to underpin the Strategic Objectives.

Generally, the deliberations on partnership are satisfactory. However, FAO should further develop its cooperation with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and other relevant frameworks for cooperation within the UN System, that is, the World Bank initiative and the Comprehensive Development Framework. In this context, the perspective of a closer strategic and operational cooperation between the relevant Agencies could be envisaged.

With regard to FAO's cooperation with the private sector, it is vital that FAO does not compromise its role as an intergovernmental organization. We have to make a series of other more specific observations on the document. You will find these remarks in a paper which is also available to other delegations.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy)

Thank you, Chairperson, and congratulations to you and to all the Bureau.

I would like to support the German presidency statement, integrating it with some reflections about the idea of an Alliance for Agriculture Development to which our Korean colleague so kindly referred.

I think everybody agrees, and it was suggested by the Finance Committee on page 9 of the Final Report, in paragraph 56 of document CL 116/16, "that it could be beneficial for the World Food Programme, FAO and IFAD to extend their cooperation to the area of strategic planning". We intend to go forward in that direction.

Our initiative has its roots in the Rome Declaration and the Plan of Action adopted by the World Food Summit in November 1996. The idea of an Alliance has been anticipated on several occasions, starting from the last Council, and then by the Italian Deputy Foreign Minister in the Inter-Parliamentary Union and by the Italian Deputy Prime Minister in IFAD, as well as in different fora and committees of FAO. It has been promoted by the deep concern caused by the number of people still suffering from hunger or without access to adequate food, which has increased from about 800 to 830 million, instead of being reduced in line with the objectives internationally agreed upon at the highest level of the Rome Summit by Heads of States and Governments. In the same way, it has been confirmed and repeated by DAC of OECD. We are afraid that at the present level, we will be unable to attain our goal.

We are particularly worried by agriculture being increasingly marginalized in national and international development policies, notwithstanding its primary importance in terms of occupation, GDP share, economic and social development and stability, as well as environmental preservation.

I quote just a few figures: international assistance to LDCs in agriculture has decreased from US\$ 18 billion in 1988 to US\$ 10 billion in 1998, which means a decrease of 44.4 percent. In Africa, the level of assistance has declined to an almost basic level. For instance, the World Bank's agriculture lending fell from an average of US\$ 612 million in 1989-93 to US\$ 177 million in 1998, which means a decrease of 71 percent, if my mathematics are correct. That happens when poverty affects primarily the rural world where about 75 percent of the world's poor population is estimated to live.

We feel an increasingly pressing need to reverse this negative trend through a broad and sustained effort at all levels and an effective international and national mobilization of governments, international organizations and civil society, focused specifically on the challenging goal of food security for all. I insist on Civil Society and NGOs because of their increasing role and involvement, and because they are often more advanced than national and international bureaucracies.

That is why we call for a broader partnership and for an Alliance for Agriculture Development to promote a forward-looking Strategic Vision of sustainable rural development, aimed at breaking the grip of the vicious circle of poverty and malnutrition which recent economic crises have worsened through the creation of political, economic and social conditions conducive to the reduction of rural poverty and improved food security and the establishment of pro-active arrangements for sustained cooperation.

The Alliance should consist of an informal and operationally-oriented, no-cost, programmatic partnership with no additional administrative structures in support of developing countries and food-deficit countries, with the specific objective of the reduction of the populations suffering from hunger or malnutrition and the improvement of the access to adequate food for all.

We consider integrating the Alliance into the broader context of international and national development frameworks, such as UNDAF, and improved coordination mechanisms between the

United Nations and international financial institutions with the aim of restoring the centrality of agriculture and rural development.

We would therefore urge FAO, the World Food Programme and IFAD as the core group of the Alliance to operate – building from the existing cooperative experiences in the field and in Headquarters – through regular Joint Meetings of their Governing Bodies, open to other concerned institutions as indicated above, with the task of defining a common action framework for operational activities. For example, the first day of the Council could be the first day dedicated by the three Governing Bodies of the Organizations to discuss common issues, prepare common documents and think strategically together.

We therefore recommend integrating into paragraph 101 of the Strategic Framework an explicit reference to the idea of an "Alliance". Paragraph 101 is, according to us, the best suited, but there are also others into which the concept could be introduced.

We intend to examine how to elaborate, with like-minded countries of different regional groups, a Draft Resolution for the next General Conference of November. The Alliance, in our opinion, will not imply new mechanisms, new structures, new expenditures, but on the contrary will tend to avoid duplication, to streamline procedures, to provoke synergies and best value for the money we provide to the Organizations, starting from, but not limited to, the Rome-based ones whose increased cooperation should not be founded on personal goodwill and friendly relations, but on institutional rules agreed by the Member Nations.

Dato' R. VENGADESAN (Malaysia)

The Malaysian delegation commends the Secretariat for having prepared document CL 116/12, Version 3.0 of the FAO Strategic Framework. In our view, Version 3.0 is a much refined and better-focused document than earlier versions. With a higher degree of coherence and consistency, these improvements were made possible by the diligent input and comments by Member Nations and other partners and alliances of FAO. In particular, Malaysia applauds the inclusion in the document of the Regional Perspectives, as contained in Annex IV. It is our view that this Annex could also be further refined and improved as it has an important link and strategic relevance to the main text.

We also believe that in realizing the long-term goals and strategic objectives of FAO, the role and function of nation states have been duly recognized. However, with the evolving environment of globalization and trade liberalization, other stakeholders, such as regional and sub-regional institutions and economic organizations, may have many positive contributions to make, especially towards achieving regional and global food security, as well as sustainable management and development of natural resources. Thus these regional stakeholders should be adequately reflected in the partnership section of the document.

Referring to the Key Regional Priorities and Strategy Elements of Asia, as found in Annex IV, Malaysia concurs with the priorities listed therein. My delegation would like to highlight some of them.

In absolute terms, the Asia Region continues to have the highest number of malnourished and poor people. Despite the impressive gains made in the last two decades to overcome these problems, the unfortunate financial and economic obstacles faced by some countries of the Region in the last two years have reversed the situation. At the same time, being a heterogeneous Region and rich in natural and human resources, including biodiversity and genetic resources, the Asia Region offers much untapped potential. Efforts therefore have to be accelerated in capacity building of its institutions, human resource development, upgrading of technology and the transfer of know-how.

Of late, the Region has not been spared the onslaught of natural calamities: floods, droughts, forest fires, as well as outbreaks of animal and crop pests, which threaten food security and undermine social stability. In this regard, risk management capabilities, including emergency

preparedness and early warning monitoring systems at national and regional levels, need to be rapidly put in place to better prepare the Region for such eventualities in the near future.

In this context, the Strategic Objective related to this aspect is an important priority and needs to be adequately reflected in the final version.

By improving and highlighting these regional priorities in the final version of the document, my delegation believes that the Strategic Framework will have a higher sense of ownership by, and more relevant and implementable to, FAO's constituents and partners. Equally important, although we are aware that some members may refer to this document as resource neutral, we believe that regional priorities found in the Strategic Framework will highlight the resource requirement or resource implication for a particular region, which would be useful in terms of FAO's biennium resource allocation and the Medium-Term Plan, international efforts on resource mobilization or private sector investment.

James W. SCHROEDER (United States of America)

The United States appreciates efforts by the Secretariat and Member Nations over the past year to improve the Strategic Framework document. This has been a participatory process, and has led to a welcome and frank exchange of ideas on FAO's direction in the future.

As others have observed, the document we review today, Version 3.0, is shorter, more readable and more focused than the previous drafts. We welcome the inclusion of the Mission and Vision Statements, but think, as the German delegate suggested, that these could be further reduced in length. In the Mission Statement, we advocate changing the focus to reducing poverty rather than eradicating poverty, in the interests of a more realistic objective for FAO.

The United States welcomes the section on priority-setting in the context of the new planning framework and the overview of the new programming model. We see it as a major responsibility of management at all levels of FAO to use this new programming model to evaluate regularly all programmes to determine if they are achieving their goals and if they have continuing relevance. We also see it as essential that the Programme Evaluation Office review these evaluations and make recommendations to Member Nations on whether to continue or eliminate programmes.

Finally, the criteria for priority-setting in paragraph 151 should be incorporated into the final version.

With respect to the discussion of partners, the United States would like to see in Version 4.0 a clear identification or indication of which organizations have the lead in the various programmes and areas. Our impression is that FAO is indicated as lead agency in too many areas, with the risk of spreading FAO resources too thin.

We advocate reducing the number of strategic elements. There are simply too many, some are duplicative or do not reflect comparative advantage or mandate, or they overlap with responsibilities of other UN agencies or bilateral and private organizations.

The following is an indicative list of elements we believe can be eliminated: paragraph 43 c) population issues; 43 d) delivering services to disadvantaged rural populations; 43 f) expanding rural employment; 51 e) providing immediate relief; 65 g) institutional decentralization and rural development; 65 h) rural investment; 69 g) rural energy; and 73 g) incorporating social issues.

Finally, we hope Version 4.0 is available well before the Conference. With the changes noted above, the United States believes the Conference will be well disposed to adopt the Strategic Framework.

Sra. Virginia PÉREZ PÉREZ (Venezuela)

Por ser la primera vez que mi delegación hace uso de la palabra, permítame desearle los mejores éxitos en el desarrollo de los trabajos de este Consejo. Cuento usted para ello con todo el apoyo de nuestra delegación.

En cuanto al documento CL 116/12 sobre el Marco Estratégico para la FAO 2000-2015, apoyamos plenamente la declaración de la Representante de El Salvador en nombre de la Región de América Latina. Nosotros posteriormente haremos llegar el documento donde haremos algunas observaciones.

Mi delegación apoya plenamente que el Marco Estratégico contenga y refleje los objetivos de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación y tienda a la vigilancia de la aplicación del Plan de Acción de la Cumbre. Es importante que no se pierdan de vista los objetivos y las estrategias de ese Plan de Acción y que no intentemos cambiar esos planteamientos. También estamos de acuerdo en que el Plan debe ser elaborado en su conjunto por la FAO con todos los Estados Miembros, manteniendo consultas estrechas con los mismos. Apoyamos la estrategia de erradicar la inseguridad alimentaria y la pobreza. Se destaca el párrafo 39, en el sentido de que se necesitan esfuerzos especiales en favor de los países con mayores problemas. Al respecto debo destacar que los esfuerzos no sólo los deben hacer los países con mayores problemas, los esfuerzos deben llevarse a cabo por todos los países, y podemos mencionar en especial los de mayores problemas, pues esto concuerda con cumplir con el mandato de la Organización y de la Cumbre.

A mi delegación le preocupa el encabezado de los párrafos 41 y 43 porque se dice que se destaca el acceso de las mujeres y los hombres a los recursos naturales. Aquí se debe hablar que se destaca el acceso de todos los sectores de la población a los recursos naturales y después destacar en especial el de la mujer, porque pareciera en ese enunciado que se está poniendo en el mismo plano a la mujer con el resto de la población y todos nosotros estamos conscientes que a la mujer hay que darle protección y facilidades especiales sobre todo en el sector agrícola, porque está desprotegida. Así lo decidimos en la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación.

Mi delegación está de acuerdo en que se potencie el papel de la población rural y ésta es uno de los objetivos primarios del Gobierno del Presidente Hugo Chavez Frías. Además que se mejoren los medios para el desarrollo rural. Es de especial importancia reconocer donde están los grupos vulnerables y desfavorecidos. La asistencia de la FAO en esta área para los países es vital. En cuanto a los párrafos 53 al 56 señalamos particularmente que es preciso destacar no sólo las regulaciones, porque se refieren a que es necesario más acuerdo regular, más normas, pero se resta importancia al seguimiento y a la aplicación de los acuerdos y las normas que nosotros hemos tomado en estos foros.

En cuanto a la Región de América Latina y el Caribe, es necesario incluir otras esferas prioritarias además de las mencionadas en el párrafo 7 del Anexo 5, inciso 6: debemos tomar en cuenta la necesidad de frenar el abandono del campo, la labor de la agricultura como motor de la economía y mejorador del empleo, además las medidas tendientes al desarrollo de la agricultura y al aumento de la producción, la asistencia técnica para la mejora de las infraestructuras y de la sanidad rural. Igualmente apoyamos los comentarios del representante de México en relación con las emergencias sobre recursos naturales y las posibilidades de coalición con la soberanía de las naciones.

En conclusión, es preciso relanzar la agricultura para el próximo siglo y las acciones de la FAO ya que no pueden limitarse a mitigar la crisis sino a superar la pobreza. También es importante - y sobre todo para la Región de América Latina y el Caribe - contar con la cooperación técnica de esta Organización. También es importante hacer una pequeña reflexión: cuando se lee este documento pareciera que se le está dando excesiva importancia, más allá del desarrollo agrícola y más allá de la labor del campo, al comercio internacional y a las negociaciones comerciales. No le resta importancia a este tema, pero no debe tener más impacto que las actividades de desarrollo rural, de desarrollo agrícola, de desarrollo de las infraestructuras y pediríamos a la FAO que trate de corregir esta falla.

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 Sixteenth Session Cent seizième session 116º período de sesiones
Rome, 14 – 19 June 1999 Rome, 14 – 19 juin 1999 Roma, 14 – 19 de junio de 1999
SECOND PLENARY MEETING DEUXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEGUNDA SESIÓN PLENARIA
14 June 1999

**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 h 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**

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)

16. FAO Strategic Framework 2000-2015 (Version 3.0) (CL 116/4; CL 116/12; CL 116/14; CL 116/16) (continued)

16. Cadre stratégique de la FAO 2000-2015 (Version 3.0) (CL 116/4; CL 116/12; CL 116/14; CL 116/16) (suite)

16. Marco Estratégico de la FAO 2000-2015 (Versión 3.0) (CL 116/4; CL 116/12; CL 116/14; CL 116/16) (continuación)

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

I would like to thank the Secretariat for the documents submitted to us on this important item which covers and contains the future work of FAO over the next 20 years. Versions 1.0 and 2.0 have been submitted to many meetings held by the Organization, and today we have received the third version of the Strategic Framework for FAO for the period 2000 through 2015. There is no doubt that there have been great improvements compared to the previous two versions. However, there is a great need for introducing further improvements in the fourth version of the Strategic Framework, in line with the following points.

There is a need for a greater measure of clarity and vision and a better organization in the presentation of the Framework. Further focus is needed in the fourth version, while being more concise and less descriptive, and an Executive Summary of the Strategic Framework should be included. It should take into account all the proposals made by the Member Nations, the integration between programmes and departments of the Organization with the necessity of coordination between FAO and other international organizations. It should include the programmes and the priorities regarding the programmes of the Organization while laying down the necessary alternatives for this Strategy in the long term. It should also include the comparative advantages of FAO; provision of the necessary resources for the implementation of this Strategy; the role of FAO in partnership with the private sector; the prominence of the role of women in development, in rural development and gender equality; the provision of the means for technology transfer, research and training; the role of information systems; sustainable development; internal and external trade systems, particularly with regard to developing countries, with a special focus on marketing and exports; the post-harvest operations and assistance to the developing countries in these important activities; the conservation of natural resources, particularly land and water, taking into account the necessity of maximum production per cubic metre of land and per cubic metre of water.

The Near East Group also has some observations on Annex IV, Regional Perspectives with regard to the countries of the Group, the major regional priorities and the qualitative strategic elements.

Paul ROSS (Australia)

Australia very much welcomes the positive work that has so far been undertaken by the Secretariat and Member Nations in shaping the Strategic Framework for FAO. We believe that Version 3.0 represents a considerable improvement over earlier versions and we would like to commend, in particular, the efforts of Ms Killingsworth and Mr Wade in reconciling all the different comments and inputs into the version before us.

It is worth acknowledging that the process itself is just as important as the final document we are working towards. This process is encouraging FAO to look at its work in a more focused and prioritized way, which is something we welcome.

We want this document to define the future ambit of FAO's activities, within which its priorities and the directions of the associated programmes are determined. It must be a useful and helpful document and, to this end, we believe there is still room for improvement before the document is presented to the Conference.

Australia considers that the recent meetings of the Programme and Finance Committees, in which we participated, provided useful direction to the Council on the need for the final version of the Strategic Framework to be even more focused and concise. In this regard, Australia welcomes the report's recognition of the need to annex much of the detailed information contained in the document and we would encourage the Secretariat, while maintaining an abbreviated Part III, to annex the detailed and descriptive information contained within Part III of the document.

Just to emphasize some points we covered in the Programme Committee, Australia would wish to draw attention to the need to see a more rigorous analysis of FAO's real comparative advantage on the basis of FAO's areas of technical and normative competence, so that these would effectively underpin the key objectives and strategies. Also, noting the importance we place on the effective prioritization of FAO's future work, we want to see further refinement of the criteria for priority-setting to provide a more rigorous basis for the determination of priorities with an emphasis on outcomes and results, rather than outputs.

Finally, we would like to see further work to reduce the number and improve the content of the strategic element section. This, to us, is the heart of the document and defines the framework on which FAO's future work would be based.

Adnan BASHIR KHAN (Pakistan)

Allow me to compliment Mr Wade and Ms Killingsworth for their sustained effort in taking further the finalization of FAO's Strategic Framework 2000-2015. We have extensively commented on Versions 1.0 and 2.0 of the document and find Version 3.0 a considerable improvement over the previous ones. In particular, we appreciate the introduction of an Implementation Programme as Part III and Regional Perspectives as Annex IV to the document.

Our specific comments are as follows:

In Part I, Overall Strategic Framework, we note the importance of defining the context of the corporate strategies and appreciate the treatment of macro projections of population growth, hunger and malnutrition as well as major trends outlined in paras 1 to 9. We agree with the Programme Committee on the need for eliminating historical references contained throughout paras 10 to 17.

Reference to World Food Summit and other UN Conferences and the resultant formulation of three interrelated global goals is welcomed. However, we agree that the text can be made crisper, for instance by reducing historical notes or explanatory material such as contained in para 24.

We note the importance of values for the Organization and their relevance to the Strategic Framework. However, we feel that these may be better placed in a box form, perhaps Box no. 2, after renumbering FAO's Constitution as Box no. 1.

We welcome the Mission and Vision Statements and find them quite appropriate. Support to the Mission Statement seems to suggest that there are other areas where FAO would continue to work, albeit with low priority. We suggest a simple drafting such as "In the coming fifteen years FAO will assist Members to...".

With regard to Part II, Corporate Strategies, we recognize that corporate strategies form the heart of the document. We have earlier endorsed the six strategies and the strategic objectives. At this stage we do not favour any reordering or consolidation of the strategies as such. We welcome the bulleted presentation of the Strategy Elements, but agree with the Programme and Finance Committees that the strategy elements were amenable to consolidation to eliminate duplication.

Para 33 suggests that a section on Regional Perspectives follow the section on Strategies to address Members' Needs. This, however, is not the case: Regional Perspectives are given in

Annex 4. We encourage finding ways to bring the Regional Perspectives into the main text. In any case, para 33 would require suitable amendment.

We feel that explanatory paragraphs 34 to 37 could be made concise or, better, eliminated altogether.

Regarding Part III, Implementation Programme for the Strategic Framework, we acknowledge the importance of including the planning framework and methodology and priority-setting criteria in comparative advantage in this chapter. We feel however that a lot needs to be done to make this chapter, and therefore the whole document, complete. In its present state, the document is reflective of an organization which wants to do something over a period of time, i.e., to contribute to global goals. It knows what and probably how to do it, with its corporate strategies, but does not know how much to do, i.e., its extent of contribution to global goals.

The document has dwelt at length on explaining that extent would be evident in the Medium-term Plan. We feel that Medium-Term Plan would at best indicate the medium-term contribution, but not the contribution up to 2015. Our delegation would like to see broad end results up to 2015 spelled out together with short and medium-term milestones as the essential part of the Implementation Programme. Only then would this document be a monitorable one in its complete time and contextual perspective which, at present, it is not.

We believe that priority-setting criteria would continue to evolve with time. We therefore propose that the Strategic Framework document may only retain broader principles such as comparative advantage, linkages and balance between normative and field work and so on, while detailed criteria or grading systems, if any, developed as a result of open and transparent consultation may be introduced into the document with details of the programme entities to be included.

Regarding Regional Perspectives, at this point in time we do not have specific proposals for modifying the regional priorities, if at all. However, we are still discussing these and specific proposals, if any, would be submitted in due course. Suffice it to note that with the highest number of hungry and malnourished in Asia, the food security context would remain over-arching with emphasis on field work and capacity-building to contribute to food production, risk management and beneficial trade.

Mrs Mariann KÓVACS (Hungary)

Since this is the first time that my delegation is taking the floor, let me welcome you in the Chair. We have carefully studied the document on the Strategic Framework for FAO. There are three short remarks with which I would like to start our intervention.

First, this paper and the Programme of Work and Budget are indeed documents whose consideration would mark the main currents in FAO's work for a relatively long time.

Secondly, after reading the previous versions of the Strategic Framework, we consider the present one as a definite improvement.

Thirdly, one is that the Hungarian delegation fully associates itself with the European Regional Group position. We would, however, like to offer some additional comments on the efforts of the Secretariat to present Member Nations with a long-term version. These comments refer to three main issues.

Our first remark is addressed to the priorities set in the document before us. We cannot help feeling that a very clear and perhaps less fragmented presentation of FAO's present and future priorities has been somewhat hindered by tackling these priorities in various parts and chapters of the document. In view of future Programmes of Work and Budget that Conferences will approve in the years to come, a concisely formulated list of priorities might be of help in planning various activities, should the real value of future financial resources be a major constraint in meeting all priorities dealt with now. This way, genuine options and choices of different priorities would be much easier.

The second comment refers to the excellence that FAO would like to ensure in all cross-organizational issues. There is no need to stress that my delegation fully agrees that FAO should be the lead player in activities belonging to its mandate, often referred to in the document before us. It is, however, our view that FAO's capacity for excellence and consequently the paragraphs covering this issue could be further improved. The present document somehow suggests the feeling that we are witnessing a competition between various UN and other organizations in tackling the most pressing issues of world food security and related matters.

Finally, I would like to bring up an issue whose importance lags far behind the previous two. This refers to the Strategic Objectives region-by-region as elaborated on in Annex 4 to the corporate objectives. My delegation would like to see a more flexible approach to regional priorities in the next version of the Strategic Framework since these may change somewhat more rapidly than the overall priorities. On the other hand, there was no reference to the emerging markets in the regional highlights covering the European Region.

Summing up, we are reasonably sure that the Secretariat has produced a highly valuable paper giving a lot of food for thought. The observation of comments, both critical and commending, will no doubt further enhance the value of the Strategic Framework as a lead document on the Organization's future work.

Masato ITO (Japan)

Since my delegation takes the floor for the first time in this meeting, I congratulate you on your election as Chairman and the election of the three Vice-Chairpersons.

My delegation welcomes the third version of the FAO's Strategic Framework with its overall improvement, both in presentation and contents. In particular, the addition of Part III of the Implementation Programme for the Strategic Framework and Annex IV, Regional Perspectives, are highly appreciated.

However, my delegation still has a couple of comments.

Firstly, the next version of the Strategic Framework can be more concise, less restrictive and priority-oriented, in order to focus more on strategic issues and better serve its purpose as a framework for FAO's actions over a fifteen-year time horizon.

My delegation would like to echo the German and other colleagues who proposed to make an Executive Summary. It would be viable to make known to the media, under broader audience, what it is and what it does.

With respect to Part II, Corporate Strategies, more than 80 numbers of Strategic Elements seem to be over ambitious. My delegation considers that Part II should be made more concise.

My delegation welcomes the additional Part III covering Criteria for Priority-Setting and FAO's Comparative Advantages. The Criteria for Priority-Setting indicated in paragraph 152 are practical.

My delegation attaches great importance on how effectively Criteria for Priority-Setting should be applied to all FAO Programmes and on how we should formulate some Medium-Term Plans and the Programme of Work and Budget, through the application of Criteria for Priority-Setting. In this regard, I would like to propose the introduction of a grading system to the application of Criteria for Priority-Setting.

Finally, I would like to stress that the Strategic Framework would undergo resource evaluation in setting the context and the broad direction of FAO's work over the long term, taking into account resource constraints situations.

Mohamad Walid TAWILL (Syria) (Original language Arabic)

My delegation would like to thank the Secretariat for having prepared this excellent document which contains a number of strategic elements, very important for agriculture in all the regions of the world. My delegation has studied with great attention this document, and especially the part

regarding the Near East, and would like to support what is contained in the document and, in particular, the priorities. We would like to thank those who have prepared this document.

Within the priorities for the Near East, we have to concentrate on the following: the sustainability of agricultural production within the framework of the climate fluctuations. Most of the Near East countries are suffering from waves of drought and fluctuations. Secondly, we have to focus our efforts to transfer new technologies, supporting the national agricultural programmes, training and agricultural extension, within the framework of the efforts made in order to promote agriculture in dry lands. Thirdly, we have to help farmers in order to cope with the agricultural developments, the market requirements, and the standards of agricultural production, and help them improve their capacities in this respect. Fourthly, plant genetic resources should be preserved, evaluated and used in order to give additional benefits and finally, animal production has not yet been given the importance it deserves in the Region.

As the Egyptian delegation has said, we hope that financial resources will be available in order to implement these actions and, as has been said much earlier, we have to stress the outcome of these strategies.

Finally, I think we have to put a clear-cut timetable and an accompanying system in order to implement this Strategic Framework.

Mohammad Saeed NOURI-NAEENI (Iran, Islamic Republic of)

I asked for the floor very early this morning but somehow it escaped your eagle eyes and so we are among the few last ones, but I have had the privilege of listening to many distinguished delegates.

In economic development texts, usually we have a chapter discussing the advantages and disadvantages of latecomers. Latecomers are those countries which joined the development extremely late and I am in the same position today, as a latecomer, both learned and confused: learned because I have listened to many delegates and I have learnt a lot, and confused because I deleted lots of things that I have prepared to say but it was said by others, so I might sound very disorganized.

I am confused because I thought that I knew the definition of a Strategic Framework. Usually, a Strategic Framework is a prospect plan, a long-term plan, a very global plan and more or less indicates the destination where we want to go. So, the priorities are global, but the comparative advantages should be known.

Then we have a Medium-Term Plan, more or less specific, with detailed priorities, policies, tools and mechanisms. Finally, the Short-Term Plan, which also shows the Implementation Plan and the Medium-Term Plan, is translated into action. It is very different in all aspects.

Therefore, in the Strategic Framework, we do not usually expect the priorities to be very detailed but just the global priorities. It is the function of the Medium-Term, and then the Short-Term Plan to focus on more detailed things.

Another thing is that the revision of the Strategic Framework is not usually done in a short time. It is only done if a major or unexpected change has taken place. Otherwise, it is a Long-Term Plan and should not be revised. There is the Medium-Term and Short-Term Plan in which to implement minor changes as required.

Having explained my confusion, my delegation very much appreciates the new Version 3.0 of the Strategic Framework for FAO 2000-2015. This paper, compared with the former versions, is a highly improved document. The language complications have been reduced to some extent and the content has been brought in line with the refinements proposed in so many previous FAO meetings. We especially welcome the addition of the Implementation Programme to this version.

However, in my delegation's view, there is still some room for improvement.

Firstly, the text is too long. We would appreciate a more concise version for other reports.

My delegation has already emphasized its support for the inclusion of the Implementation Programme. However, we believe that this part has gone into some unnecessary details. To be specific, the Planning Methodology is still a provisional proposal which needs much expert work, discussion and refinement. After all, this is an instrument of implementation and not a necessary part of the Strategic Framework. It can be deleted from the text, although it should be fully discussed in future specialized FAO committees and finally approved by the Council, if necessary, as an independent document.

On page 14, para. 29 and the first bullet read: "In the coming fifteen years it will give priority to assisting Members to eradicate food insecurity and rural poverty".

Three years ago, in the very same building, the Heads of State and Governments decided that they could not eradicate food insecurity within fifteen years but, at most, they could reduce it by half. I think, to be consistent with that decision, we have to make the necessary correction.

The final bullet, number 5, reads: "generate knowledge on all aspects of food and agriculture, fisheries and forestry".

Are we in a position to do this? You know that we are facing shrinking funds. Can we generate knowledge in all aspects of agriculture? It is not better to limit these at least to the areas where FAO has a comparative advantage and not very general?

On page 33, para. 114, it reads: "Should resources continue to stagnate, the consequences will be an increased gap ...".

I think that this sentence does not reflect the truth, because the resources have not been stagnated. They have been shrinking. For the last two biennia, we had Zero Nominal Growth, which is real negative growth, and therefore I think it would be better if it were to read: "... continue to contract ... " instead of "stagnate".

In para. 115, the last line: "... the FAO priority areas of interest to donors ... ". I did not know that we have donors and recipients. I thought that we were all Member Nations but if we do have donors, is it their wish that the targeting should be according to their priorities and not all the Member Nations. This is a question that they should answer, and I am sure that they do not agree with that.

Finally, my delegation supports the idea of the preparation of an Executive Summary for this document. It serves many purposes but I think it should be left for when the Framework has been decided and approved. If you prepare an Executive Summary, and then there are changes in the document, it would produce changes in the Summary and be a burden on the shoulders of the Secretariat. This is unnecessary, it should be postponed for when the whole document has been approved.

P.W. MISIKA (Namibia)

Namibia wishes to commend the FAO Secretariat for a well-balanced, functional and concise Version 3.0 of the Strategic Framework. The Namibian delegation is of the opinion that this greatly improved third version of Values and Mission and Vision clearly and unequivocally reflects what FAO standards for, namely, an Organization that is committed to acting in the best interests of all its Member Nations and, most importantly, an Organization that is intent on addressing the fundamental and core problem of humankind, namely, food insecurity.

Namibia also wishes to congratulate the Secretariat for incorporating the proposals of Member Nations in this version. To this end, we appreciate the inclusion of the Strategy Objective A(1) on page 16. Namibia, recognisant of the fact that not all Member Nations are well endowed with agricultural resources, welcomes the recognition of the crucial role that the various sectors of the economy should and must play in securing sustainable livelihoods for their rural poor families. We therefore welcome and support the holistic approaches proposed in paras 41 and 42. In pursuing these noble objectives, smart partnerships and multi-disciplinary approaches amongst

the rural people should be encouraged, and we urge FAO to take the lead in forging these partnerships.

Furthermore, Namibia wishes to urge FAO to assist Member Nations in building capacities to meaningfully participate in negotiations that are aimed at influencing reforms of the international trading environment referred to in para. 55 (e).

It is also Namibia's wish to urge FAO to allocate adequate resources to effect implementation of the Strategic Framework so that these good intentions become a reality, and not only good intentions on paper that will be condemned to collecting dust on the shelves of Member Nations. In this regard, Namibia strongly urges FAO to heed the humble call of the Italian delegate, to forge smart partnerships through an alliance with other role players, to urgently sensitize the international community of the need to, and without undue delays, reverse the 44 percent decline in donor aid to agriculture which, if not addressed and addressed very soon, may spell catastrophic consequences to millions of the world's undernourished.

In the same vein, we urge the Secretariat to focus on evaluation and impact assessment of its programmes and activities.

Having said this, we, like many others who have spoken before me, believe that there is still room for improvement in terms of further refining the Corporate Strategies and the Implementation Programme to clearly indicate to what extent and how FAO will be involved in implementing the Strategic Framework.

Mame BALLA SY (Sénégal)

Je voudrais exprimer toutes les félicitations de la délégation du Sénégal au Secrétariat de la FAO pour cette nouvelle version du Cadre stratégique. Comme l'ont dit les délégations qui m'ont précédé, il s'agit là, sans aucun doute, d'une amélioration très sensible, mais nous sommes parfois assez perplexes. Ce cadre stratégique a défini une période: 2000-2015. Nous en sommes à la troisième version; les pays ne cessent de demander des améliorations, une autre version. Je crains que, à cette allure, nous allions aboutir à une situation assez paradoxale, et même regrettable de nous atteler indéfiniment à des révisions sans fin, pour tout simplement éviter de considérer cette démarche assez louable du Secrétariat, qui au moins a eu la présence d'esprit de définir un cadre d'action permettant de comprendre où cette organisation veut aller et comment elle veut réaliser les programmes et les orientations qui lui ont été assignés.

Plutôt que nous référer à ce mérite et de prendre une décision, étant entendu que toute décision est perfectible, puisqu'il y a bien une évaluation à mi-parcours qui peut être effectuée pour nous rendre compte si vraiment ce qui nous est proposé est une action efficace ou non., nous choisissons vraiment la démarche dilatoire qui risque, à terme, de nous conduire dans une impasse. On nous dit souvent qu'il faut être réaliste, parce qu'on ne peut pas éliminer la pauvreté et la faim. Absolument, si nous pensons que, moralement, il est possible, parce que simplement c'est une grande entreprise, mais noble tout de même, de déterminer à l'avance que nous ne pourrions pas résoudre un fléau. Je crois que notre intention est de faire tout ce qui est possible pour la cause. Il y a quand même deux choses à distinguer, et nous préférons être très ambitieux quand il s'agit de mener une lutte de noblesse qui sert l'humanité, plutôt que d'essayer de nous imposer des contraintes pour accepter, alors que l'humanité en a les moyens. A chaque fois qu'il s'agit d'intérêts vitaux, on a vu avec quelle vigueur, avec quels moyens extraordinaires on arrive à résoudre des problèmes. Donc, je suis certain que, si nous nous sommes fixés seulement à 2025 pour réduire de moitié le nombre des affamés, c'est parce que, simplement, nous n'en avons pas eu la volonté; mais si nous l'avions, la preuve nous a été administrée à plusieurs reprises qu'on a réussi à résoudre des problèmes beaucoup plus importants, beaucoup plus onéreux que donner à manger à des personnes qui n'ont besoin que du minimum pour survivre.

Deuxièmement, on nous dit que c'est théorique et qu'il n'y a pas d'éléments concrets; on parle souvent d'avantages comparatifs. Tout cela est bien beau, mais la vérité est que dans les domaines qui concernent effectivement ce cadre stratégique, qui s'adresse au développement de l'agriculture et aux moyens de lutter contre la famine et la malnutrition, je crois que revenir encore après

50 ans, en ce lieu, sur ces problèmes pour parler d'avantages comparatifs procède d'une démarche qui ne saurait porter, sinon prouver une velléité à réellement aborder les problèmes dans leur sens.

C'est vrai, je suis tout à fait d'accord avec certaines observations, surtout celles de la République islamique d'Iran, je crois, au paragraphe 115, ou peut-être avec des modifications de cette nature qui peuvent être communiquées par écrit, mais qu'on adopte le texte une bonne fois pour toute et ne nous éternisons plus sur des révisions, parce que la perfection n'existe pas dans ce monde, et nous verrons à l'épreuve ce que nous avons fait de ces orientations-là.

Je n'ai donc pas besoin d'entrer dans les détails, puisque le Groupe africain, que je ne représente pas, mais j'ai assisté à ses travaux, s'est prononcé sur cette question et a donné un avis tout à fait unanime et favorable à ce cadre stratégique que nous appuyons. C'est pour vous dire que ma délégation sait qu'elle ne le fait pas elle seule, mais elle le fait en même temps que tout un groupe de pays africains qui voudraient manifester encore une fois leur solidarité à tous les pays et à cette Organisation qui sans cesse ne cherche qu'à aider les populations les plus déshéritées du monde à vaincre ce fléau très dramatique de la faim et de la baisse de la production agricole.

Suharyo HUSEN (Indonesia)

I will be very brief. On behalf of the Indonesian delegation, first of all I would like to thank the Secretariat for providing us with the comprehensive document CL 116/12 Strategic Framework for FAO 2000–2015.

Since this is the first time for my delegation to take the floor at the Session of the FAO Council, my delegation is pleased to see you again on the Chair, Mr Chairman, and congratulate all three Vice-Chairpersons for their election this morning.

My delegation would like to associate themselves with the Chairman of the Asian Developing Countries in welcoming the Strategy Framework for FAO 2000-2015, and the views put forward in observing the document before us.

My delegation accepts, in general, the overall Strategy Framework as stated in the document which have met the Member needs.

Regarding the Corporate Strategies, the Indonesian delegation is in agreement with the Strategies to address Member needs.

Finally, Mr Chairman, the Indonesian delegation would like to see the Implementation Programme for Strategic Framework in right and appropriate ways, such as from the planning framework, planning methodology including the new programme model and priority setting in the context of the new planning framework.

Bill DOERING (Canada)

To begin with we want to thank the Secretariat for the amount of work that has already taken place in preparation for this third draft of the Strategic Framework.

As one of the Members that initially requested this strategic planning process two years ago, we are encouraged by the enthusiasm with which the Organization has embraced the principles of strategic planning.

Version 3.0 is a big improvement over the previous one.

Section 1 - The Overall Strategic Framework is much improved and now states the Mandate of the Organization as given in the Constitution, as it has evolved through the Quebec Declaration of 1995, as a result of the World Food Summit and taking into account those responsibilities given to it by other major conferences.

We are in general agreement with the statements of Values and Mission and Vision and feel they add to the clarity of the Strategic Framework.

Section II on Corporate Strategies is also much improved. There is good logic between the five Corporate Strategies and the twelve Strategic Objectives. But it is at the next level the Strategic

Elements, where the strategic thinking breaks down. There are simply too many Elements and no sense of priorities among them. The Strategic Framework must give a sense of priorities for the Organization. As a result of this prioritization, FAO is spreading itself in too many areas.

On a more positive note, we welcome the addition of a discussion on Partnerships at the end of each strategy element. However, we believe that the concept of Partnerships can be strengthened. For example, instead of simply listing the organizations with which FAO sees partnership potential, the Secretariat should indicate for each strategy which Organization would take the lead based on a review of comparative advantages. This would also allay some Members concerns that the Organization may be attempting to take on too much responsibility.

Another way of focusing on the document would be to insert the examination of comparative advantages from Section III into the Partnership portions of Section II. Currently, it is more a list of the characteristics of any large multilateral Organization.

While the Organization does have recognized comparative advantages in specific areas such as fisheries, forestry, genetic resources for food and agriculture, data collection, information dissemination and others, they are not clearly stated. Each of the strategic element sections should clearly indicate where FAO has a clear competitive advantage.

We welcome the refinement of the strategies as well to address cross-cutting organizational issues. This section underlines quite rightly the challenges of working towards the interdisciplinary objectives proposed in the framework. Our experience is that effective implementation of interdisciplinary approaches requires a supportive organizational structure. The document as it stands does not propose any change to the organizational structure, and does not consider such time-tested mechanisms as Matrix Management.

We would strongly recommend that the Strategic Framework outline concrete management approaches to adapt the current structure in addressing these interdisciplinary issues.

Under the organizational strategy to improve the management process, there is a passing reference to the Development and Implementation of a Monitoring System. We believe this element deserves a separate and more prominent place. We note that the section in Medium-Term Plans includes considerations of result, outputs and indicators, but it does not address specifically how much a performance monitoring system, is in fact to be managed. We strongly recommend the inclusion in the document of a performance monitoring framework that would detail the different components of the proposed system. It would also indicate how much information on indicators would be collected and would specify how this process would be managed.

Section III - The Implementation Programme is also in our opinion a welcome addition. It helps to tie together the various planning documents with the new Strategic Framework.

We appreciate that the criteria, as established by the Hundred and Tenth Council, has been modified through experience and the explanation of how they are being applied.

Canada believes that individual programmes should be graded on the basis of one to five so that the criteria are not simply a pass or fail mechanism. In this way, you would be able to know not only if the proposal meets the basic criteria or not, but how it scores when compared against other activities.

In more general terms, we feel the document much improved, but it should be further refined and simpler to understand and track over time.

There are eighty separate strategic elements for five corporate strategies, and an additional fifty-five separate components to address the six cross-organizational issues. It is even hard to say Mr Chairman. That means a hundred and thirty-five separate elements to monitor and evaluate, all contributing to helping the Members achieve the original three global goals of the Organization. Surely, this can be simplified and made more comprehensible in a next version.

Renaud COLLARD (France)

La délégation française sera très brève et souhaite revenir sur l'idée développée ce matin par l'Ambassadeur d'Italie, relative à l'Alliance pour le développement agricole. La délégation française souhaite donc intervenir à l'appui de cette déclaration dans la mesure, notamment, où elle aurait pour objectif - que nous considérons avec un très grand intérêt - de permettre un perfectionnement des coopérations et des synergies entre les trois organisations romaines, la FAO, le Programme alimentaire mondial et le FIDA. Nous savons bien que cette idée de perfectionnement et d'amélioration du travail en commun entre les trois agences romaines, est une idée en général tout à fait bien reçue dans cette enceinte, et que beaucoup de délégations partagent, mais nous souhaitons, en tant que délégation française, encore une fois aller à l'appui de cette intervention.

Evlogui BONEV (United Nations Development Programme)

UNDP studied with keen interest the Strategic Framework for FAO. We congratulate FAO for this initiative ranging first among its sister organizations in the UN system to prepare such a long term strategy. UNDP welcomes FAO's commitment to broaden and strengthen partnership in the light of the ongoing process of the UN reform.

As you are well aware, UNDP and FAO have been cooperating since the inception of the UNDP. There is no recipient country where there is no trace left of our cooperation. UNDP is still a major funding source for FAO Technical Cooperation Activities. Now that we are at the eve of the third millennium, our partnership should receive a new impetus corresponding to the new requirements in challenges of the ever-changing world. It was in this context that over a year ago, in March 1998 during the Session of the ACC, the Director-General of Unesco Mr Frederico Mayor presented a proposal towards a new partnership between UNDP and the Specialized Agencies. The Administrator of UNDP Mr Speth, with the blessing of the Executive Board of UNDP, followed up on this proposal. Several informal consultations have been held since then involving UNDP and five major Specialized Agencies, ILO, FAO, WHO, UNIDO and Unesco. FAO has been a very active partner in the consultation process. On 27 May 1999, another consultation meeting took place through an audio-televised conference which provided conditions for a further progress in the concretization of this initiative. Practical steps in its operationalization have been agreed upon, starting with four to five pilot countries, selected among the UNDAF ones, favouring at the same time a regional and later an interregional and global approach. UNDP was pleased to note that FAO was again an active partner.

This initiative came in response to the changes taking place in the international framework of development cooperation and the Secretary-General's proposals for Reform in the United Nations System. Building on the historic bonds that have linked them, UNDP and the Specialized Agencies aim to strengthen their cooperation responding to the wish of all Member Nations to contribute towards making the United Nations system an effective partner in the definition and implementation of joint strategies for sustainable development requiring cross-border, cross-cutting and cross-sectoral approaches. There is no doubt that -- by each one of the partners focusing its efforts where it has maximum comparative advantage and dovetailing with complementary activities of the other partners -- the whole will be greater than the sum of its parts.

The new partnerships initiative reflects a new way of collaboration between UNDP and the specialized agencies. The traditional roles of UNDP a central founder and the specialized agencies as providers of know-how and programme design, is giving way to a paradigm where each partner brings both ideas and funding to the table for joint programmes. It is the fervent expectation of UNDP and its partners that the new initiative will be a means to address the challenges of overcoming the fragmentation of UN System of development operations and of achieving programme coherence with a greater quantum of mobilized financial resources.

The following are the main objectives of the new partnership as identified by UNDP and the specialized agencies:

1. To strengthen mutual confidence in understanding, and to that end, create or improve a better system for the dialogue between the UNDP and the specialized agencies through annual consultation of their respective Secretariats and improved information exchange, including that at the Executive Board level;
2. To work together more effectively in support of national development priorities and goals of Member Nations through joint programming and strategies, for instance, on poverty eradication, research, advocacy and resource mobilization;
3. To improve management activities and achieve economies of scale through pooling of networks and human resources; and
4. To review existing tools, such as round tables and support cost arrangements.

The new partnership demonstrates the willingness to work together and adapt to new challenges. It is the hope that this initiative will enhance the confidence of all states with respect to the UN System cooperation for development. The partner agencies are aware of the new multi-year funding framework of the UNDP which has an important section on strategic resources for support to the UN System. The results from the application of this section of the framework depend to a great extent on the pro-active role of our partner agencies.

Mr Chairman, allow me to refer finally briefly to one of the most important newly-developed tools for bringing operational entities and agencies together at the country level. This tool is the UNDAF process. The pilot exercise is now over, the assessment has been completed, lessons have been learned and corrective measures have been developed for wide extension of this process. UNDP highly values FAO's active participation in the pilot exercise, and commends its commitment to reactivate its participation in the process.

Similarly, the Common Country Assessment, another tool as an integral part of UNDAF is only possible if all UN development partners are fully committed to the exercise and work together. We strongly count on FAO. Our collective and complementary efforts are also a must in the implementation of the Action Plans of the recent major international summits and conferences, including the World Food Summit.

Finally, as you are well aware top priority of the UNDP agenda is the Eradication of Poverty through a Sustainable Human Development. FAO with its Mandate as leading agency in food security and in combatting hunger is, and will continue to be, a major partner of UNDP in achieving this enormously difficult task. We encourage FAO to continue its pro-active role and be a full partner in the New Partnership Initiative, and thereby further strengthen our cooperation in confronting the challenges of the new millennium. UNDP is pledging its full support.

Noel D. de LUNA (Observer for the Philippines)

Before anything else, the Philippines associates itself with and supports the statements made earlier by Thailand on behalf of the Asia Group. Generally, the Philippines is satisfied with the current version. Still the Philippines believes that it can stand some more improvements. We only have one concern and this pertains to item (e) under Corporate Strategies, on page 26. It articulates the concerns about data availability. In the line-up of Strategic Elements, there was no mention of economic accounts for food and agriculture. The 1993 system of economic accounts for food and agriculture poses a lot of challenges to the agricultural statistical system, particularly in terms of data requirements. We suggest that this be included in item b) of E(1).

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Chile)

Al referirnos al tema que nos ocupa, queremos sumarnos a la declaración efectuada por el Grupo Regional al cual pertenecemos hecha al comienzo de nuestros debates. También quisiéramos, a nombre de la delegación de Chile, sumarnos a la iniciativa que ha propuesto la distinguida Representación de Italia. Creemos que es una iniciativa interesante, que precisamente se capte el

sentido último de la declaración política y el Plan de Acción de la Cumbre Mundial que fue aprobado mayoritariamente por los Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno - hito histórico en la vida de esta Organización.

Al mismo tiempo, al apoyar esa iniciativa, creemos que es necesario puntualizarla en ese contexto puesto que el mismo Plan de Acción de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación hace un llamado a esa cooperación que menciona el distinguido Representante de Italia.

Creo que es enormemente importante que una iniciativa como esa pueda tener como marco filosófico y conceptual el Plan de Acción de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación para su implementación; de otro modo corremos el riesgo que al final el Plan de Acción lo vayamos dividiendo en múltiples iniciativas, pasadas todas ellas por el mismo, pero creemos que este Plan de Acción constituye un todo integral que fue negociado por todos los Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno, que cubre ampliamente las ambiciones de todos los Estados Miembros de la FAO como también del Sistema de las Naciones Unidas. Por tanto, creemos que el Marco Estratégico que se está analizando debe incluir la iniciativa del distinguido Representante de Italia, el Embajador Fontana-Giusti, pero con la recomendación que sea el Plan de Acción el marco fundamental de esa propuesta. De otro modo, podríamos caer en algunos peligros.

Dicho esto, la segunda cosa que quisiera puntualizar la delegación de Chile se refiere a uno de los aspectos que planteó el Presidente del Grupo Regional de América Latina y el Caribe. Como muy bien decía el distinguido Embajador de Senegal, hemos quizás conversado mucho y entregado muchos elementos todos los Estados aquí presentes, respecto al Marco Estratégico. Quizás es bueno ya poder entender que es útil tener un único documento, pero para ello no nos cabe la menor duda que es necesario tener un espacio político, un diálogo directo que facilite la negociación. No creemos que es posible, como lo plantea la delegación de Canadá, teorizar, jerarquizar y definir criterios de focalización de recursos financieros en el Marco Estratégico sin un intercambio o sin un compromiso político entre los Estados Miembros. No es posible dejar en el aire criterios de asignación de recursos si no existe un compromiso político de parte de los Estados Miembros de esta Organización. La Organización deberá dar una respuesta el día de mañana del por qué se están focalizando, orientando los recursos, que son escasos en esta Organización, de una u otra forma. La única manera que nos parece posible como ha sido considerado por la delegación del Grupo Regional de América Latina y el Caribe, es precisamente a través de una negociación en la cual tenga espacio, por ejemplo, la propuesta señalada por el distinguido Embajador de Italia. Esa es la única forma posible, poder reunir todos los elementos para que tengamos un documento planificador a largo plazo que sea útil, efectivo y que en definitiva, nos represente a todos.

D. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee)

It is necessary because the Report of the Programme Committee, certainly subsequent to the Joint Meeting with the Finance Committee, was echoed in a number of statements. I was happy to note that a number of the observations and comments we have made have been taken up, and I could assume that our recommendations are being approved by the Council to be included in further versions. I understand the Secretariat is already heavily involved in revising the present text towards the first stage of Version 4.0, and is taking up a number of points the Committee has made, as well as those subsequently being made here. There are some issues which I would like clarified because I was surprised to learn from two statements that have been made that FAO is involved in rural energy. This is something which, in my opinion, is difficult to understand, as we know that the rural energy firewood problem is one of the biggest problems facing the developing countries and certainly one of the forest users' problems is rural energy. So this needs to be clarified by those who made the statements, and then we will see how it is finally reflected in the Strategy.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation)

As you know, Ms Killingsworth and I have been working together on this document along with our colleagues. I wonder if you would mind if I gave the floor to Ms Killingsworth first, because she will deal with Part I.

Ms Kay KILLINGSWORTH, (Special Adviser, World Food Summit Follow-up)

I, and then Mr Wade, will try to respond to your request to highlight issues as we go along and at the same time answer a few of the queries that have come up in the very detailed and substantive debate that you have had on the Strategic Framework this morning and this afternoon. First of all, on behalf of the Secretariat, may I express gratitude for the very positive words of appreciation that have come from the Council on the document, as a real improvement over the previous two versions. The Secretariat is, however, also very acutely conscious of the fact that further improvements can be made, and need to be made. The suggestions already provided by the Programme and Finance Committees, and now by the Council, will be very precious guidance in attempting to do exactly that in Version 4.0 on which we have, as Dr Bommer pointed out, already started working. We will be continuing intensively, with input from all the Departments within the Secretariat, in the coming weeks.

We can certainly do everything possible to make the overall document more concise, and specific suggestions have been given to us to achieve that. At the same time the question of an Executive Summary is perhaps a bit more problematic. The Programme Committee had recognized, and put in its Report, that once the basic content of the Strategic Framework was agreed a short summary text could be usefully developed in order to facilitate the dissemination of the underlying message to the media and to a broader audience. To do an Executive Summary before the text itself is approved might, as was pointed out earlier from the floor today, make for a more complex approval process for you and the Conference in November. We will bear in mind also the point made by several delegations, including Australia, I believe, and Pakistan, that Part II is the heart of the document, and it will only be amenable to summarization once Members have agreed on its content, precisely because it provides the basic framework within which the Medium-Term Plan and successive Programmes of Work and Budget will be developed in the coming years.

Going on to Part I, the Overall Strategic Framework, I here reply to a couple of specific questions raised this morning. One was on paragraph 4. The delegate of China requested that we insert data which include China in the next version, and we will certainly attempt to comply. Secondly, there was the query from the delegate of the Republic of Korea with regard to different estimates on the number of undernourished. Just to confirm that the estimate in paragraph 5 of 828 million for the 1994-96 period is the only estimate we have. There is work underway to further refine our methodology for making these estimates, but there is one number at the moment and that number is 828 million for 1994-96.

As regard more general comments on Part I, a request was made by the Programme Committee for us to summarize slightly the sections in Part I containing historical references, in particular paragraph 12. I also heard some support here this morning and this afternoon for some of the other content of that section, which traces the evolution of our work over 50 years culminating in the World Food Summit. This constitutes the basis, let us say, on which we see the Strategic Framework resting. So maintaining that emphasis on the absolutely essential conceptual base provided by the World Food Summit, we will attempt to further summarize Part I. Another question that was raised in that connection was that though the Strategic Framework was resource-neutral, obviously the implications of implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action were not resource-neutral. The request was made, I think by the delegate of India this morning, that we pay some attention in Part I to the question of the resources which will need to be mobilized by countries and by the international community to ensure overall implementation of the Plan of Action. Here, we are not of course speaking only of the resources to be made available to FAO, but of the totality of the resources needed to achieve the World Food Summit target by the year 2015. In that context, I may refer Council to an information document which

was tabled at the recent meeting of the Committee on World Food Security, document INF/7. It was not actually discussed at the Committee, which did not have time to address it, but this document does contain the first results of the work carried out by the Secretariat following the World Food Summit to estimate the necessary investment in agriculture for food security, the situation and resource requirements to reach the World Food Summit objective. I believe that we can also make a reference to this work in the next Version of the Strategic Framework while keeping in mind that this is an overall situation, not the question of resources to be made available to the Organization.

Going on to what has been described as the heart of document, Part II, the Corporate Strategies, the five major Strategies to address Members' needs have been extensively supported during the debate. We would like to make a few comments in response, highlighting the issues that were raised from the floor on these Strategies. One of the first is the question of the sequencing. Diverse views have been expressed on the order in which they are presented at the moment, or how they might be presented. The Secretariat just reiterates that it has conceived the five major Corporate Strategies as being five major components of an overall framework, and therefore there is no differentiation or priority among them. Together the five Strategies make up the overall Framework, within which priorities would be subsequently established in the medium-term planning process.

All of the five Strategies will rely for their implementation on whatever means of action the Organization has at its disposal. Depending on the type of work to be undertaken, this may be purely normative work, it may be a combination of normative and field activities, it may be work primarily oriented toward international and regional problems, and international and regional cooperation, or it may be oriented more toward specific assistance to different groups of countries. An example I could cite would be Strategy B. It was mentioned by Venezuela this morning that the importance of the whole question of the international regulatory framework and the existence or formulation of standards, Codes of Conduct and Agreements, was also in assuring that they could be appropriately implemented at the country level. The developing countries should receive support and assistance in strengthening their own national regulatory frameworks and adapting to the international framework, and that, of course, is the basic thrust of strategy B(2). So within the overall strategy you have one component which aims to ensure further development of the international policy and regulatory framework, and one which focuses more specifically on assisting those countries which need and request assistance in adapting to it and in developing their national systems.

It was said from the floor just a few minutes ago that the five Corporate Strategies and the twelve Strategic Objectives form a logical whole, but that the logic breaks down when we get to the level of Strategy Elements, which are too detailed, and in many cases perhaps do not have the appropriate longer-term perspective. We have also been very conscious of this, and the Programme Committee discussed it at great length. We have already begun, and will continue to consolidate these elements to achieve greater coherence and to eliminate any overlaps or duplication which exist in order to ensure that the Strategy Components are concise and more focussed than they are at present. For that, we have already mobilized the technical services throughout the house to ensure that the proposals, which were originally based on their work last year, are put together in a way which does not betray their original approach but at the same time respond to your request for greater focus and greater strategic vision in the strategy statements.

I will not mention all of the specific suggestions that have been made. We have taken careful note of them. We need to be clearer on how we will address the issue of feminization of agriculture, on the development of FIVIMS, and a number of other specific topics that were raised. I should perhaps recall that different views were expressed on the question of emergencies, but we are working on that Strategy to make sure that there is no apparent overlap between the work of FAO and WFP. There is not any in fact. We work very closely with WFP in our emergency activities on the basis of an agreed division of labour. We will ensure that the text makes that clearer than it does obviously at the moment.

For each of the Corporate Strategies, you have asked us to be more precise and clear on the nature of the partnerships which are envisaged, and also on the respective roles that FAO and other Organizations would play in implementing the Strategies. I recall the most constructive intervention just now from the Observer from UNDP, which follows on a very positive input which came from Mr Speth a few months ago and which had already been taken into account in the drafting of Version 3.0. We are going to try and be more specific, both within the descriptions of the five Strategies, and in the cross-organizational strategy on partnerships, on the nature of the work we will be doing with other Organizations. Of course, the UN System Organizations are our primary partners but we also have strong links with other kinds of Organizations. As you recall this morning, a reference was made to the need to clarify the definition of private sector partners and NGO partners, and the way in which we will be working with them as well. There was a call for strengthening cooperation with the international financing institutions and for stronger cooperation among the Rome-based Agencies. Some support was also expressed for the proposal for an Alliance for Agricultural Development.

Going on to the question of Regional Strategies, here I should recall that the annex called 'Regional Perspectives', which is, as you have noted, new in this Version, was prepared in response to requests earlier from Members for greater attention to the regional dimension. We offered what we were able to provide on the basis of input from our own Regional Offices, from Regional Conferences, and the last cycle of Regional Conferences in particular, but we very much welcome both the comments that have been made today, and the indications we have received from, I believe, Asia, Latin America and the Near East specifically, that they will provide written comments on the regional sections which concern them. This would be invaluable to us in improving that Annex and the only request would be that you please let us have the written comments by the end of June. I know that is quite soon but we are working to a very tight deadline in order to complete Version 4.0 and get it out in time for the Programme and Finance Committee meetings in September. So we would most appreciate written comments, as detailed as you would like, from all Regional Groups by 30 June.

One final comment on the Strategies to address Members' needs but also on the cross-organizational strategies: there was a request for more systematic indication of FAO's strengths, what FAO would be bringing to the table in implementing each of these Strategies. As you know, this is very closely related to the issue of partnership and therefore we will try to deal with the two of them together.

I believe I have covered the major points that I was going to take up and if you agree, Mr Chairman, Mr Wade could take over as he is going to cover the others.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation)

Moving on to the Strategies to Address Cross-Organizational Issues and taking up, in particular, the Enhancing Interdisciplinarity and the comment of Canada, as they quite correctly said, we face a real challenge in bringing the management of interdisciplinary strategic objectives within an Organization which is structured along disciplinary lines. In fact, it is true, there is no proposal in the document for a restructuring of the Organization to address that, principally because we believe that there is a demand from the first of the Strategies to Address Cross-Organizational Issues, that is Ensuring Excellence, that we retain a disciplinary structure for the Organization. If we broke up Forestry across all of the Strategic Objectives, we would lose our Centre of Excellence in Forestry, and the message we get loud and clear is that this is not what is wanted. So, you in fact provided the answer, of course, by saying that we have to get into Matrix Management, and that is exactly what we are looking at now, and we will try and strengthen these Sections to reflect that.

A second area, raised by a number of Members, concerned the Cross-Organizational Strategy on Continuing to Improve the Management Process, and certainly we are strengthening that particular Strategy, in particular the part on Human Resource Development which will satisfy some Members who had a question there. The European Union made a comment concerning the same Strategy and suggesting that we need a fundamental review of efficiency and internal

bureaucracy. I am not sure what that was addressing, in the sense that I am not aware of any such review being outstanding. We carried out a major Management Review at the request of the Council at its Hundred and Ninth Session. The First Report went to the Programme and Finance Committees in September of 1996, and then to the Hundred and Eleventh Session of the Council, and the concluding report went to the Hundred and Thirteenth Session of the Council. The consequences of that exercise have been extraordinary, I would say. We estimate that we have saved between US\$ 40 and 50 million per annum as a result of savings, which we classify as being efficiency savings, that is, savings which did not reduce the programme outputs of the institution. Of course there are on-going efforts, in particular in the area of administrative structures which you will be addressing to a certain extent in this afternoon's next item, the Summary Programme of Work and Budget. We do not have in the Framework, and do not plan at this stage to, put in a specific requirement for this Review.

I will now turn to Part III which is the Implementation Plan. China expressed a concern about the fact that the Medium-Term Plan might only be revised every six years. I would like to clarify that. In the English text we use the word "rolling" Medium-Term Plan, but it is not fully spelt out. What we mean is that the Medium-Term Plan will be developed for a six-year period, but will be revised every two years to reflect the progress of the previous period and the new projects coming in for the next six year period. So that document is under continuous review. The United States and I think China, I am not sure, suggested that there could be a combination of the Programme Implementation Report and the Programme Evaluation Report, and then the United States also made some suggestions concerning strengthening the evaluation process in line with the requirements of the Strategic Framework. I can say that the Programme Committee, and Dr Bommer specifically, has requested that the Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation come up with a paper on the evaluation regime as it addresses the Strategic Framework. So the Programme Committee will be looking at that in September, and you will see that flow through into later documents. Here we are looking at trying to complete the cycle that you see described in the Implementation Plan Section: Strategic Framework, Medium-Term Plan with technical projects and clearly-defined objectives and indicators, Programme of Work and Budget being the two-year time slice for implementation and then Programme Implementation and Evaluation reporting which addresses specifically the Strategic Objectives. So we will be providing more information on that as we progress. I would just comment that it is not an automatic solution to combine Programme Implementation reporting and Programme Evaluation reporting. There are questions of the time periods being covered which are different for the two and of selectivity in one and completeness in the other. But we will also address that in this paper so that the Committee, and then subsequently the Council, can see whether we are on the right track.

With regard to criteria and comparative advantage, there were lot of comments. There were some suggestions from some, although argued in the opposite direction by others, that the criteria for priority selection were too general. I think that the comment was made that any international organization could have the same comparative advantages. Well, of course that is true to a certain extent. Comparative advantage is always a relative thing. Your advantage is compared to what, to something else. I think the first aspect of that is that we are not only comparing ourselves to other international organizations, we are comparing ourselves to consulting firms, we are comparing ourselves to NGOs and we have certain advantages versus them, and they have certain advantages versus us. When it comes to other international organizations, we all have very similar comparative advantages but within our mandate. WHO is an "honest broker" in the field of health. FAO can take the "honest broker" role in the fields of food and agriculture. So it is not surprising that some of those are common with other Organizations, but of course they should be read within the context of the mandate that we are obliged to address.

Again, another issue that I think we should draw attention to is a grading system for priorities. I think Japan and Canada favoured the idea that the application of criteria for priority-setting should be through a grading system where you score the projects relatively to each other - in effect as to how they meet the various criteria. Malaysia had some doubts about that particular process. For your information, FAO is already doing this with the New Programme Model. We do not publish

the results, but it is an internal management mechanism to assist Departments make the choices that they have to make and to ensure that they keep in mind the criteria that you are approving.

Turning again to the European Union's statement, there was one point that did concern me a little bit, which was that it suggested that Strategic Vision is still missing and went on to explain that a little bit by saying that no choices are presented. By way of further clarification, they suggested that the document reads a little bit like a catalogue rather than a paper with options. I think there are two important issues here which have to be addressed. The first is what do we mean by Vision? Secondly, should the Strategic Framework contain options? While strategic planning is a well-developed process the terminology is not always consistently applied. We used, as you are probably aware, the text of two significant writers in this field, one is John Bryson who wrote *Strategic Planning for Public and Non-Profit Organizations* and the other is Robert Smith who wrote *Strategic Management and Planning* and it is from there that we developed the process that was applied in FAO. Now Bryson defines Vision as "a clear and succinct description of what the Organization should look like after it successfully implements its Strategies and achieves its full potential". So the vision is about what the institution will be if we manage to implement all of this and in particular, of course, the Cross-Organizational Strategies. In fact, Smith does not define Vision, but he does use examples which are very similar to that, and this is what we have been trying to address, I feel that paragraphs 30 and 31 of the document do provide a Vision in that meaning of the word. It may well be that you were looking for something different. It is also clear from that definition that Vision was not about choices, at least not according to these methodologies. In fact, Vision is not really amenable to the inclusion of choices because it is asking you to say what it will be like once you have achieved all of these things. I would add that I do not think that the Strategic Framework was ever intended to be a document that provided options and choices. In fact, if you go back to JM 97/1, which was the document which was presented to the Programme and Finance Committees in September 1997, and see what the contents of the Strategic Framework were to be, it did not include that sort of idea. It was to be a framework which was then applied in making choices through the medium-term planning process. That is not to say that this process did not involve making choices, it involved making lots of choices. Every Department, when it was developing the Strategies that they wanted to follow in order to address the Corporate Strategies and try and achieve the Strategic Objectives, every Department was making choices and, in fact, we followed Bryson's methodology where the teams working on the Strategies had to ask themselves the question, what options were available to them in addressing the Strategies, and what barriers were preventing them from applying those options. Eventually they had to choose an option and that became the Strategy that eventually filtered up to produce this document. So, I probably went on a bit long about that, but I think it is important to understand that this document was not envisaged to be the document in which you would see choices of that nature, instead you will see choices about priorities being made in the Medium-Term Plan.

I am getting close to finishing and I am sorry I have taken so much of your time. Ms Killingsworth, in fact, has already addressed the Regional Perspectives, and that it would be very useful if we could have your comments by 30 June. If the Regional Groups get them to us by 30 June we assure you that that Annex will be amended to respect those priorities.

Finally, Chile made a statement at the end of the debate which referred to the need for direct negotiation and that this document would need to go through some sort of process like that. Of course, what Member Nations choose to do amongst themselves is entirely their prerogative, but I have to say that the Secretariat is constrained in this process. The Resolution that the Conference passed states that it "Decides that the process should be, in the framework of existing structures, a full participatory process, ... and the interpretation that you have always given to us of that is that we should use the existing Bodies of the institution, which is why, in Annex I to the Strategic Framework we list 14 different occasions where Members will be part of the process of developing this document, and we are constrained to follow that process. Now, of course, you may well wish to make your own arrangements in that regard.

I think I have covered everything, but if you feel that we have missed anything please feel free to come back to us.

CHAIRMAN

Thank you very much, Mr Wade, and I think that we have now reached the conclusion of our work today for the item on the *Strategic Framework for FAO 2000 – 2015*. So we have to push on to the next item.

15. Summary Programme of Work and Budget 2000-2001 (CL 116/3 CL 116/3-Sup.1 ; CL 116/4; CL 116/14; CL 116/16)

15. Sommaire du Programme de travail et budget 2000-2001 (CL 116/3; CL 116/3-Sup.1; CL 116/4; CL 116/14; CL 116/16)

15. Resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto 2000-2001 (CL 116/3; CL 116/3-Sup.1; CL 116/4; CL 116/14; CL 116/16)

CHAIRMAN

The Council is called upon to consider the Summary Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium in order to provide guidance for the formulation of the full Programme of Work and Budget to be submitted to the Conference. The main documents are the *Summary Programme of Work and Budget*, which is CL 116/3 and CL 116/3-Sup. 1, which contains a new scenario as requested by the Programme and Finance Committees.

Again I would ask Mr Wade, Director of the Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation, to introduce the item.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation)

In this case, I think some introduction is necessary, as the Director-General has, at the request of the Programme and Finance Committees, issued a supplementary document which provides an outline of how we would approach a Zero Nominal Growth scenario. The document, as a matter of interest, also addresses a second question, which concerns a Zero Real-Growth scenario, but I will concentrate on the Zero Nominal Growth scenario at this stage.

First of all, there is the question of definition of what we mean by the Zero Nominal Growth scenario. In itself, that is a simple matter. It means US\$ 650 million. However, to hold the budget down at the level of US\$ 650 million requires the Organization to absorb all of the cost increases, or inflation if you like, which we expect to occur through 2000-2001. Now, frankly inflation itself is not that difficult to forecast: there are now good tools to help us do that, but what is difficult is to anticipate the impact of the exchange rate relationships between US dollars and the currencies which we use, of course, the most significant currency being the Italian lira or the Euro.

At the time of developing the Summary Programme of Work and Budget we used the current 1998-99 budget rate, which is Lire 1,690 to the US dollar, and we arrived at an estimate of cost increases of US\$ 34.7 million, which is fully explained in the document. However, in examining Zero Nominal Growth for the purpose of this supplementary document, we were very conscious of the Joint Meetings' guidance that we should take into account the latest developments affecting likely cost increases for the next biennium and the impact of the Italian lira/US dollar exchange rates.

Well, the good news, albeit in a rather narrow sense, is that the Euro and therefore the Italian lira have weakened against the US dollar with the consequence that we see a sharp decline in the US dollar value of our cost increases. In other words, for example, the salaries of Rome-based staff, in terms of US dollars, are not as expensive as they would be if the lira rate of exchange was still at 1,690. In fact today's rate was 1,845 and it has been higher than that over the last week. We did not assume such a high rate. We took a rather conservative view for this paper, and estimated a lira exchange rate of 1,800 to the US dollar, and the impact of that and some other adjustments we have made to cost increases in effect at the request of the Committees, was to reduce the figure

from about US\$ 35 million to between US\$ 10 and 15 million, and we are still working on the impact of certain aspects. This is the good news.

The bad news is that we have to try and find ways to accommodate that reduction and that you will see in paragraphs 6 to 11 of CL 116/3-Sup.1, where you see the areas which are proposed to be protected. You see that there is a proposal to reduce between 30 and 40 Professional posts, and there is also a proposal to reduce consultancy and travel costs by up to 20 percent in the areas that are not protected. Of course, all of that will have a detrimental effect on the Programme, and would be spelled out precisely in the Programme of Work and Budget.

I would like to add that the Director-General is putting particular effort into trying to identify alternative forms of saving, ones which do not damage the technical programmes of the Organization. In particular he would plan not to abolish so many technical posts, even if it means that they cannot be fully funded throughout the entire 2000-2001 biennium, while other savings exercises are being put in place. The principle source of such savings is described in the document under paragraphs 13 to 18, where he outlines his decision to bring forward the implementation of adjustments of the organizational structures for the administrative areas.

In doing so, he draws your attention to the fact that there are some risks associated with this approach in that it requires us to anticipate the sort of savings that will be possible with new structures and with the implementation of new systems before we have had an opportunity to examine the matter in detail, and before there has been time to assess the new systems in their fully operational mode. In fact, if it had not been for the ZNG request, I have to be frank, we would not have been making these proposals at this time. The Director-General was of the view that we should implement the systems, develop and gradually implement the changes and proposed savings in the budget for 2002-2003, and I have to say that that would be a more careful approach to the problem. But faced with the likelihood that the substantive programmes of the Organization could be damaged, he feels that he has no option but to propose the acceleration of this process.

There are many details to be worked out, and clearly it is not possible to provide you with definitive proposals today. In fact, there will be even some difficulty in providing definitive proposals in the Programme of Work and Budget, that is, the full document that goes to the September sessions of the Programme and Finance Committees, and then to the Council and Conference. But we will have sufficient detail to be able to develop a ZNG budget scenario, using these assumptions.

I would like to draw one aspect to the attention of the Council, which is as stated in paragraph 9. There will be further costs associated with redeployment and separations even though it is, as has been the case so far, the intention to rely as much as possible on natural attrition. However, the Programme of Work and Budget will not include sufficient resources to cover the incremental costs of separations and redeployment exercises, and it is proposed that these be funded from the future payments of arrears, as in effect they were in the 1998-99 Programme of Work and Budget.

As indicated in the document, the Director-General seeks the Council's endorsement of the proposal to bring forward implementation of the planned consolidation and integration of administrative structures, within the constraint, of course, of the available resources we have and with a view to full implementation in early 2000.

Finally, with regard to this item, Members of the Council will note that some savings arising out of administrative restructuring will be taken into account in the ZRG, the Zero Real Growth version or scenario, so as to allow us to accommodate concerns of Members as expressed in the Programme and Finance Committees, and as I believe will be expressed in the Council today. This will enable us to take on board some issues, such as language coverage, into the Zero Real Growth scenario by taking some of the savings from the consolidation and integration of administrative structures. I would like to emphasize, however, that that does not detract from the basic point that the Organization would have preferred to have undertaken this exercise through a

more carefully phased implementation and that its early implementation is, in fact, driven by the need to consider a ZNG scenario.

CHAIRMAN

I now invite interventions from the floor on the Programme of Work and Budget for 2000-2001.

Chao Tiantong (Thailand)

I speak on behalf of the developing countries of Asia.

The developing countries of Asia are deeply concerned with the resource constraints pressing FAO and, in our opinion, to some extent they have affected FAO's leadership and comparative advantage. Unless adequate resources are allocated, FAO's goals and strategy objectives may not be realized. We appreciate the measures that have been taken by the Organization in the last two biennium, as recommended by Members, to streamline its organizational structure, including decentralization, and to effect efficiency savings. We have seen impressive and positive results in these efforts.

The developing countries of Asia strongly recommend that adequate resources be made available to FAO to enable it to continue serving its Mission and Mandate in matters concerning global food and agriculture, in particular in contributing to the realization of the goals and objectives of the World Food Summit.

As a result of a series of Ministerial Level meetings initiated by FAO, and recommendations made by Members through the Governing Bodies and Technical Committees, increasing and new demands have been made on the Organization. In addition, the world food security situation does not seem to get better and many developing countries, including Asia, have suffered several setbacks as a result of natural calamities and economic and financial crises. Inadvertently, these countries will resort to expert advice and a system of organization such as FAO to redress their problems.

The Asia Group would also like to emphasize the role of FAO in mobilizing funds from financial institutions and other international development bodies, as well as strengthening Technical Cooperation Programmes.

The developing countries of Asia support at least a Zero Real Growth budget level. Anything less than this, in our view, will have a bearing on the performance and effectiveness of the Organization to deliver its services to Member Nations and the international community.

In terms of programme priorities, the developing countries of Asia recommend that resources should continue to be allocated to the Programme of Work where Members could directly benefit from it, in particular, programme activities that increase food production and productivity and ensure sustainable development of natural resources, including fisheries, aquaculture, forestry, plant and animal genetic resources and water. In addition, to enable developing countries of Asia to participate effectively and thoroughly in international trade, programmes related to food safety and food standards that will enhance their technical capacities and capabilities should also be given priority.

Sra. María Eulalia JIMÉNEZ DE MOCHI ONORI (Observador de El Salvador)

Con relación al tema que nos ocupa permítame, en primer lugar, en nombre del Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe felicitar a la Secretaría por el esfuerzo realizado por introducir el nuevo modelo de programa en todos los programas técnicos. Lo anterior, sin duda alguna, por un lado representa una base metodológica y sustantiva con respecto al pasado, ya que permite analizar con mayor nivel de detalle el destino de las partidas específicas de cada uno de los programas sin perjuicio de ulteriores aclaraciones sobre los objetivos perseguidos y los productos, así como también de su distribución regional. Por otro lado, facilita a los miembros el análisis con respecto a las orientaciones prioritarias de la Organización y, al mismo tiempo, contribuye a señalar los elementos que requerirán correcciones en el futuro cercano. Todo esto a través de un enfoque participativo que permita alcanzar un consenso respecto, no sólo a las cuantías globales, sino

también a la distribución por cada categoría de programa. En este sentido, permítame anunciarle que el GRULAC formará un Grupo de Trabajo que se encargará de efectuar un seguimiento puntual de las opciones que se presenten en un breve plazo, de modo que se mantenga un diálogo constructivo con todas las Regiones aquí representadas, con la finalidad de alcanzar un consenso antes de la celebración de la próxima Conferencia de la Organización.

En esta oportunidad no nos expediremos sobre las propuestas de Crecimiento Real Cero o la de Crecimiento Real, teniendo en cuenta que en las recientes reuniones de los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas no se verificaron acuerdos sobre el particular. Por otra parte, y en consideración al anuncio realizado por la Secretaría de que en el mes de agosto se presentará una tercera hipótesis basada en el Crecimiento Nominal Cero, así como una revisión con sentido crítico en el Programa de Labores y Presupuesto final del aumento de costos, a lo cual es necesario agregar la importancia de evaluar el efecto del tipo de cambio en dichas hipótesis y una mayor precisión en lo que atañe a otros ingresos. Esto último es de fundamental importancia para no efectuar revisiones *a posteriori* que puedan afectar los programas previstos.

Hacemos nuestro el párrafo 15 del documento CL 116/16 en cuanto a alentar al Director General a continuar buscando la manera de conseguir una mayor eficacia como medio para contener la cuantía del presupuesto o reprogramar los recursos para las actividades prioritarias. Confiamos en que la Secretaría podrá continuar con la eficiencia demostrada en la consecución de ahorros conseguidos desde 1994, promoviendo el reforzamiento de los programas sustantivos de la Organización.

Permítame efectuar algunas apreciaciones respecto a las expectativas de nuestra Región. El GRULAC apoyará un presupuesto que le otorgue a la Organización las herramientas necesarias para cumplir con su mandato constitucional y con aquél proveniente de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación que implica, necesariamente, contribuir eficaz y eficientemente al crecimiento de los países en desarrollo y a la reducción del carácter multifuncional de su pobreza, verdadero objetivo a seguir. Más allá de eufemismos inconducentes en cuanto a lo que verdaderamente se entiende por crecimiento, estimamos importante la orientación a los resultados del presupuesto que se nos presente y, consecuentemente, de sus políticas implícitas, lo que nos permitirá verificar si, en efecto, aquél puede ser catalogado como crecimiento o no.

En lo que atañe a nuestra Región, abogamos por el fortalecimiento de la participación de América Latina y el Caribe en los programas de la Organización. En ese sentido, el GRULAC considera de particular importancia el reforzamiento del Programa de Cooperación Técnica (PCT), de las actividades del *Codex Alimentarius*, así como el trato igualitario de los idiomas oficiales de la Organización.

Por otra parte, como lo hemos señalado en numerosas oportunidades, es imprescindible tener en cuenta el equilibrio y consistencia que debe existir entre los aspectos normativos y técnicos de los programas que realiza la Organización. No lo hacemos por el mero sentido de conservar la posición del GRULAC en ella, sino porque estamos absolutamente convencidos que la realidad social de nuestros pueblos, en particular aquellos grupos de menor desarrollo relativo, y los efectos de la crisis de todo tipo, pero principalmente financieras y las causadas por los desastres naturales amerita un denodado esfuerzo en el que no cejaremos un sólo minuto. Ello, sin dejar de considerar la necesidad de poner en práctica un enfoque solidario, participativo y de diálogo constructivo con las otras Regiones y con la Secretaría.

Confiamos en que el presupuesto que finalmente aprobemos sea verdaderamente de consolidación y recuperación de la Organización, y estamos seguros que, en tal sentido, prevalecerá un enfoque constructivo de sus Miembros para evitar decir que no podemos hacer más; por el contrario, debemos comprometernos a hacer más con menos.

Hacemos un llamado para que todos los Miembros, en especial, los mayores contribuyentes, cumplan con sus compromisos financieros que permitan incrementar y mejorar la previsibilidad de los recursos y gastos de la Organización.

Por último, deseamos subrayar la importancia de la utilización de los escasos recursos disponibles en manera complementaria con las de otras organizaciones del sistema, sin duplicaciones de esfuerzos y de erogaciones. En tal sentido, alentamos a la FAO a profundizar su coordinación con las otras Organizaciones del Sistema, de modo tal de potenciar sustantiva y geométricamente la utilización de los recursos de la Organización que se empleen. Por lo tanto, las actividades que no se realicen de forma interdependiente, poco contribuirán a los objetivos primarios que nos fijamos en ocasión de la celebración de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación.

Abdoukarim DIOUF (Sénegal)

Je demande la parole pour vous demander de bien vouloir la donner à l'Ambassadeur du Burkina Faso, qui va s'exprimer au nom du Groupe africain sur la question.

Mme Béatrice DAMIBA (Observateur du Burkina Faso)

Je vous remercie, M. le Président, de me donner la parole pour m'exprimer encore une fois, ce soir, au nom du Groupe africain sur le point en discussion, à savoir le sommaire du Programme de travail et budget 2000-2001. Le Groupe africain voudrait d'abord féliciter le Secrétariat pour la qualité des documents, sur le contenu desquels il tient à observer premièrement que des mesures ont déjà été prises et des efforts entrepris ces dernières années pour plus d'efficacité de la FAO avec des moyens réduits. Ces efforts et ces mesures sont relatifs à la décentralisation, à la suppression d'un certain nombre de postes, à l'informatisation et à bien d'autres questions.

Deuxièmement, que la FAO a réussi jusque-là à absorber les augmentations de coûts avec deux budgets successifs à Croissance Réelle Zéro, mais se trouve maintenant acculée, parce qu'une telle capacité d'absorption semble avoir atteint sa limite extrême.

Troisièmement, que de grands programmes tels que la Production agricole, la Politique et le développement alimentaires et agricoles, la Pêche, les Forêts, le Développement durable, etc., tous concourent à la réalisation de la sécurité alimentaire. De grands programmes, tels que ceux que je viens de citer sont reconnus par tous comme étant indispensables et attendent d'être poursuivis ou mis en œuvre.

Quatrièmement, que le moral du personnel et la crédibilité de l'institution FAO pourraient être menacés si la FAO venait à être handicapée par manque de ressources.

Par ailleurs, l'environnement mondial est tel que, pour la plupart des pays en développement, notamment ceux d'Afrique, les progrès économiques et sociaux sont dépendants d'une accélération du développement agricole. En effet, les conséquences de la globalisation, parmi lesquelles la féroce compétitivité, rendent encore plus vulnérables beaucoup de nos pays en accentuant la pauvreté rurale et en marginalisant davantage les populations.

Nous notons par ailleurs la baisse continue de l'aide publique au développement et des investissements privés dans beaucoup de zones pourtant nécessaires. Le Groupe africain se pose, et vous pose à tous, les questions suivantes: Est-ce bien le moment de réduire encore plus les ressources de la FAO? Pourquoi la FAO est-elle la plus défavorisée au sein de la famille des Nations Unies, selon le graphique qui nous a été présenté? Ne devrait-ce pas être le contraire, compte tenu de son mandat? Pourquoi, contrairement à la logique de l'offre et de la demande, devrions-nous offrir moins là où plus de 8 000 millions d'êtres humains demandent et attendent plus? Manger n'est-il plus une priorité vitale? Enfin, la solidarité ne s'exerce pas dans l'intérêt de toute la communauté internationale?

Le Groupe africain, dont vous devinez alors aisément les réponses à ces questions qui viennent d'être posées, soutiendrait un budget à Croissance Positive. Cependant, il se satisferait de savoir que les programmes prioritaires reconnus par tous, que les conclusions pertinentes des réunions techniques et ministérielles de ces derniers mois, que la préoccupation légitime relative au respect du plurilinguisme, entre autres, seront prises en compte pour arrêter le niveau du budget du biennium 2000-2001 de la FAO, qui ne pourrait être au grand minimum qu'un budget à Croissance Réelle Zéro, compte tenu de certaines bonnes nouvelles que vous venez de nous présenter. Vous aurez remarqué que les points de vue du Groupe africain recoupent à bien des

égard ceux de nos amis du Groupe des 77, à savoir les pays en développement d'Asie et l'Amérique latine entre autres.

Adnan BASHIR KHAN (Pakistan)

Allow me to thank the Secretariat for a wonderful presentation of the supplementary document which we have just received today, so we are not in a position to really comment on that document. We would like to support and endorse the statements made by the leader of the Asia Group, by the leader of the Latin American and Caribbean Group and the leader of the Africa Group.

We have also carefully studied the document and the discussion in the Programme and the Finance Committees on this subject.

Our delegation believes that the budget-setting exercise for FAO should be done in a proper perspective. The Programme of Work and Budget should meaningfully contribute to combating increasing hunger, malnutrition and poverty in the wake of financial crises, weather changes and civil strife and in terms of declarations of various summits and conferences, particularly the Rome Declaration of the World Food Summit, and to meeting the demands placed by the Membership through various Technical Committees and Regional Conferences. In addition, the 2000-2001 budget, being the millennium budget, should be instrumental in sending proper signals in the fight against hunger and poverty. Given this perspective, the Membership expects FAO to do a lot more than it has been doing in the past. It expects FAO to do more through increased resources, increased efficiency in operations and through re-prioritization in line with regional and national aspirations.

In this sense, we would like to see FAO with additional resources, both new and freed to carry forward its Mission. In this backdrop, while noting that FAO's previous budget or two were based on zero nominal growth and there may be sound justification for a growth budget, we are not entirely averse to seeing a Zero Nominal Growth scenario presented even if for analytical purposes alone.

What is important for us is to know which of all priorities have been accommodated in either of the three scenarios, and whether, while assigning priorities, sufficient emphasis has been placed on field-related activities directly contributing to the global goals of the Membership. We therefore agree with the Programme and Finance Committees on providing such information to the Council. We believe it has been provided, but we have not been able to study it yet.

We are also mindful of the impact that the financial crisis has had on the ability of countries to contribute more to FAO. In this sense, we agree that considerable reliance has to be placed on efficiencies and re-prioritization. We further believe that additional programmes agreed may be, as far as possible, covered through payments against arrears. Moreover, FAO should do more towards generating other incomes and extra-budgetary resources.

On the Programme side, we have noted and generally support the observations made by the Programme Committee contained in paras 35 to 65 of document CL 116/14. We would take this opportunity to reiterate our priorities which we would like to see accommodated in the final proposals. For us, programmes pertaining to food security remain of paramount importance. In this context, we would like to see additional resources for the Special Programme for Food Security, FIVIMS and the Global Information and Early Warning System.

We also attach high priority to capacity-building of the developing nations and recommend resources for technical assistance for strengthening capacity to: (a) cope with useful biotechnology; (b) become well-informed and equal partners in the next round of multilateral trade negotiations; (c) implement Codex standards; and (d) implement the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*.

Furthermore, we reiterate our support for restoring the resources available to TCP to its former level of 14 percent of the total Regular Programme Budget, and work towards increasing it to 17 percent.

Last, but not least, we support funding for activities which serve to address the special characteristics of the Small Island Developing States.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Ante todo deseamos apoyar la intervención hecha por la distinguida Representante de El Salvador a nombre de nuestro Grupo Regional. Celebramos que se haya propuesto para el día de hoy la discusión de dos temas fundamentales e interconectados que son claves para la Organización. Ello nos permite hacer una evaluación de conjunto sobre el trabajo actual y los planes futuros de la FAO. En tal sentido, queremos reiterar dos aspectos que resultan básicos para ambos textos. Creemos que tanto el contenido del Marco Estratégico como el Programa de Labores y Presupuesto de la Organización deben reflejar un equilibrio entre las tres áreas mandatarias de la Organización: de Información, de Normativa y de Cooperación Técnica. Segundo: los acuerdos de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación deben ser el marco de referencia para ambos documentos.

Sobre la versión que hoy se nos presenta del Programa de Labores y Presupuestos, lamentamos la creciente tendencia a reducir los recursos de la Organización que pudiera afectar a los programas principales y sustantivos de la FAO. En esta línea nos preocupa, también, que los recursos extra-presupuestales adquieran un peso creciente. Consideramos que el presupuesto ordinario de la Organización debe seguir siendo la base para financiar las actividades básicas de la FAO; de lo contrario se corre el riesgo de bilateralizar las acciones de esta importante Organización del Sistema de las Naciones Unidas.

Creemos que el documento CL 116/3-Sup. 1 que hace referencia a una nueva hipótesis de Crecimiento Nominal Cero de la Organización y que será presentada en el próximo mes de agosto, es muy elocuente respecto a los riesgos que implican reducciones adicionales que tendrían efectos negativos sobre programas de la FAO. En este sentido quiero citar parte del párrafo 12 de este documento CL 116/3-Sup. 1 que señala: "...Es evidente que el consiguiente debilitamiento de la capacidad técnica y la menor consignación para consultorías y viajes darán lugar a ajustes a la baja en elementos del programa incluidos en el Resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto -proyectos técnicos, actividades constantes del programa y acuerdos de servicios técnicos-...".

Advertimos que el riesgo que se corre más es en un área clave, que es el área de la cooperación técnica, porque consideramos que tanto el área informativa como la normativa están bien cubiertas, de hecho, en varios sectores como se deriva del Proyecto Programa de Labores. Se advierte que hay nuevos programas de información en varios campos, por ejemplo en el campo forestal y en el campo de pesca, a los cuales les damos la bienvenida; pero no creemos que la mejor manera de financiar estos programas sea precisamente a costo de otras actividades que consideramos también importantes para la FAO.

En esta línea queremos resaltar la importancia que nuestro país otorga a programas en los sectores de pesca, particularmente en la aplicación del Código de Conducta para la Pesca Responsable, en el sector de montes, de recursos fitogenéticos y también en el *Codex Alimentarius*. En esta línea, y finalmente, deseamos brindar nuestro apoyo a que se le otorgue el espacio y la importancia debida al Español como idioma oficial de la Organización.

E. Michael SOUTHWICK (United States of America)

We would like to thank the Secretariat for putting forward a Zero Nominal Growth budget scenario for the 2000-2001 biennium. We feel that this is a very helpful and informative document that incorporates many savings and efficiencies into the budget in an effective manner. It also protects most high-priority programmes, while significantly narrowing the difference between ZNG and ZRG.

The United States is strongly in favour of a ZNG budget. We feel that a budget of US\$ 650 million is large enough for FAO to achieve its highest priorities. We believe that a ZNG budget

can incorporate savings from important reforms that will continue during the next biennium, while recognizing exchange rate and inflation trends.

A ZNG budget also reflects the budgetary constraints faced by Member Nations. We note that a majority of countries have difficulty paying assessments at current levels. A higher budget will only exacerbate this problem. The US faces tight fiscal constraints, as well. Our budget position in favour of ZNG is reflective of a legislative and budgetary constraints that we face domestically.

Fortunately, the difference between ZNG and ZRG is now very small, thanks to anticipated exchange rate gains. Ten to fifteen million dollars on a base of US\$ 650 million should not be difficult to absorb. In fact, we feel that if the Secretariat were also to factor the very low rate of inflation into the projections used to calculate cost increases for personnel, the difference between ZNG and ZRG could be reduced significantly.

We note that the Secretariat used three percent while recent inflation and cost-of-living indices have been much lower, falling in the range of one to two percent. Exchange rate and inflation trends have helped the other large UN Specialized Agencies, the ILO and the WHO, to achieve ZNG budgets in negotiations this year. If they can do it, we believe FAO can do so, too.

We will touch on two more important issues in our intervention: reform and prioritization of programmes. On reform, we would like to congratulate the Secretariat for the management improvements and efficiencies that have been achieved through decentralization. We believe that further savings might be possible, and would point to the ITU practice of translating documents in countries where costs are lower.

We also appreciate the fact the Secretariat has decided to move forward on the administrative reforms that will accompany the introduction of Oracle software. The efficiency and management improvements gained through this programme should be very beneficial to the Organization. We look forward to hearing progress reports in this regard.

Another area of potential cost savings lies in the area of publications. We commend the Secretariat on the proposal to introduce a new publications distribution system, and we suggest that FAO could realize additional significant savings by reducing the quantity of publications that are sent to Member Nations. All of these reforms put a ZNG budget well within reach.

Finally, we would like to address programme priorities. We are relieved to see that the Zero Nominal Growth scenario incorporates many programmes in which FAO has a comparative advantage. We are also pleased to see that some of the programme priorities specified by the Technical Committees have been funded. However, we note that some very important programmes that are fundamental to the technical mission of the FAO are missing from the list of protected programmes. These include adequate funding for the following programmes: the Interim Phyto-sanitary Commission, the Prior Informed Consent Secretariat, Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Mapping or FIVIMS and assistance to developing countries in assessing the effects of the Uruguay Round and in preparing for the next round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations. These programmes are invaluable to increasing trade. They benefit Member Nations directly and they exemplify the technical and normative types of programmes for which FAO is best known and of which the Organization can justifiably be proud.

We feel strongly that it is essential that these programmes be protected. In general, we would like to see FAO focus its resources more on areas of comparative advantage, in accordance with the priorities recommended by the Technical Committees.

We will conclude our remarks on the Summary Programme of Work and Budget on a positive note. We feel there is much to celebrate in this document. It reflects good management, forward thinking and prioritization of programmes, all of which are essential to the success of FAO.

Kazuo TANAKA (Japan)

As you can see in the Secretariat document CL 116/16-Sup. 1, my Government has given a substantially higher Scale of Contribution of 20.228 percent to the FAO budget for 1999,

compared with 16.73 percent for 1998. An even higher scale of 20.67 percent is proposed for the year 2000. This is a great challenge for us, particularly in view of the tight financial situation of our country. It is a big challenge for FAO as well because, under such circumstances, FAO's works are being watched more carefully than ever before.

It is, therefore, especially important for us to be doubly sure that the funds entrusted to FAO are used in the most effective and efficient manner.

In this connection, my delegation was pleased with the progress in moving forward a discussion on a budget level which was made by the Programme and Finance Committee at a Joint Meeting in May, and welcomes the efforts made by the Secretariat in response to the deliberation by the Joint Meetings of the Programme and Finance Committees to prepare the document CL 116/3-Sup. 1, which outlines a Zero Nominal Growth scenario for the Programme of Work and Budget 2000-2001 biennium.

As noted in para. 20 of the document CL 116/4, in order to seek to bridge the differences at budget level, dialogue should continue among membership without prejudice and in a flexible and constructive manner.

In this regard, my delegation feels that the document CL 116/3-Sup. 1 provides a good basis for the discussion towards a consensus outcome. Without any prejudice to the workload expected from FAO and, at the same time, taking into account the circumstances under which the Programme of Work and Budget has to be formulated with continuous constraints reflecting the financial difficulties and tightness of each Member's financial situation, including Japan, the budget level of US\$ 650 million for the next biennium appears to be realistic and should be supported by our delegation.

Here it should be noted, and as pointed out by the US delegate, 111 Member Nations have not paid their assessment as yet and more than half of the Members are in arrears. The question of arrears should be settled expeditiously by the countries concerned. At the same time, my delegation considers that this issue itself is a clear manifestation that FAO should establish a realistic budget level that could be fully financed by all Member Nations.

Let me now turn to several points which we believe are important in the formulation of the next biennium's Programme of Work and Budget, based on a ZNG scenario.

My delegation could not support indiscriminate, across-the-board cut proposals which would compromise the effectiveness of higher priority programmes. In addition, overlapping activities among Departments and duplication of programmes should be avoided. FAO should respond to the high-priority needs, and eliminate the activities that have not achieved positive and measurable results, or that are overtapped.

My delegation would like to stress that FAO's resources should be concentrated on areas where FAO's comparative advantage and expertise are widely recognized, as exemplified in the supplementary document.

Having said all this, once again my delegation would like to urge FAO to prepare a Zero Nominal Growth budget programme, accommodating continuing as well as new programmes such as the implementation of FIVIMS at national and international level, technical assistance on trade policy and the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*.

Last but not least, the delegation of Japan highly appreciates the decision made by the Director-General, Mr Diouf, with tremendous courage, to bring forward the implementation of adjustment to administrative procedures and organizational structures in conjunction with the new computerized Oracle system. It should be underlined that Japan has attached great importance to this Organization ever since its assumption of membership. Japan's support to FAO remains unchanged, and Japan would like to work together with other Members for a more efficient and effective Organization with a view to realizing the objectives of this Organization.

Tang ZHENGPING (China) (Original language Chinese)

The delegation of China welcomes documents CL 116/3, CL 116/4 and CL 116/14, that have been prepared by the FAO Secretariat, and I would also like to thank Mr Wade for the introduction to this agenda item.

The Chinese delegation also supports the statement made by the Thai delegation representing the Asia Region. We would also like to add something.

The Chinese delegation has also noted that the Summary Programme of Work and Budget 2000-2001 has taken into consideration the reform of FAO in the past six years and the role and implications of the on-going formulation of the Strategic Framework. We commend FAO for applying the new programming models in preparing the work programme, dividing the Programme into three categories, namely, the Technical Programmes of the Regular Programme, the on-going Programme activities and the Technical Service Agreements.

The Chinese delegation is pleased to see that, after undergoing years of reform and decentralization, the structure of FAO is becoming more rational and the work efficiency has also been significantly improved. As for the Summary, document CL 116/3 serves a good basis for our deliberations today.

However, we have also taken note that this document is based on the Zero Real Growth scenario and it rather clearly illustrates the work programme and the budget level for the various delegations. We are of the view that it is necessary for FAO to present a detailed and a comprehensive comparison among the three scenarios, namely, the Zero Nominal Growth, Zero Real Growth and the Real Growth scenarios. In doing so, the Member Nations shall be better positioned to make decisions which take into account the positions and interests of various Member Nations.

The Chinese delegation believes that the Programme of Work and Budget 2000-2001 should enable FAO to carry out its duties and meet the increasing needs of Member Nations. It should also fully consider the financial situation in the Member Nations and not increase burdens excessively on them.

Now, our concrete views concerning document CL 116/3.

First of all, China is very concerned about the declining income of FAO. With a reduction of Other Income and Miscellaneous Income, the newly increased Programme costs will mainly come from contributions from the Member Nations. On top of this, for a considerable number of Member Nations, the percentage of contribution has gone up, thus increasing their burden. Therefore, we urge FAO to continue its measures to encourage more agricultural inputs from international organizations and donors, increase FAO's income and reduce the Assessed Contributions.

Secondly, FAO should further increase the share of TCP in the work programme. According to the Zero Real Growth scenario, the share of TCP will be decreased from US\$ 78.86 million in the 1998-99 budget to US\$ 78.66 million in 2000-2001, making up only 10.7 percent, which is worrying for us. We would like to make an appeal to FAO to increase TCP funds, making it closer to the 14.1 percent level in 1986-87 budget, or 17 percent if possible.

Thirdly, the cost of personnel should gradually be decreased so as to increase technical and financial assistance to developing countries. The delegation of China is pleased to note that, in the proposed budget, the cost for Governing Bodies' Support Services and Common Services is kept at the original level but the amount for personnel services in 1998-99 reaches US\$ 490 million. If other Human Resources items are added, the total amount is as much as US\$ 628 million, making 84.3 percent. We are of the view that FAO reform and decentralization should also be reflected in the reduction of personnel costs so that more budget allocations can be made for technical and financial assistance to developing countries to promote agricultural production and reduce the number of undernourished people.

Fourthly, FAO should enhance the language balance. The Chinese delegation is very much concerned to note that the working language balance in FAO has not been reached in terms of meetings, publications and documents. In most cases, only one or two languages are used, which is not in conformity with the Constitution and the Rules and Regulations of FAO.

Having said that, we would like to reaffirm that FAO should achieve the goal of equal and simultaneous use of five working languages, including Chinese. The language balance cannot just be considered in the increased programme. It should be carried out in other programmes also.

Harald HILDEBRAND (Germany)

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

The 15 Member States of the European Community contribute almost two-fifths of the regular budget and in due time. This is one reason why we attribute great significance to a well-balanced, financeable Programme of Work for the next biennium. It should reflect, in its essence, the strategic lines of FAO action. The EC and its Member States regret that a major concern unanimously expressed by FAO Member States as to the allocation of Regular Programme resources for agriculture, fisheries and forestry seems not to have been fully taken regard of. It was at the high-level Ministerial Meetings on Forestry and Fisheries in March this year, and also during the respective Technical Committee meetings, that FAO Members stressed the need for the marked long-term relative changes in the political and economic importance of FAO's three main areas of competence to be reflected in a re-allocation of the regular resources of our Organization.

Therefore, we expect the Secretariat to take these conclusions into account when working further on the draft Programme of Work and Budget.

My statement will mainly deal with three major aspects: programme structure, including some important aspects of content; budget matters; and further procedure.

On programme structure, we welcome the application of the new programme model tested previously on Programme 2.1.1, Natural Resources, to all technical programmes in Chapter II. In para. 9 of document CL 116/3, reference is made to each component being rated with a numerical score, from one to five, to indicate relative importance and serve as a basis for prioritization. We miss the application of such scores, and we recommend that they be included in the summary description of each component in the Programme of Work and Budget.

Likewise, we approve of the proposed three types of programme activities: Regular Programme Technical Projects, continuing Programme of Activities, and Technical Service Agreements.

As regards Programme 2.1.1., Natural Resources, we have missed reference to FAO's contribution to UNCED follow-up. We are aware of the Organization's task manager part for Chapters 10 to 14 of Agenda 21, which next year, again, are on the agenda of the Commission on Sustainable Development of the United Nations.

In relation to Programme 2.1.1.A.1, the project called Agricultural Water Use Efficiency and Conservation, we think that more emphasis should be laid on programmes and projects on improved techniques of rain water and flood water harvesting, given the growing demand for irrigation water and the rising deficits of water availability for agricultural purposes.

Likewise, we would like to request the Secretariat to re-examine the contents and titles of projects 2.1.1.A.2 and 2.1.1.A.3 on Land Resources, Soil Fertility and Plant Nutrition, Policy Planning and Management, and the other one on Integrated Land Water and Plant Nutrition Management, because they appear to overlap.

Again, under Programme 2.1.2, Crops, two projects, 2.1.2.A.6 and 2.1.1.P.4, both on Plant Genetic Resources, could be integrated, in our view. Project 2.1.2.P.4, as drafted in the Summary Programme of Work, does not reflect, in our view, what has been discussed previously on Plant Genetic Resources, for example in the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. Later on, we would like to submit to the Secretariat a redrafted text of paras 142, 143 and 144.

As to 2.5.3.A.4, we suggest to add the title "Sustainable Livelihoods" to the project name, so that it would read "Promotion of Participatory Approaches and Methods to Support Food Security, Sustainable Livelihoods and Rural Development". In the case of this particular project, emphasis should be put on developing strategies to secure consistent participation in all projects and programmes of the Organization. Methods and training material have already been extensively developed.

I would like to refer to budget aspects. To make the 2000-2001 Programme of Work and Budget feasible in terms of funding will require refocusing priorities, securing further efficiency savings, in particular process-related efficiencies, seeking synergies and avoiding double work. This would also imply the efficient management of resources in such a way that recipient countries are encouraged to contribute with national inputs to FAO programmes. In view of the great number of programmes and projects, looking intensively for partners among the many international and national agencies who work in similar fields remains indispensable.

The European Community and its Member States recognize possible areas for reductions: to consider a cut in the number of country offices, taking into account the number of regional and sub-regional offices or *vice-versa*; to seek a reduction in the number of FAO Intergovernmental Groups under the Committee on Commodity Problems. Efforts to make savings in this field should be continued, especially with regard to the cost of meetings. To strengthen linkages between Departments would be another possible area for cost reduction. We should seriously consider the enlargement of the smallest structural units in the Organization and consequently a reduction in the number of structural units at Division and Departmental level. Reasons for doing so are the need for increased efficiency and effectivity, and secondly the New Programme Model has to be applied to major programmes, focuses more on outputs of projects and programmes and should logically be followed by the establishment of larger units. This would reduce the burden of coordination at Headquarters.

Finally, to concentrate field activities more strongly on those activities necessary to develop and evaluate normative activities. We would like to emphasize the growing need to plan and to perform normative and operational activities in an integrated and balanced way.

The Special Programme on Food Security is not funded, as we know, only from its own programme source in the framework of Chapter IV, Technical Cooperation Programmes, but also from six other programmes. Financing from so many different sources does not contribute to the clarity of the structure and the transparency of the financial operations under the Programme of Work and Budget. Therefore, the financing structure of the SPFS should be more clearly defined.

We would also request the Secretariat to carry out an evaluation of the SPFS using the framework of the New Programme Model.

Whilst working on the 2000-2001 budget and ways to implement it, one aspect should not be overlooked, the strong dollar which, if this trend continues, would provide considerable margin for non-dollar expenditure of the Organization and would require even a decrease in the overall budget level. The fact that a considerable part of the payments by the Organization is not made in US dollars implies to consider the possibility of paying contributions in other freely convertible currencies than the US dollar.

Finally, let me refer to procedure. Regarding the Zero Nominal Growth option, the Secretariat is requested to develop an equally detailed scenario of Zero Nominal Growth and to submit it in time for further work on the draft Programme of Work and Budget before the November session of the Council and the Thirtieth Session of the Conference.

The comparative consideration of Zero Nominal Growth and Zero Real Growth options will therefore allow visualization of the real impact of the level of the budget as decided for the activities of the Organization. It will thus be possible to decide, with full knowledge of the facts, the priority areas to be consolidated or to be increased and other areas to be revised or to be relatively revised, in particular in the context of a better breakdown of tasks within the UN System.

Bhaskar BARUA (India)

We have just finished discussing the Strategic Framework for FAO some time. We are aware of the challenges likely to be faced by the developing countries in the next millennium and the concerted efforts needed to tackle them.

The depiction of FAO's diverse and important role in the agricultural development process, and thereby removal or substantial reduction of poverty, and a Zero Nominal Growth scenario in the budget level are, I must say, contradictory.

Developing countries will look to the enhanced role of FAO in the changing external environment and my delegation would emphasize that we have to reconcile such aspirations and the availability of resources. In this I fully endorse the sentiments expressed by Thailand, the Representatives of the Latin America Group and the Africa Group.

Over the years, in the majority of programmes emphasis has switched from direct promotion of improvement at the country level through field projects to the dissemination of information. While we appreciate the importance of the information generation and dissemination, especially in the context of structural changes and liberalization in the countries around the world, we would like to stress that for Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing Countries, FAO's presence in the field is still of paramount importance. Therefore, a healthy balance between the field programmes and the normative functions needs to be maintained, as stated by the honorable delegation from Germany representing the European Community. This will be in keeping with the priority being given by various international funding agencies to agriculture and poverty alleviation, and will enable FAO to play an effective role in partnership programmes.

My delegation is of the view that among the normative programmes, emphasis should be on building the capacities of the developing nations to effectively participate in such technical communities as the Codex Alimentarius and IPPC. We have always emphasized the advocacy role of FAO in such matters so that issues relevant to developing countries are understood in their proper perspective.

We do appreciate the problems which may be posed by scaling-up of Member Nations contributions if we have a Real Growth in budget. We also appreciate the economy and efficiencies that have been effected, efforts towards which are continuing. However, we submit that every dollar saved should go to appropriate field programmes rather than to decreasing the budget. Even if the level of resources cannot be increased significantly, there has to be a prioritization in favour of dealing with the issues raised by developing countries from time to time in various fora.

We see that even among the programmes listed under the Zero Real Growth scenario there are very few which impact on agriculture development in resource-poor areas. The nominal budget, I am afraid, will further marginalize FAO's role as a major catalyst of agricultural development in the world, a scenario we would not like to see happen.

We also urge FAO to increase its efforts in forging partnership with Member Nations to raise resources and initiatives under programmes such as the South-South Cooperation which are steps in the right direction. India, along with others, has in fact been supplementing the efforts of FAO through various Trust Fund projects. This is a matter which will compensate for a lack of real growth in the budget.

Suharyo HUSEN (Indonesia)

First our delegation would like to thank the Secretariat for producing the fairly comprehensive Summary Programme of Work and Budget 2000-2001, document CL 116/3, for today's discussion.

Secondly, we would also like to congratulate FAO for the efficient work done and the good progress made throughout the last three biennia with regard to restructuring and downsizing its staff. We also feel that the coming biennium 2000-2001 should provide good ground for the

Organization to consolidate the already streamlined process. Therefore, our intervention will be very brief. That is, to support the position of the developing Member Nations of Asia as already presented by the distinguished delegate from Thailand, as well as the position of the Latin American and Caribbean Group and the Africa Group. We feel that at least the Zero Real Growth scenario should be approved by this Council. However, our delegation would also like to see FAO stress the importance of mobilizing all possible funds, including arrears from Members, to support the additional requests for programme activities recommended by the Technical Bodies and the Regional Conferences, particularly focusing on regional needs in improving food security for all.

Finally, my delegation shares the view of the Chinese delegation to increase the budget of the Technical Cooperation Programme under a Zero Real Growth scenario.

Dato' ANNUAR MA'ARUF (Malaysia)

The Malaysian delegation commends the Secretariat for document CL 116/3 and supports the statement made by Thailand on behalf of the developing countries of Asia, in particular the call that sufficient resources be made available to FAO to satisfactorily execute its mission and task for the next biennium.

Malaysia believes that the Zero Real Growth scenario, especially in the context of strengthening multilateralism, will be even more relevant in the next century, after having witnessed the global socio-economic order or disorder of the recent past. No country, however rich, or Region however self-sufficient, can claim that it has found the solutions to the global problems of hunger and poverty. Needless to say, global efforts and international commitments are essential in particular to enable multi-lateral agencies such as FAO to play a leadership role based on its areas of competence and comparative advantage.

Specifically, my delegation recommends for the Secretariat's consideration the following priority areas in resource allocation for the next biennium:

- Firstly, it supports programmes on conservation and sustainable development of genetic resources for food and agriculture, in particular with regard to support for the ongoing negotiations on the International Undertaking of Plant Genetic Resources, accelerated implementation and monitoring of the Leipzig Global Plan of Action and the Formulation of the Domestic Animal Genetic Resources Global Plan.
- Secondly, support should be given to improving the technical and legal capacities and capabilities of the developing countries and institutions with regard to food standards, food safety and international trade in the context of international protocols, Conventions and Codes of Conduct that all of us have agreed upon.
- Thirdly, forestry programmes should be given due importance in FAO work, especially those that relate to afforestation and reforestation in low forest-cover countries, and development and diversification of the utilization of forest products within the context of sustainable forest management should also be emphasized.
- Fourthly, acknowledgement should be made of the growing contributions of aquaculture to global food security, the need to allocate adequate resources to inland fishing and sustainable aquaculture and the convening of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture.
- Finally, activities related to sustainable farming systems should be accelerated, in particular Integrated Pest Management, Integrated Plant Nutrient Systems and Organic Agriculture, within the context of multi- and interdisciplinary approaches within the FAO organizational structure and with other partners.

Mrs Ulla HEIDEN (Denmark)

Denmark is giving this Statement on behalf of the Nordic Countries and in association with the statement given by Germany on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Secretariat has now submitted its Summary Programme of Work and Budget for the years 2000-2001. The Nordic Countries welcome this effort to apply the new programming model to the Programme of Work and Budget. The result is a document which is quite easy to read, giving clear indications of changes, as well as background information.

The Nordic Group attaches great importance to the work of FAO and wants to collaborate in order to reach the central goals of the Organization. There are major challenges facing FAO, and many new and pertinent issues that FAO must address if it is to meet its obligations. We want FAO to fulfil its role as a lead agency and agenda-setter in a number of areas central to food security in terms of agriculture, fisheries and forestry.

At this point we want to raise three issues of major concern.

The first issue is related to the connection between the Programme Work and Budget and the Strategic Framework of the Organization. We do understand that the Organization is asking for adequate funding, and the concerns raised by the Secretariat regarding budgetary constraints. However, the discussions related to the Programme of Work and Budget, and not least the budget levels, must be seen in close connection with the necessary strategic choices and with the contents, performance and the cost-efficiency of the Organization.

A major concern in relation to the present Programme of Work and Budget is the evident lack of Strategic Vision. The present document is a very good demonstration of the need for a Strategic Framework for FAO based on a set of well-supported priorities. This is the only way to secure the consistency, direction and focus of the Organization. It is absolutely necessary that the Programme of Work and Budget in a clear way demonstrates how the central visions and strategies of the Organization will be implemented.

We think that FAO must retain and indeed develop its status as a Centre of Excellence. In this connection, it is essential that FAO builds upon its comparative advantages, that the normative activities are always the point of departure, and that the objectives are always pursued in close cooperation with all relevant partners.

The present Programme of Work and Budget is submitted as a programme aiming at consolidating and streamlining FAO after several years of major change and reorganization. Indeed, we do not see a major change of direction in this new Programme of Work and Budget. Considering, however, that in this same period a new Strategic Framework is being debated by the entire membership, we are surprised to learn that the Secretariat expects the period of change to be over.

The second important issue is the relationship between budget levels and the contents of the Programme of Work and Budget.

At this point, we do not want to prejudice our position on the level of the budget. However, a Real Growth scenario is not likely to be the outcome as the Secretariat has presented a Zero Real Growth budget, and indeed a number of Member Nations have stated their preference for a Zero Nominal Growth scenario.

In the present Programme of Work and Budget, the Secretariat has included a list of provisions to be made under a Real Growth scenario.

The Nordic Countries are concerned to find that all of the activities on this list are activities that have been called for by FAO's Governing Bodies and Technical Committees. These activities should therefore be integrated into the central part of the Programme of Work and Budget itself. The failure to do so underlines the urgent need for clear priorities and focus to be given by a Strategic Framework.

The Nordic Countries strongly object to the concept of introducing into the regular Programme of Work and Budget a call for extra-budgetary funds. The regular budget must provide the funding for FAO's core activities, and calls for additional funds must not be made in this context. Extra-budgetary activities should be treated in a transparent way, consistent with the principles established for regular activities.

FAO should take on a leading role in all the sectors relevant to its central mandate. This implies that fisheries and forestry must also receive budgetary funds that will enable these sectors to take

on the relevant obligations. This request has recently unanimously been put forward by Ministers representing all Member Nations.

Finally, we think the issue of efficiencies and savings is still a central component of the budget discussion.

The Nordic countries are aware of the Organization's budgetary constraints. However, we find it difficult to accept the idea that all possibilities of efficiency savings have been exhausted. Indeed, we believe that the improvement of management processes, and streamlining and efficiency savings are on-going processes, and that FAO still has the possibility to improve its performance in these fields.

As for the on-going decentralization process, it must be implemented efficiently and should take place within the UN context. It is also essential that decentralization be accompanied by delegation of authority and budgetary responsibilities. However, it is of utmost importance still that the decentralization process does not lead to erosion of competence at Headquarters.

Julian A. THOMAS (South Africa)

This being our first intervention we would just like to express our appreciation for seeing you in the Chair, and would also like to extend our congratulations to other Members of the Bureau that were elected this morning.

I would like to apologize for not having been present at the previous item on the Agenda, but this was just not possible for various reasons.

Thanks to the Secretariat for these documents that we have before us, and to the introduction given by Mr Wade.

At this stage we would just like to say that we support the statement made by Burkina Faso on behalf of the Africa Group, by El Salvador on behalf of GRULAC and by Thailand on behalf of the developing countries of Asia. It was then obvious to South Africa that support has been expressed by these delegations for a positive growth for the FAO budget for the next biennium.

I will summarize the reasons for this because a number of them have already been given, but there may be some small additions. The main reasoning, of course, is that there is little scope for major savings in the next biennium. This does not exclude the on-going quest, of course, for savings -- and I will have a remark later in this presentation on that concerning the implementation of Oracle -- but for practical reasons, the major savings that have been possible over the last two biennia in the short term have now been exhausted. It is therefore clear that a decreased budget will harm existing major programmes and activities of FAO. This is not only clear from document CL 116/3-Sup. 1, but also from document CL 116/16, para 21, which refers to transfers that had to be made during this present biennium from major programmes dealing with technical issues to other programmes. In these cases, it is always the technical programmes that suffer, and hence the output and ability of the Organization to perform its proper development function.

This appears contradictory to appeals by the membership for greater and more intervention by FAO. We saw this in a number of the Technical Committees of the Council.

There is ample evidence of the importance of agriculture in overall economic development, in terms of growth, employment creation, particularly of course in developing countries. It is also clear that the net effect of globalization is still not fully understood. Evidence seems to suggest that as global competitiveness spreads, marginalized countries and particularly the poor in those countries become even more vulnerable and less able to help themselves. A lot still needs to be done by FAO and other multilateral Organizations and Agencies, as pointed out by Thailand, to understand these new forces associated with globalization and how they effect agriculture in developing countries, and particularly, the rural poor.

The proof that things are not getting better is clear in the data that were given to us in the CFS. In the short term at any rate, there appears to be an increase in the number of poor and hungry and this, of course, is particularly the case in Africa. This is not the time to reduce support for

Organizations, such as FAO, involved in agricultural development and poverty alleviation. However, in practice, we are experiencing a reduction in Official Development Aid, a reduction in the part of Official Development Aid for agriculture, decreased external funding to FAO, as pointed out by the Representative of China, and as very ably pointed out by the Deputy Director-General during the Committee on Food Security, there is also evidence that private investment bypasses poor countries and poor communities. This trend towards an increased need, but decreasing resources to deal with these needs, needs to be reversed.

The question can be asked why, in the face of these needs, is there the continued decline in resources allocated to FAO. The rationale behind this is not understood, as pointed out by the Representative of Burkina Faso.

Turning now to document CL 116/3, there are a number of priority areas there that this delegation would like to add to the list that already appears in that document established by the Secretariat and to major areas pointed out by the United States as well. These areas, that we would like to add and that are particularly important to Africa, are Programme 2.1.3, Livestock Production; Programme 2.2.3, Food and Agriculture Information -- and presumably this is included in the bullet that deals with WAICENT, but just make sure it is the one dealing with the full scope of information gathering processing and distribution; Major Programme 3.5, Cooperation with External Partners -- and here we point particularly to the need for interaction with civil society and the commercial sector; and Programme 5.1.1, Public Information and Publication Support. We consider that publications and general information supply are probably the main output of FAO, and we would not want this product to suffer in any way.

Turning to the alternative forms of saving as pointed out by Mr Wade in that same document, we have two questions. First of all, related to para 9 where it is mentioned that arrears could be used to cover possible separation costs, the question is what is the likelihood of these arrears being paid? The second question refers to the accelerated implementation of ORACLE-based and associated systems. Thus, you have the decision by the Director-General to seek savings, albeit at risk, by centralizing the MSUs. We would like more information than provided by Mr Wade this morning on the type of risk that would be involved, and the likelihood of this risk. We would not want the acceleration of this process to lead us to a situation where we may have false savings. We are all truly aware of the difficulty of implementing ORACLE within this Organization, and would want this process to be implemented as smoothly and as effectively as possible and not run too much risk just for the sake of incurring short-term savings.

Enrique A. PAREJA (Argentina)

Intervengo en este punto de la Agenda al cual mi país atribuye una singular importancia. Tenemos en primer lugar una propuesta que hacer a todas las distinguidas delegaciones de este Consejo porque nos parece que es algo indispensable para la FAO. Argentina está de acuerdo con aumentar, y lo repito y reitero, aumentar las actividades de los programas sustantivos de la Organización. Necesitamos - y es indispensable frente a las necesidades crecientes en particular de los países en desarrollo - duplicar, por lo menos, el trabajo desarrollado por esta Organización tan básica e importante no sólo aumentando su volumen sino aumentando y profundizando su eficiencia y su eficacia.

En donde no estamos de acuerdo es en aumentar los costos, sea cualquiera de las variables matemático-financieras que se están discutiendo del Presupuesto de la Organización. Y no estamos de acuerdo en aumentar los costos porque como ya lo dijo el Presidente del Grupo Latinoamericano esta tarde al hablar de la posición común de nuestra Región sobre el Programa y Presupuesto, creemos que pueden hacerse importantes y significativos ahorros en el manejo de esta Organización y no sólo el problema de la inflación. Yo vivo en un país donde en los últimos seis meses el dólar americano se cambiaba a 10 unidades por un dólar americano, en este momento se está cambiando a 38 unidades de la moneda nacional por dólar americano. No sólo el tema de la inflación, sino también el cálculo de las tasas de cambio nos pueden dar una visión absolutamente distinta a la que ofrece el documento actual presentado por el Director General.

Nos parece muy curioso esta propuesta del Director General del Crecimiento Nominal Cero del presupuesto de la Organización, y nos parece muy curioso porque ciertamente estimamos que deben ser compromisos adoptados por el Director General en su actual campaña electoral. Yo hablaba hace un momento de ahorros y como el propio documento en su párrafo 28 invita a los países a indicar cuáles son y de donde pueden salir los recursos, yo me limitaré a dar cuatro ejemplos.

Los Representantes de la FAO en los países, a nuestro juicio, están cumpliendo una función absolutamente distorsionada que sólo corresponde a los Estados esa función. No creo que nosotros necesitemos embajadores de la FAO residentes en los países. Nosotros necesitamos urgente oficiales funcionarios de vinculación con la Sede para canalizar los ricos recursos de conocimientos, de información que ha acumulado la FAO en los 50 años de vida. Necesitamos la experiencia de la FAO se canalice a través de esos representantes. Yo menciono este caso primero porque noto que no menos del 10 por ciento del presupuesto global se gasta en las Representaciones de la FAO en las oficinas regionales, subregionales y a nivel nacional. Pensamos y creemos en este sentido coincidir con las importantes declaraciones previas de la Unión Europea hechas por Alemania y de los Países Nórdicos, hechas por la distinguida Representante de Dinamarca, en el sentido de que es ya indispensable - y es curioso que no aparezca en este documento que estamos discutiendo - la necesidad de hacer uso máximo de las instituciones de investigación básica y aplicada en los países destinatarios de la acción de la FAO.

Estoy hablando de las instituciones universitarias y de investigación que deberían ya estar desde hace tiempo, o por lo menos en un futuro cercano, trabajando como socios plenos para llevar adelante el programa sustantivo de esta Organización. Están curiosamente ausentes de esta propuesta hecha por el Director General. Las instituciones nacionales como las universidades no se tratan de vínculos bilaterales o unilaterales que estemos proponiendo entre FAO y una universidad determinada. Se trata de coordinar y que la FAO promueva grupos, pares, dos, tres universidades provenientes de países en desarrollo y de países desarrollados donde se esté estudiando e investigando problemas y áreas similares dentro del campo agrícola y de la alimentación. FAO debería ser el principal motor para coordinar esta vasta red esta amplia red de instituciones de investigación básica y aplicada en países desarrollados y en países en desarrollo.

Hay un capítulo en el Programa y Presupuesto al cual se dedican 12.5 millones de dólares y que, yo confieso señor Presidente, quizás no sepa leer en castellano, quizás no sepa leer en inglés o en francés, pero no lo tengo y cada vez que lo leo nuevamente me es más confuso, y que es programa dedicado a "liaison - vinculación con otras organizaciones internacionales". Así como en ese programa se están gastando 12.5 millones de dólares el programa que debería ser un mandato urgente del actual proceso de globalización de ligar la agricultura con la industria, con el *food-processing*, con el aumento del valor agregado para la producción de los países en desarrollo, está decreciendo en más del 60 por ciento comparándolo con el Presupuesto 1998-99.

Voy a poner otro ejemplo: recuerdo que era mi puesto en ese momento la oficina de Enlace en Ginebra, Suiza. En 1984, contaba con dos funcionarios, hoy 1999, donde los términos globalización, facilidad de las comunicaciones, revolución de las comunicaciones, son comunes, por todos aceptados, la FAO cuenta con cinco funcionarios en puestos permanentes en Ginebra. Y le puedo decir más: cuando en UNCTAD en OMC o en otros organismos y agencias especializadas en Ginebra se trata de reuniones importantes, el funcionario responsable aquí en Roma, en la sede, se desplaza en una hora de vuelo para participar e intervenir en la reunión de que se trate. Estamos en una globalización, pero me parece que las decisiones del señor Director General van en sentido contrario. Yo todavía no me explico por qué hoy hay cinco funcionarios, 16 años después de cuando yo conocí la oficina de enlace de la FAO en Ginebra.

No desconozco la importancia que tiene la tarea de información, de conscientización, de *awareness*, de la acción tan importante y vital que desarrolla la FAO, pero no estoy muy claro cómo, con qué calidad de gastos se está desarrollando y ejecutando el famoso programa *Telefood*. Nosotros pensamos que ese programa debería ser urgentemente sometido a una auditoría independiente para conocer si los objetivos con los cuales se estableció el programa *Telefood* han

sido respetados, no han sido cambiados, si las actividades desarrolladas son actividades pertinentes y, en particular, y muy principalmente, si los resultados del programa *Telefood* es lo que esperaban los Estados Miembros de la FAO.

Tampoco tengo claro algo que está ciertamente dentro de las facultades y privilegios del señor Director General, pero me sorprendió cuando durante el año 1998 recibí la información de que el Director General había estado fuera de sede, en viajes, 175 días en todo el año. Todos sabemos que el año útil son 280 días. Pues bien, el señor Director General ha estado de viaje 175 días. Nos importaría mucho saber, aumentar un poco la transparencia en este programa tan intenso de viajes del señor Director General, conocer los objetivos de sus viajes en general, por supuesto, y los resultados que obtiene.

Finalmente nos extraña mucho que con la instrumentación de nuevos programas de gerencia financiera en la Organización, durante los últimos cinco años no tengamos aún los Estados Miembros designado en firme un Director de Finanzas de la FAO. Los últimos cinco años ese puesto de principal responsable del manejo de los recursos financieros de la Organización no sé quién lo ha desempeñado, ciertamente debe haber sido el Director General, pues hace cinco años que ese puesto está vacante.

Quisiera agregar dos importantes cuestiones a mi juicio: una de ellas la mencionó la Presidenta del Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe, es el uso del castellano. Yo diría ya no tanto en las reuniones y cuestiones y actividades de los órganos rectores y comités sino el uso del castellano pleno en instrumentos tan útiles como el *Codex Alimentarius*.

Finalmente, creemos que en la asignación global de recursos de este documento se muestre una tendencia inversa a lo que se proclama. La asignación de recursos, el peso de esa asignación de recursos va para la sede en Roma en contra y en perjuicio de la descentralización que se proclama hacia las Oficinas Regionales, Subregionales y Nacionales.

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

We would like to thank the Secretariat for the document and in particular the Summary Programme of Work and Budget for the period 2000-2001. We would also like to thank the Organization for all the activities that have been implemented in the past two years.

Without doubt, we are now in the midst of preparing for adoption a strategy for the period 2000-2015, and that will undoubtedly call for major resources. That is why we would like to ask all countries, in particular donor countries, to approve the budget proposed so that the various activities of the Organization may be effectively implemented, so that we may achieve the main objective of the Organization, which is to campaign effectively against hunger and poverty, and also implement all the other activities that FAO is designed to implement, including equality of treatment for all the working languages of the Organization so that we may achieve the objectives that we have set ourselves, i.e. to facilitate communication and liaison, and distribute information at every level.

We entirely agree with previous speakers with respect to that very important activity, and we also wholeheartedly support what the Representative of China had to say with respect to increasing resources for the Technical Cooperation Programme of the Organization by 17 percent, because the Technical Cooperation Programme is one of the most important ones of the Organization and is designed to provide aid and assistance to developing countries.

We would also like to reaffirm the importance of the Special Programme for Food Security for countries where it is being implemented, and we also would like to support the Telefood Programme.

It is for this reason that we agree with previous speakers in supporting the Zero Real-Growth budget so that the Organization may carry out its Mission and achieve its objectives, which are to improve the standards of living of all those who suffer from hunger and poverty throughout the world.

Ahmed AFAILAL (Morocco) (Original language Arabic)

My delegation would like to congratulate you on your election. We would also like to congratulate the members of the Bureau of the Council. We would like to support what was said by the Representative of Burkina Faso, the Chairman of the Africa Group. We would also like to thank the Secretariat for the improvements that have been made to this document, and the improvements which are going to be made to the Summary Programme of Work and Budget of the Organization, as well as to the management and administrative methods. I would like to stress a couple of points however.

Many of these comments have already been made by the Representative of India who spoke before. My comments are the following.

First of all, efforts need to be made to become familiar with the achievements of this Organization and the reforms that are taking place at a time when there is a certain satisfaction. However, there is a paradox on the one hand, before reforms have been carried out well and the lack of funding and resources for these reforms. This is an aspect that we have to examine and develop in the future.

My second comment is the following. We have to ensure that we strengthen the assistance granted by the Organization to Member Nations so that they can take on their responsibilities for the development of agriculture at the global level to strengthen their capacity for scientific research and to facilitate the acquisition of modern technologies and techniques.

My third comment involves the encouragement and strengthening of technical cooperation among developing countries.

Fourthly, we have to ensure a balance between field activities of this Organization on the one hand, and normative activities on the other.

Fifthly, and finally, we should respect the balance in the treatment given to the different working languages of this Organization.

Brett HUGHES (Australia)

Australia acknowledges the efforts of FAO over the last two biennium to cut unnecessary costs and to increase efficiency in the Organization, as well as to implement a more effective planning model to assist FAO more effectively, to prioritize its work and budget. However, we also believe that further efficiency gains are possible, and that further savings can be found without adversely affecting the Organization's highest priority programmes.

Australia also considers that the level of the budget needs to take account of the financial and economic challenges that many Members are facing. Indeed, the Australian Government continues to face severe pressures for change and budget stringencies and it must adopt a fiscally-responsible approach to its contributions to international organizations. It is therefore important that FAO be realistic in setting its priorities, given there will be a need to be achieved, within a realistic budget level, a budget level which Australia considers should be appropriately set at Zero Nominal Growth.

In this regard, Australia, while looking forward to receiving the detailed Zero Nominal Growth proposal, welcomes the preliminary assessment. In particular, we welcome the indication of the favourable impact the revised exchange rate will have, assuming this rate holds in November. This significantly improves FAO's capacity to achieve a Zero Nominal Growth position, while not adversely impacting on the Organization's highest priority programmes.

Finally, in terms of the Programme of Work and Budget for 2000-2001, Australia wishes to briefly indicate that it 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, the facilitation of international trade in agricultural and food products through the standard-setting work of Codex Alimentarius and IPPC, and support of developing country capacity in responding

to increasing trade liberalization. Our emphasis, therefore, is on normative and standard-setting activities with a slight shift of resources towards forestry, fisheries and Codex Alimentarius activities.

Mohammad Saeed NOURI-NAAENI (Iran, Islamic Republic of)

At the outset, my delegation commends the Secretariat for the preparation of an excellent document and excellent introduction by Mr Wade. My delegation associates itself with the views expressed by the distinguished delegates of Thailand, on behalf of the developing countries of the Asia Group, as well as Chairpersons of Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean Groups.

The Secretariat had originally prepared two scenarios, i.e. Real Growth and Zero Real Growth, and later a new semi-scenario was prepared called Zero Nominal Growth. First of all, the language has been changed in the third scenario. Scenarios should be comparable, here we are comparing different levels of Real Growth, i.e., real growth, zero real growth and therefore the third scenario should be called negative real growth and not Zero Nominal Growth, because the latter is a kind of disguised reality.

Another inconsistency arises between the objectives of the World Food Summit and the FAO budget, if we accept anything below real growth because our countries committed themselves to goals and objectives in a Plan of Action which requires Real Growth. False efficiency savings beyond some points would result in more inefficiency. My delegation believes that FAO most probably has reached such a point as a result of several years of negative growth in budget, and if we are really looking for an efficient Organization, we should not push beyond this critical point by insisting on negative growth.

My delegation appeals to all Council Members, especially the main contributors, to accept the Zero Real Growth as the minimal scenario, and then identify areas for savings to be discussed in the Programme and Finance Committees for their feasibility and implementation.

Such savings can go to higher priority areas which currently are not fully financed. After all, the added cost of US\$ 5 to 7 million per year, which is around 2 percent, should not be difficult to be financed by the 175 Member Nations of FAO.

Finally, I strongly recommend inclusion of the request made by the last Near East Regional Conference regardless of the level of budget, especially para 7 of CL 115/REP and para 24 of NERC/98/REP because they represent the highest priorities of the Region.

In order to refrain from repeating what has already been said by other delegations, my delegation fully supports the statements made by the delegations of China, South Africa and Egypt.

Mohammad MEJBAHUDDIN (Bangladesh)

We can be very brief as the distinguished Representative of Thailand, on behalf of developing Asian countries, has already spoken on this item.

On the budget level, we would like to reiterate that the ZRG scenario should be the minimum level around which we should try to build a consensus. The favourable exchange and the low inflation rates should lower the differences between ZNG and ZRG scenarios further than originally estimated.

My delegation is, however, interested to see that the major technical programmes and projects of the Organization are protected from attrition and that FAO seeks avenues for further efficiency savings if there are possibilities.

On the Programme side, we would like to see that a rational balance is maintained between the normative and field programmes. We highly value FAO's programmes in fisheries, especially aquaculture, and assistance to Member Nations in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, Sustainable Forestry Management Practices, assistance to less developed Members to prepare themselves to take advantage of and participate effectively in international trade negotiations. Biotechnology is another area where FAO should provide useful and effective

assistance to developing Member Nations. My delegation is also in favour of increasing allocations for TCP and the Special Programme for Food Security.

One final point relates to application of the Programme Budget approach across major programme categories in the Organization. We are particularly interested to see this new approach being implemented in the coming biennium, thereby introducing increased result orientation for major programmes and activities, and therefore helping to establish the clear linkages between major programmes and activities, and the strategic objectives identified in the Strategic Framework.

In our view, FAO will be increasingly required in future to demonstrate, in clear terms, how its programmes and projects contribute to the achievement of goals and objectives which the membership values.

Onyeabo Emmanuel ONWUKEME (Nigeria)

Nigeria would also like to compliment the Secretariat for presenting such an excellent document. We can conclude that this document is factual, it shows some technical expertise and to say that it is a professional job is just an understatement.

Nigeria fully endorses the interventions made by the Chairperson by the African Group, the distinguished Representative of Burkina Faso; by Thailand, on behalf of the Asia Group; the distinguished Chairperson of the Latin American and Caribbean Group; and other individual speakers before us, including Egypt, South Africa and Pakistan.

The important role of FAO in improving the food security situation in developing countries is well-known. Its comparative advantage over other multilateral agencies and the vital role it plays as a knowledge institution and aid agency in international development cooperation in the field of agriculture and rural development are also well-known.

We recall the primary objective of the World Food Summit Plan of Action - to reduce the number of the world's hungry by the year 2015 by half. Three years after the adoption of such a laudable objective, the world's hungry are increasing rather than decreasing. There are prevailing poverty levels in Africa and in the greater part of the developing world. Globalization of the world economy, the shrinking of the public sector in most of the developing countries, which imply dwindling resources to the rural poor, the target group of FAO assistance, are also major trends taking place.

There has also been reduction in the multilateral overseas development assistance, as well as recent adverse climatic conditions in the agrarian economies of Central America and Asia, and the recent financial crisis in Asia. All these developments imply greater responsibilities for FAO.

Increasing responsibility in poverty alleviation implies greater resource needs in real terms. The documents CL 116/3 and 116/3-Sup. 1, are lucid enough in expounding FAO activities and its resource needs. Due attention has been given to normative and operational aspects of the work of FAO. Nigeria attaches great importance to capacity-building, technical assistance in the development of the forestry, agricultural and fisheries sectors, as well as in land and water management. FAO's support in these sectors has been invaluable to our national endeavours in sustainable and integrated agricultural development.

The budget level being recommended in the documents placed before the Council, we would conclude and believe is realistic. This delegation would not believe we mean to pay lip service to the Rome Declaration of reducing the world's poor by 50 percent by the year 2015. In this regard, we believe that a budget level below US\$ 684.7 million will impact negatively on FAO's ability to implement its economic and technical programmes. The Organization, of course, is not static but responsive and dynamic. The request for additional resources was formed through analysis, conclusions and recommendations from Technical Committees and other stakeholders. Any disparity between the declared and operational policy, between intentions and actions, should be reconciled, and it requires strong political will and commitment to do so.

Before I conclude, and with your permission, I will recount a little anecdote. There was the story of a very smart young person, a smart child, who caught a butterfly, held it by the arm, came before a very wise old man and asked the old man to guess whether the butterfly was alive or dead. The old man, being wise, knew that if he said dead the little child would let the butterfly out, and if he said alive the little boy would crush the butterfly. So what was the old man's reply. The old man said "the answer is in your hands". So, the answer is in our hands, whether FAO is to be given the necessary support or it has to be constrained to render it ineffective in carrying out its mandate.

Nigeria would, therefore, appeal to the membership to rally around the Organization they created and give it the necessary morale and material support it needs to make it relevant and effective against the background and the realities of its prevailing global operational environment on the threshold of the twenty-first century and, if I may borrow the words of His Holiness Pope John Paul II, the threshold of hope.

P.W. MISIKA (Namibia)

Firstly, Namibia welcomes the Summary Programme of Work and Budget presented on behalf of the Secretariat by Mr Wade. The document is a well-formulated, concise and informative document which we believe will guide this Council in making an informed decision. Namibia also supports and endorses fiscal discipline, however, realizing the ever-increasing numbers of people who go to bed not knowing where their food for the day will come from. Cognizant of the Declaration of the World Food Summit to reduce the number of undernourished and hunger-stricken people by 50 percent by the year 2015. Considering that the FAO has already undertaken painstaking downsizing, rightsizing and the restructuring exercises, that the Organization abolished 83 posts, coupled with a characteristic cutting and downsizing down of its programmes and activities, agreeing that FAO, since 1994, been significantly disadvantaged versus other UN System sister organizations, insofar as resource allocations are concerned, and considering that the restructuring process referred to above took place amid clear signals of the widening gap between the affluent and the poor, and a decrease in *per capita* income mainly in poor and developing countries, we recognize the need for FAO like any other organization to live within its means. However, Namibia wants to launch a very strong appeal for a more pro-active budget approach.

It is no secret that if we want to achieve the noble objectives of the World Food Summit, and at the same time, implement the highly-regarded Corporate Strategies we have set ourselves, then we need more than just a Zero Real Growth budget. It is our submission, Mr Chairperson, and Namibia considered a humble submission that a Zero Real Growth budget will adversely impact on the already vulnerable and chronically poverty-stricken poorest of the poor in the developing countries, in that it will imply the cutting of programmes that were intended to assist these very countries in extricating themselves from the hunger and poverty cycles.

In light of the above, Namibia would like to support the Chairperson of the Africa Group from Burkina Faso, in affirming that if we want FAO to assist disadvantaged Member Nations to address issues of food insecurity then it is time, now or never, for us to put our money where our mouths are and to ensure that we mandate the Secretariat to implement a real or positive growth budget. This budget scenario will ensure that projects that are very critical to the survival of many kinds in the developing countries such as those being dealt with. I will mention them: one hazardous chemical and pesticides in international trade, studies on the impact of sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures on international food, national systems of food aid in agricultural statistics, technical assistance on trade policy, enhancing technical support to Member Nations for the implementation of Codex Alimentarius standards on veterinary drug residues in foods, strengthening regional and sub-regional offices, not only in Africa but also in other developing countries, to enable them to be more responsive to the needs of the regions and countries they serve; to ensure decentralization; technical cooperation programmes and programmes related to enhancing the implementation of the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Management Systems at national and international levels, are very crucial. Without these programmes, a scenario which is implied by both the Zero Nominal and Zero Real Growth rates, being advanced

by some Member Nations here, this Council would be making a mockery of the World Food Summit's Declaration on Poverty and Hunger and also a fallacy of our own commitment to FAO's Plan of Action and the increased needs that are emanating from our Member Nations.

Kyeong-Sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

First of all, my delegation would like to thank the Secretariat, especially Mr Wade, for his effort to provide the new Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium in a concise format, documents CL 116/3 and CL 116/3-Sup. 1.

We commend FAO for its sincere endeavour towards successfully restructuring the Organization and introducing effective budget and programme management for the current biennium. We feel that the efficiency and effectiveness of the Organization have been on the increase since restructuring and decentralization began.

Regarding the proposed Programme of Work and Budget, we consider that it would be necessary for FAO to continue to adhere to the on-going process of achieving efficient savings and operations and the management of major programmes for the next two years.

In this time of tight fiscal constraints, it seems to be desirable that FAO keep the same budgeting guidelines that most Agencies of the UN System are requested to follow while ensuring the effective follow-ups to and monitoring of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, and the achievement of the key element of the Corporate Strategy to be included in FAO's Strategic Framework for 2000-2015 under consideration towards the new millennium.

My delegation would like to point out two things. First of all, my delegation would like to comment on the situation of the decline in the Programme of Work entirely due to the reduction in other income. A large number of the Member Nations of FAO have emphasized the importance of close cooperation with other organizations, especially with international financial institutes, for example, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

My delegation emphasized several times, in the meetings concerned, the importance of further cooperation with IFIS and high-level negotiations between FAO and IFIS for seeking the resources from IFIS. However, as pointed out in para. 12.22, the budgets of the Programme of Work seem to be declining by US\$ 11.2 million in the period 2000-2001, largely because of the decline of resources from the World Bank.

My delegation would like to stress that, even though resources from the World Bank are expected to be reduced in the next biennium, FAO should keep on looking for a solution to revert such situations.

In this respect, my delegation would be really glad to be informed why the foreseen level of resources from the World Bank in the Programme of Work and Budget 1998-99 could not be evaluated. Our understanding is that the Secretariat is doing its best to obtain resources from IFIS. Here, I would like to ask one question. Is it impossible to keep the same resource levels of the World Bank as before or to increase them by the further strengthening relationships between FAO and IFIS, as is the case between the World Bank and the ADB?

Secondly, we are of the opinion that in the determined scale of the budget for the next biennium, it is of much importance to take duly into account that the assessed contribution of Members in arrears have been increased in recent years, as mentioned in para. 34 of the document. Therefore, it would be undesirable that the budget scale of the Organization is set over the levels that the Members can probably contribute to the Organization under the given fiscal restraints they are facing. In this context, it seems worth noting that Members will be affected, for the time being, by the economic recession.

Moussa Bocar LY (Sénégal)

Monsieur le Président, la Présidente du Groupe africain a déjà donné la position de notre Groupe sur ce point important. De même, le Représentant de l'Afrique du Sud et le Représentant de la Namibie et d'autres, ont identifié le programme qui revêt une importance particulière pour notre

Groupe. Le Sénégal, en ce qui le concerne, s'associe à toutes ces déclarations. De même, nous serions intéressés par la réponse que le Secrétariat devra donner à la République de Corée sur l'explication de la baisse attendue des financements de la part de la Banque mondiale.

Monsieur le Président, en novembre 1993, quand la Conférence de la FAO a procédé à l'élection d'un nouveau Directeur général, elle avait également pris une mesure importante, qui était de demander à tout nouveau Directeur général qui serait élu, on ne savait pas lequel le serait d'ailleurs, de réfléchir sur les programmes, activités et structures de façon à donner des propositions dans le cadre du budget adopté. Ce travail colossal a été réalisé par le nouveau Directeur général, qui en 1994, soumettait, après profonde réflexion, des propositions de restructuration, de décentralisation et de programmes au Conseil de la FAO. En effet, le Conseil de la FAO est l'organe directeur principal se réunissant durant l'intervalle des sessions de la Conférence.

Cet organe directeur a approuvé les propositions jugées sages du Directeur général et l'a chargé de les mettre en œuvre. C'est ainsi que ce programme, adopté par le Conseil de la FAO, doit être considéré comme le programme de l'Organisation et de ses États Membres dans leur ensemble. Parmi ces programmes, nous voudrions mettre l'accent sur le Programme spécial pour la sécurité alimentaire dont les États Membres ont reconnu l'efficacité, dont le Conseil, organe directeur, a répété à plusieurs reprises l'efficacité, mais qui a été attaqué, non dans le cadre du Conseil, mais dans le cadre d'un journal que, nous francophones, ne pouvons pas lire parce qu'il a été écrit en anglais, *The Economist*.

Mais je crois que le Secrétariat de la FAO a donné, par le biais de ses fonctionnaires, la réponse objective qu'il y avait à donner, car ce programme, adopté en 1994, est le fait du Conseil. Dans la même veine, le Conseil, organe directeur, a défini un certain nombre de priorités et de critères pour le programme. Cela a demandé un travail de longue haleine, mais c'est le Conseil qui a accompli ainsi ses responsabilités. De même, l'opération *Telefood* a été examinée par la Conférence de la FAO, on s'en souvient il y a deux ans de cela; examen qui a fait l'objet d'une résolution que nous gagnerions à relire. Et je crois que le Secrétariat est prêt, nous, en tous cas, nous ne sommes pas surpris parce que nous avons déjà étudié la question, mais je crois que le Secrétariat lui-même pourra donner la réalité des faits avancés, car il est surprenant de parler de 40 millions de dollars E.-U. contre un gain de 4 millions de dollars E.-U., quand on sait qu'il s'agit d'un Fonds spécial chargé de recueillir les donations de générosité de par le monde.

C'est le Conseil qui est chargé, sur délégation de la Conférence, de diriger l'Organisation et de donner les indications à son Directeur général. Pourtant, le même auteur ici de propositions n'a pas manqué de dire dans un document officieux ce qui ne peut être considéré que comme un pamphlet: je cite "Le Conseil de la FAO de 49 États membres, n'est pas habituellement en mesure de fournir des directives claires de gouvernance". Alors nous demandons, qu'est ce que nous faisons ici en tant que Conseil? Pourtant, c'est ce même auteur qui propose la mise sur pied d'un soi-disant "panel permanent" de personnes sages, à choisir, tenez-vous bien, parmi ces mêmes représentants des États membres chargés, en quelque sorte, de surveiller le Directeur général. Devant l'embarras de sa propre proposition, l'auteur, qui en décèle les contradictions, signale l'existence des Comités financiers, dont le Président est à ma droite, et du Programme, dont le Président se trouve au podium, se rendant compte lui-même, d'un chevauchement certain entre ce qu'il propose et ce qui existe déjà.

Je crois que le Secrétariat donnera les réponses voulues mais nous devons tenir ce débat et cette campagne dans le cadre des limites de la civilité et du respect mutuel. Moi-même, j'ai eu l'honneur de servir à Genève, comme représentant de mon pays, et le document, que je citais tout à l'heure, rappelle les discours fleuves dont les diplomates traditionalistes, dont l'auteur lui-même, diplomate de carrière, Ambassadeur, sont passés maîtres pour aligner des généralités dont il est difficile de tirer des nouveautés ou recommandations concrètes. Si tel n'était pas le cas, comment expliquer qu'après avoir attaqué ce qui existe, l'auteur n'ait pas été en mesure, ni de citer une liste de priorités, ni de donner des critères permettant de dégager une liste de priorités.

Je crois que c'est assez significatif de la valeur de ce document, et nous ne voudrions pas que notre Conseil soit transformé en tribune de campagne électorale. Le Conseil a une responsabilité en endossant les propositions et les programmes du Directeur général, il les fait siens et nous avons la responsabilité de les assumer tous ensemble, totalement, mais dans le respect réciproque.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italie)

Mon admiration pour Tony Wade augmente tous les jours. Après une journée pareille, je crois qu'elle a doublé. Je veux seulement soulever quelques questions parce que j'ai été sollicité par quelques interventions. Je voudrais souligner l'importance que nous attachons aux FIVIMS nationaux et je crois que leur réalisation est en train de procéder avec de grands progrès en Afrique occidentale. Il y a eu une demi-journée à la réunion de Niamey pour expliquer et présenter les FIVIMS et les possibilités qui existent pour les potentialiser, non seulement sur le plan national mais aussi sur le plan global, et c'est un exemple de ce que je disais ce matin sur la possibilité que plusieurs organisations travaillent ensemble pour la réalisation des FIVIMS.

J'ai participé à toutes les réunions techniques qui ont eu lieu cette année des différents comités, et chaque comité a demandé davantage à l'Organisation, et notre collègue de Namibie a soulevé un problème très important qui est celui des pesticides, qui est un problème de très grande importance pour l'Afrique et c'est un problème auquel nous devons aussi faire face. Tout ceci dit, je voudrais quand même relever un point que j'ai soulevé déjà à plusieurs reprises au Comité financier. C'est-à-dire l'exigence d'une présentation plus simple et transparente des chiffres budgétaires.

Le Secrétariat devrait rédiger une page supplémentaire, qui fasse en un seul tableau, un cadre complet contenant dans une colonne toutes les ressources financières, en y incluant les disponibilités existantes, celles qui devront être versées à titre de contribution ordinaire, volontaire, de sources publiques et privées ainsi que les divers; dans une autre colonne, toutes les dépenses nécessaires pour réaliser les programmes, soit les programmes à réaliser, soit les programmes en cours de réalisation; les dépenses du personnel, y compris les arriérés, et en dernière analyse, ce qui est très important, la partie des contributions des Pays Membres que l'on estime être due, et qui n'a pas été reçue, et qui devrait donc figurer dans les passivités de l'Organisation. Ceci permettra aux Pays Membres de visualiser la situation financière nette de la FAO, soit en termes de disponibilité, soit en termes de passif. Parce que franchement, pour retrouver ce chiffre que je viens de dire, il faut creuser dans des kilos de documents, de papier, tandis que tout ceci pourrait se réaliser en une seule page.

Donc, ce n'est pas pour augmenter le travail de mon ami Tony Wade, mais c'est plutôt pour le réduire, et en même temps, donner aux Pays Membres, pas seulement au Comité financier et au Comité du programme, mais à tous les Membres du Conseil et à ceux de la Conférence, un cadre exact, précis et complet. Tout en comprenant les efforts et les questions qui ont été posées et les nouvelles exigences que l'on pose à l'Organisation, je trouve quand même que quelques économies peuvent être faites. Je l'ai déjà dit à plusieurs reprises au Comité financier, je le répète aujourd'hui, par exemple, les dépenses de voyage qui ont augmenté de 2 pour cent je crois, par exemple, une enquête sur les dépenses de décentralisation qui devraient réduire certaines dépenses et qui apparaissent en train de les augmenter. Tant mieux. comme a dit, je crois, le Délégué américain, si on peut réabsorber les différences entre Croissance nominale zéro et Croissance réelle zéro. J'en doute, mais si cela s'avère possible, ce sera un autre miracle de Tony Wade.

Bill DOERING (Canada)

I will try to keep my remarks brief as I may be the only reason between a number of people and their supper tonight.

Again, I would like to begin my remarks by complimenting the Organization on the progress it has made in changing the way of introducing its new business practices which have clearly been reflected in this Programme of Work and Budget. As the Director-General said in his introduction to the Programme of Work and Budget, the years since 1994 have indeed been years of reform, and it is now time to reflect upon what has been accomplished and what remains to be done.

The United Nations has embarked upon a programme of reform and FAO has been part of that reform. Canada strongly supports the UN Reform. We believe that an important part of the reform process is the setting of priorities in budget documents, in other words, the strategic vision. In FAO, priorities are set by Member Nations through technical committees. It is the responsibility of Member Nations to give direction and to be good managers of the Organization by operating within means we can afford. As the United States clearly pointed out, a number of Members are finding it difficult to pay their assessments, even at current budget levels. In fact 51 Member Nations are in arrears to the extent that they are in danger of losing the right to vote at this November's Conference.

Canada's policy continues to be zero nominal growth for all multilateral organizations, including FAO. While FAO has made considerable reforms and has reduced expenditures, Canada believes it is possible to save even more by working differently. Currently, the biennial budget is built on existing and new requests from Members. When new programmes are adopted old ones are seldom ended. They simply continue from biennium to biennium. This process would seem to account for a certain rigidity in FAO's budget process. One way of addressing this problem would be the adoption of a "sunset clause" when starting new programmes. This would require the Organization to revisit each programme or project after a set number of years, and assess whether or not it has accomplished its goal and whether or not it should be continued.

Canada commends the Organization for the progress it has made to date in decentralization, but again believes more can be accomplished. Paying greater attention to hiring local expertise when staffing regional, sub-regional and country offices makes good economic sense, while at the same time helping to develop local capacity and in fact the local economy.

Another suggestion Canada would like make is that there be reallocation of resources within FAO's current budget. We feel there is not an appropriate balance between the agriculture, fisheries and forestry budget, and that the fisheries and forestry programmes, in fact, are suffering. FAO has a clear and well demonstrated expertise and comparative advantages in both fisheries and forestry, and can do more to raise its profile in these areas.

As an example, let us look at fisheries. FAO is the only truly global body dealing with fisheries' matters in which there can be both political and normative discussions to help advance difficult international issues. This was stated very strongly at both the Committee on Fisheries and the Fisheries Ministerial meetings earlier this year, and confirmed by the UN Commission on Sustainable Development. Both the Committee on Fisheries and the Fisheries Ministerial meetings directed FAO to consider its resource allocation between programmes, but this is not reflected in this version of the Programme of Work and Budget. Canada believes it should be.

Finally, Canada would like to see the Organization, and in fact all UN Agencies, adopt a standardized budget format. This would make it much easier for Members to compare costs from one biennium to the next and from agency to agency. Also in the preparation of the final version of the Programme of Work and Budget, we would like to see the programme presentations quantified and a clear rationale given for proposed funding allocations.

Now turning to document CL 116/3-Sup. 1, entitled *Additional Information*, which responds to the request for the Programme and Finance Committees for information on a Zero Nominal Growth budget, Canada would like to have more time to respond to this important document. Based on an initial review, we congratulate the Secretariat for responding to this request and for the decision to move quickly to implement the savings from the ORACLE system. However, we cannot agree to the proposal in paragraph 9 to fund the incremental separation costs from arrears, as was done in 1998-99. If there are separation costs incurred as a result of the zero nominal growth proposal, those costs are to be absorbed within the US\$ 650 million budget. Canada agreed in 1997 to such a proposal, conditional to it being on a one-time basis. We will not support such a proposal for the 2000-20001 biennium.

Krassimir KOSTOV (Observer for Bulgaria)

It gives me the opportunity to apologize to the delegate of Argentina and the Council for interrupting your work. As a representative of a Member Nation I wanted to vehemently state an opinion that the attention of the Council should in no way be diverted to issues that cannot be characterized in another way, but as speculations. Now that they have got a dignified answer I hope the mentioned publication will make it public. In fact, I intended to ask the floor for a different issue, a very important issue. I hope all Members of the Council and all colleagues in this room will agree. I intended to ask the question under this item, because I could not find a more appropriate item.

My question to the Secretariat is whether the Secretariat envisages any activity to rebuild the agriculture in the areas stricken by the conflict in Kosovo?

Noel D. de LUNA (Observer for the Philippines)

Firstly, the Philippines would like to associate itself with and support the statements of Thailand on behalf of the developing economies of Asia, even if it means an increased regular assessment on the part of the Philippines. In general, the Philippines finds the Programme of Work and Budget acceptable except for three minor concerns. One regards fisheries. We are concerned with the proposed changes in resources at a major programme level. 2.3 Fisheries, item 249 states that the only major shift of resources proposed in the major programme is US\$ 220 000 from Programme 2.3.3, that is *Fisheries Exploitation and Utilization*, to Programme 2.3.2, *Fisheries Resources and Aquaculture*. In the light of the growing emphasis on the upgrading of the quality of fishery products to attain global competitiveness, the transfer of funds to the relatively well-funded *Fisheries Resources and Aquaculture* is viewed as disadvantageous to the attainment of the objectives of the *Fish Utilization Sub-programme*.

The other minor concern regards livestock. The Summary Programme of Work and Budget makes no mention of livestock because it is lumped together with other programmes under the title of *Agriculture Production and Support Systems*. We are distressed by this omission. We believe that this is contrary to FAO's emphasis on the concept of disease emergency preparedness being promoted by FAO among its Members in view of the emerging diseases of livestock. We suggest that the programme on livestock be included in page 4 of document CL 116/3, and we can submit our proposal to the Secretariat. The Philippines is doubly distressed to find on page 46 that the Programme of Livestock is decreased by the abolition of six sub-programmes or projects. Again, the Philippines feels that this is contrary to FAO's emphasis on the concept of disease emergency preparedness.

Finally, on savings, we would like to know from the Secretariat the amount of forecasted savings for the year ending 1999, and how the Secretariat plans to treat these savings for the next biennium.

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

In the name of God, the Merciful and Compassionate, this is the first time I ask for the floor. May I take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr Chairman, and the Secretariat for having prepared this good document. I thank all those who collaborated with the Secretariat in order to submit this document.

As a Member of the Near East in the Finance Committee, we would like to comment on the report of the Finance Committee. I should like to refer to what is contained in this report. This is a mere example. First, there is the support for the Zero Real Growth, including in the developing countries. This is the basic stance of the developing countries in the Finance Committee.

As for the discussion of the various programmes, mainly within the Near East Group we have stated that the Regions should be given enough time to study the various scenarios. In addition, some comments were submitted in order to amend some programmes so that we can focus on

those programmes leading to sustainable development, and the capacity-building programmes in addition to institution strengthening and training facilities in the countries in the Region.

Within the framework of the discussions held in the Finance Committee we talked about the share of the publications of the various countries. We compared the share of the Arabic-speaking countries and the others, and we wanted to ask the Organization to raise the cost by 80 percent for the developing countries. The developed countries would see their share increased by 20 percent only so that the developing countries can receive these publications in a less costly manner.

While reviewing the language policies of the Organization, our Group stated its position, namely the equal treatment of all languages. All languages should be dealt with on an equal footing in conformity with what is laid down in the Constitution. Hence for the Near East Group, the Arabic language should be treated on an equal footing. This applies to publications, the Committee on Desert Locusts and the Codex Alimentarius, along with other issues and topics.

With regard to decentralization, we called for the creation of more national offices in order to promote national capacities. Regarding "Telefood" and the publicity that accompanied such an event, this was of great service to the developing countries. Actually this had a positive impact and should be considered as a positive asset for the Director-General.

Last year, it was said that the Director-General spent 175 days outside Headquarters. This is ridiculous because the Director-General does pay field visits in order to get acquainted with the reality of the situation, so this is the *raison d'être* of this Organization. He should have an insight into the field where the Organization should be present.

CHAIRMAN

We do have a full, very frank and positive debate in which a range of opinions has been clearly expressed.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Actually, I am only going to respond to one question while leaving the more detailed ones to Mr Wade. The delegate from Bulgaria asked whether FAO was going to be involved in the agricultural reconstruction of Kosovo. First, I would like to remind delegates here that we made a special effort to assist the refugees who were in Macedonia and Albania, in particular by providing assistance to those families that were hosting refugees. We used the modest resources available in the TCP Programme to provide seed to the hosting families to grow vegetables and to provide them with fertilizer and animal feed. We also sent some of our staff to the Region to serve as volunteers to assist the local Ministries of Agriculture there, and we issued special appeals for extra-budgetary support for the Region. I think you could expect us to make similar special efforts to help rebuild the agriculture sector in Kosovo. We would certainly hope to do this in full partnership with the broader UN System. In this regard, we participated in the recent assessment team that the Secretary-General sent to Yugoslavia. As I said, in rebuilding the agriculture sector in Kosovo we would look forward to working in close partnership with the greater UN System, especially in very close liaison with the World Food Programme and with the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation)

Thank you for the real challenge in responding to all of the questions. I have to say thank you also for the appreciation you expressed for the new format. This is very important as a lot of people throughout the House have had to spend a great deal of time coming up with the new programme entities that make up the new model. They will appreciate the fact that Members did find it a more useful format. I will try and group responses to the questions as best I can.

Inflation and cost increases. The United States of America raised the 3 percent increase on personnel costs and wondered whether we could not save on that a bit. First of all can I clarify one thing, In the case of General Service staff, the scale is worked out on the basis of surveys with the ICSC and in relationship to local indices but it is not the index for consumer prices, it is the index for wage earnings and that in Italy is significantly above for the consumer price index. The latest

Economist Intelligence Unit rates for the CPI, that is the consumer price index, for 2000 is at 1.8 percent and 2 percent for 2001 but on net wage earnings it is 2.9 percent and 3.1 percent. It is the latter that has a more direct effect on our General Service rates. For Professionals, the situation is slightly different and, as it happens, the results coming in now do suggest we will be able to make a certain reduction. In fact, the rates you have there show 3 percent from November 1999 but then in 2001 we only have 1.6 percent. We believe we will be able to bring in the November 1999 rate down further so there will be some gain on that. Related to inflation also, Italy makes the comment that the SPWB includes an increase in travel expense. That was based on the forecasts that we rely on from CCAQ(FB). The Geneva-based Agencies do an analysis of airfares and air freight rates, and provide an assumption for the System, and that is what we based that increase on. This is intended to cover the cost of increases for the same amount of travel, if I can say that. Now I should make two points. First of all, the Director-General has decided, as part of his exercise to reduce the claim on cost increases, to absorb that increase in the full Programme of Work and Budget. So that amount will disappear in the full Programme of Work and Budget, and this is one of the ways that we get down from the US\$ 35 million to the US\$ 10 to 15 million. He also, you will find, has made a substantial cut in travel costs on the non-protected programmes close to 20 percent. Again you will see that in the full Programme of Work and Budget.

On the question of level, as usual we have a wide variety of suggestions being made. Four countries, I think, specifically mentioned ZNG, a large number ZRG or RG and, in fact, several others did not make a statement yet as to where they stood. On the question of other income, which relates of course to the level, there was the enquiry, I think by the Republic of Korea, concerning what had happened in other income, in particular from the international financing institutions. If I can draw your attention to the table on page 18 on document CL 116/3, I think the distinguished delegate was referring to the reduction on the World Bank line from US\$ 20,994,000 to US\$ 18,469,000. That is a reduction of about US\$ 2.5 million, which is due to some over optimism on our part in 1998-99 where we thought there were to be some incremental funds coming to support activities which they wanted to work with us on. However, we discovered that their total envelope was fixed by their own Board, and therefore they could not provide additional funds. They were just moving funds between line items. So that is the reason for that reduction. I would say that the figure for 2000-2001 will rise because the World Bank normally does accommodate the cost-increase part and that is not shown there, so it will look a little bit better. The total decline, as you correctly point out, is about US\$ 11 million. A much more serious reason for this decline was the reduction in support cost earnings. And here I am talking about out earnings on projects, the 13 percent project servicing cost, our earnings in technical support services, and all related earnings, where we see a decline of US\$ 7.9 million out of that US\$ 11 million. That reflects a decline in the Field Programme itself and you will see a table on the opposite, on page 19, showing the history of decline in that Programme, at least up until now. That brings me to a remark that there was an increasing reliance on extrabudgetary-resources. In fact, the ratio of extra-budgetary to Regular Programme is declining, and has been declining for some years, so it is simply not the case.

On a question of arrears, which was mentioned by both Japan and Canada, and I think, even the United States of America, as being a reason for not increasing the budget. I think Japan said it was clear manifestation of the need to establish a budget at a level which would be supported by Member Nations. I think we have to clarify something of what happens on arrears. It is true, we have a lot of Member Nations in arrears, and we would like to have a lot less in arrears. However, it is not true that the real level of arrears is growing substantially from biennium to biennium. What happens is that a large number of Members have chosen to pay their contributions two years out from when they should be paying them. So what happens is that every biennium, we have current assessments going into arrears, but we have arrears being paid for assessments that are two years late. In fact, the growth of arrears, if we exclude the impact of the United States of America for the period when they were not paying, has been roughly equal to the inflationary increases; that is, around about the same number of Members are always in arrears for the same amount and the only difference being the cost increases. Now if you increase the budget, or you

decrease the budget, it will make no difference of any significant amount to the level of arrears. They will presumably continue to practice the practices that they have been practising so far.

With regard to assessments in other currencies, the European Union raised the suggestion that we should look at the possibility of receiving assessments in national currencies. I presume they were talking about the Euro or the various currencies of the European Union. There is an important question to be asked here, which is do we mean that we are going to start paying in those currencies instead of US dollars but accept a liability in US dollars, or are we asking to accept a liability in Euro or Lire, etc. Now the former is where we are now, the current Financial Regulations allow any country to pay in their national currency but of course it is converted immediately to dollars and the dollar amount is what is credited against your assessment, so any exchange losses are yours not ours, in that particular area. Now, if the European Union is proposing to pay in Euros and to have the Organization accept the exchange losses, I suspect other Members may have some difficulty with that. There is an alternative which we are looking at, which is whether we should move towards, what is known as, a Split-Assessment Scheme, which is currently employed by Unesco, IAEA and UNIDO. All of those organizations assess their Member Nations in two currencies - one in US dollars and the other one in whatever the local currency is, French Francs and Austrian Schillings. The liability of the Member is to pay the equivalent of whatever currencies they are assessed. They also can pay in any currency but they only get the credit for whatever they are worth in those currencies. That is also avoiding the impact of exchange loss coming to the Organization. May I say that this is under active study, although we do not anticipate a change for the upcoming budget, because we really do not have time to put this through Committees and discuss it in the depth that it will need to be discussed, but it is under active consideration and any ideas you have should be given to the Secretariat.

On format, again thank you for the comments on the new programme model. With regard to the comments to the People's Republic of China and Germany concerning comparisons of the various scenarios, yes indeed, we will present a budget very similar to the one we produced in 1998-99, where you will see the impact of Zero Nominal Growth at each programme level. You will also see the impact in terms of lost production, if I can call it that. Germany's question with regard to scores, yes we do employ internally this technique of trying to score each proposal, actually on a 0 to 5 scale, against the criteria that we are now using. They are the same criteria that appear in paragraph 152 of the Strategic Framework. This work is done within the Divisions, and they use it as a technique for determining their priorities. I have to say I have not collected that data centrally. Apart from anything else, the minute you start doing that it becomes an exercise in defending programmes instead of an exercise in really using the criteria. My personal advice on this issue is that we should encourage Divisions and Departments and programme managers to use the criteria in coming up with their proposals, and we should not get too much into trying to have them justify individual scores, etc., otherwise I am afraid it will turn the whole thing into an exercise to defend programme proposals.

Several delegates, and in particular Denmark, I believe, talked about the link between the SPWB, the Summary Programme of Work and Budget and the Strategic Framework, and in fact, outside this meeting other delegates have raised it with me. We are in a period of transition, so we accept the criticism that the linkages are not clear. It is almost intentional. While the Strategic Framework continues to be a document under really quite heavy scrutiny by Member Nations, it would be almost improper of us to base a budget on that Strategic Framework. Not until it is approved by the Conference does it have the authority to be used for that purpose and, in fact, we have asked managers in preparing the budget to rely on existing authorities, decisions of Council, Conference, of the Technical Committees, etc., not to rely on their work on the Strategic Framework. Having said that, of course, those same managers have spent the last year working on the Strategic Framework so you can see the influence coming through in the text and elsewhere, so it is not surprising there is some commonality between the two. But we will not really see the full picture until we move into the next stage which is during the year 2000 when we will develop the first version of the Medium-Term Plan under this new model, specifically addressing the Strategic Objectives in the Strategic Framework and relating the new programme model to the

Strategic Framework objectives; that is, what is the contribution of this technical project to which Strategic Objectives and in what way. By that means, we hope to be able to produce the full cause and effect relationship between what we are proposing and what you have approved as the Strategic Objectives of the Organization. This is something one Member specifically raised as being apparently missing from this document, and I think I probably agree to a certain degree.

The distinguished delegate from Italy proposed a magnificent new table. I will consult him outside the meeting to see if I can understand it. I would say however, that the Summary Programme of Work and Budget in a way, because it is "summary", does lack some of the detailed connections which exist in the full document. There are two tables in the full PWB that between them show total resource availability and total utilisation and how they match; that is, we do balance the budget. That is not shown in one place, and perhaps that is what we need to do to make it clearer.

On the question of priorities, I won't go through all the priorities that were mentioned. Let me say that we have taken note of the comments on priorities, and we will do our best to accommodate them in the final budget, particularly where they received widespread support. One comment by the distinguished delegate of Philippines with regard to the livestock programme needs to be addressed. I think there is a misunderstanding. I am talking about the table preceding paragraph 145 where the delegate expressed concern about the effective abolition of a series of sub-programmes in the livestock area. This, in fact, is just the impact of implementing this new programme model. We deleted all of the existing sub-programmes in all programmes, and then we provided a new set of technical projects or continuing programme activities which roughly speaking represented the same amount. In this case you will see that there is a reduction of US\$ 400,000 but there is not a reduction of US\$ 17 million which is what it looks like if you look at those sub-programmes. If I am not clear on that, I would be happy to spend some time afterwards and go through what exactly has happened there. So, for example, I think you raised a Livestock-EMPRES. It is still there, but it is now under Technical Project 213.A7, and it exists there with US\$ 2.7 million.

On the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS) again, just a clarification so people do not go away confused. This is for the distinguished delegate for Germany. It is not budgeted under TCP, but rather is budgeted under Programme 2.5.6. It is all in one place, and it is currently at US\$ 9.138 million. Of course, countries may choose to use their TCP money for whatever they request, as long as it is within the guidelines. Some TCP money has been used, for example, on the water component of SPFS projects because countries requested that we approve projects for them in that area. The only other areas where you find SPFS work is, of course, in the technical support to the SPFS programme but, can I say, we budget that in the right places and we also highlight it in paragraph 379, so you can see how much money is being set aside for that purpose. I believe the picture is fairly complete, but accept that it is quite complicated.

On the question of the evaluation of the Special Programme, yes that is certainly on the cards, I think it may well be in the next Programme Evaluation Report, but it rather depends on the items that are selected by the Programme Committee from those proposed by the Director-General. But certainly we see it as being close to the time when it needs to be evaluated.

Regarding the intervention from the distinguished delegate from Argentina, I will limit myself to the questions of fact, if I may, so that at least you have the facts and can judge from there. The first one was a question of a fact on liaison offices and programme of 1.3 which is a total of US\$ 12 million. Again I can see that the Summary Programme of Work and Budget is somewhat summary in this particular area and it is not until the full Programme of Work and Budget that you can see what all the details are for but, for your information, of that amount, US\$ 2.7 million is for jointly-funded activities with the UN System. This consists in cost sharing arrangements for things such as CCAQ, of the Joint Pension Fund, of the International Civil Service Commission, of the Joint Inspection Unit. These are all areas where FAO is obliged, if it is to remain a Member of the Common System, to pay its share of their costs. Then there is the cost to FAO of the Liaison Offices themselves. I will quickly go down them, Brussels US\$ 0.6 million, Geneva

US\$ 1.9 million (I am talking about Programme 1.3.2 liaison costs there, I will come back to your question on posts), Japan US\$ 1.9 million, New York US\$ 2.1 million and Washington US\$ 2.5 million. There are two groups of Liaison Officers, as you probably know. There are those who deal primarily with liaison with the United Nations System, that is New York and Geneva, and those who deal with liaison with governments or major groups, the North American Office which is in Washington, the Japanese Office and the Brussels Office which is aimed primarily at the European Union but also has a direct relationship with Government of Belgium. On the question of the posts in the Geneva Office, yes there are five posts, there, but two of those posts are with the Economic Commission for Europe dealing with forestry matters. Actually, they have been there for a long time but they used to be in the Joint Division with the Economic Commission. However, Joint Divisions were abolished so these posts came into the Geneva Liaison Office, not as additions, but as an effective transfer. The only addition, in fact, is the Director position for that Office.

“Telefood” is part of the World Food Day costs in the budget. There is not a great deal in the Regular Programme. “TeleFood” produces most of its money through contributions, but on your question of audit, etc., I should add that it is subject to External Audit, that is the French *cour des comptes* and also to the reviews of the Inspector General.

With regard to the Director of Finance, I am not sure where the information came from, but it is a little bit misleading for other Members I am afraid. The last Director of Finance permanently holding the position was Mr Owens. He left in March 1997, and he was subsequently replaced with an interim director Mr Ruddy, who is the ex-Director of Accounting and Finance at the World Bank. So the post has actually been substantially covered in one way or another, pretty well for all of that period, so I am not sure from where your information came from.

Moving on to administrative arrangements, South Africa asked the question about the type of risks we face in bringing forward the consolidation and integration of administrative structures. It is difficult to say in a way, because part of our problem is that we really would have preferred to have done more work before we presented this particular proposal. We are very confident that we will make more gains in terms of savings from the process, but it requires new flows of information between individuals and between offices, it requires new delegated approvals of authority, it will require new forms of communications, and time will be needed for training the staff involved. There is the question of the system's capacity to handle everything that it is being asked to handle. It has not been tested at full volume yet, and particularly over the capacity of the telecommunication lines both on decentralized offices where we are relying on communications facilities, etc. which are not in our control. I suppose the risk for us is that there will be a temporary loss of programme delivery. That is, in accelerating the process, we will not do it as well as we would have otherwise have done, and therefore we will probably lose some programme delivery both to the Regular Programme and the Field Programme. I do not believe we will have any permanent loss in the sense that we will have a lower level of delivery for the implementation period but, in fact, I am sure we will fully recover that. It remains a question of how long it will take us to implement it effectively.

I am sure I have missed some questions but those are the ones I had on my list. Please come back to me if I have missed something important or if any Member feels I have disregarded something.

Thank you Mr Chairman.

D. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee)

Mr Chairman, it is hard to add anything after Mr Wade has replied in such a comprehensive way.

I just wanted to say I think it was a rich debate, and the Committee will certainly take the various comments made, particularly in relation to the priorities seen by the various groups and countries into consideration, when the revised format of the full Programme of Work and Budget comes to us, reflecting the debate of today, and certainly all the other inputs which have been made will be considered.

The Chairman of the Finance Committee actually should have spoken on our agenda item to the Secretariat, and if you allow, I can do it. The Secretariat has actually followed up on the Joint Meeting, as you can see on the paper provided to us, we are now in a position to understand what the Zero Nominal Growth would mean to the Organization.

The meeting rose at 20.00 hours.

La séance est levée à 20 h 00.

Se levanta la sesión a las 20.00 horas.

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixteenth Session Cent seizième session 116º período de sesiones
Rome, 14 – 19 June 1999 Rome, 14 – 19 juin 1999 Roma, 14 – 19 de junio de 1999
THIRD PLENARY MEETING TROISIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE TERCERA SESIÓN PLENARIA
15 June 1999

**The Third Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.50 hours
Mr Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding**

**La troisième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 50
sous la présidence de M. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Président indépendant du Conseil**

**Se abre la tercera sesión plenaria a las 9.50 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

3. Current World Food Situation (CL 116/2)

3. Situation actuelle de l'alimentation dans le monde (CL 116/2)

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4. Report of The 25th Session of the Committee on World Food Security (Rome, 31 May – 4 June 1999) (CL 116/10)

4. Rapport de la vingt-cinquième session du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale (Rome, 31 mai - 4 juin 1999) (CL 116/10)

4. Informe del 25º período de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial (Roma, 31 de mayo-4 de junio de 1999) (CL 116/10)

CHAIRMAN

We have two related major items for consideration, namely, Item 3 which is *Current World Food Situation*, document CL 116/2 and Item 4 *Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on World Food Security*, document CL 116/10.

In order to save time, I suggest that the Secretariat introduce both documents together so that delegations may then address both items in their interventions. If delegates wish to speak once on Item 3 and then after that on Item 4, they can certainly do so.

I realize that the Report of the Committee on Food Security was issued only yesterday, due to the fact that the Committee held its session about a week ago, however I hope you have had time to read the document and are in a position to comment on it, bearing in mind that many Council delegations attended the Session of the Committee.

Item 3 focuses on development and trends in food production and international markets for staple food and is complementary to the Report of the Committee on Food Security, which covers the wider issue of development in food security.

If there are no objections from Members of the Council, I suggest that we discuss the two items together. I see no objections, I would proceed to ask Mr de Haen, Assistant Director-General of the Economic and Social Department, to introduce both items.

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

It is a pleasure to introduce these two items. For the item on the *Current World Food Situation* the Secretariat has prepared document CL 116/2 for the discussion. The main emphasis of that document is on developments in food production and markets for basic food products and, as the Chairman has just pointed out, the reporting in this document should be seen as complementary to that presented to the recent session of the Committee on World Food Security, which had also an item on the assessment of the World Food Security Situation, with a report that we see as complementary to this one. The report of the CFS itself is also before you as document CL 116/10.

I would briefly summarize the main relevant points of CFS 25 as far as they seem important for your attention and I would then give you some latest updates on the World Food Situation which could not be incorporated in the document CL 116/2. As regards CFS, I would just summarize the following points:

Regarding the follow-up, monitoring and assessment work with respect to the World Food Summit, the Committee welcomed the new structure proposed for the assessment, endorsed a reporting format for commitments 1, 2 and 5 and agreed that this format should form the basis for all future reporting on the progress of the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of

Action. These commitments 1, 2 and 5 will be subject to your reporting in the next CFS Session in the year 2000.

The Committee stressed the importance it attached to the work of the Inter-agency Working Group on FIVIMS, that is Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems. It recommended that further development of the indicators be used by the CFS for its monitoring work and what it be undertaken within this context of FIVIMS, and it requested that the report on progress in implementation of FIVIMS, at national and global levels, be tabled at each future session of the CFS. Furthermore, the Committee agreed to the suggestion of the CFS Bureau that the thematic issue for consideration at the 26th Session of the CFS i.e., next year, should be "Who are the Food Insecure?" This is, of course, to be linked to a thorough debate on FIVIMS, i.e. on information systems.

Finally, under this item the CFS welcomed the report of the outcome of the Fourth IBO-American Forum of Agriculture Ministers held in Havana, Cuba in May this year, and appreciated the contribution that meeting made to the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

I will deal very briefly on the other points as far as they need your attention. With regard to the standing item on Nutrition, the Committee recognized the importance of food quality and safety as an integral component of food security and stressed the importance of having developing Member Nations participate more actively in the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

The Committee also recalled the decision of the FAO Conference Resolution 19/77 regarding the Council decision at its Hundred and Fifteenth Session in November 1998, on the use of languages in the FAO and its Subsidiary Bodies. The CFS requested, through the Council, that the FAO Conference draw this decision to the attention of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and request that the decision regarding languages be implemented by that Body.

Regarding broader participation of civil societies and other partners in the work of the CFS, the Committee invited the NGOs and CSOs to be closely involved in the follow-up process and suggested that in each subsequent session of the CFS, the NGOs or CSOs should present a report on their activities related to World Food Summit follow-up and make any necessary suggestions on procedural issues needing further consideration by Member Governments.

This brings me to the final point in my report on last week's CFS. The Committee decided that the document CFS 99/LIM/1 entitled *Implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action – Report of the Committee of World Food Security through the FAO Council to ECOSOC* be submitted to Council for transmittal to ECOSOC within the context of Objective 7.3a of the World Food Summit Plan of Action. This would be in line with the request of the FAO Conference.

Turning now, very briefly, to the *Current World Food Situation*, the most recent information on food production and markets confirms, in general, the overall picture that we had already presented in document CL 116/2, namely, that of a relatively poor year, 1998, in terms of food production growth. Of course, I would not repeat that. But, in fact, for the developing countries recent data suggest that food production from crop and livestock only rose 1.2 percent in 1998, which was down from the 1.8 percent that we have reported in the document. This lower figure, however, is the result of an upward revision of the estimates of absolute levels of production in 1997, rather than a downward revision in 1998. That, at least, is a positive sign.

As regards staple food, I can only mention that the estimate of world cassava production has been revised somewhat downward, while the estimate of global cereal production, including rice and milled equivalent, has been revised slightly upward by 2 million tonnes, now totalling 1 882 million tonnes. The short-term outlook for cereals, however, points to some further reduction in cereal output in 1999, which we now forecast to amount to 1 858 million tonnes, which is a decline of 1.3 percent and to a slight deterioration in the cereal supply outlook for the marketing season 1999-2000.

If these forecasts materialize, cereal output will not be sufficient to meet the expected consumption requirements in 1999-2000. The ratio of global stocks to trend utilization at the end of the 1999-2000 season is thus forecast to fall to 16.4 percent, which is below the 17 to 18 percent range which the Secretariat considers necessary to safeguard global food security. I thought I should bring this to your attention. Indications are thus, at this stage, that in order to avoid the deterioration of the cereal supply demand situation in 2000 and 2001, i.e. still a year further ahead, a significant increase in cereal production would be required in the year 2000.

Further reason for serious concern is obviously the large number of countries worldwide facing various degrees of food emergency situations and most recently, of the past weeks, we have all seen the evolving of a major humanitarian emergency in Europe. The prospects for lasting peace are now higher than when we wrote the document, but continued international humanitarian assistance will certainly be needed in the coming months, if not years. It must not be forgotten though that severe food supply problems and food emergencies continue to persist in a very large number of developing countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean as well.

On our last point concerning food aid, I would like to report that our latest forecast of cereal food aid shipments in 1998-99 is now 8 million tonnes, rather than 8.5 million tonnes, as reported in the document. This still represents an increase of 2.2 million over the previous year.

Finally, I want to provide you with the latest information from the meeting last week in London of the International Grains Council. The information is that the Food Aid Convention is very likely to go into effect in July this year, only 1 to 2 countries still need to sign. Just to recall, it has some additional provisions: one, is the expansion of the commodity coverage to include dairy, micro-nutrients and fortified foods, roots and tubers and sugar; and second, that it will have a cash component, as well as a commodity component, where the volume commodity component is smaller but the cash component is likely to make up for this. I thought you might find this information, which is very recent, of interest.

This is my short introduction, and I thank you for your attention. This has covered both items, in our view, as far as information is concerned that is not contained in the documents.

James W. SCHROEDER (United States of America)

We greatly appreciate FAO's Secretariat's comprehensive assessment of the *World Food Situation*. FAO is unique in its ability to survey the global food supply situation across so many countries and for so many major food commodities. These comprehensive annual updates by FAO allow us to evaluate the importance of developments in countries and commodity sectors that we, for example, at the US Department of Agriculture, cannot routinely analyze on our own accord.

The United States assessments of the current global food situation are largely consistent with those of FAO. A period of high global demand, declining stocks and relatively high prices during 1995 and 1996 has now been followed by two years of increased supplies, slowing demand, rising stocks and weakening prices. The gains in food supplies have been broad-based, although weather and other factors have adversely affected supplies in some Regions. The surge in global supplies reflects increased production in most major exporting Regions, as a result of a combination of favourable weather, market-oriented policies, improved crop and livestock sector productivity and, in some areas, improved incentives for agricultural investment.

These gains, along with weakened demand among major importers in Asia and the newly-independent states, have led to sharp declines in world market price for virtually all major foods and feeds. The United States generally agrees with the Secretariat's conclusion that these developments create an environment where the cost of commercial food imports by food deficit countries will fall; and where the global availability of food aid to address food emergencies is likely to increase.

Now, with regard to developments over the next year, current United States assessments indicate continued excess supplies and weak world prices for major food commodities, during 1999-2000, followed only by a gradual nominal increase in prices over the following three to four years.

Global supplies are expected to adjust downward in response to lower prices in 1999-2000, but supplies are likely to remain large unless there is a major setback due to poor weather. With normal weather, we expect gains in productivity amongst several major developed and developing country exporters. This will largely offset any area declines and maintain downward pressure on grain and oil seed prices.

At the same time, we anticipate only a gradual recovery in consumer incomes and import demand for food grains, feeds and meats among the Asian economies. The newly-independent states are also likely to achieve only a sluggish recovery over the next three to five years with constrained commercial import demand creating downward pressure on global meat prices.

The current United States assessment of the medium-term outlook suggests that food deficit countries will continue to benefit from an environment of downward pressure on global market prices and upward pressure on food aid availability. However, despite a generally favourable current and medium-term outlook for the availability of low-cost food imports, a number of countries will continue to experience either chronic or emergency food deficits due to poor weather, civil strife, lack of purchasing power or other factors.

The current FAO estimate is that about 38 countries face short-term food emergencies of varying degrees of severity. The most recent US assessment, completed in September 1998, generally parallels this estimate. We have identified 37 countries with short-term food deficits; nine of these were identified as highly food-insecure, with the remaining 28 being moderately food-insecure. The same United States study also evaluated the outlook for food-deficit countries through 2008, with the aim of identifying those countries with chronic and significant food gaps. Significant chronic food gaps, unlikely to be met through commercial food imports, were identified in 39 countries, with 12 countries found to face relatively high food insecurity over the next 10 years, and 27 to face moderate food insecurity. The bulk of these countries are in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The FAO document provides good estimates of the increase in food aid for 1998-1999. The need for emergency food aid to Russia and some other countries remains large. Currently world production in supplies available food aid are also adequate, however, to meet these emergency needs. The United States has responded to global food needs by providing over 10 million metric tonnes of food aid, including significant increases in both cereal and non-cereal food assistance. Non-cereal donations have included pork, salmon, soybean meal, vegetable oil, lentils, non-fat dry milk and planting seeds. We expect US food donations to remain high in the coming year and as has been mentioned, of course, certainly the Balkan situation is of concern.

In the document provided by the Secretariat, FAO has focused primarily on a review of food production trends as a means of identifying food emergencies. Other factors are briefly discussed, including near term developments with commodity prices, cereal import bills and food aid availability, but only production trends are systematically documented and reviewed. Now, undoubtedly, production trends are a key determinant of food security in many countries, but these other factors are often, at least, as important. So, as the FAO report points out, medium-term prospects for global food security are to a large extent influenced by the international economic environment. So, quite apart from production developments, local food security can be affected both positively and negatively by economic events that affect national commercial import capacity or consumer purchasing power.

US assessments of food gaps and food insecurity attempt to account for four important sets of factors in food security: domestic food production, nutritional need, income distribution and the capacity to import food commercially. In the future, we would suggest that FAO consider also providing information on a broader range of variables relevant to the assessment of the *World Food Situation*, particularly, the needs of food deficit countries. First, we think it would be very helpful to provide an estimate of *per capita* income and real food price trends in many countries. Second, it is important to provide consistent and comparable estimates of current and forecast nutritional status across these countries. Third, we think it is essential to have a systematic evaluation of the commercial food import capacity of countries, in order to assess their capacity to close food gaps through

commercial imports. Finally, because food access by the lowest income segments of the population is a key to food security, we suggest that FAO include estimates of consumption status by income classes.

Now, each of these tasks entails challenges with regard to data and methods, but we believe that reasonable measures of each of these variables could be derived from available data and that this information would substantially improve the utility of this annual document.

Finally, with respect to the Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on World Food Security, certainly our preference would be that the Council adopt that Report.

Hugo-Maria SCHALLY (European Community)

I speak on behalf of the European Community and its Member States on Item number 3.

In the paper distributed as document CL 116/2, we have an overview of the trends in food production and markets for basic food products. We regret, however, that demand and consumption trends and patterns continue to be neglected in this document. We agree on the conclusions that medium-term prospects for the world food situation will depend, to a large extent, on developments in the world economy and also on the timing and strength of recovery from financial crisis. The trade potential of developing countries depends, in our view, on a broad range of elements ranging from world demand and trade policies, factor endowments and agronomic constraints, production and distribution factors, domestic agricultural and economic policy, through to external factors such as location and integration in the trading system.

For these reasons, it is very difficult for us to draw broad conclusions about trade potential. However, there is a clear potential to increase productivity in most developing countries within the agricultural sector.

The WTO Agreement, especially the agreement on agriculture, limits subsidized exports and improves market access. These commitments, to which the European Union subscribes, contribute to better functioning of world markets. There is considerable scope for developing countries to better exploit their comparative advantage, particularly in tropical and certain commodities such as sugar, beef, citrus fruit, horticultural products, fresh and semi-processes, etc.

Production from developing countries is present on markets in the developed world. This is particularly the case in the European Community, which is by far the greatest importer of developing countries' products.

Although developing country overall exports have grown substantially since 1986, and their share of world agricultural trade increased from 40 percent in 1990 to 41.6 percent in 1996, many of the preferential access arrangements remain unexploited. I am referring here to the GSP Scheme, the Lomé Convention and others. This is something that could be built upon in the future.

As regards the European Community trade in agri-food, developing countries are the main partners. In 1997, the shares of different groups of developing countries in the European Community's imports of agri-food products were the following: Mercosur and Andean, 20 percent; ACP, 18 percent; Asean, 6 percent; non-ACP countries in North Africa, 2 percent and Central America, 2.5 percent.

The European Community and its Member States are committed to ensuring that sustainable development and core labour standards are integrated both within WTO processes and its development policy. Appropriate mechanisms should be elaborated to ensure that developing countries can achieve sustainable development, in both human and environmental terms, as they take advantage of the opportunities and benefits that trade brings.

Attention must, however, be increased with the focus on the need to accompany the structural adjustment programmes with appropriate franking measures to ensure that supply site problems are appropriately addressed. This calls for significantly better integration and coordination of development policies with structural adjustment programmes.

Net food importing developing countries may experience some negative effects during the liberalization process from increasing prices for agricultural products. They will very probably need the solidarity of the international community but the long-term prospects for net importers might also be positive.

The European Community would advocate that priority should be given to the analysis of better ways to coordinate and integrate the action of the international bodies most interested in the enhancement of developing country situations, with a view to addressing in the appropriate fora a number of development needs complementary to the establishment of trade rules.

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

We would like to thank the Secretariat for the information it has given us on this subject.

It is known that every human being on this planet has the right to a dignified life. Thus food security must be ensured, as must his right to security in all walks of life and all aspects of his life.

With regard to the document on the Committee on World Food Security, we have information from 1990-1992 and 1996, which represents the food situation and the factors that led to a shortage in food supplies. We have noticed that these data and information cover a period that precedes the World Food Summit. We should like to know how the situation has developed in the two years that have passed since the Summit was held. The most recent developments following the holding of the Summit might have led to an increase in the number of malnourished, instead of decreasing those numbers. We know that one of the most important decisions and resolutions of the World Food Summit was to reduce by half the numbers of malnourished by the year 2015 at the latest. It is clear from this document that, to date, following the Summit in 1996, we have no concrete figures for those for who are malnourished in the developing world. This is one of the most important issues before the Committee on World Food Security in particular, and before FAO in general.

However, it is a complex and complicated issue; thus, we express the hope that FAO and other Specialized Agencies acting in this field will give this issue extreme importance by adequately cooperating and coordinating their activities. Indeed, FAO should be the lead coordinator in the fight against poverty and food insecurity in the world.

Thus we appeal to the Independent Chairman of the Council and the Secretariat to put before the next session of the Committee on World Food Security all the information and data needed, covering the period that followed the World Food Summit, so as to be able to assess and evaluate the impact of the implementation of the measures promulgated in the Summit.

It is known that the world population will grow exponentially in the coming period, especially in the developing world, which poses challenges to food systems. With a view to meeting that challenge, we have to increase food production, in terms of both quality and quantity. Currently, many countries lack national regulations for food quality and safety. This might be costly. Objective 4.1 of the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit calls for meeting the challenges posed by the WTO Agreement and calls upon the international community to provide assistance to developing countries to strengthen their national institutions in order to ensure quality and safety of food supplies, and to provide also the new trends that are necessary for healthy living.

The need for assistance increases day-in day-out, as a result of the WTO Agreement. However, the problem faced by the countries in implementing those goals is the lack of financial resources. Financial institutions such as the World Bank, bilateral financial institutions and regional financial institutions, must provide financial resources for those countries to enable them to implement those goals. Financial and technical assistance must be provided by those institutions, in cooperation with FAO, which has a great deal of expertise in providing such assistance to developing countries in this field, especially technical assistance for food quality control.

If developing countries do not receive such necessary financial and technical assistance, the food insecurity problems in those countries will be exacerbated.

There is no doubt that developing countries' access to markets will depend on the degree in meeting the conditions of the regulatory bodies of those markets. In this case, and for those countries that impose strict and rigorous conditions on their imports, the developing countries must indeed follow scientific methods. On that basis, we call strenuously for providing technical assistance to developing countries with a view to elaborating comprehensive regulatory bodies to control food quality and safety.

Egypt has taken steps, with a view to strengthening those regulatory bodies, to ensure food quality and safety under the umbrella of our commitment to implement the goals and objectives of the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit. We presented our plan and programme to FAO last year. We are proud of these great achievements. I do not have time to go into more detail on these achievements, but I will give you a review of what we achieved in 1998 compared to the situation in 1982. The *per capita* wealth has increased from 2.6 to 3.4 percent; cereal production was 18.3 million tonnes compared to 8.5 million tonnes; vegetable production increased from 8 million to 14.5 million units; fruit production increased from 2.6 in 1982 to 6.6 units in 1998; livestock and fish production increased from 2.3 million Egyptian pounds to 18.2 billion Egyptian pounds; the food gap decreased by 17 percent to 4.5 million tonnes from 26 million tonnes; *per capita* calorie consumption has increased to 3 280 calories a day, which is way above the recommended daily average at the world level and also that recommended by FAO, which is about 2 540 calories per person daily.

Those are some of the examples of our achievements in the field of food security within our implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

With regard to increasing the participation of civil society and other NGOs in the activities and work of the Committee on Food Security, we believe that Governments should bear the primary responsibility for implementing the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit. Thus, civil society and the NGOs must work under the umbrella of Governments so as to pinpoint accountability.

Abdolali SABBAGH RENANI (Iran, Islamic Republic of) (Original language Farsi)

In the name of God, my delegation sincerely thanks the Secretariat for preparing this report, which shows many improvements over previous reports that we have had in the past. This report includes an analysis rather than mere statistics. This feature of the report is most welcome, and we hope to see this trend continuing in the future.

With regard to food security in developing, least developed and LIFDCs, the existing situations and prospects are not promising. To summarize, the following are areas of major concerns.

First of all, estimates of food production represent the lowest rate of global expansion since 1991, which correspond to a decrease of 0.9 percent in *per caput* terms since 1993.

Secondly, food production in Africa South of the Sahara, has failed to keep up with population growth over the last five years.

Thirdly, seven percent of the developing country population lives in countries which have suffered a relatively sharp decline in *per caput* production.

Fourthly, global cereal production has decreased as compared with previous years.

Fifth, global production of roots and tubers is estimated to be less than last year and five percent lower than the 1996-1998 average. Since LIFDCs account for 60 percent of this production, this reduction in output will have important negative effects on their food security.

Sixth, against this bleak picture, in spite of some increase in food aid by some developed countries, which is appreciated by my delegation, the volume of food aid is still considerably lower than the average shipments during the last five years.

Seventh, non-cereal food aid shipments fell for the fifth consecutive year and were down by seven percent, and the 28 percent decrease by a major donor more than offset the increase registered by others.

Eighth, many developing countries have suffered periods of trade losses in 1998.

Ninth, the modest economic recovery projected by the World Bank for the future is highly uncertain. The major downside risks and, consequently, the impact of slower economic growth on incomes, employment and the capacity of poor households to feed themselves adequately, should all be taken seriously into account.

Tenth, the considerable decline in international commodity prices since mid-1997 and bleak expectations for the coming years are major reasons for concern for developing countries in general, as well as for those developing countries that are heavily dependent on export markets in particular. In this context, it should be noted that the Near East has recently experienced a five percent loss of GDP as a result of diminishing trade.

There is no need to continue counting these concerns felt by developing countries with regard to agricultural production, trade, overall economic growth and food security. The above-mentioned examples give enough reasons for my delegation to once again express the considerable importance that should be attached to our commitment to the World Food Summit Plan of Action and the Rome Declaration, which was unanimously adopted here, in this very same building, three years ago.

In spite of these difficulties, there are promising lessons to be learned and areas which need more focus and attention.

World food production expanded at an average annual rate of 2.3 percent over the period 1994-1998 and growth in food production in the developing countries significantly exceeded that in the developed countries, in both overall and *per caput* terms. My delegation hopes that these are signs of technical progress and that the trend will continue in the future, and that the gap between developed and developing countries will start to narrow down, both through design of better policies, adoption of appropriate technologies, provision of enabling environments in developing countries, and the increased support and technical assistance given by developed countries through FAO.

An examination of the figures on page 6 of the report highlights sharp differences between Regions of the developing world. Although all the countries listed in the grey area have demonstrated extremely good achievements, those with more than 5.0 percent have registered an outstandingly good performance, which deserves our appreciation and congratulations. A closer look reveals that countries in the grey areas are not the ones that enjoy good climatic conditions or highly stable social environments. As a matter of fact, a great number of these countries are located in arid zones and desert areas, and some suffer from long-standing civil strife and other hindrances. So what are the secrets of this success? To answer this question is the main challenge before us all. We should all help FAO find successful elements and transfer them to the countries listed in the bottom part of the table, in the white area, and assist them move to the north-western corner of Figure 1.

Another very important task is to prevent the countries of the upper section of this table from moving down into the white area.

A closer look at Table 2 on page 3 shows that *per caput* food production even in developed countries has reflected sharp annual fluctuations. Of course, this is worse in developing countries and worst in the Near East and North Africa Region. Prevention of these fluctuations is a prerequisite for steady, continuous movement towards the objectives of World Food Security, and should be a major area of focus and attention by FAO.

We urge FAO to take serious steps towards the identification of successful elements, to find ways and means of controlling agricultural production fluctuations that should be transferred to developing countries and reported here in future sessions of the Council and to all FAO Technical Committees.

With your permission, very briefly I wish to offer the Council a report of major achievements of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the agricultural sector. Agriculture is one of the main sectors of the

Iranian economy. It produces 25 percent of the GDP, 25 percent of employment, 33 percent of non-oil exports and 75 percent of our national food requirements.

Attaching the highest priority to this sector over the last two national development plans has proved extremely effective country.

Per caput food production rose from 600 to 750 kg from 1988 to 1997. This corresponds to an increase in *per capita* energy consumption from 2 600 to 3 000 kcal. Wheat, rice and pulses, all of which are most important staples, have registered growth rates of 5.1, 6.9 and 6.89 percent, respectively. The self-sufficiency coefficient in food production in 1996 reached the following levels: 72.5 percent for wheat, 65.5 percent for rice and 40 percent for sugar. In meat, milk, poultry and fish production, this coefficient has varied between 90 and 100 percent.

One of our major areas of concern in food production and food security has been in the area of post-harvest losses. In this regard, the development of the food processing and food preservation industries have received high priority in the Second Development Plan, and will continue to be given attention in the Third Development Plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Provision of a safety net through different policies and actions has always been a major objective of our Government, which absorbs huge amounts of consumer subsidies in a wide range of food, energy, health and educational goods and services. Needless to say, on the average more than two million refugees living in the Islamic Republic of Iran have also enjoyed these subsidized commodities and services.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is facing an unprecedented drought which will have tremendous negative effects on agricultural production and on the national economy this year. We expect that FAO will take the necessary steps to include the combatting of this phenomenon at the core of its activities in our country.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran fully supports and commends the food security measures taken by FAO, especially through the Special Programme for Food Security and, more recently, through the Telefood micro-projects in all developing countries of the world.

Mohammad MEJBAHUDDIN (Bangladesh)

My delegation at the onset thanks the Secretariat for a document that provides opportunities for review of the world food situation, as well as a chance for introspection about the realization of the target of World Food Summit goals.

The document most favourably shows that although the developing countries as a group experienced some positive growth in food production, wide variations exist among them. As Tables 1 and 2 indicate, food production in the Low-Income Food Deficit Countries in 1998 registered a steep decline after attaining an average growth of 5.2 percent during the last six years. More importantly, *per caput* food production in LIFDCs experienced negative growth in 1998. This situation should be a cause of concern for all and our approach should be in these countries not only to fight transient crises in food but also more fundamental structural causes of poverty.

Last year was particularly unfavourable for world agriculture and food production. World food production has witnessed the lowest ever growth compared to the last six years. The decline in the growth rate was more dramatic for the developing countries against the background of robust growth in the last six years.

The document identifies lower input demands, lower international prices, the Asian financial crisis, national disasters, etc. as the main causes responsible for the production shortfalls. In our view, these are important factors responsible for the overall downturn. However, apart from these factors, structural rigidity, ecological disasters and increasing marginalization of vast numbers of people in these countries, also contributed largely towards poverty in general, and declining food production and access to it in particular.

One redeeming feature last year has been the record production of fish. Improvement in the fisheries sector has occurred mainly due to impressive growth in aquaculture production. My

delegation believes that this is one area where potential exists for further improvement in many LIFDCs. When area expansion is not a viable option, attention to aquaculture production along with livestock production and small-scale agro-processing industries seems to hold the key to increased income, which is vital for access to food in many of these countries. In fact, production diversification has become vital for many countries to ensure food security for millions of poor people in developing countries. In this context, we appreciate the inclusion of a special chapter on Rural Non-farm Income in Developing Countries in the FAO publication, *The State of Food and Agriculture 1998*.

Food aid in 1997-98 increased by 9 percent compared to the previous year, mainly as a result of food emergencies around the world which also resulted mainly from both nature-induced and manmade disasters to agriculture and food production. We would urge FAO, as we did in the last Council in 1998, to assist disaster-prone countries to tackle such emergencies and to rehabilitate their agricultural production system.

Another awesome feature in 1998 was terms of trade losses for many developing countries which export agricultural products. It is very difficult to predict recovery unless the growth momentum is regenerated and strong demands are created. Although trading goods and gains from it are largely determined by the interplay of market forces, the more advanced countries can still play a supportive role in redressing the sufferings of these affected countries.

In concluding, the Council, when examining this topic last year, suggested that in future reporting on the current world food situation the Secretariat should provide a broad picture of the food security situation. The document under consideration indicates that the document presented to the last CFS, that is CFS 99/2, provides such a picture. However, as we mentioned during the CFS meetings, that document largely provided information about food production and supplies, not the state of physical and economic access to food by the population.

In this regard, we would stress the need for strengthening the process leading to development of FIVIMS to develop suitable indicators of access, such as income distribution and the power of populations to purchase food so that we can gauge the state of the food security situation across countries and Regions and also among particular groups of the population.

Paimin SUHARNO (Indonesia)

Mr Chairman, this is a great honour and privilege for me to extend, on behalf of the Indonesian delegation, our sincere appreciation to you and to Members of the Bureau of the Hundred and Sixteenth FAO Council. I should also like to express our appreciation to the Secretariat for the preparation of the documents under discussion, namely documents CL 116/2 and CL 116/10.

As noted in document CL116/2, the global production of cereals declined slightly in 1998. Indonesia suffered the same phenomenon with the decrease in rice production due to the effect of *El Niño* in 1997, which caused late planting and the outbreak of pests in the following year. Rice production in 1998 declined by 1.8 percent below that of 1997 which was actually already at a low level.

In the first semester of 1999, however, our rice production improved due to favourable rainfall and the availability of inputs and agricultural credits, as well as the Government's support price.

In the short term, the Government's policy for the agricultural sector is to provide food self-sufficiency for people through the strengthening of supply, securing accessibility of people to food and giving more attention to nutrition at the household level.

In this regard, the Government of the Republic of Indonesia has launched several crash programmes, among others, "Gema-Palagung 2001" a programme to boost production of rice, corn and soybean through improved intensification programmes and cropping intensity; "Protekan 2003," a special programme for boosting fish production to reach US\$10 billion worth of export earnings by the year 2003, "Gema Proteina 2001", a special programme to increase livestock production; and "Gema Hortina 2003," a programme to increase horticultural production.

In addition to the concerted efforts made in improving domestic food production, our Government launched several programmes to mitigate the impact of economic crisis which led to the food insecurity of low-income groups. The programmes included the sale of subsidized rice through special market operations. In the 1998-99 fiscal year, the amount of rice to be distributed was nearly one million tonnes. Each poor family was allocated 10 kg of rice per month, which was then increased to 20 kg per month. This emergency operation was acknowledged to be the most successful of social safety net programmes in Indonesia.

In the coming 1999-2000 fiscal year, the Government would like to continue the operation by allocating 7.8 trillion rupiahs of subsidies to 17.5 million poor families spread over 27 provinces, 400 districts and 30,000 distribution points.

As we are aware, the FAO Declaration of World Food Security that was made during the World Food Summit in 1996 emphasized the urgency of taking action to achieve food security for present and future generations.

By considering the multifaceted character of food security, this statement was formulated in the seven commitments of the World Food Summit Plan of Action that require national and international efforts to supplement and reinforce national action.

One programme to support this statement is strengthening the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS) that is operational in 30 countries and is being formulated in 41 others. We support this Programme and are looking forward to cooperating with FAO on this matter.

With regard to the assessment of world food security, we support the recommendation on the Committee of the improvements in the indicators for monitoring the world food security situation. The improvements, among others, the use of the poverty index, income distribution and purchasing power, terms of trade, extra debt, capital flows and overseas development aid should be complementary indicators reflecting the economic access to food.

Since food security and the trade of food are closely related our delegation welcomes and appreciates their initiative of FAO in planning the Symposium in September 1999 in Geneva to help developing countries to prepare for next WTO Round of Negotiations relating to food security issues. We will be participating in the Symposium.

With respect to the reporting format for monitoring progress in implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, we agree to the format. However, we feel that the format should be simplified and made more straightforward and a more flexible review and modification of the format should be carried out by the open-ended, regionally representative Working Group.

In line with the WFS Plan of Action, our delegation would like to report to Council that Indonesia has established an Inter-ministerial Committee to monitor the implementation of the WFS/POA. As reported before, the State Ministry of Food, Forestry and Horticulture is currently the focal point for the monitoring of the Programme in Indonesia.

Finally, our delegation proposes to the Council to adopt the report of the Committee on World Food Security.

Sra. María Eulalia JIMÉNEZ de MOCHI ONORI (Observador de El Salvador)

En relación con el Tema 3: *Situación Actual de la Alimentación en el Mundo*, el Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe, recoge los acuerdos emanados de la pasada 25ª Conferencia Regional de la FAO que tuvo lugar en Nassau, los Acuerdos del 115º Consejo de la FAO, las recomendaciones y acuerdos de los distintos Comités de la FAO que han efectuado sus deliberaciones durante 1999 y las decisiones del Foro de Ministros de Agricultura de los Países Iberoamericanos realizado del 15 al 17 de mayo en La Habana, Cuba.

Los países de la Región de América Latina y el Caribe, protagonistas destacados de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación, reiteran su compromiso con el cumplimiento de los acuerdos alcanzados en este histórico evento y reafirman la voluntad política acordada en la Cumbre.

En cuanto 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, reiterando que deben ser aplicadas medidas destinadas a neutralizar los efectos negativos de la globalización sobre los pequeños productores, como también así a reforzar los aspectos positivos. La legítima liberalización del comercio constituye uno de los elementos fundamentales de la seguridad alimentaria. 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 - situación que reviste múltiples aspectos, en especial, a través del uso de medidas zoo y fitosanitarias sin base científica, que son aplicadas como barreras al comercio.

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 OMC.

Solicitamos dar especial consideración a los pequeños estados insulares a causa de su fragilidad y vulnerabilidad, debido a factores climáticos y económicos. Respaldamos la selección de propuestas de las cuatro áreas prioritarias que deberán orientar el trabajo de la FAO en la Región: seguridad alimentaria, inserción dinámica en el comercio exterior, gestión sostenible de los recursos naturales y reforma de las instituciones agrarias.

El Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe reitera la necesidad de profundizar el análisis, particularmente en los siguientes temas: el financiamiento para el desarrollo rural sostenible, el desarrollo de los recursos humanos en cuanto a capacitación y organización, el impacto de los desastres naturales en la inestabilidad de la oferta alimentaria y el peso de las barreras no arancelarias. Tal como quedó expresado en la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación y ratificado en diversos foros, nuestra Región reitera que los alimentos no deberían utilizarse como instrumentos de presión política y económica. Reafirmamos la importancia de la cooperación y la solidaridad internacionales, así como la necesidad de abstenerse en aplicar medidas unilaterales que no estén en consonancia con el derecho internacional ni con la Carta de las Naciones Unidas poniendo en peligro la seguridad alimentaria.

Durante los últimos años la producción de alimentos de América Latina y el Caribe se ha visto particularmente afectada por diversos fenómenos climáticos adversos, puntualizando la grave repercusión que tiene el fenómeno de “El Niño” en la seguridad alimentaria de muchos países de la Región, produciendo las más graves e imprevistas inundaciones y severas sequías, causando enormes daños, reportándose un alto costo social y económico que no han sido suficientemente atendidos por la comunidad internacional.

El Caribe y, recientemente, los países de Centro América han sufrido los efectos de una serie de ciclones siendo el Huracán Mitch una de las catástrofes más graves de este siglo por lo que están inmersos en los esfuerzos de reconstrucción de las áreas desbastadas. Hoy más que nunca necesitan de la cooperación internacional en general y de la FAO en particular, para recuperar su capacidad productiva. Por lo anterior, consideramos urgente reforzar el Sistema Mundial de Información y Alerta y otros programas pertinentes para que en una acción conjunta y coordinada con los países se continúe brindando apoyo para prevenir y mitigar los daños ocasionados por estos fenómenos y 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. Al respecto solicitamos que se continúe brindando cooperación técnica y apoyo a la búsqueda de financiamiento para ejecutar el Código en los países.

La Región de América Latina y el Caribe desea subrayar que, hasta la fecha, diversos avances han sido obtenidos en este sector, en particular en la última Reunión de Consultas sobre la Ordenación

de la Capacidad Pesquera, la Pesca del Tiburón y las Capturas Incidentales de Aves Marinas en la Pesca con Palangre, en la cual se acordó que la implementación del Plan de Acción y los lineamientos internacionales deben basarse en el *Código de Conducta*, particularmente en el Artículo 5, con relación al fortalecimiento de la habilidad de los países en desarrollo para fomentar su capacidad pesquera y a participar de la pesca en alta mar, incluyendo el acceso a estas pescas de acuerdo con sus derechos legítimos y sus obligaciones bajo el derecho internacional. De conformidad con las recomendaciones emanadas de anteriores Conferencias Regionales, reafirmamos la importancia de establecer la Oficina Subregional para América Central y una Oficina Permanente de la FAO en Asunción, Paraguay. El Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe quiere dejar sentado nuestro absoluto respaldo a la candidatura de Guatemala para ser sede del Congreso Forestal Mundial en el 2003 - aspecto al que nos referiremos con mayor detalle cuando abordemos este tema en el Consejo.

El GRULAC considera que una adecuada coordinación de esfuerzos reales en función de la complementariedad de los mandatos de la FAO, del PMA y del FIDA reafirmando respectivamente los conocimientos técnicos, la asistencia financiera internacional y la ayuda alimentaria garantizará que se logren los objetivos previstos, que se eviten la duplicación de funciones y permitirá contar con una base institucional universal, firme y permanente. Dentro de este esquema de coordinación, el GRULAC reitera que la FAO debe colaborar con los gobiernos para fortalecer los programas de cooperación técnica y la cooperación técnica inter-regional e infra-regional y así aprovechar la capacidad existente, con el fin de cumplir con el compromiso adquirido en la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación y en la aplicación del Plan de Acción para lograr las metas fijadas. Para esto, exhortamos a la FAO a intensificar mecanismos de gestión con los donantes a fin de hacer viable esta iniciativa.

Finalmente reitero que estas consideraciones constituyen las propuestas de nuestra Región.

Wilberforce KISAMBA MUGERWA (Uganda)

Permit me, Mr Chairperson, to congratulate you upon your wise guidance as well as the Vice-Chairperson's upon being elected to chair this Council Session.

I wish to inform you that the political leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries in Uganda has since the last Council Session changed. My predecessor, who is the Vice-President of Uganda, Her Excellency Dr. Specioza Wandira Kazibwe, relinquished the portfolio of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries which I have now the honour to chair. Her Excellency Dr. Specioza Wandira Kazibwe was, presented with the Ceres Award by the FAO Director-General in July 1998, in recognition of her fight against hunger and poverty in Uganda. Honourable Dr. Lawrence Kezimbira. Miyingo who took an active role in FAO affairs is now in The Charge of Environment in the Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment.

Mr Chairman, allow me to present the agenda item on the current world food situation.

My delegation recalls that the Heads of State and Government, through the Rome Declaration 1996, committed themselves to reduce by half the population of malnourished people, that stands at about 800 to 880 million, by the year 2015. It is regrettably noted that developed countries have experienced a lower output growth rate over the last five years. It is also noted that population growth in near half of the developing countries is higher than food production, although overall growth in food production in these countries has been significant. Cognizance of this is made by the following constraints to food production: one, adverse weather conditions; two, civil strife, and three, the financial crisis in many countries of Africa, Asia and parts of CIS. And I wish to add, the debt burden particularly in most of the African countries is also an important consideration. As a way forward, it is a prerequisite that all we Member Nations reaffirm out commitment to finding solutions to these constraints, in order to realize our good goal of ensuring food for all, at all times, and in the right quantities and quality.

During the fiscal 1998-99, the Ugandan economy bounced back from the adverse effects of the *El Niño* weather phenomenon which had devastated the country for two years running, and achieved a real GDP growth rate of 7.8 percent, up from 5.4 percent recorded the year before. By

international standards, a 7 percent growth rate is very good, but in Uganda's case, much of it is still reversing the longer years of economic decline. Much of this growth is attributed to the recovery of the agriculture sector which achieved a growth rate of about 8.1 percent in the same period, as compared to 1.9 percent in 1997-98 and 1.1 percent in 1996-97. GDP *per caput* grew by 5.1 percent during 1998-99, faster than in the previous two years.

This positive growth was due to the government's commitment to create an enabling environment by putting in place the right policies and to supporting strategies that have enhanced development. Since 1996 a number of macro-economic policy measures have been instituted, which have strengthened the agricultural sector. These included liberalization, privatisation, civil service reform and decentralization policies. The Land Act 1998 gives more access to land to women and youth, who contribute much of the agricultural labour force and ensure security to farmers.

The Government of Uganda has adopted a poverty eradication budget whose aim is to eliminate food insecurity and supply sufficient raw materials for the manufacturing sector. Interventions to increase food production are to be achieved through the implementation of a Plan for Modernization for Agriculture. This Plan is in the final stages of development, and will be ready for implementation by November 1999.

In the context of Uganda, the adopted definition of agricultural modernization is one in which government creates a conducive environment in which small-scale farmers can move away from subsistence to production surpluses for sale at a profit.

The key elements of the programme of Modernization for Agriculture include making poverty eradication the over-riding objective; transforming the small-holder farmers from subsistence to producing for the market; reducing public sector activities to the maximum extent possible; supporting the development of the private sector in all commercial activities; deepening decentralization of public service provision; supporting the spread of profound technological change throughout the agricultural sector; address food supply and food security issues, through a trade rather than a self-sufficient orientation; give priority to agriculture as the pivotal sector of economic growth and poverty eradication, and improve access for women and the youth to productive assets and empower them to undertake economic activities.

In line with the Plan, therefore, priority areas which the government intends to begin with and concentrate efforts on are as follows: improving research, extension and farmer linkages; investment in infrastructure; promoting agricultural production for the market; agricultural education; improving access to and availability of credit in rural areas; promoting private sector role in the modernization of agriculture; capacity-building in Central and Local Government services, database establishment, including production of agricultural statistics; promoting development of rural agro-based enterprises; environment management; forestry development and management; good governance, and finally, building social capital.

Uganda's food production increased by 1.8 percent from 1997 to 1998, yet the population growth rate was about 2.5 percent. The national food situation was good, with food production levels increasing as a result of increased area under staple food crops. However, food shortages were experienced in parts of the country bordering Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, resulting from the insecurity in these regions, which greatly hindered food production.

Government support to research led to the release of high quality, high yielding, planting materials to farmers of cassava, maize, beans, rice and fruits. Better breeds of cattle, goats and pigs are being introduced, while fish fries of high value are now available to farmers.

Uganda's level of crop production continued to improve in 1998 over what was recorded in 1997, despite the fluctuating weather conditions. Food production increased by 11 percent from 1997 to 1998, and is estimated to grow by 13.8 percent in 1999.

Regarding cereals, although the area planted under cereals did not change in 1998 from that of 1997, production increased to 2 084 million tonnes, an increase of about 28.25 percent above the 1997 production level. The 1999 forecast indicates a growth in production of maize and sorghum

and a decline in finger millet production. The levels of rice and wheat production are expected to remain constant. Regarding root crops, the production of root crops grew by about 26.8 percent, from 4 548 million tonnes in 1997 to 5 764 million tonnes in 1998. The 1999 production forecast indicates an increase of about 29.3 percent. The World Food Programme has often purchased beans for distribution to refugees within and outside the country.

Regarding oil seeds, production increased by 2.7 percent from 9 248 million tonnes in 1997 to 0.309 million tonnes in 1998. The forecast for 1999 is about 22 percent increase.

Regarding livestock, there has been significant improvement in the production and quality of livestock. This is due to the commercialization of the sub-sector, particularly the pig and poultry industry. Overall cattle population has increased by 3.5 percent, sheep, 3.5 percent, goat 3 percent, pig, 3.5 percent and poultry 1.04 percent.

Apiculture, the collection of honey rose from 596 tonnes to 707 tonnes in 1998. Fish production declined in 1998 from 218 680 tonnes in 1997 to 217 000 metric tonnes as had happened from 1996. The decline in production was due to the *El Niño* weather phenomenon and the noxious weed – Water Hyacinth, which continued to be a menace.

However, the overall performance of the fisheries sub-sector was affected by the ban of Uganda's fish and fish products on the European Union market. The export of fresh/chilled fish resumed in July 1998 in only 5 out of 11 factories in the country.

In conclusion, it must be mentioned here that one of the impediments to actualization of food security programmes and policies in the country has been the inadequacy of statistical data and information. Such data and information can be generated by a well structured and functional system that monitors food security in the country year round. Such a system unfortunately is not functional in Uganda.

The Government of Uganda is fully committed to production of food and agricultural data and information to underpin decision and planning processes and policy formulation. In this connection, we would like to register our appreciation of the technical assistance which FAO has given to Uganda over the years, to develop systems for production of the current agricultural data and information. In particular, we express appreciation for Uganda's inclusion on the list of participating countries in the FAO/World Bank Initiative for the Development of Agricultural Statistics in Africa. We will play our role in the implementation of the initiative, to ensure that food and agricultural statistical system in the country is strengthened and made sustainable.

My delegation commends the report on the world food situation, as presented by the Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Department this morning.

Carl-Josef WEIERS (Germany)

I am speaking on behalf of the European Community and its Member States and I can assure you that I will press down the average speaking time.

I want to make a few remarks on Item 4, the *Report on the 25th Session of the Committee on World Food Security*. The European Community and its Member States would like to endorse the report of the Committee on World Food Security which had its Session at the beginning of this month. The conclusions and recommendations of the Committee should be taken into account in the further work of the Committee, in particular in monitoring the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

Mrs Mariann KÓVACS (Hungary)

The Hungarian delegation has studied with great interest the document CL 116/2 on the *Current World Food Situation*. We have to agree with what has been said in paragraph 45 stating that the actual situation and medium-term prospects for world food and agriculture, as well as global food security, are to a large extent influenced by the international economic environment. Much to our regret, that influence has exerted a negative impact also on the Hungarian agro-economy and we cannot see, for the time being, any sign pointing towards a recovery or improvement. We would

like to add that, the partial over-production in a number of commodities is not making our task any easier.

The above-mentioned crisis situation has only partially hit the Hungarian agriculture and food economy, though I must report, that the development of the Hungarian agriculture in the last year lagged behind both our expectations, and the climatic and other potentials it commands.

Agricultural output stagnated at last year's level. As a matter of fact, these experienced rather significant differences between the performance of the main sectors of agriculture, first of all, in plant production and animal husbandry. Some indices have, however, shown a more favourable development than that of gross output. Those were the very qualitative ones like the volume of foreign trade, the output of industries processing local agricultural products.

I would also like to mention that the most severe flood we suffered this year will no doubt have an adverse affect. The flood and its results with inland waters have caused immense damages to tens of thousands of farms and to Hungarian agriculture as a whole. The compensation for these damages will regrettably commit sizeable budgetary resources. It is however to be mentioned that Hungarian agriculture was nearly the only one in the region which had been able to maintain both its export potential and its position as net exporter after the changes occurred.

Although the emphasis that my Government is putting on the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action cannot be questioned. The importance of Hungarian agriculture in sustaining and developing world food security is negligible. Even so, I feel the Council may be interested in my reporting some characteristic problems and strategic issues which many countries in transition in the Central Eastern European Region are addressing themselves to.

We are fully aware of the present gap between the actual agricultural output in my country, using the term agriculture in its broader sense, and the potential climatic and other factors which are lending themselves to a higher quality and larger production.

The Hungarian Government is now facing one of the greatest challenges of the last year of this millennium and the first years of the third one which are the continuous and safe supply of the population, the follow-up of the delay in restructuring of land tenure, the improvement of rural population and the population retention capacity of the countryside. All these problems need to be looked after in harmony in complying with requirements resulting from our accession to the European Union - including qualitative, standard, and hygienic aspects, since we consider our accession to the European Union a great challenge to the whole national economy and especially to agriculture.

Summing up, Hungarian agriculture had already passed rock bottom following the change but it would need all the effort it could manage, to stabilize its own situation through improvements in efficiency of management, in order to be able to contribute to an improved world food security.

I would like to refer to the introduction of Mr de Haen at the beginning of the Agenda point, and I would just like to state that we fully agree with the huge demands in the coming years for food assistance in the Balkan area, which should be taken into serious consideration under Chapter 6 of the document, together with a process of rebuilding of agriculture, as it was already mentioned yesterday.

Lastly, my delegation would like to associate itself with those delegations who already recommended the endorsement of the Report of the CFS.

Ms Malgorzata PIOTROWSKA (Poland)

In the opinion of the Polish delegation the documents under discussion are appropriate to describe the world situation in agriculture and nutrition, meeting the requirements of growth and monitoring as suggested by the Council, in particular with regard to malnutrition and food security.

Although on every annual growth in food production, 0.5 percent *per capita* must be regarded as low, it enables further stabilization and improvement in the world nutrition situation, especially in

the developing countries. Increased general food supplies in these countries would decrease imports and the over-production in developed states have a favourable impact on the world market prices of agricultural products. However, the situation in agriculture and nutrition must still be the subject of particular care of some countries and the Organization itself, and food aid must be increased.

Poland expresses its hope that the overcoming of financial crises, in certain parts of the world, and an anticipated economic growth will strengthen favourable trends in food production in the coming years.

The situation in agriculture and food production in Poland can be assessed in a similar way. Poland has permanent surpluses of primary food products following a fall of everywhere from 10 to 20 percent in the demand for food within the last few years. This was caused by introducing market economy conditions of food production and food prices, and a temporary fall in demand, for some food products, as well as the changed structure of family budget expenditure. This is a favourable trend for consumers and for curbing inflation. Low farm prices of major agricultural products, however are a negative development for rural populations. Farmers' incomes have fallen within the last few years, which led to some economic and social problems. Together with a relatively low domestic demand for food, there has been a stabilization of foreign trade in food products and a certain fall in export value. This makes alleviation of difficulties through foreign trade difficult.

Alhaji Mai M. JIR (Nigeria)

I would commend the Secretariat for the excellent documents and the summary presented by Mr de Haen.

While we agree with most of the analyses and express our concern on the decline affecting developing countries, the majority of which are in Africa, we specifically wish to comment on document CL 116/2, Figure 1, page 6: why are Nigeria's production levels lower than the population growth? Our population growth is about 2.83 percent and our production level has been above 3.5 percent since 1994 and in 1998, we recorded 4.1 percent. We therefore wish that this be checked.

Let me, however, thank FAO for the SPFS Project and Telefood project in Nigeria. We also certainly consider the FAO/IFAD project on roots and tubers especially very valuable and hope that it is due very soon. However, we have not yet noticed the negative trends in our cassava production.

In document CL 116/10, we wish to support the recommendation in paragraphs 14 and 15. Rural urban movement creates more problems, especially, putting pressure on urban facilities in developing countries causes an increase in crime rates and shortage of labour force for agricultural production in rural areas, with all the consequent effects.

Nigeria is planning to introduce a youth employment in agriculture programme in addition to our existing programmes on employment, so as to encourage the youth and rural people to stay in rural areas to continue production.

With this, Mr Chairman, we endorse this report.

Julian A. THOMAS (South Africa)

Our thanks go to Mr de Haen and his collaborators for the three documents before us.

Document CL 116/2 provides us with a valuable annual update of the global food situation. Despite some positive signs at global level and in some Regions, Africa south of the Sahara still faces major challenges in trying to achieve food security. This is well illustrated in Figure 1 on page 6, which shows that many African countries appear in the lower right-hand quarter of the table where high rates of population growth are combined with slow growth in food output. We also note the large number of countries, particularly in Africa, still facing food emergencies.

These two phenomena again point to the need for FAO, amongst other organizations, to continue to increase and improve its assistance to countries still confronted with constraints which prevent them achieving household and national food security. We fully realize that a number of interrelated internal and external factors contribute to food insecurity. These have been well articulated, particularly by the representatives from the United States, European Union and El Salvador for Latin America. FAO's multi-disciplinary and integrated approach to dealing with such complex problems is thus endorsed.

Although all FAO activities are ultimately aimed at achieving improved food security and poverty alleviation, this is probably best illustrated or embodied in the Organization's activities dealt with by the Committee on World Food Security. We thus, again, emphasise the importance of this Committee, particularly for Africa, and now turn to the Report before us on the 25th Session of the CFS, document CL 116/10.

We fully endorse this Report and hope Council will do likewise in recommending it to Conference. In doing this, we wish to emphasize the importance of further work on FIVIMS, at international and national levels, and the need for further work on indicators.

We welcome the theme chosen for the next meeting; "Who are the food insecure?" We emphasize the importance of food quality and food safety for food security, and we support the approaches outlined in the document to broaden the participation of civil society in food security-related matters.

Finally, we support the recommendation that CFS meetings in even years be scheduled to be held after Regional Conference sessions.

Sra. Virginia PÉREZ PÉREZ (Venezuela)

Mi delegación agradece a la Secretaría la presentación de los documentos CL 116/2 y CL 116/10. Además, nos sumamos y apoyamos plenamente los elementos contenidos en la declaración que, a nombre del GRULAC, hiciera la Presidenta del mismo.

Mi delegación se referirá en forma general a ambos documentos. En primer lugar, quisiera decir que el Gobierno de Venezuela, bajo la dirección del Presidente Hugo Chávez Frías, ha decidido ejecutar una serie de medidas para superar la crisis de nuestro sector agrícola y así evitar el abandono del campo para ir a buscar trabajo en la ciudad, toda vez que se deja de producir acrecentando los problemas urbanos con el consiguiente aumento del desempleo, la pobreza y la delincuencia en las zonas urbanas y periurbanas. En Venezuela, el sector agrícola es el primer empleador del país; ocupa 800.000 trabajadores: esta cantidad de personas vive de la producción agrícola; por este motivo se ha previsto dentro del Plan Bolívar, que no es más que un plan general de desarrollo del país en el cual participan todos los sectores de la sociedad, dos planes dirigidos a estimular el desarrollo de la agricultura.

El primero es el Plan Pro-Patria destinado a favorecer el asentamiento de las familias campesinas en las comunidades rurales del interior del país mediante el mejoramiento de las condiciones de vida en las zonas rurales. El segundo es el Plan Pro-Nación que estimulará la producción de Rubros Banderas en los que el país es competitivo.

Parte de los objetivos de mi Gobierno es ir cambiando los hábitos de consumo del venezolano hacia productos autóctonos del país. Esta no es una tarea fácil, pero se harán los esfuerzos para lograrlo. Del mismo modo, se está aplicando un programa para privatizar los sistemas de riego y otras infraestructuras para la actividad agrícola, a través de la transferencia a los productores.

En cuanto a la venta de tierra: se instrumentará un plan especial con el Instituto Agrario Nacional para la colocación de terrenos en tres modalidades: primera, la simple venta a quienes ya están trabajando la tierra y son, por lo tanto, sujetos al beneficio de la reforma agraria; segunda, la venta condicionada: para aquellas personas que quieran fundar fincas; tercera, la venta para urbanizar: a la que se destinarán tierras que no pueden ser utilizadas para faenas agrícolas, por su condición agrológica o la ubicación en las ciudades.

En cuanto a la seguridad alimentaria se refiere, y en cumplimiento de los acuerdos alcanzados en la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación, el Presidente Hugo Chávez Frías dará rango constitucional a la seguridad alimentaria, que se materializará a través del Programa de Alimentos Estratégicos pues, a juicio de mi gobierno, el Estado está obligado a proteger la salud de los ciudadanos y lo fundamental, en este aspecto, es una adecuada alimentación. He aquí el derecho a la alimentación que tanto hemos defendido. En este marco, el Ejecutivo desarrollará, en el área agropecuaria, el plan denominado Rubro Banderas: arroz, palma aceitera, maíz y ganadería; con lo que se garantizaría la disminución de costos por almacenamiento. De igual modo, el Gobierno está decidido a luchar contra la pobreza y los males que ella comporta para la sociedad.

Además, quisiéramos realizar algunas observaciones en relación con el documento CL 116/2. A mi delegación le llama mucho la atención la relación tan estrecha que se hace en el documento, párrafos 14 y 15, entre el aumento de la población y el descenso de la producción pues, a nuestro juicio, el aumento de la población no es el único elemento que produce un descenso en la producción. Reconocemos que, si bien es cierto, los aumentos inusitados de la población afectan la producción, no podemos perder de vista otros factores que inciden directamente en esos descensos de la producción y que deberían ser tomados en cuenta, como lo son: factores ambientales, (que fueron mencionados) barreras no transparentes al comercio, el no-acceso a la tecnología y a la biotecnología, sólo por nombrar algunos.

Mi país quiere hacer un llamado a la FAO en el sentido que continúe sus esfuerzos para cambiar las ayudas alimentarias, para combinar aquellas urgentes con microplanes de desarrollo que permitan a las poblaciones afectadas por catástrofes, a corto y mediano plazo, desarrollar sus destrezas para enfrentar estos inconvenientes. Es decir, la asistencia alimentaria debe ser vista y concedida como una inversión de futuro capaz de romper el círculo de la pobreza.

Nos preocupa profundamente el panorama desalentador de las perspectivas de la situación alimentaria en el mundo; sin embargo, confiamos en que los gobiernos, las organizaciones internacionales, y la sociedad civil organizada trabajarán juntas para lograr los objetivos que nos trazamos en la Cumbre.

Por último, mi delegación aprueba el informe del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria y las recomendaciones en él contenidas.

Khairuddin Md. TAHIR (Malaysia)

The Malaysian delegation wishes to participate in this morning's discussion on the report of the Committee on World Food Security, in particular, document CL 116/10.

Malaysia applauds efforts taken by the Committee on World Food Security to closely monitor and report on the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action by national governments, NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSO) and other stakeholders, including the international community and the private sector.

Malaysia appreciates the work of the Committee on World Food Security in developing a flexible, practical and cost-effective reporting format, including the work of the inter-agency group on FIVIMS and the need to integrate and harmonize the indicators and monitoring formats of these two groups.

The Malaysian delegation is also supportive of the deepening interest of NGOs, Civil Society Organizations, in the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, and would like to encourage NGOs to continue to be active at grassroot levels and in countries and Regions where food security matters most, in particular in activities relating to resource mobilization in support of projects in food production and nutrition.

Finally, my delegation supports FAO efforts in the data collection and information gathering with a view to analyzing investment trends in, and mechanisms to mobilize resources for agriculture and food security. We strongly suggest that FAO continues to undertake this activity by building up quickly its own database in this specific area and utilizing effectively other existing databases. Particularly, in monitoring progress in agriculture investment, FAO should also identify and

recommend more innovative approaches and mechanisms for mobilizing resources for food security through bilateral and multilateral resources, and utilizing fully public and private sector contributions.

Adnan BASHIR KHAN (Pakistan)

My delegation compliments the Secretariat for producing a comprehensive document on the Current World Food Situation. Read together with CFS/92, it can be seen in the proper food security perspective.

Tables 1 and 2 of document CL116/2 show that 1998 food production has not contributed much to food security. There was a 0.5 percent growth in world food production against the five-year average of 2.3 percent, a negative growth in the developed countries, a growth of only half of the five-year average in the developing countries and one-fifth in the Low-Income, Food Deficit countries, and a nearly 1 percent decline in *per caput* terms.

The year was not much better for Pakistan either. The agricultural sector as a whole, after increasing at 3.8 percent in 1997-98, registered a meagre growth of 0.35 percent in 1998-99. In terms of cereals, rice and maize reflected an increase while wheat production declined due to a long spell of dry season during the sowing time. On the other hand -- and this is also with reference to Figure 1 of the Report -- the latest estimates released by the Government of Pakistan, on the basis of the population and housing survey of 1998, tend to indicate that the population growth rate in Pakistan would be more like 2.3 percent as against a general perception of around 3 percent.

Paragraph 18 of the Report does not seem to convey a very rosy picture for the near future either. This position is supported by the US Agriculture Department estimates as provided by the distinguished delegate of USA. Pakistan is hoping that its agriculture in 1999-2000 would be better than the previous year, with production of all cereal crops improving. However, as noted by the distinguished delegate of Bangladesh earlier, a country like ours would have to increasingly rely on production from marginal and rainfed areas, more efficient use of water resources, aquaculture development, advances in useful biotechnology and better management of livestock. For the advancement of these areas, we require technical assistance from FAO.

Insofar as the Report of the Committee on World Food Security is concerned, we support its adoption. In doing so, we particularly endorse the use of range estimates in conjunction with regularly updated point estimates, improvement and refinement of the indicators selected, particularly in the overall poverty context. Here we would support estimation of national vulnerability on the basis of four parameters outlined by the distinguished delegate of USA and also consideration of preparing composite indicators; the importance of establishment and operation of national Codex committees with possible financial and technical support of donor countries; the work of FAO in providing technical assistance for national food control systems through the Technical Cooperation Programme; mobilization of additional resources to assist developing countries to improve the quality and safety controls of locally-produced and imported food and to meet the quality and safety standards required for export trade; the new reporting format adopted; and last, but not least, the recommendation contained in paragraph 26 of the Report regarding use of language.

Kyeong-Sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

At the outset, I express my appreciation to the Secretariat for providing this well-structured report on the *State of Food and Agriculture in 1999*. However, before I comment on this item I need a clarification. According to paragraph 56 of CL116/10, the impact of the financial crisis on food security in the Asia region would be covered in the World Food Situation document for this Council; as announced by Mr de Haen at the last CFS. However, I cannot find any detailed information about this, so I would like to request the Secretariat to explain the study result on these issues.

It is somewhat relieving to note that expected ratio of the global cereal stock to its utilization is within the range of 17 to 18 percent, which FAO considers as the minimum safety level. On the other hand, we are concerned that recently reported lower planting, especially in the major exporting countries, the possible decline in world cereal stocks, and notable downturns in the effective important demand by developing countries for major cereals, due to economic recession, will have a negative effect on world food security in the next two years.

Furthermore, in the long-term context apart from the agricultural sectors, increased evidence of global warming and intensified and more frequent weather anomalies augment our concerns about stability in food supplies.

I would like to comment on the rice market I stressed, the extraordinary food security situation of rice in many meetings such as 115th Session of the Council, the 62nd CCP meeting, and the 25th CFS meeting, etc. The global rice market exists in the form of a "thin" market; on the export side, that is also the buyer, the oligopoly market. In this view there is a need for reducing, as far as possible, the risks arising from the dependence on import of foodstuffs, especially staple foods. Along this line, the Republic of Korea accords particular emphasis to preventive strategies for food security. Also, I wish to stress that increasing domestic production to the extent possible, through effective utilization of existing production resources in a sustainable manner, and maintaining an optimal level of self-sufficiency in staple foods in each country is vital for achieving lasting food security.

Secondly, I would like to comment on the multifunctional character or positive externality of agriculturalists. Multifunctionality of agriculturalists has been discussed in the various international fora such as OECD and WTO, as well as FAO. These discussions, I think, can provide great positive contributions in the coming WTO Rounds. Beyond its primary function of supplying food, Korea's agriculture based on the paddy field planted with rice, has a very positive external effect, including vital conservation activities such as preservation of biodiversity, maintenance of wildlife habitats, and the provision of scientific and scenic landscape, and territorial preservation such as flood control and soil erosion prevention and the maintenance of socio-economic viability in rural areas.

A recent study deduced that monetary value of flood control by the rice paddy in Korea reaches over US\$10 billion, far exceeding the total rice output US\$6.6 billion in 1997. However, the market system cannot internalize or remunerate true values of the positive externality, resulting in the market values. Without proper corrective measures, therefore, agriculture's multifunctionality would fade out. Moreover, since market prices for rice do not reflect or fully internalize such positive externality, the Government can play an important role in correcting failure.

On top of these, non-food services, Korea's rice farming provides the country with food security, the most important positive external effect derived from the food service itself. We consider that food security is one of the important elements of multifunctionality with a public goods aspect, because food security provides positive externality such as social stability and additional security, which has been proved in the recent Asian economic crisis. This positive external effect covers the whole country.

For the Republic of Korea, one of the net food importing countries, continuing rice production is a key determinant to maintain and strengthen multifunctionality. In other words, promotion of multifunctionality is primarily conditioned by the sustainable and effective utilization of production resources based on rice. Accordingly, we consider the preventive strategy for food security has a strongly positive correlation with the strengthening of multifunctionality.

We believe that effective utilization of production resources and sustainable rice production combined with the Government's corrective measures of market failure serve as a buffer against short to medium-term food crisis, including unexpected supply shocks. This is especially the case when the trade volume of the foodstuff concerned is very small, the supply is unstable and the non-agricultural shocks occurs. In fact, the financial crisis starting in late 1997 revived its importance for the Korean people. Had there not been enough rice stocks in those times of severe,

devastating impacts of economic crisis, the country would probably have faced serious social unrest.

On the other hand, if agricultural reform is pursued on a uniform basis without due consideration of such multifunctionality of agriculture, it could substantially damage the production resource base of net, food-importing countries. Since the Uruguay Round Agreement came into effect, the shrinkage of the agricultural sector in net food importing countries has been accelerated. It should be noted, in this regard, that once the production base of a country is damaged or are disrupted it takes a considerable time to rehabilitate it due to this organic characteristics. In addition, uniform agricultural policy reform has been threatening irreversible multifunctions that the agriculture of many countries has produced and developed in their respective territories for thousands of years.

In this view, we believe that the upcoming "FAO/Netherlands Conference on the Multifunctional Character of Agriculture and Lands" represents a very timely and meaningful opportunity to reaffirm the importance of agriculture's multifunctionality and explore proper policy options to foster it.

At this point, I would like to remind you that the non-trade concerns of agriculture, which is almost the same terms as multifunctionality in nature, were discussed in the Uruguay Round. We consider that a few articles of the Uruguay Round Agreement actually embrace non-trade concerns although the Preamble of the Uruguay Agreement states that NTCs should be taken into account in a reform process. In this respect, we feel that the Agreement is somewhat unbalanced, and we stress that due attention should be given to the need to promote multifunctionality of agriculture, especially in net, food-importing countries. It is this necessary to build a framework reflecting such concerns so as to achieve a balance of interest among WTO Member Nations.

Finally, we are of the view that, except for the major natural and man-made disasters, the next WTO Round may be the single largest exogenous factor to influence food security and the number of undernourished people in the developing world. In this light, we would like commend FAO for its commitment to assist developing countries to prepare for the next Round. Here we request strongly the Secretariat to establish its concrete action plan to ensure that FAO plays the vigorous advocacy role for developing countries in the next WTO Round in the context of food security issues, as described in paragraph 36 of document CL 116/6. We consider that in doing so the Secretariat should first carry out accurate assessment of the Uruguay Round Agreement on food security in developing countries prior to the beginning of the next WTO Round.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Deseamos respaldar el discurso hecho por la distinguida Representante de El Salvador a nombre de nuestro Grupo Regional, y agradecemos a la Secretaría la elaboración del documento base para la discusión de este tema, el cual refleja de manera sucinta y clara la situación actual en la perspectiva de la seguridad alimentaria, en especial en lo que se refiere a la oferta de los alimentos básicos, en particular los cereales.

En tal sentido resulta preocupante que frente a los acuerdos de la Cumbre Mundial la producción de alimentos haya aumentado en 1998 sólo medio punto, cifra inferior al ritmo observado durante el último cuatrienio del 2.3 por ciento. En este marco, sin embargo, hay algunas noticias positivas para los países, en especial para las naciones importadoras de alimentos, sobre la baja en la factura por compras de cereales así como en relación con los niveles de reservas alimentarias las cuales se mantendrían en los rangos planeados si bien, con la información reciente que nos proporcionó el señor De Haen, parecería que la información más reciente indicaría que se mantendría por debajo del 17-18 por ciento que establece la FAO como adecuada. Apreciamos la información detallada que se nos proporciona sobre la producción de cereales que resulta básica para la alimentación. En particular agradecemos el Cuadro 1 sobre la Variación de la Producción de Alimentos en relación con el crecimiento demográfico.

Permítame en este sentido proporcionar algunos datos sobre la situación productiva de mi país. Al respecto llamo su atención sobre la producción de los diez principales cultivos básicos de México que durante el ciclo otoño-invierno será de 9.5 millones de toneladas, lo que representa un

aumento del 2.8 por ciento en relación con el ciclo homólogo anterior y del 6.8 por ciento en relación con el período 1990-1997. Se espera que los incrementos más significativos se den en el arroz, con un 57 por ciento, en el frijol, con un 18.2 por ciento, en el maíz, con un 7.4 por ciento y en la cebada con un 25.6 por ciento. Por el contrario algunos cultivos como el trigo, el cárcamo y la soya disminuirán respectivamente en un 4.2, 2.1 y un 51.8 por ciento, respectivamente. Resalto que los cultivos de maíz, trigo y sorgo representan más del 90 por ciento de la producción de este ciclo.

Por lo que se refiere a las importaciones agropecuarias durante el período de referencia, éstas mostraron un incremento del 14.2 por ciento respecto al mismo período del año anterior mientras que las importaciones ganaderas y de apicultura disminuyeron un 6.5 por ciento. Los principales productos de importación fueron las semillas de soya y algodón, maíz y sorgo, que representan cerca del 50 por ciento de las importaciones agropecuarias.

Como bien lo señalaron los acuerdos alcanzados en la Cumbre Mundial, la oferta de cereales constituye un importante elemento de la seguridad alimentaria, no obstante, el aspecto más determinante del proceso lo representa sin duda alguna las posibilidades de acceso de la población. En este sentido, ni siquiera la disponibilidad garantiza la seguridad alimentaria. Al respecto nos gustaría que, en las próximas ediciones de este documento, se considerara adecuadamente todo el proceso de la seguridad alimentaria enfatizando, por su importancia, la fase del acceso en todas sus variantes que influyen en ella de manera importante. En tal sentido coincidimos con diversas delegaciones que se han pronunciado en este sentido, entre ellas las de Estados Unidos y Bangladesh, cuando se refiere a la necesidad de incluir en los futuros informes de la FAO datos sobre el estado de consumo de alimentos por grupos vulnerables. A lo anterior agregamos que con el mismo objetivo se deben considerar información sobre el acceso a los alimentos por grupos poblacionales.

Liang Ling QU (China) (Original language Chinese)

The Chinese delegation would like to thank the FAO Secretariat for preparing the document on the *Current World Food Situation* and on the 25th CFS Report.

The Chinese delegation believes that, in general, the current world food situation has somewhat improved. We noted that many national governments in the world have taken action to realize the World Food Summit target of cutting by half the number of hungry and malnourished people by the year 2015. Certain results have been achieved.

The Chinese Government has always attached great importance to the food security issue and taken a series of measures to fight poverty. The number of poor people in China keeps going down. China's rural poor population has gone down to 42 million in 1998 from 250 million in 1978. The rural poverty occurrence rate has also gone down, from 30.7 percent to 4.6 percent now.

Early this month, the Chinese Government held a National Poverty Alleviation and Economic Development Conference in Beijing. The meeting clearly declared that, in the next two years, they will try to lift ten million poor people each year out of poverty. This clearly shows the enormous efforts made by the Chinese Government, aimed at realizing the World Food Summit goals. This is also a positive contribution to world food security. However, we should be clearly-minded that the world food situation is far from promising.

The world agricultural growth in 1998 continued to slow down. The average *per capita* holdof farm commodities dropped by 0.9 percent, and there are still nearly 40 countries with poor grain production and supply situations. They are still in need of emergency food aid.

What makes for even more concern is that continuous drop of cereal prices over the past three years will certainly result in a drop of future cereal production and its supply. The latest development in 1999 has proved this concern, and all governments and international communities should give due attention to this fact.

The newly-released World Bank report shows that the world poor population is increasing substantially. In 1987, there were 1.2 billion people living a US\$ 1.00 per day life. By the year 1993, this number was 1.3 billion. In 1999, when mankind is about to enter the Twenty-First Century, the world's poor population will reach 1.5 billion, most of whom are hungry and malnourished.

I would hereby like to draw the attention of all delegations to this fact that Asia, which is hardest hit by the financial crisis, also sees the worst poverty occurrence. The financial crisis has almost offset all the achievements made in poverty alleviation over the past years in this Region.

Presently, most of the world poor population is in Asia. However, we noted with regret from reading the 25th CFS Report, that the share for agriculture in the total overseas development assistance was down by half from the 1980s to the 1990s.

The Chinese delegation would therefore like to take this opportunity to express the following views on how to improve the world food situation.

Firstly, efforts should be made to improve the macro-economic environment and create favourable conditions for promoting agricultural production. The world grain production is heavily subject to the influence of the macro-economic environment. That is why unstable political situations, financial crises and the economic transition in many countries have led to a decline, or even negative growth, in agricultural production, and have caused a negative impact on the world grain supply and improvement of world food security.

We would like to make an appeal to all countries concerned, including developed countries, to take strong measures to stimulate economic growth and promote agricultural development in developing countries.

Secondly, in order to realize the objectives of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, it is important and highly necessary to strengthen, monitor and evaluate the follow-up actions. We wish FAO to make a realistic investigation and evaluation concerning the world food security situation after the World Food Summit, and make an accurate calculation of the current number of hungry and malnourished people. We encourage the Secretariat to further improve monitoring and evaluation indicators, so as to more accurately reflect the world hunger and food insecurity situation.

Thirdly, to solve the world food insecurity and eliminate hunger and malnutrition, we need not only the efforts of all countries, particularly developing countries, but also the cooperation and support of the international community. For developing countries, lack of resources is one of the key restraints to resolving the food insecurity problem.

We therefore stress that developing countries should formulate policies and take measures conducive to agriculture and grain production, increase agricultural inputs, speed up agricultural technical advancement and strengthen education and training for farmers. At the same time, we appeal to the developed countries to provide developing countries with necessary agricultural development aids, increase ODA to LDCs and make actual efforts to eliminate trade protectionism and trade discrimination.

Besides, developing countries should further strengthen cooperation technically, and achieve common development by mutual help.

Fourthly, the Chinese delegation actively supports the DDGs opening remarks at the 25th CFS meeting, and his emphasis on the importance of peace, political stability and sustainable social and economic development in helping solve food insecurity problems. We also noted the Havana Declaration of the Agricultural Ministers' Meeting for Ibero-American States, and the positive role this declaration will play in implementing the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

We also support the Korean delegation's viewpoint on strengthening international economic security. We hope that the international community will work together and create a peaceful and

stable environment for development, strengthen cooperation and reduce conflicts, so as to jointly promote the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

CHAIRMAN

The Argentinian delegation has requested the floor in exercise of its Right of Reply under Item 15 of yesterday's agenda.

I have consulted with the Legal Counsel, and now I will give the floor to the delegate to Argentina for an intervention. However, discussion on Item 15 of yesterday will not be reopened after Argentina has the floor.

Right of Reply

Droit de reponse

Derecho de Replica

Juan Carlos Roland VIGNAUD (Argentina)

Lamento tomar la palabra pero se me ha indicado que ayer en mi ausencia una delegación se refirió específicamente a mí y a mi trabajo, en consecuencia creo que me asiste el derecho de replica a los comentarios que se hicieron con respecto a mi persona. Lamento hacerlo porque yo creo que hay muchos temas importantes para tratar, que tienen mucha más trascendencia que un cambio de opiniones entre delegaciones, pero obviamente cuando se hacen alusiones específicas a alguien no hay más remedio que responder, porque el silencio otorga, como usted bien sabe.

Vine a Roma integrando la delegación de mi país con la intención de aprender, aunque hace treinta y cinco años que asisto a las reuniones de la FAO, nunca se termina de aprender. Siempre se aprende escuchando las intervenciones de las delegaciones y, sobre todo, conociendo las necesidades de los Países Miembros. Porque creo que la obligación nuestra es precisamente tratar de tener una visión precisa de los más necesitados para saber el modo y la manera más eficiente para ayudarlos. Por otra parte, mi delegación está encabezada por un embajador de carrera, mal le pese al delegado que ayer hablaba despectivamente de los embajadores de carrera, pero un embajador de carrera muy respetado en el servicio exterior y en la comunidad internacional porque ha tenido un largo desempeño.

Yo me voy a limitar a responder específicamente a los temas que se citaron ayer, no tengo la menor intención de hacer campaña política ni electoral, aunque aquí en la FAO se viene haciendo campaña desde hace un par de años. Pero eso no corre por mi cuenta. No vine a polemizar, porque la polémica implica siempre un oponente y yo no tengo oponentes, tengo ideas y tengo propuestas. Me doy cuenta que hay quienes pueden sentirse molestos con las propuestas o con puntos de vista diferentes, pero creo que eso es precisamente la base de la democracia la que debe reinar en una institución multilateral. Es del intercambio de opiniones y no del aislamiento donde surge la luz del conocimiento que nos debe orientar en nuestro trabajo.

Como le digo no tengo oponentes pero sí tengo enemigos, contra los cuales he venido luchando desde el inicio de mi carrera, hace treinta y cinco años y esos enemigos son el hambre, la pobreza, la ineficiencia, la burocracia, la falta de transparencia y el autoritarismo, la ambición de poder en lugar de la vocación de servicio. Contra esos enemigos si he de luchar. Se me ha dicho que ayer una delegación calificó de panfleto a mis propuestas y creo que tiene razón, le quiero dar la razón. Esto ha sido circulado en los tres idiomas de la Organización, tiene toda la apariencia de un panfleto. Precisamente porque lo hice siguiendo la regla de austeridad que ha inspirado toda mi vida profesional. Yo creo que cuando hay un centavo para gastar, hay que gastarlo en los que más necesitan, no en cosas superfluas. Tengo un compromiso con la austeridad y de ahí que tenga este folleto el aspecto de panfleto, pero no el contenido de panfleto y para que se entienda mejor que quiere decir austeridad y que quiere decir un compromiso con la misma, quiero hacer aquí un compromiso adicional delante de todos los delegados.

Y es que cuando sea Director General, voy a donar todo lo que exceda de mi salario para atender las necesidades de mi familia, para crear un fondo de solidaridad para asistir a los que más

necesitan y quiero que todos los que están acá sean testigos de este compromiso que acabo de hacer.

El segundo punto que se citó ayer, es que mi documento no tiene prioridades, y yo creo que esto es nada más que la repetición de la *misconception* que existe, de la confusión de que quien fija las prioridades. Las prioridades las fijan los Estados Miembros. Esta Organización son los Estados Miembros, las prioridades no la fijan ni la Secretaría, ni el Director General. De cualquier manera yo invito a quienes han leído mi documento que vean en las versiones en francés, en inglés y en castellano a partir de la página 12 y 13 donde están los criterios que se deben seguir para el establecimiento de prioridades.

Muy rápidamente, otro punto que se trató ayer que fue materia de crítica es la designación de un Grupo de Representantes por Regiones que yo propongo que se incorpore al Gabinete del Director General para facilitar una interacción entre la dirección general y los Estados Miembros. Creo que la realidad de este Consejo me da la razón, porque el Director General no ha tenido tiempo de venir a escuchar a los Estados Miembros aquí, a hacer presentes sus preocupaciones. Esto indica muy claramente que la interacción entre el Director General y los Gobiernos no existe. Nosotros necesitamos la presencia del Director General aquí. Llegó ayer, dijo unas palabras de circunstancia, y se fue.

El cuarto punto al que se hizo referencia es que, y lamentablemente despectiva, de que soy un diplomático de carrera y es cierto: soy un diplomático de carrera y eso me da una ventaja porque como soy diplomático de carrera y porque tengo estabilidad como diplomático de carrera, no estoy buscando trabajo. Estoy buscando que se apliquen principios para mejorar esta Organización. Además, agrego a esto que, como diplomático de carrera con treinta y cinco años de servicio, lo único que he hecho en mi vida profesional ha sido dedicarme a la lucha contra el hambre y la pobreza. Por eso es que fui distinguido por mi Gobierno como Secretario de Estado y Asesor Principal del Presidente en temas de pobreza.

Quiero concluir con una propuesta: si este llamado panfleto ha ofendido o ha producido desacuerdos, pues yo lo lamento, es mi punto de vista y estoy dispuesto a discutirlo públicamente delante de todos ustedes con el Director General. Lo invito a un debate público para que los dos hagamos conocer nuestras propuestas, en un lugar neutral en Roma o donde quiera y, entonces, que cada uno diga qué es lo que espera de la FAO en los próximos seis años. Queda hecha esa invitación, si quiere llámelo desafío para que el Director General nos responda. Establezcamos las reglas de ese debate, y que salga quien tiene las mejores propuestas.

Right of Reply

Droit de réponse

Derecho de Replica

Mame BALLA SY (Sénégal)

Si très certainement ma délégation a fait référence à un ambassadeur de carrière. Je me sens moi-même visé, mais je suis très fier d'être un ambassadeur de carrière, parce qu'un ambassadeur de carrière, en tout cas dans mon pays, ce que l'on en comprend, c'est la maîtrise, c'est le doigté, et c'est le sens de la magnanimité. Je pense qu'il a été donné l'impression, ou bien l'occasion, à l'ambassadeur de carrière de dire quelles étaient ses qualités d'ambassadeur de carrière. Je l'en remercie.

Ce que je voudrais simplement dire, c'est que ma délégation regrette même profondément un tel spectacle, et nous sommes sûrs qu'il ne se reproduira jamais. L'invitation qui a été faite, je pense, est hors propos. Le Sénégal n'est nullement concerné par une bataille entre des candidats, nous sommes concernés par ce que fait une organisation. Nous sommes plus intéressés par des faits palpables, par des résultats concrets, parce que en trente-cinq ans, l'homme a pu faire sa route et laisser des traces, qui sont indélébiles et qui sont susceptibles d'être consultées au point que, loin de nous engager dans cette démarche, ce que nous regrettons simplement, parce que nous avons sûrement offensé, peut-être involontairement, mais très honnêtement, intellectuellement parlant, un Membre du Conseil, à qui j'adresse toutes mes excuses en tant que Chef de délégation, en lui

faisant comprendre simplement que la tradition du Sénégal n'est pas d'invectiver et de créer des tensions inutiles, mais de faire valoir des arguments, sa capacité et ses possibilités de réflexion, d'analyse et d'action.

La FAO est une organisation qui doit être à l'écoute des populations, elle doit se rapprocher des populations, elle doit aller sur le terrain voir ce qui s'y passe, agir par des actions concrètes qui soient appréciées ou non appréciées, mais le résultat est là, criant. Donc je pense qu'il faudrait qu'on cherche une autre enceinte que celle-ci, qui est uniquement concernée par l'avenir des jeunes, des vieillards, des femmes qui ont tant besoin de notre action de manière concrète, réfléchie et pondérée, comme le veut, en tout cas, la diplomatie qui est faite d'élégance, de calme, d'intelligence et de maîtrise de soi.

The meeting rose at 12.35 hours.

La séance est levée à 12 h 35.

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.35 horas.

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixteenth Session Cent seizième session 116º período de sesiones
Rome, 14 – 19 June 1999 Rome, 14 – 19 juin 1999 Roma, 14 – 19 de junio de 1999
FOURTH PLENARY MEETING QUATRIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE CUARTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
15 June 1999

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

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

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

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)

- 3. Current World Food Situation** (CL 116/2) (continued)
3. Situation actuelle de l'alimentation dans le monde (CL 116/2) (suite)
3. Situación actual de la alimentación en el mundo (CL 116/2) (continuación)

- 4. Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on World Food Security (Rome, 31 May – 4 June 1999)** (CL 116/10)) (continued)
4. Rapport de la vingt-cinquième session du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale (Rome, 31 mai - 4 juin 1999) (CL 116/10) (suite)
4. Informe del 25º período de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial (Roma, 31 de mayo-4 de junio de 1999) (CL 116/10) (continuación)

Bhaskar BARUA (India)

We have read with great interest the excellently produced document under consideration on the *Current World Food Situation* and also the Report of the Committee on Food Security. We note that, despite the adverse climatic changes and the challenges thrown up by the new world economic order in the last two years, the farmers of the world have endeavoured to increase food production. However, we are also concerned about global food production in 1998 not keeping pace with the increase in population. The situation of food production in Africa, particularly South of the Sahara where *per capita* food production has steadily declined, requires special attention.

We would also like to underscore the food security issues raised by the recent Asian crisis in our Region. The task ahead of us, therefore, in eradicating hunger in the next millennium needs commitment and action of a very high order from national governments and international agencies.

As you are aware, India supports a population of nearly a billion people. We have come a long way in the last 50 years in ensuring self-reliance in food production. With a record production of over nearly 200 million metric tonnes of foodgrains this year, we can take comfort in the fact that we are not only self-sufficient in production of foodgrains, but have attained high resilience through development and wide adoption of appropriate technologies.

In spite of all these achievements, the present levels of yield of agricultural growth in the country are far below their potential. Spread of new technologies and dissemination of modern inputs to the least developed regions of the country, especially rainfed areas, together with improved management practices are required to provide a major thrust to agriculture production.

The Green Revolution areas where prosperity and progress have been recorded the concern of sustainability needs to be addressed. In the rainfed and marginal areas, biotechnology can help in achieving a breakthrough in production and the level of economies, as has already been mentioned by the honourable delegate from Venezuela.

We would like a pro-active role of FAO in information and dissemination, technology transfer and institution building in this area. As a premier international agricultural organization, FAO also has to act as a neutral forum to discuss bio-safety measures. We would urge FAO to actively pursue efforts started earlier.

Agricultural production in developing countries enjoys considerable cost-advantage. If this advantage is to lead to betterment of farmers' livelihoods, quality improvement is a key factor.

Similarly, in areas such as organic production, the developing countries can succeed provided they are helped to evolve standards which are not only cost-effective but acceptable in the world market.

Yet another important aspect to be addressed is increasing access to resources. Investment in irrigation is a very important component of this. The World Food Summit estimated that 60 percent of the extra food to sustain the world in future must come from irrigated agriculture. Harnessing of water resources and providing irrigation support to the small farmer-dominated agriculture sector is one of the critical issues staring at many developing countries at the turn of this century. In tackling several of these challenges, we look forward to FAO playing a crucial role through its technical assistance programmes.

The comments made by the distinguished delegate from Uganda relating to access of women and youth to resources, particularly land resources, are very noteworthy in this connection because, in terms of food insecurity in the developing countries and the Third World, it is the women and the younger people who suffer the most.

The greatest challenge faced by developing countries in the post-WTO Agreement on Agriculture phase is to respond robustly and confidently to the demands of adjusting the structure of economy to resonate with external stipulations.

Efficient scanning of the external environment for spotting emerging sites for opportunities, and organizing appropriate responses from the production system to signals from the markets are some of the areas that will require attention. We would request FAO to assist the developing countries in establishing such systems.

We welcome the proposed Symposium to be organized in Geneva by FAO on matters relating to WTO. We hope that this Symposium will not only provide opportunities to the developing countries to prepare for the forthcoming WTO negotiations, but will also enable the developed countries to understand and appreciate the special problems of the developing countries, including the Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States. As already pointed out by the distinguished delegate from Korea, multi-functionality of agriculture in these economies is something which is to be appreciated.

We in India view self-sufficiency in foodgrains as a most viable solution to achieve food security of the people. Food security is an undeniable right of the people, and every nation is entitled to determine the production, distribution and consumption of food according to their preferences and cultural tradition.

Moreover, agriculture is the main source of employment as it provides the livelihood of a large proportion of poor people in developing countries. Despite the limitations of shifting people on a large scale to other sectors in such economies in the near future, development of agriculture is the only feasible proposition for alleviating poverty. In other words, where the root cause of food insecurity is poverty, local production is the best method for eliminating this menace.

I take this opportunity to express our support to the Director-General's laudable initiative for expansion of the Special Programme for Food Security. India has supported the initiative by offering to implement projects in a few countries.

I once again commend the role of FAO, which has worked in close collaboration with the nations in need. My delegation feels confident that FAO will also continue to share fruitful, collaborative relations with the developing countries in future.

We look forward to FAO's announced role in helping the under-privileged sectors of our farming community to come to terms with rapid changes in the external environment.

Brett HUGHES (Australia)

Australia welcomes FAO's report on the *Current World Food Situation* and largely concurs with its assessment, although we would note that the situation described appears rather patchy. In particular, Australia agrees with the Report's conclusion that the world food situation in the

medium-term will depend on developments in the world economy and the recovery from the financial crisis that has affected the world economy recently. It is therefore important that countries experiencing economic difficulties and the major food-producing countries do not resort to protectionist policies which would further down the pressure on world food prices. This would only serve to reduce incentives to produce food in countries that have open agricultural markets and would delay the recovery process.

Further, the continuing decline in the level of cereal stocks also underscores the importance of countries adopting open market policies that promote growth in world food demand.

Australia notes FAO's latest forecasts for cereal food aid shipments in 1998-99 of eight million tonnes, which is up from the 5.8 million tonnes in 1997-98. While Australia recognizes that the demand for food aid has increased in recent years, because more countries have been facing a food emergency situation, we would like to emphasize that it is important that only genuine emergency cases are targeted so that local and global food markets are not depressed.

Australia also welcomes recognition of the importance of fish production and availability as an important element in meeting food security. In this regard, it is important that market forces be allowed to determine demand and supply levels for fish products to encourage the effective and efficient use of world fishery resources.

Further, to ensure that future sustainability of global fisheries production it is vital the Members implement responsible management plans and practices consistent with the principles established by the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*.

In relation to the Committee on Food Security, without wanting to go over ground already covered in the CFS, Australia wishes to make a number of brief comments.

We welcome the broadened range of indicators used in assessing the world food security situation and welcome the agreement to the new reporting format for World Food Summit Follow-up.

We also welcome the continued positive progress with FIVIMS development, which Australia sees as an important area of work for FAO.

Given this, we would wish that Council adopt the Committee on World Food Security report.

Finally, reference has been made to the issue of multi-functional character of agriculture. Australia recognizes that agriculture has a role in society beyond the production of food and fibre for both domestic consumption and trade, and that it does assist in meeting national objectives such as the vitality of rural communities and the environment. In this context, Australia accepts that rural life is multi-functional, and has several other functions embodied by the issues addressed as non-trade concerns.

The WTO agreement on agriculture has recognized the importance of non-trade concerns. It is the position of Australia that in meeting the policy objectives raised by these non-trade concerns, the implementation of policy should not be inconsistent with liberalizing world trade in agriculture. Indeed, the WTO gives its Members the opportunity to develop policy measures to address multi-functional or non-trade concerns through the "green box" measures allowed under the agreements on agriculture, and to do so without distorting trade.

Australia too faces many of the concerns over issues such as the vitality of rural communities in the environment that can be encapsulated within the concept of the multi-functional nature of agriculture. However, the means to address these problems must be targeted, transparent and decoupled from production so as not to distort trade in agricultural commodities.

Finally, it has been suggested that the "FAO/Netherlands Conference on the Multi-functional Character on Agricultural Land" will make a contribution in the next WTO round.

Allow us to point out this is a conference that is intended to be a technical contribution to CSD-8 next year and in no way is it intended to input into the WTO Round, particularly given that this issue is still the subject of active debate within the OECD and WTO.

Let us remember the fundamental role that trade liberalization plays in achieving food security, as recognized in the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

CHAIRMAN

I would like to remind the Council that there is a Session when we discuss the Maastricht Conference that will relate to the multifunctionality of agriculture, so I would appeal that we avoid debate on multi-functionality agriculture right now.

Masato ITO (Japan)

My delegation would like to highly commend the effort made by the Secretariat in preparing document CL 116/2 which clearly summarizes the *Current World food situation*.

We are glad to hear that cereal production in developing countries increased, though modestly. The world food supply and demand situation tends to be facing bigger fluctuation than ever before. The record high prices for wheat and maize in 1996 dropped down to a very low level in 1998 in the space of two years. The Asian region, having experienced an international financial crisis and weather abnormalities, is no exception. Since such fluctuations could affect adversely not only the economy of exporting countries but also the food security situation in importing countries, we have to watch carefully the world food situation.

As the largest net food-importing country, Japan has a keen interest in the world food situation. From this point of view, we place the highest priority on self-help programmes in support of developing countries. In this connection, we would like to express our expectation that FAO will continue to exert its leadership more actively in this field and endeavour to conduct timely and precise monitoring of the world food security situation.

My delegation would like to highlight the importance of the development of FIVIMS, which could address food insecurity and vulnerability at national, regional and international level.

Japan is funding a Trust Fund project to support the development of national FIVIMS in Asian countries. I wish the Secretariat to strengthen its efforts to promote the FIVIMS initiative.

Taking this opportunity, my delegation wants to introduce a new policy direction in Japan, namely, the basic laws for food, agriculture and rural areas. The Bill was submitted to the Diet in March and copies of this Bill, provisionally translated in to English, are available on the table at the entrance.

I would like to touch very briefly upon the basic idea which will direct future policies as presented in the new basic law: to guarantee food security and stable food supply based on domestic agricultural production together with an appropriate combination of input and stockpiles; to enable agricultural and rural areas to fulfil their multi-functional laws; to promote sustainable agricultural development; and to ensure comprehensive development of rural areas.

I would like to touch upon major policy changes in the areas of food and agriculture. With regard to the food policy, setting a target for the food self-sufficiency ratio as a guideline for production and consumption, and formulating a food policy that focuses on the consumer's viewpoint plus introduction of improved food laboursing systems are the main changes. Concerning the agriculture policy, studying efficient and stable agriculture management through improvement in farming productivity and demand-driven production, reviewing existing price policies and introducing farm management stabilization policies are the main changes.

I would like to briefly touch upon the effect of trade liberalization on food security. Some delegations emphasized the importance of trade liberalization in achieving world food security. Trade is an important element. However, trade is a key element in achieving world food security as agreed upon in the World Food Summit Plan of Action. I would like to emphasize that domestic production is also a key element in achieving world food security.

I would like to echo the statement made by the Korean delegation in terms of the multi-functionality of agriculture. Agriculture is, in addition to its primary role of production, a crucial

vehicle for the achievement of an improved socio-economic, biological and physical environment. However, my delegation would like to come back to this issue at a later stage.

Now let me turn to the fisheries issues. My delegation welcomes aquaculture's significant contribution to the expansion of fish production. My delegation supports the importance of aquaculture, in particular for its immediate contribution to food security in certain regions. However, my delegation is afraid that rapid development of aquaculture may cause degradation of hostile habitats used for aquaculture, spread of diseases, genetic pollution, inefficient use of wild fish production as aquaculture feed, and resource competition with stakeholders.

Under these circumstances, the Japanese Government has submitted new legislation to the Diet relating to the promotion of environmentally-sound aquaculture and prevention of the negative impact of its environment.

As a responsible fishing nation, my delegation would like to stress the need to review and adjust the administrative and policy framework to address the programmes arising from aquaculture.

On fisheries issues, we would like to comment on the point proposed by Australia. It is not my intention to prolong this debate, so I would like to come back to this at a later stage in terms of the COFI.

Finally, with respect to the Agenda Item 4, my delegation wishes to take this opportunity to express its intention to host the Twenty-fifth Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific Region in Japan in early September next year. In this connection, we propose the timing of the CFS meeting be decided in coordination with that of the Regional Conference. We are given to understand that the regional coordinating meeting of NGOs, featuring an important contribution to the discussion of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, will be organized in parallel to the Regional Conference.

Luis A. WAGNER (Paraguay)

En primer lugar quisiera expresar mi agradecimiento a los señores Miembros del Consejo por asignarme una de las Vicepresidencias del 116° período de sesiones de este Consejo en representación del Grupo Latinoamericano y del Caribe, hecho que nos halaga sobremanera y ubica por primera vez a mi país en la mesa directiva. Quisiera aprovechar esta ocasión para ratificar todos y cada uno de los puntos de la Declaración del GRULAC que fuera expuesta por la señora Presidenta de nuestro Grupo Regional. Además quisiera resaltar particularmente que dentro de esa declaración, entendemos fortalecer el libre comercio mundial eliminando progresivamente las barreras impuestas fundamentalmente a lo atinente a los subsidios, a las exportaciones y a las barreras no arancelarias. Nuestra gente, nuestro pueblo, para poder comer, para poder satisfacer sus mínimas necesidades, tiene que trabajar, quiere trabajar y producir, utilizando los mejores recursos que cada país tiene para poder intentar exportar. Sin embargo, nos encontramos con barreras que impiden aprovechar las oportunidades que tienen nuestros países y nuestras regiones.

Vemos que si no podemos utilizar nuestras ventajas y oportunidades, entonces cada vez vamos a estar más sometidos al hambre y a las necesidades. No se va a poder llegar a lo que muy bien la FAO considera como uno de los puntos fundamentales como objetivo de los próximos tiempos, que es disminuir y eliminar la desnutrición en el mundo.

También quisiera apoyar la puesta en marcha de las recomendaciones emanadas de anteriores conferencias, así como las aspiraciones señaladas explícitamente por connotados representantes en el sentido de lograr la efectiva descentralización de las gestiones de la FAO a fin de posibilitar el acceso cercano y directo de los productores agrícolas de nuestras regiones a la asistencia técnica. Por ello reiteramos la importancia de contar con una Oficina Permanente de la FAO en Asunción, Paraguay.

Ratificamos nuestro apoyo a la candidatura de Guatemala como sede del XII Congreso Forestal Mundial, uno de los países más azotados por el Huracán Mitch, una desgracia natural que tanto daño y tantas necesidades ha generado en nuestro pueblo latinoamericano.

Marcel Théophile RAVELOARIJAONA (Madagascar)

Puisque que c'est la première fois que la délégation malgache prend la parole, ma délégation voudrait joindre sa voix à celles des délégations qui ont manifesté leur plaisir de vous voir présider à nouveau les travaux du Conseil. Nous sommes assurés de leur succès compte tenu de votre grande expérience et compétence. Nous félicitons aussi les trois Vice-présidents élus pour leur brillante élection ainsi que les membres du Comité de rédaction.

Ma délégation voudrait féliciter le Secrétariat pour la qualité du document CL 116/2 à l'examen, qui traite les tendances récentes de la production alimentaire et des marchés des produits alimentaires de base. L'analyse faite dans le document est pertinente.

Cependant, ma délégation voudrait faire quelques commentaires en tenant compte de l'agencement des chapitres tels qu'ils figurent dans le document à l'examen. Dans le chapitre "Production alimentaire en 1998" on relève, au paragraphe 11, que parmi les régions en développement seule l'Afrique sub-saharienne n'a pas réussi à accroître sa production alimentaire à un rythme suffisant pour accompagner l'accroissement de la population dans la période 1994-1998. La production alimentaire par habitant a diminué de 0,4 pour cent. Le tableau 3 indique également que 7 pour cent de la population des pays en développement vit dans des pays ayant enregistré un déclin sensible de la production alimentaire par habitant. Ce tableau met aussi en relief des différences très remarquées entre les régions. Le tableau 1 met en évidence les variations de la production alimentaire totale et l'accroissement de la population des différents pays pendant la période 1994-1998. On constate que la production n'a pas augmenté aussi vite que la population dans près de la moitié des pays considérés, y compris Madagascar. Cette situation est étonnante quand on sait que beaucoup de pays en développement sont confrontés d'année en année aux effets pervers des catastrophes naturelles telles que les cyclones, les inondations, les sécheresses et pour le cas de Madagascar, les criquets.

Ceci dit, un soutien plus accru de la communauté internationale s'avère absolument indispensable. En ce qui concerne le chapitre "Commerce agricole", ma délégation regrette les difficultés rencontrées par les pays en développement sur les négociations commerciales multilatérales de l'*Uruguay Round* et souhaite que les pays en développement soient soutenus pour résoudre ces problèmes. Enfin, je parlerai des chapitres "Situations d'urgence alimentaire" et "Aide alimentaire". En matière d'aide alimentaire, je souhaiterais tout simplement réitérer ce que j'ai dit auparavant, à savoir, le besoin impérieux pour les pays en développement d'un soutien accru de la part des donateurs au moment où ces pays traversent actuellement une situation alimentaire très préoccupante, notamment en Afrique. L'aide alimentaire qui contribue aussi au développement fait bel et bien partie de l'assistance extérieure et ma délégation ne peut que se féliciter de l'initiative du PAM lors de sa dernière session du Conseil d'administration pour favoriser l'aide alimentaire au développement. En ce qui concerne le rapport du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire, ma délégation souscrit aux recommandations faites par le Comité et le Conseil de l'approuver.

Lyall W. SMALL (Barbados)

Thank you for giving me the opportunity of making some brief comments on the documents provided to us by FAO on the *Current World Food Situation*, CL 116/2, and the 25th Session of the Committee on World Food Security, CL 116/10.

First of all, it is heartening that the Report on the *Current World Food Situation* highlights a phenomenon that is not usually evident, that is, where developing countries as a group show a greater average percentage of expansion of food production than developed countries. Whatever the reasons adduced from this, I hope that it is a trend which will continue, minus the caveats given in the document. For my Region, the Caribbean, it is heartening that of the five Caribbean countries highlighted in Figure 1 in CL 116/2, four of those countries showed production increasing at a higher rate than population growth. This is also a trend which I hope will continue.

Our Region is subject to natural disasters which can seriously impact on food security, with hurricanes being the most usual type of disaster affecting us. Of course, volcanoes and earthquakes are not uncommon. It should be noted that predictions by various meteorological

experts have indicated that there is an expectation that 1999 is likely to be a hyperactive one for Atlantic hurricanes. We trust that the reality will not be as bad as the predictions and that we will not require significant food aid assistance follow on these expected hurricanes.

Here, I would wish to commend FAO for proactively implementing a regional project on hurricane preparedness in time for us to be prepared for this hurricane season. I sincerely hope that we will not have to use any of the prescriptions coming out of that FAO TCP.

My delegation is pleased to endorse the two reports.

Hassan KATANA (Syria) (Original language Arabic)

Our delegation wishes to thank the Secretariat and also commends them on the quality of documents CL 116/2 and CL 116/10.

The document is exhaustive and comprehensive in our opinion. The very useful information and the statistical data in the document give us a picture of the world food situation. This situation has indeed taken important steps forward. However, this progress is not steady and it has great fluctuations. The agricultural situation is faced with many problems, and there are also difficulties in the access of people to food. Population growth is still galloping, and in the world there are many malnourished and hungry people. In this respect, we would like to underscore that one of the targets of the Organization is to halve the number of undernourished people. This of course is only a temporary target. Progress, however, so far has not been satisfactory. This is caused by a number of different events, and, in this regard, my delegation wishes to commend the analytical nature of the two documents now before us.

We would like to be able to find this also in future documents. We hope that stress will be laid on all those causes that have mitigated success or have led to failures in promoting food production. Likewise, we would like the Organization to also handle the implementation of the resolutions and recommendations of the World Food Summit. We would like this follow-up to be based on quantifiable data concerning food security in the world.

We also believe that the Organization should focus on those problems which are highlighted in the document when preparing its Programme of Work and Budget. This would lead to greater efficiency in FAO projects and programmes. These documents would thus become more useful.

Furthermore, I would like to state that my Government gives priority in its economic and social policies to the agricultural sector and the promotion of agriculture in food production, improving its quality and seeing that production costs are lowered, and at the same time preserving natural resources by means of their rational use.

Philip MOUMIE (Cameroun)

La délégation du Cameroun voudrait d'abord adresser ses félicitations au Secrétariat de la FAO pour la qualité des documents préparés et soumis au Conseil afin de lui permettre de voir clair sur la situation alimentaire mondiale. Malgré l'insuffisance de certaines données sur certains produits alimentaires, notamment les tubercules, dont l'impact est indéniable sur la sécurité alimentaire de beaucoup de pays en développement, il y a lieu de reconnaître que l'analyse globale retracée dans les documents CL 116/2 et CL 116/10, reflète la réalité. Une réalité triste pour les pays d'Afrique sub-saharienne qui enregistrent une baisse de leur production par habitant.

La délégation camerounaise, tout en recommandant au Conseil l'approbation du rapport du CSA, souhaite néanmoins faire quelques recommandations au Conseil sur l'exploitation des rapports nationaux du suivi du Plan d'action du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation. Etant donné que les actions à entreprendre pour améliorer la situation alimentaire des populations sont de loin plus importantes que les dispositifs pour en mesurer l'impact, il nous paraît utile que ces actions figurent clairement dans les rapports et reçoivent les soutiens nécessaires des instances de la FAO. Parmi elles figurent certainement des actions qui concernent plusieurs Etats d'une même sous-région.

Il serait, par conséquent, nécessaire que ces actions soient examinées et approuvées par les Conférences régionales qui devraient avoir la possibilité de les faire apprécier avant qu'elles n'arrivent au Secrétariat du CSA pour la rédaction du rapport. En ce qui concerne la participation des ONG aux travaux du CSA et leur concours dans l'analyse de la situation alimentaire nationale et régionale, nous réitérons la proposition qui a été faite au Comité de la sécurité alimentaire, à savoir que leur apport doit être préalablement intégré dans les rapports nationaux. Il serait beaucoup plus facile ainsi de pouvoir en tenir compte dans l'élaboration des programmes d'actions réels au niveau des différents Etats.

S'agissant de mesures concrètes visant l'amélioration de la production alimentaire, notre pays, comme d'autres, a besoin d'un soutien réel et concret pour atténuer les effets néfastes de certaines calamités naturelles qui empêchent de manière permanente cette augmentation. Nous voulons parler plus spécialement des effets de la sécheresse qui peuvent être atténués par l'utilisation de moyens plus importants pour la maîtrise de l'eau. Ce problème a contraint notre pays à recourir à des interventions d'urgence en matière d'assistance alimentaire aux populations de sa partie septentrionale ces dernières années. Le Programme spécial pour la sécurité alimentaire mérite un soutien accru.

Nous voulons saisir enfin cette occasion pour remercier les pays et organismes qui nous ont aidé, et qui continuent de le faire, pour nous permettre de faire face à la situation que je viens de décrire. Nous voulons enfin, Monsieur le Président, vous réitérer, ainsi qu'aux membres de votre bureau, les félicitations de notre délégation pour votre élection pour diriger nos travaux.

P.W. MISIKA (Namibia)

Namibia welcomes the report on the *Current World Food Situation* contained in the document CL 116/2, which we regard to be comprehensive, factual and informative. I would like to extend our deep appreciation to the FAO Secretariat for a job well done. The same goes with regard to the *Report on the 25th Session of the Committee of World Food Security*, contained in document CL 116/10.

While supporting the two said Reports, we strongly deplore the cold distressing realities contained therein. It is distressing to note that the 0.5 percent increase in food production at the global level represents the lowest rate of global expansion during the 1990s. It is also most particularly disturbing to note that there has been a decline in the rates of food production for both the developed and developing countries, and more so for the Low-Income, Food-Deficit countries.

While we appreciate the reported significant improvement in the forecast of surplus cereals to be held by major exporting countries is and should be good news and a source of relief for all concerned, we wish to caution that this may not be the case for the hungry millions of people in developing and Low-Income, Food-Deficit Countries, because of several bare realities confronting these countries and their people, that in one way or another, make it difficult, if not impossible, for them to access these stocks. Some of these sectors are inequality in income distribution, low purchasing power, adverse terms of trade, external debt, private capital flows, civil strife, financial turmoil, and weak export prices for products from these countries. This makes it impossible for them to import these stocks and causes stagnation and, in some cases, decline in official development assistance to these countries.

The combined effect of these factors is much more dramatic for the developing countries in general, for Africa South of the Sahara and the Low-Income, Food-Deficit Countries in particular, that registered very minimal food production growth rates of only 1.8 and 0.7 percent, respectively, as reflected in Table 1 on page 2 of the document; which in turn resulted in two negative changes of minus 1.2 and minus 0.9 percent, respectively. Figure 1 on page 6 further amplifies these bleak pictures by showing that in Africa, only 17 countries experienced a favourable combination of lower population growth rates coupled with higher food production rates.

Two countries experienced the food production growth rates equal to their population growth rates, while the majority of 27 countries experienced a perverse combination of high population

growth rates coupled with stagnating or even declining of food production growth rates. Namibia believes that the figure could even be higher if all African countries were to be included in this assessment.

These factors, coupled with adverse weather conditions, constitute the justification in some instances for food aid and in most, if not all cases, development aid, not only to Africa but also to other Low-Income, Food-Deficit Countries.

Having said that, Namibia would also like to comment on a theme that has been used in this debate, and that is the issue of comparative advantage. Reference was made to this theme, and Namibia would humbly like to comment on this by pointing out that this is not only a relative theme but also a misleading one, and should be used with slight caution since if not consciously used, it would easily become a comparative disadvantage. This is because, firstly, many countries in the developing world are not only endowed with limited natural and basic factors of production but that their endowment in these sectors is limited in comparison to the developed countries.

Secondly, the exploitation of these relative advantages depends on various factors such as availability of financial resources necessary to invest in the appropriate technologies, human and institutional capacity, etc. Most countries in the developing world and the Low-Income, Food-Deficit Countries face a shortage of these sectors. Hence our humble plea to FAO and the international community to assist in this regard, in order to enhance the capacities of these countries to exploit their comparative advantages fully, because if not so, as we submitted, these comparative advantages will be comparative disadvantages.

Chao Tiantong (Thailand)

The Thai delegation commends the Secretariat for the well-prepared documents, CL 116/2 and CL 116/10, and we endorse them both.

We would also like to associate ourselves with the comments made earlier by the previous speakers, namely the distinguished representatives of South Africa, Republic of Korea and Malaysia.

Under the situations that many countries are facing, such as natural calamities or political crises, we would like to emphasize that FAO should give priority to rendering emergency assistance to these countries in order to bring them back to their normal situation, as soon as possible, so that food security can be achieved as targeted.

Ms Mitzi Gurgel Valente da Costa (Brazil)

First of all, my delegation would like to fully endorse the declaration made by the distinguished delegate of El Salvador on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group. My delegation also welcomes the documents under review at this moment, for which we would like to thank the Secretariat.

My delegation already spoke, at length, during the recently-concluded session of the Committee on World Food Security Committee and it mentioned the steps that the Brazilian Government had taken in order to promote the greater participation of the rural population in agricultural production. I will not repeat this information at this time, but let me just say that Brazil is well on its way towards implementing its part in the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

I would just like to make one comment at this time with regard to the document entitled *Current World Food Situation*. It depicts an agricultural production tendency that most of us are already aware of, and would agree with as a whole. I think that for any organization to predict global catastrophes in the future is a very difficult thing to do. We would all hope that this does not come true, to happen, we will not have decreased food production because of these unforetold catastrophes.

As a whole, the declining prices of commodity products and the declining world demand due to the recent economic turmoil in certain regions have contributed to a reduced demand of

agricultural products, in spite of the fact that the lower prices have reduced the food import bills of the major LIFDCs.

I would just like to comment on paragraphs 42 and 44 of the document, where it says that there was an increase in the shipments of food aid as a whole. This needs to be looked at carefully for, as stated in paragraph 42, contrary to what might be expected, the increased availability of food aid was not directed towards the LIFDCs. This is a trend that could cause us some worry in the future because it could adversely affect the regular flow of commercial food sales and further depress the prices of staple foods worldwide. If we are to stimulate the agricultural output of developing countries as a means to achieve global food security, we must also ensure that this increased production can find a suitable outlet in an increasingly tight world market.

Alioune SECK (Sénégal)

Permettez-moi tout d'abord de féliciter le Secrétariat pour la qualité des documents produits, qui traduit l'effort que la FAO ne cesse de déployer pour répondre au besoin d'information des Etats Membres. L'analyse de la situation mondiale de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture constitue pour notre délégation une source réelle de préoccupation, car elle indique que l'Afrique sub-saharienne demeure la seule Région où la production agricole a reculé. L'Afrique est également le continent où la situation d'urgence alimentaire est la plus préoccupante, du fait notamment des conflits et des catastrophes naturelles qui l'affectent. Une telle situation justifie assurément que la FAO, les autres organisations internationales, ainsi que les pays développés continuent de placer l'Afrique au centre de leurs préoccupations, sans pour autant oublier les autres régions du monde, dans le cadre d'une solidarité bien comprise entre pays en développement. A cet égard, il faut déplorer la baisse des engagements des donateurs bilatéraux et multilatéraux en faveur de l'agriculture, baisse qui s'inscrit dans la tendance générale à la réduction de l'aide publique au développement. Si cette tendance devait se maintenir, nous nous éloignerions davantage des objectifs du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation plutôt que de nous en rapprocher, objectif qui est, je le rappelle, de réduire de moitié le nombre de personnes souffrant de la faim d'ici à 2015.

Je voudrais à présent vous présenter la situation de l'agriculture dans notre pays, le Sénégal. Le secteur agricole demeure pour le Sénégal le levier principal pour la relance de la production et la réalisation des objectifs stratégiques de croissance économique, de lutte contre la pauvreté et de développement durable. Le secteur agricole reste cependant dépendant des pluies, et l'impact des cultures irriguées est encore marginal. Cette dépendance climatique, caractérisée par l'irrégularité des précipitations et le faible potentiel productif des sols, fait observer des fluctuations de la production agricole d'une année à une autre. L'analyse des données par spéculation montre que les rendements observés dépendent des niveaux d'eau, de l'utilisation d'intrants agricoles et de technologies adaptées. Plus de la moitié des terres cultivables sont continuellement cultivées par 60 pour cent de la population, mais le reste du pays reste encore dépendant des importations en riz. Les contraintes majeures à lever pour réduire notre dépendance sont la détérioration de la fertilité des sols et la non-maîtrise de l'eau. L'offre de céréales locales est estimée à 1 169,7 milliers de tonnes d'équivalents produits constamment par an durant la période 1986-1996, dont 40 pour cent en riz et 46,8 pour cent en céréales sèches, mil, sorgho et maïs. Les importations de céréales ont fluctué ces 10 dernières années entre 413 000 et 574 000 tonnes, dont 70 pour cent en riz, 20 pour cent en blé et 10 pour cent en mil et sorgho, mais le taux de couverture des besoins céréaliers en 1998-99 est estimé à 56,6 pour cent, soit 966 756 tonnes. Et l'établissement du bilan céréalier prévisionnel 1998-99 fait ressortir un déficit de 110 000 tonnes après importations. Cependant, si on a des zones déficitaires dans le nord et le sud, ces mêmes zones peuvent être approvisionnées par des transferts. En outre, les revenus tirés des cultures de rente peuvent permettre, dans une certaine mesure, l'accès à la nourriture que nous recherchons.

Je voudrais, à présent, développer le problème du rapport entre le Sénégal et le Programme spécial pour la sécurité alimentaire (PSSA). Comme vous le savez, mon pays, en coopération avec le Gouvernement du Viet Nam et la FAO, s'est engagé à mettre en œuvre le PSSA depuis 1997, après le programme pilote avec la FAO, qui était en exécution dans deux sites. Ainsi, 120 experts vietnamiens sont dans les campagnes sénégalaises pour travailler en commun avec les

organisations paysannes, riziculture, élevage, aquaculture, horticulture, transformation de produits, socio-économie. Dans le sud du pays, grâce au PSSA, les rendements en riz sont portés à 1,3 tonnes à l'hectare contre 0,5 tonne à l'hectare autrefois pour le riz paddy. Pour les autres cultures, nous avons 1 tonne à l'hectare pour le mil, 1,2 à l'hectare pour le maïs, 5,5 tonnes à l'hectare pour le manioc. Dans le nord du pays, pour le riz, nous avons des rendements de 3 à 7 tonnes à l'hectare avec des pointes de 10 tonnes à l'hectare. En 1997-98, sur 47,38 hectares pour 58 producteurs, le rendement moyen est de 5 tonnes à l'hectare et des pointes atteignent 8 tonnes à l'hectare. En 1998-99, sur 52,62 hectares pour 23 producteurs, nous avons pu obtenir un rendement moyen de 6 tonnes à l'hectare. La contre-saison pour l'oignon a donné pour 1996-97, 18,6 hectares pour 76 producteurs, pour 1997-1998, 9,25 pour 36 producteurs et pour 1998-99, 16,25 pour 44 producteurs, avec des rendements moyens de 11 à 15 tonnes. Le PSSA, comme il a été retenu, a été évalué en 1997 à Dakar et en 1998 à Hanoi. Les trois parties que voilà et les organisations de producteurs sénégalais ont montré leur satisfaction dans l'exécution du PSSA et des résultats obtenus.

Aussi, les Gouvernements du Sénégal et du Viet Nam ont-ils convenu de prolonger l'accord tripartite de trois ans. Le gouvernement de mon pays, au vu de ces résultats satisfaisants et à la demande même des collectivités locales qui veulent toutes bénéficier des activités du PSSA, a accepté des comptes supplémentaires d'investissement pour un montant de 2,5 milliards sur deux ans; 1,5 milliards ont déjà été débloqués cette année. Les bailleurs de fonds comme la Belgique, la Banque mondiale, la BAD, la BID, sont intéressés par le PSSA au Sénégal. La France participe déjà au financement depuis 1997 en assurant la formation des experts vietnamiens.

Nous devons remercier ces différents partenaires, y compris le Gouvernement italien, qui dès le début a perçu le caractère important et innovateur du PSSA. Ainsi, grâce au concours de l'Italie, les coûts des investissements du PSSA ont pu être couverts au Sénégal.

Mon pays s'est engagé avec les producteurs, le système privé et la société civile dans son ensemble, conformément au Plan d'action issu du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation, à relever le défi de l'insécurité et a mis les différents instruments et mécanismes pour y arriver. En particulier, un Comité national de sécurité alimentaire a été installé et est fonctionnel actuellement. En tout état de cause, il reste nécessaire et indispensable de mobiliser les investissements incontournables dans le secteur agricole et de prendre les mesures appropriées pour faire face à l'ouverture des marchés.

Concernant le rapport du CSA de la semaine dernière, nous appuyons le recours aux indicateurs composites avec l'introduction d'indicateurs ventilés par sexe et par âge, pour mieux tenir compte des femmes et des enfants, qui constituent une priorité. Une telle approche nous semble à même d'améliorer la classification des indicateurs. Notre délégation est donc satisfaite de ce rapport du CSA dont elle voudrait recommander, à l'instar d'autres délégations, l'adoption par notre éminent Conseil.

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Chile)

En primer lugar quisiéramos apoyar el *Informe del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial* y sus recomendaciones. Deseamos enfatizar la importancia decisiva que le asigna nuestra delegación al desarrollo. Estamos convencidos que este es un instrumento valioso para la focalización de los recursos financieros y las acciones en la lucha contra el hambre y la malnutrición. Creemos que deberían focalizarse y orientarse nuestras acciones para desarrollar lo más pronto posible dicho sistema.

En segundo lugar la delegación de Chile también quisiera valorar los progresos realizados en el derecho de alimentación como fue establecido por el Objetivo 7.4 del Plan de Acción de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación. El tema de la Seguridad Alimentaria, por otra parte, constituye una preocupación trascendental para mi país.

Como fuera establecido por el Plan de Acción de la Cumbre en su párrafo primero, donde se refuerza la idea que es necesaria una acción concertada a todos los niveles para alcanzar una seguridad alimentaria, al mismo tiempo, subraya que cada país deberá adoptar las iniciativas y las

acciones que permitan y faciliten alcanzar dicha seguridad alimentaria, pero al mismo tiempo invita a los Estados Miembros a que participen a que se logre dicha seguridad alimentaria a nivel mundial. Así quedó definido en el compromiso cuarto, al establecer que nos esforzaremos para asegurar que la política de comercio alimentario/agrícola y de comercio en general contribuyan a fomentar la seguridad alimentaria para todos a través de un sistema de comercio mundial leal orientado al mercado.

Este mismo compromiso ha sido reforzado por el IV Foro Iberoamericano de la Agricultura realizado en La Habana y que fuera mencionado por la Presidenta de nuestro Grupo Regional, el cual ciertamente endosamos. En este Foro Iberoamericano se explicó y se subrayó la importancia del Plan de Acción de la Cumbre Mundial, apoyando en toda su extensión dicho Plan. Referido a esa declaración quisiéramos apoyar específicamente el párrafo 18 de la Declaración de La Habana que renueva el compromiso de los Estados Miembros de América Latina y el Caribe con la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación, reconociendo la alimentación como un derecho humano fundamental y teniendo en cuenta que los alimentos no pueden constituir un instrumento de presión político-comercial.

Mención aparte merece el tema de la inocuidad y calidad de los alimentos que ha sido mencionado en el informe del último Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria, puesto que cada día somos testigos de cómo estos aspectos cobran importancia en el comercio internacional. Estimamos esencial que los mayores controles de inocuidad alimentaria adoptados por los distintos países y como mi delegación lo mencionara especialmente en la Reunión del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial, no se transformen en barreras comerciales y que dichos controles estén basados en el Acuerdo de Medidas Sanitarias y Fitosanitarias. En este sentido se debe subrayar tal responsabilidad que la FAO tiene en preparar a sus Estados Miembros a una participación activa en las reuniones de los diferentes Comités del Codex y en la creación de los Comités nacionales del Codex. Sobre este particular quisiéramos agradecer a la Organización el proyecto de Cooperación Técnica recientemente desarrollado que ha permitido que tengan un impacto en mejorar la coordinación nacional e internacional de nuestros productos de exportación asegurando que dichas normas se apliquen en mi país y también a los productos que nosotros exportamos a nivel internacional.

Pero así como hemos recibido la cooperación de la FAO, quisiéramos señalar la importancia que la Organización subraye sus recursos en el desarrollo de dos instancias de referencia internacional y que son esenciales para el comercio internacional y que tiene una implicación en la Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial y que están radicadas aquí, en este organismo. Y ello tiene una trascendencia enorme puesto que su desarrollo afecta el cumplimiento del Acuerdo de Medidas Sanitarias y Fitosanitarias. Una apropiada asignación de recursos financieros por parte de la FAO en esta materia ciertamente tendrá un gran impacto en asegurar una provisión de alimentos nutricionalmente adecuados e inocuos a nivel internacional.

Chile está enfrentando la mayor sequía del siglo derivada de los efectos climáticos adversos del fenómeno “El Niño”, comprometiendo ciertamente el nivel de actividad económica nacional. Pero no obstante, esta menor actividad económica, hemos y estamos tratando de desarrollar nuestro comercio exterior con una aplicación de las normas Codex.

La delegación de Chile considera que se debe dar una prioritaria atención al recurso agua, el cual tiene cada día una importancia mayor, puesto que constriñe la posibilidad de desarrollo de muchos Estados Miembros.

Per Harald GRUE (Observer for Norway)

Norway welcomes the Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on World Food Security. As underlined by many delegations, *inter alia* by Germany, the Report is a good basis for future work and follow-up activities. Norway would like to highlight three important points.

Firstly with reference to paragraph 4, we would like to express our appreciation for the efforts made by FAO to strengthen the cooperation between United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, FAO and others on the right to adequate food. We would like to underline the

importance of such cooperation which we see as particularly crucial in the field, drawing on competencies from several disciplines and from several institutions.

Secondly, in Section V of the Report, addressing the issue of Broadened Participation of Civil Society in the work of the Committee on World Food Security, we would like to stress the need for such cooperation for at least two reasons. to draw on their competence and expertise which often is complementary to the competence of FAO, and because Two, NGOs and CSOs often enjoy considerable media focus and by involving these actors more in the discussion, the issue of food security may receive more media attention than is the case today. We believe this is important in order to activate all relevant parties in the work for global food security.

Finally, turning to Section IV of the Report concerning the reporting format. Governments are often being overwhelmed by various requests for information and reporting. It is therefore important to keep reporting a requirement to a necessary minimum. In this connection, we would like to underline the importance of harmonizing indicators and forging appropriate links to existing monitoring and reporting mechanisms in other relevant UN Bodies. We would also emphasize that it is important to keep the same reporting format for a time, so that information can be analyzed in time series.

Sra Ana María DEÚSTUA (Observador del Perú)

Le agradezco el uso de la palabra y aprovecho la oportunidad para saludar a usted y a los miembros de la Mesa. Mi delegación aspira que el resultado de estas sesiones sea positivo para todos. Debo sin embargo señalar mi sorpresa en que se pase primero la palabra a los observadores de ONGs antes que a los observadores de los Gobiernos.

Deseo expresar la total adhesión de mi delegación a cuanto señalado por la Presidenta de nuestro Grupo Regional y quisiera añadir que agradezco a la Secretaría por la elaboración del documento CL 116/2. Las cifras que allí se incluyen son muy útiles para permitirnos tener una apreciación general de la situación alimentaria en el mundo. Sin embargo, apreciamos con preocupación las tendencias no muy alentadoras, algunas basadas en la reducción de la producción, otras en el aumento de los precios y algunas más en la retracción del comercio internacional.

Adicionalmente, al margen de la apreciación estadística, el muestreo empírico diario indica que siguen habiendo hoy más personas que pasan hambre en el mundo que el día de ayer, y eso es lo preocupante. Por ello mi delegación desea reiterar en esta ocasión la necesidad de avanzar, de progresar en los compromisos adoptados ya que afrontar la pobreza en el mundo constituye una obligación y no una dádiva. Por ello un compromiso para reforzar la multilateralización de la ayuda es indispensable como complemento a los esfuerzos nacionales a fin de abordar la meta establecida para el año 2015 en el Plan de Acción de la Cumbre de 1996.

El Gobierno peruano es consciente de dicho compromiso como lo señalamos recientemente en ocasión del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria. Nos hemos propuesto la meta de reducir para el año 2000 la mitad de la pobreza extrema y los niveles de desnutrición crónica y la prevalencia de anemia en los niños menores de cinco años en mi país. Lo que pretendemos es enfrentar la inseguridad alimentaria a través de una mejor disposición de alimentos, ya que con un país importador neto de alimentos dependemos también de las tendencias internacionales sobre los precios y el comercio, lo cual afecta particularmente al 18 por ciento de la población peruana que se encuentra en situación de extrema pobreza, es decir en la imposibilidad de acceder a los requerimientos nutricionales mínimos.

En los últimos años, el aporte de la producción nacional de alimentos para la disponibilidad calórica total ha estado dentro del rango del 58 por ciento al 74 por ciento. No pedimos subsidios, y reitero, no pedimos subsidios, por el contrario, los combatimos ya que lo que necesitamos es un ambiente nacional e internacional, sano y transparente que permita desarrollar la economía y la agricultura. Cabe añadir que en el Perú se vienen promoviendo programas destinados a un mayor y mejor acceso a los alimentos, sobre todo de los grupos más vulnerables es decir los menores de 5 años y las madres gestantes y lactantes en extrema pobreza.

Con relación a la utilización de los alimentos, tercer componente esencial de la seguridad alimentaria dentro del Plan Nacional de Nutrición y Alimentación, se viene fomentando en el Perú el uso de productos nacionales y la variación de los patrones de consumo muy inclinados en los productos importados.

En síntesis, mi país ha asumido su compromiso nacional y como país en desarrollo espera que la comunidad internacional incremente sus esfuerzos en esta materia.

Noel D. de LUNA (Observer for the Philippines)

The Philippines would like to join our colleagues in congratulating the Secretariat for a concise and well-written paper and supports the Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on World Food Security.

We take note of the Secretariat's assessment that the agricultural production of the Philippines in relation to population growth is equal at 2 to 2.5 percent. Now, 2 to 2.5 percent growth of a population whose base is around 70 million is still huge and a cause of concern for the Philippines. In 1998, the Philippines experienced a prolonged dry spell brought about by the weather anomaly called *El Niño*. Agriculture hit an all-time low record performance in 1998 with gross output shrinking by 6.67 percent. Rice paddy or palai output last year reached only 8.6 million metric tonnes, equivalent to 5.6 million metric tonnes of milled rice. Significantly down by 24.1 percent from 11.3 million metric tonnes or 7.3 million metric tonnes of milled rice produced in 1997.

Corn production, on the other hand, fell by 11.8 percent to 3.8 million metric tonnes from 4.3 million in 1997. For a country that requires 21 000 metric tonnes of rice per day, production decreased rapidly and the Philippines had to result to some of the biggest rice importations in its history, notably at an estimated 2.1 million tonnes.

This year, however, agricultural production is jumping leaps and bounds due to the opposite weather anomaly called *La Niña*. The Department of Agriculture estimates rice and corn production in the first nine months of the year to increase by 55 percent and 35 percent, respectively, benefitted by favourable weather conditions as well as by Government assistance.

Corn output is expected to reach 3.8 million metric tonnes, up by 35 percent, total palai or rice paddy harvest for January to September would reach 7.52 million tonnes, up 55 percent. In the first semester alone palai output is expected to expand by an all-time record high of 50 percent to 5.3 million metric tonnes from last year's 3.5. This is the highest production we have had in history as far as rice paddy is concerned. Corn output for the first six months of 1999, meanwhile, is estimated at 2.09 million tonnes, twice as much as last year's production.

Within the context of the cornerstone programmes on Food Security and Poverty Alleviation of the President of the Philippines, stepping up grains production, as well as improving the country's irrigation system, will be the main focus of the Department of Agriculture. Moreover, concerned that 1.5 million school children are malnourished, the Department of Agriculture will tap the country's 430 000 public school teachers in large-scale food production efforts of the current administration at making basic commodities available to all the Philipinos at affordable prices.

The teachers' involvement, one of the priority strategies of the agency in its sustained struggle to transform the Philippines into a food-sufficient nation, is considered very vital because of their direct link to the students who need to be fed and provided with adequate supply of nutritious food. The teachers and the students would be involved in various food production programmes of the Department of Agriculture such as backyard gardening, animal raising, fishery and protein substitution to high value vegetables.

Ms Francesca RONCHI PROJA (Ad Hoc Group of Rome-based NGOs)

Now, on behalf of the Ad Hoc Group of International NGO Representatives and also Members of the Civil Society Organizations who attended the last Session of the Committee on Food Security, I wish to express our appreciation for the arrangement adopted during the discussion of document

CFS 99/5 as described in paragraph 39 of the Final Report. This has allowed direct participation of NGOs and CSOs in the debate on the subject of concern to them and on which considerable attention had been devoted prior to the CFS Session.

We note the limitation indicated under paragraph 39 by which it is stated that the arrangement should not create a precedent for other CFS and FAO meetings. However, we hope that the example could be followed in the case of other specific subjects of direct concern and/or of technical interest to NGOs and CSOs, because the arrangement is very useful in facilitating the dialogue among partners who are equally involved in the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action. With respect to paragraph 51, the process of direct communication between the Secretariat, the Bureau and NGOs/CSOs initiated at the CFS 24 was found of great utility to us.

The NGO/CSO Working Group which was established at the CFS 24, composed of the International NGOs in Rome, the Global Forum on Sustainable Development and the Italian Federation of Pasta, will continue to maintain contact with the CFS Secretariat and the Bureau, in order to follow-up and implement the recommendation of CFS 25.

Finally, we are also following with interest the idea of an Alliance for Agriculture and Development proposed by the Italian Government a proposal in which international NGOs may have a role to play because of their involvement in food security issues.

CHAIRMAN

Distinguished delegates we have had a very good debate and there is a general support to the Report, and at the same time there are constructive contributions. I would now like to invite Mr de Haen to highlight the issues which have emerged during the debate, and also answer some questions.

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

On behalf of my colleagues in the Secretariat, I wish to thank the delegates for the many complimentary remarks and many very constructive comments.

We have also noted that many reports were given by delegations on recent developments in their countries. Many countries have reported on difficulties they are facing in improving food security. A wide-ranging set of actions taken and policies implemented in the field of food and agriculture was reported, including in fisheries and aquaculture. A number of delegates underlined the need for financial and technical assistance to enable their countries to implement the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit. In this context, the FAO Special Programme for Food Security was particularly welcomed by many.

Several delegations confirmed the Secretariat's report on increasing numbers of emergencies and emphasized the importance of continued monitoring and reporting on the part of the Secretariat. Actions to be undertaken to improve preparedness in the countries concerned, as well as assistance to them in the rehabilitation of their food and agriculture sectors as a consequence of emergencies were also emphasized.

The continued need of food aid was underlined by a number of delegations, both to overcome short-term food shortages but also, as was expressed by the delegation of Venezuela, as an investment in the future.

On the documents, the Committee has requested the Secretariat to continue the regular assessments of global and regional food security developments and to continue in the broadening of the range of indicators used in these assessments. I would just note, *inter alia*, indicators relating to production that you have already in the documents but also on the nutritional status, on access, income, income distribution and so on, on food import capacity, on vulnerability, and certainly, there were others. I just want to highlight those that were listed by many.

Of course, the Secretariat will make an effort to improve the assessments in this direction.

On the question expressed by the distinguished delegate of Egypt, as to whether we have more recent information on the number of food insecure, measured as the number of chronically-undernourished, I am sorry to say that, at this point in time, the latest year for which we have such estimates is for the year 1996, as already documented in the report, but we are about to complete the estimate for the year 1997, which we will report in due course through an appropriate publication.

As I already replied at the CFS itself, we are also making efforts to provide you with a more recent forecast of the current and preceding years' numbers of undernourished. That, of course, is faced with a number of uncertainties and difficulties because the basic data that we need are not available for a more recent year than the year preceding the current year.

On trade and trade-related issues, many delegates have noted and expressed the recommendation that the Secretariat continue to assist developing countries in the preparation of the next WTO Round in the area of trade related to food and agriculture and that the Secretariat continue the analysis of market developments, in particular also the analysis of the impact of trade globalization on food security.

Several delegates expressed the importance of further strengthening the regulatory systems in agricultural trade, such as those related to the SPS and the TBT agreements of the WTO -- in particular SPS was mentioned -- and that the standards used and developed should be strictly based on science. Furthermore, the importance of active participation of developing countries in Codex Alimentarius was stressed, as well as the establishment of national Codex Committees.

On the impact of the financial crisis on food security, the distinguished delegate of Korea was wondering why -- although I had promised it and although it is mentioned in the Report of the CFS -- he did not find reference to it in the Report that is before you. I am speaking of document CL 116/2. I admit that what is in this Report is rather brief, and certainly not at all complete in its coverage. However, I do refer you to paragraphs 45 to 48, where the Secretariat states that, as a result of this crisis, the prospects for world economic growth have weakened; East Asia is most affected by this; that we have observed a decline in incomes and purchasing power of large numbers of people; that the recovery is expected to take several years; that the effect will be most felt by a number of developing countries, in part through weakening of export markets, but of course also by net food-importing countries because the import bills are reduced. I would also recall that it is already written in the Report that, at the next FAO Conference, under the item on the *Situation of Food and Agriculture in the World*, we will go into this issue again in more depth. Hopefully, then, you will be able to report about experiences in your countries and debate the issue on that occasion.

Finally, I have noted that many delegates have endorsed and recommended to Council that the Council endorse the report of the CFS. All those who referred to it did recommend adoption. All those who spoke about the proposed reporting format did endorse it, and underlined that the reporting should be understandable, flexible and not duplicative with other reporting obligations of Member Nations. I can say that I think and believe that the CFS did take these criteria into account when it proposed a change to the original proposal of the reporting format, and adopted the one that you have found in this Report of the CFS.

Many delegates referred to the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Mapping Systems -- FIVIMS -- and encouraged and requested the Secretariat to continue working along these lines, together with other Agencies and Member Nations in order to broaden the set of quantifiable indicators measuring food security, and to do this based on existing information systems and in the framework of existing statistics on food and agriculture.

Furthermore, still with specific reference to the items on the agenda of the CFS, broadening the inclusion of civil society was endorsed by many delegations.

I come to my last point, regarding the timing of the next CFS. I have noted two delegations who referred to it: South Africa recalled, as is already in the report of the CFS, that future meetings should ideally be held after the Regional Conferences, in years when there are Regional

Conferences. The specific proposal of Japan was also noted, and I am sure that the Secretariat, together with the Government of Japan, will find a way to accommodate these wishes.

This is my summary and answers to the few questions that I noted.

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)

14. Programme Evaluation Report 1998-99 (C 99/4; CL 116/14)

14. Rapport d'évaluation du Programme 1998-99 (C 99/4; CL 116/14)

14. Informe sobre la Evaluación del Programa 1998-99 (C 99/4; CL 116/14)

CHAIRMAN

We can move on to Item 14, which is the Programme Evaluation Report 1998-99.

This Programme Evaluation Report is the fourth in a series of particularly informative and useful documents that form an integral part of the so-called "accountability chain". It covers in-depth reviews of three selected programmes, namely programmes on Agricultural Support Systems, Forestry Resources, the major programme on Support to Investment, plus the automatic evaluation of TCP projects in support of food quality control and a thematic review of participatory approaches used in FAO.

I am sure the document will elicit interest in this Council. However, in view of our heavy agenda, Members are invited to draw attention only to those major points and issues in the report to which they attach particular importance.

I will now ask Mr Wade, Director of the Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation, if he wishes to make other introductory remarks.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation)

The Secretariat has no introductory remarks, but I wonder if you might invite the Chairman of the Programme Committee to summarize the outcome of the Programme Committee deliberations.

D. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee)

I think the Council has certainly noted that in document CL 116/14, our assessment of this Programme Evaluation Report 1998-99 is reflected. I shall give very briefly note the major assessment we made on this document, certainly recalling that the membership of the Organization is increasingly aware that programme's value depends on an effective evaluation system.

In this report, progress has been made in improving the evaluation process, including a more systematic incorporation of comments by the Programme Managers and Senior Management, the greater use of external expertise through review panels and, in some cases, in conducting the reviews. At the same time, many of the reviews are still rather descriptive, without a systematic assessment of goal, achievement and impact. The Committee reiterated the importance of further strengthening the analytical content of the report, with the focus on facts and impact, including a more systematic application of assessment criteria and correcting existing weaknesses in planning and in implementing programmes.

The Committee assumes that with the introduction of the new programming approach, which we discussed yesterday, the situation is becoming more conducive to this effect. It will therefore discuss evaluation in the context of the new programming model at our next session in September.

The Committee broadly endorsed the main issues and recommendations of the Report for consideration by the Council. For its observations on individual programmes, I wish to refer the Members to the text of the Report.

Richard J. HUGHES (United States of America)

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Programme Evaluation Report 1998-99.

The United States would like to compliment FAO's Evaluation Service on the five in-depth reviews. We believe that evaluation plays an important role in the process of planning and budget.

With regard to the review process and highlights in Review 1, we are pleased that the Agricultural Support Systems Division is learning from a recent strategic planning meeting ways to better define focus and objectives. We support external linkages in UN System partnerships for parts of programme activities and encourage AGS to develop these possibilities. We also see the need to improve the effectiveness of publications and their targeted audiences. The Programme 2.1.4, Summary Assessment Box on page 32, of the Report is a good self-evaluation. We agree with the comments made by the External Peer Review that the lack of impact assessment is a weakness of the review, and we urge the staff to overcome this problem in future exercises.

Regarding Review 2, we agree that greater efforts could have been made to better capture the Forest Resources Programme's development, effects and impact section. However, we understand that many of these projects are multi-disciplinary in nature and require more in-depth review.

Concerning Review 3, the US regards the Investment Centre as one of the more important divisions in FAO. We are pleased that the Centre is providing a productive window for FAO's organization-wide skills and experiences. The links with other banking institutions is also of value, in our view. We agree with the need for the Investment Centre to improve the measurement of project effects and impact. We look forward to the Centre working to enhance capacity-building in developing countries to promote bankable project proposals.

With regard to Review 4, in an age of increased food safety and quality awareness, we are pleased to note that the Technical Corporation Programme projects on food quality control were evaluated around themes in order to draw lessons for future designs of similar projects, thereby improving ways to measure achievements, cost-effectiveness and accountability. We also agree, when it can be arranged, that a team approach to country visits be undertaken for cost savings. Another recommendation which is of importance is the use of simple food safety extension materials and local languages.

Regarding Review 5, we support FAO's strong interest in participatory approaches to development. FAO can be commended for promoting participatory training as a means of improving training quality and effectiveness, by engaging people and analyzing and finding solutions to their own problems.

In the review process, we found that Micro-Banker Technology and the Farmers' Field Schools for Integrated Pest Management are good examples of successful and measurable activities.

Concerning the Analysis, overall, the document reaffirms the importance of sound evaluation for both accountability and improving the internal learning process. The evaluation does show that efforts have been made, since the last Report, to improve the analytical content and presentation of programme reviews to foster greater dialogue between the Service, Programme Managers and Staff, and the use of external peer review to improve transparency.

Regarding actions to be taken, we look forward to continued evaluation in accordance with standardized FAO methodology; the continued relevance of effectiveness of programmes; procedures on reporting the results of evaluations, including the identification of programmes that have met criteria for continuing relevance, and effectiveness and proposals to terminate or modify programmes that have not met such criteria; and procedures to authorize an appropriate body within FAO to review each evaluation and report to the Governing Body on means to improve or terminate the programmes concerned.

We would like to make the following summary observation.

Although the report provides a comprehensive overview, we found it excessively lengthy and descriptive. We urge that future documents of this type contain an Executive Summary written especially for policy makers, with a clear and concise vision of FAO's programmes and activities. Such a document would help policy-makers better understand issues, provide recommendations and options and understand the impact of their actions.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on what the United States views as an increasingly important function of FAO's mandate for the new millennium.

Harald HILDEBRAND (Germany)

Thank you for giving me the floor again to speak on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.

On the whole, the EC and its Member States welcome this report for two major reasons. The necessary selection of Programmes is found appropriate. Secondly, the basis for the evaluation has become broader with the inclusion in this exercise of the Organization's Evaluation Service, programme managers and external peer reviewers. Also the Report still has too much of a descriptive rather than evaluative character. We recognize progress in terms of more objective assessments and concrete recommendations for future activities of the Organization.

We approve of the uniform approach chosen for the detailed review of the Programmes as given in paragraph 7 of the document. The constraints mentioned in paragraph 8, which still prevent the review process from being more balanced and objective, should be further worked upon to improve the quality of future reports.

Referring now, more concretely, to the Programmes evaluated, the European Community and its Member States would like to draw attention to the following.

Regarding Agricultural Support Systems, as the evaluation of this Programme covers a relatively long period of seven years, it would have been convenient, and also possible we think, in better assessing its concrete impact to refer to countries which have benefitted from this Programme. This would allow Member Nations to better appraise the output reached. This could also focus future programme activities in this area on outputs of general applicability in developing countries. Among the recommendations in paragraph 16, those advocating the proper targeting in the dissemination of outputs the -- United States delegation has already made reference to this -- such as publications, websites, computer packages, especially the key policy principles, should be taken very seriously because they are vital for FAO's advisory function *vis-à-vis* Governments, extension workers and local farmers' organizations.

Concerning Programme 2.4.1, Forest Resources, the review of this Programme fully confirms the leading role of FAO in this vital area, in particular with regard to ongoing international processes on the criteria and indicators for the management, conservation and sustainable development of forests, also in the Inter-agency Taskforce on Forests and in the framework of the Commission on Sustainable Development. There, as we know, the Organization fulfils the task manager function for Chapters 11 and 13 of Agenda 21. To be able to also comply in future with this vital role, FAO should make stronger use of synergies by concentrating on those activities where its competence goes undisputed. These are primarily clearly prioritized normative tasks, such as the development of concepts for the management, conservation and sustainable development of forests, the continuation of work for harmonization of criteria and indicators, as well as further efforts towards sustainable forest management.

On Support to Investment, the pressing challenges confronting developing countries in the food and agricultural sectors require-nationally and internationally-funded investment. What has been done by FAO under the FAO/WB Cooperative Programme, (CP) and the Investment Support Programme (ISP) over the past years to underpin such efforts is concretely reflected in the review.

The European Community and its Member States note with satisfaction the qualitative changes in this field of work that have been possible to bring about in the nineties, among them the shift towards more advisory, guiding and training work and the strong involvement of national staff in project preparation and execution. The review thoroughly documents, by means of tables, the trends in the availability and the use of considerable financial and human resources devoted to FAO support to agricultural and rural investment.

We would have liked a list of major areas in which the investment projects have been concentrated in the various regions during the period under review to have a more concrete idea of the priorities pursued.

To conclude, we welcome the stronger integration of the TCI Division with the work of other technical units of the Secretariat to give the investment-related activities of FAO an even more solid basis.

On the TCP projects on food quality control, the EC and its Member States share the overall positive judgement of the TCP projects on food quality control. Projects under the Technical Cooperation Programme, because of their specific short-term character, cannot but fulfil tasks of limited relevance to recipient countries. The ongoing trade liberalization puts higher demands on the inspection of food commodities being imported or exported. Improved consumer protection is another requirement for Member Nations, both developed and less developed, in this field. Therefore, the financial resources and staff that have been employed for these projects have proved a useful investment, given the deficits that must be overcome in many countries with regard to food quality control in general, food legislation, laboratory conditions and food standards.

For the European Union, it is gratifying to note that part of the limited TCP funds were also devoted to upgrading food control, including legislation, in five European countries seeking to harmonize their systems with those of the Community. This is a typical case which demonstrates the relevance of this kind of operational activities implemented under the TCP of the FAO as field application of the normative work of the Organization. Even small TCP projects may have a substantial catalytic effect. Therefore, we are in favour of any recommendation that promotes follow-up in sustained effects.

Lastly, on participatory approaches to development in FAO, peoples' participation is known to be of overriding importance for progress and rural development. FAO's long-standing efforts to promote participatory approaches and activities such as demonstration and extension of new technologies, project preparation and execution, training, institution building and cooperatives therefore warrant a closer look at results achieved. Decentralization and downsizing of government functions are new factors requiring participatory approaches that need to be strengthened. Social sustainability of rural development pre-supposes, among other things, participation of the rural people in realizing, handling and solving their problems. Therefore, FAO's endeavour to incorporate this principle into all its field work is strongly endorsed.

Thank you for your indulgence in view of the rather lengthy statement.

Seon-oh KIM (Korea, Republic of)

We would first like to express our gratitude to the Secretariat for its efforts to provide an evaluation for the five Programmes which have been executed for the current biennium.

We appreciate that the Secretariat has endeavoured to collect various opinions of the interested parties in an objective fashion by duly incorporating remarks of both FAO's Programme managers and external specialists. In our view, it is desirable that this effort should be spread all the more to other areas of FAO's work.

We have some comments we wish to make for the sake of more fruitful performance of FAO's programme operation.

Firstly, in designing programmes relating to Agricultural Support Systems, it is necessary for FAO to increase, where possible, linkages between relevant services so as to enhance to the maximum extent possible, synergies generated.

Secondly, FAO's programmes need to focus on more priority requirements of beneficiaries in order to address the needs of FAO's normative role, and the fact that relevant supporting services are more complementary to each other.

Thirdly, in carrying out planned programmes and services, FAO needs to improve, as far as possible, its cost-effectiveness and efficiency by expanding and strengthening its cooperation and partnership where appropriate with relevant international organizations, including its Sister Agencies in the UN System and the more concerned NGOs.

Lastly, regarding the programme activities completed, including field operations, it is necessary for FAO to keep on monitoring relevant follow-up measures and to lend the supplementary support to them.

Masato ITO (Japan)

My delegation believes that evaluation is an especially important function both as a means of accountability and a tool for learning lessons for future improvement. Each should play an important role in the process of planning and budgeting.

My delegation highly appreciates the added efforts made by FAO in improving the evaluation process through systematic incorporation of comments by programme managers and senior management as well as the use of external reviewers. I know that FAO's internal evaluation works well. Nevertheless, I would like to propose to move forward to the greater use of external reviewers in the evaluation process, so as to reflect a wider perspective, as well as improved transparency.

The TCP accounts actually for 40 percent of the overall regular budget for 1998-99. Therefore, my delegation would like to suggest that an overall evaluation of the TCP should be undertaken in the near future, since it will be useful in determining how available resources can best be allocated to priority areas, taking into account the budgetary constraints.

Finally, I would like to commend FAO's Evaluation Service for its valuable work, and we would like to stress that more effective evaluation would improve food security in developing countries.

Bill DOERING (Canada)

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this document.

Canada compliments FAO on the further improvements made to the Report, especially the inclusion of internal peer reviews. We feel FAO is developing strengths in programme evaluation, and we also note the increased objectivity this has brought to the entire process.

In addition, we concur with the statement in the Report that the individual programme reviews and evaluations are descriptive, without a systematic assessment of the impact actually being achieved. In fact many of these evaluations read more like a list of activities rather than a qualitative assessment itself.

We believe that the evaluation function should provide guidance in the project approval process and in establishing programme priorities in budgets.

Canada fully supports the principle of participatory approaches to development in FAO. The recommendations made to improve the work of FAO in this regard, particularly the reference to participatory project management training for mid-level managers, are welcome. However, we are both disappointed and surprised that the review of FAO's participatory approaches makes little reference to the importance of gender activities.

The Conference in 1995 stipulated the promotion of gender equity throughout the Organization. This was not mentioned in any of the evaluations. Therefore, we propose that the Council strongly recommend to the Conference to provide instructions that all future FAO Programme

Evaluation Reports include an assessment on the implementation of the gender mainstreaming policy. In general, we concur with the findings of the evaluation.

In closing, we would like to know more about the process of selecting programmes for review. More importantly, we expect the results to be fully utilized in the programme planning and budgeting cycle.

We strongly support the suggestion of the September 1998 Programme Committee that, in the future, the selection of programmes for evaluation be based on management considerations, such as what is working particularly well or not and why, and then apply those lessons learnt from the evaluation to future programmes and projects.

LIANG QU (China) (Original language Chinese)

The Chinese delegation, first of all, would like to thank FAO's Secretariat for having prepared such a good document. The Chinese delegation welcomes FAO's efforts in improving its evaluation process and has noted that there has been more dialogue between programme managers and other related staff. We have also noted FAO's efforts in using an external peer review. We believe that using an external peer review will improve of cost-effectiveness and absorb external know-how, as well as improve transparency and expand FAO's spectrum.

The Chinese delegation is happy to note that FAO's relevant departments, and the Director-General, have attached great importance to the evaluation results and recommendations therein. We have noted that the Departments of Agriculture, Forestry, Technical Cooperation, and Sustainable Development have already acted on the recommendations and this is a very good beginning. We hope that they will take the necessary measures to put their recommendations into effect so as to improve their work.

The Chinese delegation has noted, with concern, that in the evaluation of individual programmes there are too many lengthy explanations, notices of metric evaluations on the impact of the programmes. We hope that FAO will improve its work in this field. In its evaluation, it should systematically use the indicators and perform do some analysis on the impact of programmes. As limited by its length, the Programme Evaluation Report has only reviewed the agricultural support system, forestry resources, investment support, TCP projects, and food quality control and FAO's participatory approach. We hope that in future Programme Evaluation Reports will include the review and evaluation of other programmes.

The Chinese delegation has regrettably noted that over the past biennia, FAO has cut its Field Programme by a large margin. This is due, of course, to the continuous cuts in its Regular Programme. That is why we, hereby, would like to issue an appeal to Member Nations to face the continually growing requests put to FAO, so that they can take the necessary measures to help to improve FAO's financial status. In so doing, FAO's Programme of Work and Budget should attain a rational level to satisfy the needs of Member Nations.

The Chinese delegation did not receive the documents in time, so did not have the time to study the documents -- I am referring to this Programme Evaluation Report. We hope that FAO will improve its efficiency and provide the delegations with the documents on time, in order to improve the efficiency of the deliberations.

Suharyo HUSEN (Indonesia)

On behalf of the Indonesian delegation, I would like to join other Members of the Council who spoke before me, in thanking both the Secretariat and the Programme Committee for preparing and submitting the report contained in CL 116/14 para 18 to 26. The Indonesian delegation would also like to associate itself with other speakers in accepting and approving the Programme Evaluation Report for 1998-99. However, there are some points to be considered by the Committee for its future work in this matter.

Firstly, the Programme Evaluation Report should become the basis for the future planning of the FAO programme in assisting the Member developing countries, offering all fields under FAO

Mandate, including agriculture, fisheries, forestry and livestock. Therefore, the Indonesian delegation is in agreement with the Committee that it should include more analytical work and more systematic incorporation of the comments of the programme managers and senior management, as well as a greater use of external expertise in the evaluation process through a review of the draft report for the individual programme, including possible work within the unit and person concerned in FAO, before inviting external expertise.

Secondly, in the future it should be taken into account that evaluation work should also include the impact of the programme in the national food and agricultural development of the Member Nations. If there is the positive impact, such as on food security of the country, then the programme can continue, if there is an improvement in the future but if the impact of the programme is towards the negative influence to the national development report of the country, then the programme should be reviewed or adjusted or even eliminated in the future programmes of FAO.

Thirdly, the Indonesian delegation would also like to stress that important aspects of evaluation that should be given more emphasis in the future work: a participatory approach to the problem, including the assessment of impact of this approach, in order to draw lessons relevant to methodological and policy consideration; and improvements in planning, implementing and managing programmes.

In conclusion, the Indonesian delegation, in conformity with the Committee, stresses the need to correct the existing weakness in assessing programme results and impact, noting that this situation is becoming more conducive to this effort, especially with the introduction of new programming approach in the context of the Strategic Framework.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation)

I will, as you requested, highlight the issues and comment on some of the items. After that, if I may, I would ask the Chief of the Evaluation Service to respond to some of the questions on methodology, etc.

I think we are all in agreement on the importance of evaluation in the programme and planning cycle and it came out that Members see three areas in which evaluation can provide a service. The first is as an element of the accountability chain, if I can put it like that. The second is a very important internal value in learning lessons and improving our programmes and how we implement them. The third is for both the Secretariat and for Members to help us all make decisions about future programmes, recognizing which programmes are working well and which ones are not and making decisions regarding consequence of that.

A second area where I think there was also agreement was that, and you can certainly see the Secretariat supports this as you study this volume, which comes out every two years, you will note that we have made progressive improvements in standardized methodologies, so that you can see the comparative results between programmes. You have also seen that we also agree with the increased uses of external reviewers. We are doing more and more of this, although it is always a resource constraint problem for us. This time, we did quite well and got several of them involved at no cost, which is the best way to do it, and we will continue to look at methods of trying to do this in as a cost-effective approach as possible.

In the identification of successes and failures, the United States made a particular point of this and pointed also to the idea that there should be an appropriate FAO body reviewing all such evaluations. In a way I feel we have that, in that the Programme Committee is the first reviewing body of all of these documents and documents related to it. We would be interested to know if there are ideas as to whether that should change or not.

We note, and sympathize with you concerning the question about the document being excessively descriptive. This is something we have wrestled with internally, and there is a sort of *quid pro quo*. If we cut out the description it is actually quite hard to see easily why we have arrived at our conclusions. On the other hand, there is too much descriptive material, and everybody feels that,

so we will have to find other ways of presenting the material and the idea of Executive Summaries will help. I would add, that one technique we are looking at throughout the Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation is to put more of the detailed material on the Internet, on FAO's web pages, so those who want the detail can go there and get it. This would allow us to tighten up the documents, so that the documents that you are formally addressing, are not so voluminous.

Canada mentioned the need to include an assessment on the implementation of gender mainstreaming. I am not sure it would fit with every evaluation, and I would like Mr Kato to comment on that. Of course, you realise that there is a major progress report coming up at the next Conference on that subject, and that this will also go through the Programme Committee for similar reasons.

There were a couple of other issues. My apologies to China for the fact that they did not receive the document on time. Something went seriously wrong. We sent it out on the 20th April, so I do not know what went wrong in the distribution. We regret the fact that you did not receive it.

With regard to the comment on the technical cooperation programme by Japan, I may have misheard you Sir, I thought you said 40 percent, maybe not, 14 percent, that is closer, we feel it is around 13 percent but your point is taken. The only comment I would make there is that we have had in the past, I think some 10 years ago, overall evaluations of the TCP programme, but they suffer from a serious lack of focus because the TCP programme responds to demand in various areas according to the guidelines that you have established. We have found, and I hope you would agree with this, that having a focussed evaluation on a particular theme such as the particular evaluation on food quality efforts, is much more useful than having a general evaluation of the overall programme. We would prefer to put the resources into a series of thematic evaluations, which is what we are now doing, rather than trying to do the whole lot at one go. It is a bit like trying to evaluate all of FAO's programme at one go; it really is very difficult to produce a meaningful Report for you of a length that would be digestible, if I can put it that way.

On the question of selection of programmes, I would ask Mr Kato if he would mind commenting on that.

I would just like to make one last comment concerning Canada's suggestion, which if I understood it, was that the Evaluation Service should be strongly involved in the programme planning process and, I think you said, the project approval process. I agree with the first part wholeheartedly. We could not have done the work we did on the Strategic Framework and we could not have improved the programme planning model without the input from the Evaluation Service on what it felt was wrong with the current processes, so there I agree with you. In their own internal review, when PBE also did some strategic planning, the one thing that surfaced as a concern was their independence. They see themselves as being independent in providing advice to managers, to senior management and to the Council on the results of programme evaluations. I therefore think that we have to be a bit careful about bringing them too close to that process. If they start to become involved in the approval process of programmes, they start to become a party to the system on which they are making judgements. So I think we have to be careful to draw lines so that their independence is reasonably protected.

If I may, I will stop there and ask Mr Kato, who is the Chief of the Evaluation Service, to comment on the issues that he would like to cover.

M. KATO (FAO Staff)

I may address a few points that emerge. I certainly appreciate a very encouraging assessment by the Members of the Council, and we take the suggestions in very humble manner, recognize the room for improvements, and wish to let you know that we will strive for those improvements.

One of the common comments, both also internally, is of these programme reviews, evaluations being too descriptive. Without trying to detract from the pledge for improvement, I may simply say that I think it is partly a presentation problem and we will make changes there -- I think, along

the lines of the executive -- concentrate more on an analytical aspect. I should like to draw a few points on this.

We wholeheartedly agree with the importance of the assessment of results and impact. We have been under constant pressure from the Programme Committee to strive for that. As we say in the Report, in the introduction part, the ambiguities in the programme designs hamper this effort and, perhaps more seriously, the programme implementation monitoring. That is very important, and as we move to more strategic planning, with the improved programme models, this aspect becomes very important, not only for us, the Evaluation, but also for internal planning and management.

Also, I would like to stress the kind of activities that FAO undertakes and services it provides. They are rather intangible and it takes an ingenious effort to try to find out about impact effects, particularly at the country level. It involves a lot of data collection. FAO has an enormous outreach, and many people, and institutions in Member Nations help us enormously, not only through our Regular Programme activities but through our Field Programme activities, and through various activities in the regional commissions, and committees. Through these, we can get a lot of information, but certainly they need to be strengthened. I am afraid it will be a gradual process.

One point made by the United States delegation was the need for standardizing the evaluation and criteria. We will work on that further. Some of the standards we have presented in summary form may be still a bit of a jump to rank the performance and say, this is inadequate, so it should have sunset. However, I am sure these are issues that we have to address.

On the selection of the programmes, we have a broad cycle of visiting major activities under our current programme structure. We consult FAO senior management about the need for in-depth review of these programmes which may be particularly useful from the Department/Divisional point of view. We also consult the Programme Committee. Therefore, we essentially decide on this criteria. Perhaps in future, as we have more clearly-defined Corporate Objectives, and Strategies, perhaps we can streamline the process of planning evaluation more systematically.

In terms of the use of the feedback from the evaluation, at the moment -- and I agree with the importance of that -- up to now, I think, my colleagues, and I have been emphasising very much, learning improvement effort as an internal unit. Perhaps we have been less committed to accountability reporting. We are now -- I hope you appreciate -- trying to improve in that way too. From this background, our most important counterparts are the programme managers, division directors, sometimes the Heads of Department, and the Service Chiefs with whom we agree that we will do this. From our experience, we have an interested audience. Beyond what we report in written form, we can achieve a lot more through informal dialogue and that is, I think, a most important and direct use.

Secondly, as Mr Wade mentioned, through the Programme of Work and Budget process, and other programme planning processes and within PBE, we provide feedback. We also work with technical staff in Headquarters as well as Regions, through various training programmes on the project programme design monitoring, and so that is another way. I hope we will also be equally effective in the future by disseminating lessons, synthesizing of evaluations, through intranet and internet. We are working on it, and I hope you will be able to see what we have there as well.

Finally, on the gender aspects, as Mr Wade said, certain thematic subjects, like gender, cut across several programmes. But depending on the programme, the focus is emphasized more, and they become apparent in their project and programme design, and in the implementation and the results. We can make a more systematic effort to try to look at them. I think, up to now, in this version of the Programme Evaluation Report, we tend to look at what there was. We are also in the process of discussing with SPW, the division in charge of gender aspects, and we will be working with, them and I hope we will also learn to become more sensitive to this issue.

Bill DOERING (Canada)

A point of clarification on the issue of applying evaluations to the approval process - what we meant was applying the lessons learnt.

D. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee)

I just wanted to say that the debate that we will have on the evaluation methodology and process in our next meeting suits the Programme Committee very much. As I explained to you, we hope this new programming model will give clearer goal and target-setting milestones and criteria and will help us to come to a more clarifying and satisfying system. Within programme planning, there are already inbuilt measures and criteria to measure impact, but more thought will have to go into it by Programme Managers regarding which criteria should be used and how they could be applied because it will considerably facilitate the evaluation process and increase accountability and clarity for the membership.

So we are very much looking forward to this new process being developed.

Harald HILDEBRAND (Germany)

I just wanted to know from the Secretariat whether in future it would be possible for certain evaluations, or the re-evaluation of certain programmes, to make more concrete reference to countries benefitting from such programmes. We had asked for this under the first programme we made reference to. I think for Member Nations and for delegates reading this quite large document, one could feel more comfortable or would have more certainty about the need and the use of programmes.

This is a recommendation, maybe for the future, or are there any problems hindering such concrete reference to countries?

M. KATO (FAO Staff)

In principle, we do not see any reason why this is not possible. Of course, if we have to quote some of the evaluation report, this may be a matter of some sensitivity to some countries concerned. We could introduce more specifically what is happening, specific examples of effects and impact benefits of programme activities in certain countries. I think you see some of that in the forestry resources area. I think it has been done sometimes to add more of a descriptive quality unless we have a very crisp, concrete and indicated impact effect, and so we have been judicious on how far to go. But if there is interest, in principle, there is no problem. We can try that.

The meeting rose at 17.30 hours

La séance est levée à 17 h 30

Se levanta la sesión a las 17.30 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixteenth Session Cent seizième session 116º período de sesiones
Rome, 14 – 19 June 1999 Rome, 14 – 19 juin 1999 Roma, 14 – 19 de junio de 1999
FIFTH PLENARY MEETING CINQUIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE QUINTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
16 June 1999

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

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

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

VI. OTHER MATTERS (continued)
VI. QUESTIONS DIVERSES (suite)
VI. OTROS ASUNTOS (continuación)

- **Tribute to the Memory of Mr C.H. Murray, Former Assistant Director-General, Forestry Department**
- **Hommage à la mémoire de M. C.H. Murray, ancien Sous-Directeur général, Département des forêts**
- **Homenaje a la memoria del Sr. C.H. Murray, ex Subdirector General, Departamento de Montes**

CHAIRMAN

Before we start our proceedings this morning, I have the sad duty to inform you of the death in Canada last week of Mr C. H. Murray, who was Assistant Director-General of the Forestry Department from 1988 to 1994.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I am sure that Council Members, particularly those who knew him well, will want to join the Secretariat in paying tribute to Mr C. H. Murray, former Assistant Director-General, FAO Forestry Department.

After graduating from Oxford University and serving as Conservator of Forests in his native Trinidad and Tobago, Claude Hollis Murray joined FAO in 1968 as Forestry Officer. He was seconded to UNDP in 1975 as Senior Agricultural Advisor and FAO Country Representative in Jamaica. In 1977 he returned to FAO Headquarters as Attaché de Cabinet and was appointed Directeur de Cabinet in 1986. Two years later he became Assistant Director-General of the Forestry Department, a post he occupied until his retirement from the Organization in 1994.

We, his colleagues and friends, will remember him well. Like so many from the Caribbean, Hollis was by instinct, upbringing and philosophy a true citizen of the world, able to communicate with and understand any race, creed, religion or point of view.

Hollis Murray was much loved and held in great esteem by both friends and colleagues. He will be remembered by them as the most modest, unassuming, sincere and loyal of colleagues, combining great kindness, a wonderful and dead-pan sense of humour, and the ability to remain cheerful even under the most intense pressure.

During his remarkable career, both in the Forestry Sector in Trinidad and later in FAO, he epitomized the finest qualities of public service. He was hardworking, accessible, even-handed and deeply committed to FAO and its ideals.

CHAIRMAN

May I now ask the Council to join me in observing one minute of silence in memory of Mr Murray.

One minute of silence
Une minute de silence
Un minuto de silencio

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)

17. Report of the Joint Meeting of the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee (Rome, May 1999) (CL 116/4; CL 116/INF/16; CL 116/INF/16-Rev. 1 (Spanish only); CL 116/INF/1-Rev.2)

17. Rapport de la Réunion conjointe du Comité du programme et du Comité financier (Rome, 5 mai 1999) (CL 116/4; CL 116/INF/16; CL 116/INF/16-Rev.1 (en espagnol seulement); CL 116/INF/1-Rev.2)

17. Informe de la Reunión Conjunta del Comité del Programa y el Comité de Finanzas (Roma, mayo de 1999) (CL 116/4; CL 116/INF/16; CL 116/INF/16-Rev.1; CL 116/INF/1-Rev.2)

17.1 Change in the Quota Distribution System of Information Products
(CL 116/4 paras 24-25; CL 116/16 paras 45-46; CL 116/LIM/3)

17.1 Modification du système de distribution des produits d'information par quotas
(CL 116/4, par. 24-25; CL 116/16, par. 45-46; CL 116/LIM/3)

17.1 Cambios en el sistema de distribución de cupos para productos de información
(CL 116/4 párrs. 24-25; CL 116/16 párrs. 45-46; CL 116/LIM/3)

17.2 Report on Decentralization (CL 116/4 paras 22-23)

17.2 Rapport sur la décentralisation (CL 116/4, par. 22-23)

17.2 Informe sobre la descentralización (CL 116/4 párrs. 22-23)

17.3 Other Matters Arising Out of the Report

17.3 Autres questions découlant du rapport

17.3 Otras cuestiones planteadas en el informe

CHAIRMAN

We now can move into our first item this morning.

You will find a new document before you this morning, namely the revised Provisional Timetable, document CL 116/INF/1 – Rev.2. The details of this were finalized in collaboration with the Secretariat in the light of the progress made to date. As you can see, we are aiming at concluding the Session on Saturday morning instead of Saturday afternoon.

Should any Members have problems with the new distribution of items -- and please take note that we have based this on the Agenda which has been adopted -- please contact the Secretariat before lunchtime.

If the new Timetable is acceptable, it will be reflected in the Order of the Day.

If there are no comments, I think we should proceed with the first item.

The first item that we shall discuss today is Item 17, Report of the Joint Meeting of the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee.

I should like to point out that the sections of the Report regarding *FAO's Strategy Framework 2000-2015* have been examined under the substantive items, and therefore I suggest that we do not reopen the discussion on this subject.

With regard to 17.1, *Change in the Quota Distribution System of Information Products*, we have an additional document from the Secretariat, document CL 116/LIM/3. This document has been prepared in response to the request of the Programme and Finance Committees that, in addition to the Secretariat's proposal for the reduction to one free copy per Member Nation of those publications subject to order, a costed proposal be produced for Council giving other options for

free distribution based on five or ten copies, with further copies being available for sale at various discounted prices.

The Joint Meeting, under the standing item on *Savings and Efficiencies and Governments* noted the *Final Report on Implementation of Conference Resolution 13/97 on the Review of Statutory Bodies*. The Committees congratulated the Secretariat on the prompt action taken to follow up on the Conference Resolution, which had resulted in the abolition of a number of Statutory Bodies. The Council may wish to take note of this Final Report, as provided in document CL 116/INF/16.

Also under the item of *Savings and Efficiencies*, the Committees have considered interesting ideas on how to increase interaction at the level of Ministers at the Conference during the general debate in Plenary.

I suggest that we take up this matter, including the Secretariat note CL 116/INF/5 under Item 11 of the Agenda, preparations for the 30th Session of the Conference. If there are no objections to this proposal that we take the Joint Meetings' conclusion on the General Debate of Conference in the context of Item 11 -- and I see none -- then it is so decided.

It was so decided.

Il en est ainsi décidé.

Así se acuerda.

Julian A. THOMAS (Chairman, Finance Committee)

Thank you for the opportunity to present to you the *Report of the Joint Meeting of the 81st Session of the Programme Committee and 92nd Session of the Finance Committee* held last May. We are referring here to document CL 116/4.

It is my honour to do this at this Session of Council due to the custom that Joint Meetings are chaired alternatively by the chairs of the Programme Committee and Finance Committee, so next time my colleague, Dr Bommer, will be performing this task.

Considering the Council has already examined the FAO Strategic Framework and the Summary Programme of Work and Budget, as pointed out by the Chair, I will not dwell on these two important items. They have already been examined by Council. I would just like to point out though that at the Joint Meeting, these two items were dealt with in an extremely constructive and detailed manner, which enabled us to reach the conclusions that are reflected in your Report.

I also wish to reiterate Dr Bommer's thanks to the Secretariat on Monday for preparing the outline of the ZNG scenario in document CL 116/3-Sup.1, and for what remains to be done to produce a complete ZNG scenario by August. It was difficult for me to do this on Monday, as I was preoccupied with my delegation's interests.

Turning to other matters considered by the Joint Meeting, I will start with Item 17.1 on our Agenda, *Change in the Quota Distribution System of Information Products*, which was also discussed by the Finance Committee.

Given the need to introduce a reduced quota distribution system aimed at more efficient, targeted and equitable dissemination of FAO publications, the Committees supported the proposal to change the quota distribution system of information products in principle, and recommended its approval by Council. It was, however, requested that the Secretariat produce for the consideration of this Council a costed proposal, giving options for a quota distribution of publications based on a free distribution of either five or ten copies, a discounted sales price of 80 percent for developing and 20 percent for developed countries, and thirdly a discounted sales price of 60 and 40 percent for developing and developed countries, respectively. As has been pointed out by the Chair, this information is provided in document CL 116/LIM/3, which includes the recommendation the Chair referred to, the recommendation by the Secretariat in paragraph 9, which the Council may wish to consider.

If it meets with your approval, I will complete my report and then we can perhaps come back to this item, which needs a decision by Council.

That was Item 17.1.

Now turning to Item 17.2 on our Agenda, *Report on Decentralization*, discussion on this topic was facilitated by a report on decentralization, prepared by the Secretariat at the request of the Programme Committee and of the Finance Committee. The purpose of the document and subsequent discussion was not to question the principle of decentralization, approved previously by Conference, but to be informed about certain aspects of the decentralization process, such as: the roles of the respective components of the decentralized structure and contributions to FAO objectives; working level relations among decentralized officers, and between these officers and Headquarters; adjustments to the financial systems and procedures, including the delegation of authority; criteria for the establishment of country offices; and, finally, assessment of the enhanced, decentralized policy.

The Committees, in confirming this support for decentralization, expressed appreciation for savings so far achieved in the process, while requesting further clarifications and stressing the importance of appraising the impact of country offices.

There is one additional item I would like to deal with very briefly, which was also discussed by the Joint Meeting, and that was a report by the Director of the Personnel Division on *Improvements in the FAO Recruitment Process*. This matter was supported by a document prepared by the Secretariat on improvements in the FAO recruitment process, and the Committees expressed appreciation for the positive results achieved, mainly in terms of speeding up the recruitment process. I just wanted to draw that to the attention of Council as well.

In concluding this Report, allow me again to thank the Members of the Joint Meeting, many of whom are present here today, for their hard work and constructive cooperation in dealing with the affairs of the Joint Meeting. We had a particularly long and demanding agenda in May. I would also like to thank the Secretariat for the support provided during the meeting.

Naturally, I am available to respond to the extent of my ability to any questions that may be posed by members of Council on this report.

CHAIRMAN

We need a decision on Item 17.1, *Change in the Quota Distribution System of Information Products*, so please make your intervention with a view to making a decision. Then we can, at the same time of course, debate on the Report and matters arising from the Report.

Adnan BASHIR KHAN (Pakistan)

We appreciate the papers provided to us by the Secretariat and we also appreciate the presentation made by Dr Thomas today.

We will come straight to the point on *Change in the Quota Distribution System of Information Products*. We appreciate the savings identified, and we think the savings are considerable. We, however, feel that to start with ten copies per country would be advisable.

We note that there is a statement in the documents CL 116/LIM/3 which says: "It may be noted that the sale of publications at the substantially lower discount of 80 percent would imply that the publication would be sold at a loss". We do not know what the break-even scenario is or at what price it would not make a loss. That information would be useful. In any case, we thought of favouring something like a 75 percent discount.

Moving on to the *Report on Decentralization*, we agree with the Joint Meeting on the importance of appraising the impact of Country Offices.

Mrs Laurie J. TRACY (United States of America)

Thank you very much Mr Chairman, and thank you very much to Julian for his excellent introduction to what I agree was an excellent set of meetings in May.

First of all on the quota of distribution, which the Independent Chair had asked for a decision from the Members, we can support the proposal on a quota distribution. The only

recommendation that we would have on this is that this effort be broadened to first develop within the FAO, on the part of management, a clear understanding of all of the documents published and where they are going, not just this limited number or category of documents that was taken into consideration by the Committees in May.

We need, and we think it is imperative, that we get started on this as soon as possible, a broader effort to rationalize and reduce the number of copies, not the number of documents, the kind of documents published, but the number of copies of individual documents that find their way to Member Nations. We have tried on an individual country basis to determine who is responsible so that we can reduce the number of copies that go to the various aspects of the United States Government, both here in Rome and in Washington and through the FAO Liaison Office in Washington. It has frankly been not possible to find this out, yet we find that we get far too many copies of documents.

With respect to decentralization, we can support the Programme and Finance Committee conclusions. In Programme and Finance Committees the Secretariat provided, I think, a solid rationalization for the role of the Regional and Sub-regional Offices and evidenced that these Offices have saved money and brought programme delivery to Members in a way that increases its efficiency and repetitivity of response.

Nevertheless, the United States believes that the FAO should pursue the same kind of clarity and rationalization of the role of Country Representative Offices. These offices absorb 10 percent of the regular budget, or at least that has been the case until the coming biennium. We do not know what it will be like in the coming biennium. I think that Members need a clearer concept than we currently have of the value added of the country offices to the FAO's Regular Programme activities. We would support having a continuing dialogue between the Secretariat and Members on the Country Offices, with a view to developing for each Country Office a country plan that outlines their principal goals and their principal mission in each country, and something that would be available to all Member Nations.

Bill DOERING (Canada)

Canada supports the programme or the proposal in paragraph 9 of the Report. We would like to note that this will generate savings of approximately US\$ 1 million and would thus urge the Secretariat to implement this change as soon as possible.

Mame BALLA SY (Sénégal)

Je voudrais très rapidement exprimer, à travers le Président du Comité financier, à son collègue du Comité du programme et à tous les Membres de ces deux Comités, notre profonde appréciation du travail remarquable qui a été fait, qui nous permet de nous rendre compte des progrès importants réalisés par cette Organisation dans la rationalisation de ses activités et de ses moyens de fonctionnement. C'est certainement un processus qui reste à améliorer, parce que la perfection demande toujours un mouvement en avant; aussi nous nous joignons à ce Comité pour non seulement approuver les grandes lignes de ses propositions, mais aussi pour féliciter le Secrétariat et l'encourager à persévérer dans cette voie, surtout en insistant particulièrement sur la remarquable initiative de décentralisation qui, outre les économies réalisées, a l'avantage de rapprocher l'Organisation encore plus des populations les plus nécessiteuses.

Je tenais à faire ce double témoignage à l'endroit des deux Comités et aussi du Secrétariat et de son personnel, pour que tous ces efforts soient poursuivis.

Kyeong-sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

We basically agree with the Secretariat's position that the present quota distribution system has not been satisfactory since it is not based on real demands by individual Member Nations for FAO publications and documents.

We also agree that the current situation requires proper corrective changes that, under the existing distribution system, Member Nations with low incomes and lower levels of financial

contributions to FAO's budget, where we believe basic agricultural technical information and statistical data from FAO are most needed, receive the smallest share of FAO publications.

In this connection, we support, in principle, the proposal to address the need to introduce a reduced quota distribution system aimed at an efficient, targeted and equitable dissemination of FAO publications.

Concerning this, we support that a quota distribution based on a minimum of a free distribution of five or ten copies would be appropriate because many Member Nations have some consistent demand for main documents and publications of FAO, including *Production Yearbook*, *Trade Yearbook* and other important technical publications and documents.

Regarding Members' purchase of additional copies of FAO publications beyond free distribution, it is desirable that differing discount rates be applied to developing and developed countries respectively. In view of extensive demands by least-developed and developing countries for FAO publications, we feel in the first place that it would be better to apply a discounted sales price of 80 percent for developing and 20 percent for developed countries, as mentioned in paragraph 25, CL 116/4.

However, it is clear that the application of the two sets of differing discount rates will certainly have financial implications for FAO's income from sales of its priced publications. We are of the opinion, therefore, that the determination of the discount rates should be based on due consideration of the financial implications of the two options: firstly, 80 percent and 20 percent; secondly, 80 percent and 40 percent for developing and developed countries, respectively.

In addition to this, we are of the opinion that timely delivery of publications and documents is as important as their equitable distribution. We consider that FAO needs to focus on more cost-effective and efficient ways to ensure a rapid and timely delivery of FAO documents to Member Nations since their deliveries are often delayed, and thus their value tend to be less than originally anticipated. In this connection, we recommend that FAO make the best use of electronic distribution systems including File Transfer Protocol (FTP).

Klaus GARCKE (Germany)

I regret that I am not in a position to give you a clear picture of the opinion of the European Community on this point. We had understood from the Report that an additional report of the Secretariat would give options for a quota distribution of publications. Since this paper was available so late, it was not possible for the Members of the European Community to develop a common position.

I am sure that, as expressed by other Member Nations, reduced amount of publications probably will have the consent of the Members of the European Community but we can only give you our final position at a later stage.

Bill DOERING (Canada)

La décentralisation des effectifs de la FAO vers les pays et régions a été proposée par le Directeur général au début de son mandat. Elle a été approuvée par le Conseil en juin 1994. L'objectif principal était de rapprocher les activités de la FAO de ses bénéficiaires.

Le Canada a appuyé cette démarche, d'autant plus qu'elle permet de développer et de mettre à profit l'expertise locale. Nous sommes donc heureux de voir que l'exercice a déjà mené à l'embauche de nombreux nationaux dans les bureaux de la FAO sur le terrain.

Dans le Rapport sur la décentralisation présenté par le Secrétariat, on dit que les bureaux régionaux et sous-régionaux sont responsables pour la planification et la gestion des programmes dans leur région. Nous aimerions savoir quels sont les niveaux de délégation des pouvoirs financiers dans les bureaux régionaux et dans les pays; par exemple, est-ce qu'un représentant au niveau national peut approuver des fonds pour des projets d'appui technique en situation d'urgence? Ou, est-ce que le bureau régional peut en faire autant?

Par ailleurs, le rapport contient peu d'information sur le soutien offert au personnel décentralisé. L'expérience nous enseigne que ceux-ci doivent faire un ajustement considérable tant au plan personnel que professionnel. Nous voudrions savoir si des programmes spéciaux de formation ont été créés pour aider le personnel décentralisé à fonctionner de façon efficace dans son nouvel environnement. Par exemple, dans quel domaine a-t-on offert de la formation?

Dans son introduction au Programme de travail, le Directeur général a indiqué qu'il est temps maintenant de se pencher sur l'évaluation des réformes entreprises au début de son mandat. Nous croyons qu'il s'agit là d'une excellente initiative. Nous voudrions savoir de quelle façon le Secrétariat entend procéder à l'évaluation de la décentralisation. Nous voudrions aussi suggérer que cette évaluation soit participative et que les Pays Membres ainsi que les employés sur le terrain y participent. Les recommandations formulées par les évaluateurs devraient aussi faire l'objet de discussions avec les employés décentralisés. Enfin, nous suggérons fortement que l'évaluation soit effectuée par des professionnels extérieurs à l'Organisation.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Queremos hacer un reconocimiento a los esfuerzos que realiza la Secretaría en cuanto a la racionalización en varias áreas, por ejemplo en Publicaciones. Sin embargo, nos preguntamos hasta qué punto una política que, tal vez, exceda ciertos límites pueda afectar una de las funciones más importantes que cubre la FAO, en términos de mandato, que se refiere precisamente a ser un centro de difusión de información importante. En este sentido, advertimos que los títulos de la categoría Peso son títulos importantes de los cuales la mayoría de los países nos beneficiamos. Quisiéramos, en este marco, preguntar ¿si este cupo, que se está discutiendo, de señalar entre 5 y 10 ejemplares como máximo afectaría también la distribución de los destinatarios de las listas especializadas de direcciones y bibliotecas, o si estos ejemplares fuesen solamente para entidades gubernativas? En esta misma línea, tal vez sería conveniente hablar de un rango de flexibilidad; creo que varias delegaciones se han referido al hecho que siendo muy diferenciados los requerimientos de los diferentes países, entonces deberíamos hablar más de rangos que de una cifra particular.

Julian A. THOMAS (Chairman, Finance Committee)

Thank you Mr Chairman and thank you to the Members of Council for those comments, they certainly would be taken into consideration by the Joint Meeting should and when it looks at either of these two items in the future.

There was really one question concerning the issue of publications that I think needs to be responded to before one can look at the response to the proposal. I think we need to turn to Mr Zenny to provide that information and then, perhaps, when we deal with the question of decentralization. Mr Omar will be able to provide an answer to the questions posed by Canada.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

As I see it, there were three questions.

The first question was from the distinguished delegate of Pakistan, asking where was break-even. The break-even is 60 percent discounted price. That covers the cost of printing and distribution. Any discounted price in excess of 60 percent does not cover these costs.

The distinguished delegate of Mexico wanted to know how this decision would affect the distribution to the depository libraries. This decision is only concerned with the free distribution tied to the quota system which is based on the Member Nations' contributions, so that the largest contributor gets in excess of 240 copies. It does not affect the mailing lists of the Divisions and Departments. Each Division and Department has a mailing list of its networks, constituents, the people who they know need these publications. That free distribution through these specialized mailing lists will continue. We also have a network of depository libraries in every Member Nation. That free distribution will also continue. The targeted mailing lists, if I may put it this way, will therefore continue.

What this proposal is all about is the non-targeted list, which just goes to a government address -- which sometimes is one, sometimes is two -- which is given to us. We think this dissemination is not targeted, and is clearly supply-driven and not demand driven.

Mr Chairman, you urged that a decision be taken but I am not quite sure what the decision is. Two countries, I think, spoke in favour of the Secretariat's proposal, Canada and the United States; others, Republic of Korea and Pakistan, wished the Secretariat's proposal to be modified. I am not quite sure what we have decided.

CHAIRMAN

One decision would be to go back to the Joint Committee and come up with a paper that can be adopted. I also see that we cannot, at this time, adopt this as it is.

Julian A. THOMAS (Chairman, Finance Committee)

Perhaps we can just have one try. As Mr Zenny said, a couple of countries have expressed satisfaction with the proposal of five copies. Pakistan has asked for ten. I think I understood the Republic of Korea to be flexible on that and Mexico also, proposing that there may be an option open here for Members to indicate whether they would require five or ten.

Perhaps Members of Council could consider the proposal as it is, with five copies but with the option of ten copies for those countries that express a need for ten copies. This is just a proposal.

CHAIRMAN

Can we adopt that proposal, which is an amendment to Item 17.1?

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I am a little wiser now, but I would still wish to know about the discounted prices. The Secretariat's proposal is 60 to developing countries and 20 to developed countries.

I would like to know the sentiment of the Council on this, if I may.

CHAIRMAN

I think you have also given the Council one very important piece of information concerning the break-even; 60 percent is breaking even.

If we take that additional information, can we also decide on this?

Adnan BASHIR KHAN (Pakistan)

I was just going to suggest that maybe the Secretariat would like to work out a formula where the overall recovery matches the cost. The Secretariat does not, in a way, make an earning out of this. It seems to me that from sales to the developing countries, they would probably recover the cost, but then from sales to developed countries they would make a 20 percent income.

If some sort of a formula could be worked out where there is an overall break-even, maybe the discount for developing countries could be increased.

Kyeong-sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

I need some clarification. I do not know whether or not we have to choose one option amongst the two options, for example the five copies or the ten copies.

We should decide in this Council that option. If we decide, I would like to support the ten copies.

Julian A. THOMAS (Chairman, Finance Committee)

On the question from the Republic of Korea, the way I understood the proposal was that five copies would be made available to countries, unless they indicated that they would prefer ten, so that it would be up to the individual country to opt for ten copies, otherwise they would receive five copies.

Mame BALLA SY (Sénégal)

J'espère qu'avec cette explication, nous pourrions prendre la décision, parce qu'il semble très clair qu'imposer dix copies sans que tout le monde n'ait besoin de dix, ne serait pas sage, même si c'était gratuit. Je pense donc que le compromis est très dynamique et très bon. On part de la base de cinq, avec possibilité d'atteindre dix, si on en justifie la nécessité par une demande expresse. Je crois que c'est un compromis particulièrement sage que nous appuyons et qui, j'espère, sera adopté.

CHAIRMAN

I would like to ask Pakistan if, at this moment, we can take 60 percent and give the opportunity to the Secretariat to see if it can be increased later on, so that we can adopt this.

Adnan BASHIR KHAN (Pakistan)

That is fine.

CHAIRMAN

It is now ready for adoption. Item 17.1, *Change in the Quota Distribution System of Information Products*, is adopted.

On the *Report on Decentralization*, I do not see any problem there. Since there are several questions, I would like Mr Wade to speak.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation)

Just briefly, the delegate to the United States commented that they felt the Report had provided a sound rationalization for the regional and sub-regional office structures, but that they still had some doubts for the FAORs.

I am a little bit surprised at that. The rationale for the FAORs is also provided in the same Report and does not appear to have been questioned by the Committees in their Report. I suppose my concern is more, however, with this concept of a country plan, because I am not quite sure that I understand what the concept is. If we look at the responsibilities of the FAORs, as included in the original Report, we see that they provide a series of services in the relationship between FAO and the country concerned, for example, representing the Organization, working closely with them, channelling and coordinating the use of FAO's resources, etc.

It is quite hard to develop a time-bound plan in the provision of such services. What is more likely to be produced is some form of Service Agreement, if you like, about what services will be provided, but it is a little difficult to see it in the terms which you expressed. Maybe we could discuss it more outside this meeting but, at this stage, I am not clear what it is you are hoping to achieve.

A country plan *per se*, that is in terms of what FAO is delivering in the country, is another issue and is not necessarily entirely the responsibility of the FAOR. We may be running a series of projects, executing them for different donors, we may have various arrangements in place. Maybe it is something to do with that aspect that you would like to see covered in such a plan. I guess I am asking a question there, through you, Mr Chairman.

With regard to Canada, the levels of delegation depend very much on the source of funds concerned. In the case of the Regular Programme, the Regional Representative has the full authority to expend the allotments which are allocated to the Regional Office, within the same rules that apply to Headquarters' Assistant Directors-General. In fact, in one or two cases, I think the purchasing authority is slightly higher. It is not a limitation which will constrain them. This means that they receive an allotment which is based on the appropriation that you approve, and that they can go ahead and spend it as long as they spend it on the programme purposes for which it was approved.

There are, of course, constraints within the system, as there are within any bureaucratic system, which have to be met. For example, if they decided to design a new computer system, they would have to obtain also an approval from the Information Systems and Resources Committee, because we need to see that it fits in with the corporate system architecture that has been approved for the Organization. If they wish to appoint a professional staff member, they need to go through the Professional Staff Selection Committee and through the normal approvals for that process. Those constraints are exactly the same as the ones which exist for Headquarters' Assistant Directors-General.

Other sources of funds have other constraints. If we have a Trust Fund in a Region, then the rules of the Trust Fund system apply to the Regional Office which is operating the project. In that case, as it happens, the delegation lies with the Operations Branch to go ahead and commit funds in line with the workplan for the project concerned. There are no specific additional constraints except that those that apply, for example, in the area of purchasing. If a contract is in excess of US\$ 100 000, it has to go through our Contracts Committee, etc, but again the same set of rules that apply to Headquarters' staff.

You asked a question on emergency projects, which I am not sure I caught and I apologize for that. The Regional Representative would have no authority to commit funds on an emergency project until such time as funds were approved for that project. It might be coming from an external donor, it might be coming from TCP, but once the operating authority is provided to the Region, then the Region can go ahead and commit funds. I should say that for emergency projects, much of it is managed from the centre through the Office of Special Relief Operations.

With regard to special training programmes for decentralized staff, I cannot give you a very good answer. I know that training was provided in certain areas where they were taking on new responsibilities, for example, in the use of computer systems and in the use of new computer tools and new software, etc. That is not a very comprehensive answer, I am afraid, because I am not well informed on that point.

You refer to an evaluation of the reforms that have taken place and how we intend to proceed. This is not on the agenda for our Evaluation Service at the present time. That is not to say that such an evaluation could not be carried out of decentralization, and what I would suggest is that we take this as being a proposal which would be put on the list of possible evaluations coming before the Programme Committee at its next session.

As regards your suggestions concerning the evaluation, certainly if we were to carry out one, one thing one would want to do is to contact the countries in the Region to see whether they felt that the services were improved, adequate, etc. I imagine we would take some sort of questionnaire approach to that problem.

Yes, it would be carried out by professionals but I do not think that would preclude us using some of FAO staff, as we include ourselves in that category. I do not know whether we would use internal or external people. It would depend on the circumstances. There is, however, some advantage in internal involvement in such an exercise, because knowledge of the Organization and its processes certainly helps the evaluator do a good job.

I think that covers the issues raised on decentralization.

CHAIRMAN

Are there any comments from the floor after we have listened to Mr Wade?

Mame BALLA SY (Sénégal)

Peut-être que pour les besoins de rédaction du rapport il est important que nous revenions sur ces questions posées après notre intervention et la réponse que nous venons d'entendre sur l'évaluation. Nous pensons qu'une évaluation est fondamentale et importante; nous pensons que l'évaluation doit être faite de manière professionnelle, objective et sérieuse. Quelle que soit la formule engagée, nous souhaitons dire que même s'il fallait recourir à une formule plutôt qu'à une

autre, bien que nous préférons la formule d'une évaluation connaissant mieux le terrain et tout le contexte, ou si on devait recourir à toute autre forme d'évaluation, il faudrait qu'elle soit étendue à l'ensemble des États Membres pour qu'on ne s'achemine pas vers la monopolisation d'une connaissance ou d'une capacité d'évaluation dans tous les Pays Membres de cette Organisation. Enfin nous voulons souligner que le Secrétariat est parmi les mieux placés pour faire un travail sérieux, et nous espérons qu'il pourra le faire dans ce sens.

Bill DOERING (Canada)

A point of clarification. What I meant was not external professionals, I meant an external organization. If it was taken out of context, having someone else do it is I think more independent.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Creo que el tema de la descentralización es un tema clave para el trabajo futuro de la Organización. Nos preguntaríamos si en algún momento el Consejo podría recibir un documento global sobre la política que abarcara por un lado los objetivos de la descentralización, los límites y el aspecto de las delegaciones que tienen las oficinas regionales a los que se refirió el señor Wade. Creo que esto sería muy oportuno para poder evaluar el nivel de avance de descentralización y ver también en qué punto o en qué momento esta política o esta fase concluiría. Ahora por lo que yo percibo hay un concepto no muy claro por parte de las delegaciones sobre los límites de la política, sobre lo que se está haciendo y sobre cuáles son los problemas. No sé si los Comités de Programa y de Finanzas tienen una percepción mucho mejor que nosotros pero yo creo que sería muy sano que todos los Miembros de la Organización contaran con un documento informativo, sobre este aspecto dado que es una política clave de la Organización.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation)

Of course, the Programme and Finance Committees have an advantage over the Council in this regard, as there is a paper which extensively described the progress that had been made and also went through, as Dr Thomas referred, to the roles of the various parts of the decentralized structures.

That document is available to you on the FAO Website. Its reference is JM 99/1, and you will find it under FAO Governing Bodies, FAO Committees of the Council, Programme Committee for May 1999. If, of course, you would like a hard copy rather than going through that process, please let me know.

I think perhaps, if I could suggest, that Members who are interested could have a look at that. If they then feel it should be taken up further in a more formal way, then we could address it at that time.

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Chile)

Quisiéramos complementar lo que ha dicho la delegación de México. Creemos que es muy importante, por lo menos en lo que corresponde a la delegación de Chile, los comentarios que ha hecho la delegación de México, puesto que el tema de la descentralización también tiene enormes repercusiones sobre las obligaciones que tienen algunos Estados Miembros respecto a cobijar las Oficinas Regionales de la FAO. Es el caso específico de mi país que, ciertamente, alberga la Oficina Regional de la FAO en Santiago de Chile.

Nos interesaría, sobremanera, conocer cuál es el límite de la descentralización, el número de funcionarios que se espera lleguen a la Oficina Regional. Puesto que, como ustedes saben y lo hemos informado en otras ocasiones a este mismo honorable Consejo, Chile desde hace tres años a la fecha entregó un edificio nuevo a la Oficina Regional de la FAO en Santiago de Chile, con una determinada idea, una determinada imagen objetiva de lo que iba a ser la presencia de nuestra Oficina Regional en Santiago; pero, hoy día, por efecto de la propia descentralización ha ido aumentando el número de personas. Creo que es fundamental conocer, tener información más precisa sobre ese tema, especialmente por el impacto que tiene en la responsabilidad que asume el Gobierno de Chile sobre esta materia.

CHAIRMAN

It seems to me that all of us regard decentralization as a very important policy, the implementation of the FAO Mission. As such, the Report submitted by the Secretariat at this stage I think should be regarded as a progressive report. There are suggestions and comments arising from the floor that have to be taken up by the Secretariat in order to implement this very important policy in a better way in the future. In this sense, we can conclude this debate and move on to the other items that we have before us today.

Keyong-sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

We will discuss the *Savings and Efficiencies in Governance* included in CL 116/4. I am satisfied with your comments, we will discuss this.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

May I just explain that Savings and Efficiencies in Governance covers two Sub-items: one is the Review of FAO Statutory Bodies; and the other is the *Implications of Scheduling Separate Meetings for Ministers during Conference*.

Regarding the first item, the Chairman in his introduction suggested that the Council might wish to take note of the *Final Report on the Implementation of the Conference Resolution 13/97: Review of FAO Statutory Bodies*, contained in document CL 116/INF/16. So, that is before the Council under this Item.

For the second Sub-item, the *Separate Meetings for Ministers during Conference*, the Chairman suggested that it should be taken up in the discussion of the preparations for the 30th Session of the Conference, which is Item 11.

According to the Revised Timetable, Item 11 will be taken up on Thursday, if you are in agreement.

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)

18. Report of the 81st Session of the Programme Committee (Rome, 3-7 May 1999)

(CL 116/14; CL 116/INF/10; CL 116/INF/11; CL 116/INF/12; CL 116/INF/13; CL 116/INF/14)

18. Rapport de la quatre-vingt-unième session du Comité du programme (Rome, 3-7 mai 1999) (CL 116/14; CL 116/INF/10; CL 116/INF/11; CL 116/INF/12; CL 116/INF/13; CL 116/INF/14)

18. Informe del 81º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa (Roma, 3-7 de mayo de 1999) (CL 116/14; CL 116/INF/10; CL 116/INF/11; CL 116/INF/12; CL 116/INF/13; CL 116/INF/14)

18.1 Review of FAO Language Policy (CL 116/14 paras 66-72; CL 116/16 paras 47-52; CL 116/INF/14)

18.1 Examen de la politique linguistique de la FAO (CL 116/14, par. 66-72; CL 116/16, par. 47-52; CL 116/INF/14)

18.1 Examen de la política de la FAO en materia de idiomas (CL 116/14 párrs. 66-72; CL 116/16, párrs. 47-52; CL 116/INF/14)

18.2 Other Matters Arising Out of the Report

18.2 Autres questions découlant du rapport

18.2 Otras cuestiones planteadas en el informe

CHAIRMAN

After considering the Report of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees, we now turn to the *Report of the Programme Committee's May 1999 Session*, which is document CL 116/14. May I welcome Mr Bommer, Chairman of the Programme Committee, and thank him for joining us on the podium.

With regards to Item 18.1, *FAO Language Policy*, you will recall that the Council last November expressed a strong interest in the analysis of the Secretariat concerning this issue. In consequence, the document submitted to both the Programme and Finance Committees, *Review of Language Policy*, is now before Council as CL 116/INF/14. Your attention is drawn to the Committees' recommendations on this important matter.

I now invite Mr Bommer, Chairman of the Programme Committee, to report to the Council on the discussions in the Programme Committee.

D. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee)

You have already indicated before, when we discussed the Report of the Joint Meeting, that the three most important items of our agenda have already been discussed in the session, that is the *Strategic Framework*, *Summary Programme of Work and Budget* and the *Programme Evaluation Report*.

For the remaining items that you have indicated, next is the *Review of the FAO Language Policy*, an item which had been put on the Agenda at our proposal and requested by the Council. A Report has been prepared which has been provided to Council Members.

This document prepared by the Secretariat was considered by the Committee as providing comprehensive information and analysis. Because of the interest expressed by the Council, we asked that the document be put forward to Council Members. The Committee noted with satisfaction the Director-General's concern for the equitable treatment of the FAO languages in the Organization. It noted that also the use of one language tended to prevail in meetings and publications, and concurred with the principle that worldwide meetings should be held in the languages of the Organization.

The Committee welcomed the Organization's commitment to a more balanced approach and gradual improvement in the usage of all FAO languages. It supported the Director-General's proposal in this direction, and requested that this be reflected and developed to the extent possible in the various scenarios of the Programme of Work and Budget 2000-2001. The implementation of the use of languages should however not divert resources away from the technical and economic programmes.

We have already requested that, in future, reporting on programme implementation should systematically include a section on progress in the use of languages in the Organization. This is, in essence, the main conclusion of the Committee on this item. I will also deal with the other items if you perhaps agree to decide on this item on language policy.

Ahmed Suleiman AL-AQUIL (Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the Middle East Group my delegation would like to make some comments on document CL 116/16 now before us, which is entitled: *Report of the Finance Committee*. We would like to refer to the documents which fall under the heading *Review of the FAO Language Policy* in paragraphs 47 and 52, and in particular paragraph 47 which focuses on the equality of treatment, the statutory parity of all languages outlined in the FAO Constitution, and what is indicated in paragraph 51. In paragraph 51, the Finance Committee fully supported the allocation of additional Regular Programme funds towards improving the use of the five languages of the Organization, and ensuring a more equitable treatment of these languages.

We request the inclusion of the proposal of additional funds for the implementation of the language policy made in the document, no matter what budgets may now be adopted.

We would like you to give the floor to the delegation from Libya who has some comments it would like to make in that regard and who is here as Observer to this Council meeting.

Mansur Mabruk SEGHAYER (Observer for Libya) (Original language Arabic)

I would thank you very much for giving me the right to speak. The document now before us, CL 116/INF/14, directly refers to the *Review of the FAO Language Policy*. If we look at paragraphs 6 to 24, paragraph 6 refers to the utilization of languages and stress is placed on the language composition of meetings. In general, the basic text and normally the original language for texts is English.

The words used here are a direct translation from the English, and the Arabic translation of this document does not correspond to what is translated into other languages. Paragraph 6 also refers to languages in which interpretation is provided, but not translations, and this was for a short period of time.

I would not want to monopolize the Council's precious time because I have an awful lot to say on this topic. I do believe that Dr Bommer has provided Council with an exhaustive overview of the situation and information as well, which we discussed at length during the Programme and Finance Committees.

Nonetheless, I would like to call to mind the decisions which were adopted by this Council at its 115th Session. Here I would like to quote what is mentioned in paragraph 71: "Council agreed in insisting on the importance of the language diversity within this Organization, and this with respect to the utilization of the official working languages and translation of documents and publications and also the interpretation which is provided during meetings of this Organization, as well as in other activities launched by FAO..."

The Council also insisted on the need to treat all languages in an equal manner, and the Council in that regard indicated very clear priority for this Organization in order to facilitate communication, comprehension, understanding and discussion on points brought to the attention of meetings. So that was more or less the tone of the decision made by Council at its 115th Session.

We all know that the UN General Assembly adopted a Resolution, which is Resolution 11, during its 50th Session and that Resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations indicates, and quite clearly so, and quite frankly and apparently so, that the official languages of the organizations should not suffer as a result of any budget reductions.

I do not want to be lengthy on this, but we cannot accept the principle of any linguistic discrimination which seeks to, or ends up by, depriving Arabic-speaking citizens or Chinese-speaking citizens from being able to access in their own language the publications and documentation of this Organization.

This Organization is also financed by the Arab countries.

Klaus GARCKE (Germany)

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

We thank the Secretariat for document PC 81/6 FC92/13, which comes in response to an insistent question from the Council and has been examined and commented on favourably by the Programme and the Finance Committees.

The effective practice of multilingualism, as set down in the Statute of the FAO, is of fundamental importance for the proper functioning of the Organization if it is to remain deep-rooted throughout the world among the peoples concerned by the fight against hunger, as many delegations pointed out when the *Summary Programme of Work and Budget* was being examined on the first day of the current meeting.

This effective practice of multilingualism at the necessary quality level requires that certain of the Organization's practices undergo progressive reform.

With regard to financial resources, the Secretariat's proposal should form part of a multi-annual programme aimed at reducing disparities. To achieve this, the following additional information would be required: a detailed evaluation of the resources of all kinds mobilized for FAO's language policy during the 1998-99 budget year and the draft Programme of Work and Budget for 2000-2001; and how those resources evolved during the five previous budget years.

We share the views of the Secretariat, as set out in paragraph 36, and support the implementation of the language cover as set out by the FAO rules.

Regarding the Organization's practices, fair treatment of languages also depends on the rules which the Secretariat has adopted to attain that objective and the way in which it has monitored the implementation. In this sense, the Chapter on the *Management of Human Resources* in the Report presented is appropriate, but the presentation should better reflect the actual situation.

Delays in the dissemination of the different language versions of documents hinders the Member Nations considerably in their work. This should be put right.

In conclusion, the Member States of the European Community, on the basis of their own experience, would emphasize the importance they attach to multilingualism which reflects the appropriate emphasis on of cultural diversity, as well as furthering better understanding between people.

Multilingualism is a corollary of the universal mentality of the United Nations and, as the General Assembly recalled in its Resolution of 2 November 1995, it requires rules and resources, in particular financial resources without which compliance with that basic principle would only be a delusion.

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

I would like to begin by voicing my support to what has been said by my colleague from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on behalf of the Middle East group and likewise, support what was said by the Representative from Libya and by the Representative from Germany, who spoke on behalf of the European Union.

I would like you to bear with me as I try to make an attempt to clarify something which is most important for us on this whole agenda item. Linguistic and cultural diversity are essential aspects in the whole realm of international cooperation. They have constituted one of the comparative advantages of this Organization. There is no doubt whatsoever that the ability and capacity of the Member Nations of this Organization to express themselves and to prepare documents of the Organization and access the publications of this Organization, in all the various languages, is something all important and can but help them participate in the life of this Organization. This also enables us to achieve the aims and put into practice the ideals of this Organization and hence, necessarily, be more effective in what we do. Languages are an essential channel for cultural transfer, for cultural exchange, in order to bring about sustainable development and global development. This is what is the main aim of this Organization in pursuing food security, fighting against famine and poverty throughout the entire world.

Within the framework of the pragmatic approach evoked by the Conference during its Nineteenth Session, adopted was the Resolution of the General Conference, Resolution 19, in 1977. Within that context, as I was saying, the Council, in 1978, reaffirmed the principle, the statutory parity among all the languages of the Organization. In addition, the Council of this Organization had, in the course of its 115th Session, adopted paragraphs 70 and 71 and that in November 1998.

We would like to recall what was mentioned within the framework of the Programme Committee in May of 1999 and also in the Report of the Session of the Finance Committee held in May of 1999 as well. Allow us, to recall the decisions made by the CFS at this later Session in June 1999, and the importance which is assigned by the Director-General to treat all the working languages of this Organization on the same footing.

Article 47 of the Basic Texts of the Organization, stipulates that the Arabic, Chinese, English, French and Spanish are the working languages of FAO. The Arabic language was introduced as an official language of the Organization in 1970. The utilization of Arabic has really developed quite a bit over two decades following upon that date of introduction. There was even a special counsellor for the Arabic language who was a D-.

Nonetheless, we have noted that the use and utilization of Arabic has decreased and declined quite a bit over the recent past, despite the decision made by the Council during its 115th Session in 1998, which stipulated the need to deal with all working languages in parity and that FAO's greatest priority was to ensure understanding and discussion of agenda items.

In effect, the justification advanced each time around was budgetary problems of the Organization, hence the need to cut back. It would appear that this only applies to the Arabic language though, because the three other languages, English, French and Spanish, are used more and more, as is recognized in the document submitted for our consideration by the Secretariat on a FAO's language policy. We see that these three languages are practically the only ones to be used, whether this be in meetings or in publications of this Organization, while the Resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations at its 50th Session, Resolution 11/50, stipulates quite clearly and quite explicitly that translation and interpretation must not suffer negative effects as the outcome of budgetary cuts or budgetary constraints. That Resolution approved by the General Assembly clearly requests that the documents of the various working meetings and the publications, be prepared in all the working languages of the United Nations, six languages there, because Russian is also an official language at the General Assembly and in the United Nations.

There are more than twenty countries that have Arabic as their official language. Practically 200 million people speak Arabic and there are additional millions of people who speak Arabic living in other countries. All those people must have access to the most recent information generated by this Organization, and have that access in the Arabic language, the language with which they are most familiar.

On the other hand, there are extremely important activities undertaken by this Organization, such as Codex Alimentarius, for example, which focuses on food control and also phytosanitary measures. Those measures which do have an essential impact on international trade, and the activities related thereto, are not available in the Arabic language. Even the publications relative to the desert locust, for example, which has one of its main areas of concentration in the Arab countries, are not available because they are not published in the Arabic language. The publication of all these documents in Arabic is an essential aspect of the activities and the specialization harboured in this Organization with its myriad skills. This cannot depend, in anyway whatsoever, on whether there are ups or downs in the budgetary resources, because the first article of the Constitution of this Organization stipulates: "The Organization shall collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture".

The Arabic-speaking countries would like to ask the Organization that: no matter what the level of the budget of this Organization be, this premise should be put into practise.

Firstly, the Arabic language, as stipulated in the Constitution, should be treated on a level of parity with the other working languages of FAO.

Secondly, we request that all publications, directly concerning the Arab Region, be in Arabic in order to expand the basin of the beneficiaries.

Thirdly, we request that all documents having to do with Codex Alimentarius be published in Arabic with a view to implementing agreements on sanitary and phytosanitary measures of WHO.

Fourthly, we request that the Arab speakers be kept up to date on the most recent technological information this Organization has on agriculture, soil management, water and any other agricultural-related endeavours.

Fifthly, we request the use the Arabic language just like the other languages in meetings of Committees and Commissions of FAO, and particularly the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the

CCLM, General Fisheries Council for the Mediterranean, as well as in other Committees and important Conferences.

Sixthly, we request that Resolution 11/50, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, relative to the Arabic language, be implemented at FAO.

Lastly, we request that all the documents of the Organization be in Arabic, available on internet, and in addition to information relative to Waicent.

At the end of this statement, I would just like to say that I hope that the Council in the course of this Session will assign utmost priority to this matter, and that it will take a definitive decision in this regard, so that we no longer have to discuss this matter in the future and this to save our own time.

TANG ZHENGPING (China) (Original language Chinese)

The Chinese delegation would like to express its support to the statement made by Germany on behalf of the European Union, and also for the statement just made by Egypt, speaking on behalf of the Arabic-speaking group.

The Chinese delegation has carefully studied the document referring to the *FAO Language Policy* and we are of the view that with respect to language balance in FAO we need, first of all, to respect the principle of the statutory equality and legality of all five working languages in the Organization. On the basis of that, we need to adopt a pragmatic and flexible approach in the light of factors such as financial resources.

Nevertheless, we have noted with regret that in recent years, on the pretext of budgetary constraints, it often happens that there is a lack of balance, and inequality in the use of the languages in the Organization, at the expense of the Chinese language. In paragraphs 1 to 6 in CL 116/INF/14, it is shown quite clearly that there is disparity between all languages when considering the number of times they are used. In fact, this question of linguistic balance has not been taken sufficiently into account in an important publication such as this, with respect to Arabic and Chinese in particular. Although we have noted that FAO has shown some improvement in the matter, we would nevertheless express the hope that the Organization strictly apply the UN Resolutions and the FAO Resolutions with respect to language policy, strengthen efforts to improve the balance between languages and practise the principle of statutory legality.

We should note that on FAO's Website, and its major publications in CD ROM, particular attention needs to be given to language balance. We do hope that FAO will speedily conclude the reorganization of its Website pages and research tools so that the information provided by its Website can be targeted and reach the very many Chinese users. We are convinced that, at the present time, with the means that we have for transmitting information, a certain amount of investment would produce inestimably useful results.

Louis DOMINICI (France)

Je voudrais d'abord m'associer entièrement à la déclaration de la présidence de l'Union européenne à laquelle nous attachons la plus grande importance. Je voudrais aussi me réjouir des interventions des autres délégations qui vont dans le même sens. Au nom de la délégation française, je voudrais simplement ajouter quelques précisions sur l'aspect pratique et concret des préoccupations qui sont les nôtres en la matière.

Dans sa dernière session le Conseil a souligné avec une grande force l'importance de la pratique effective du plurilinguisme dans notre Organisation. Depuis, le Comité du programme et le Comité financier ont travaillé sur ce sujet, sur la base des informations fournies par le Secrétariat concernant la pratique actuelle du plurilinguisme et d'une certaine manière concernant les moyens d'améliorer cette pratique au plan quantitatif et au plan qualitatif. Il importe que nous poursuivions maintenant notre effort, notre effort concret. Cet effort porte sur un certain nombre de méthodes de travail à l'intérieur de l'Organisation et d'autre part, sur la diffusion des informations, notamment des informations techniques, que l'Organisation a le devoir de fournir

dans le monde entier dans le sens de sa mission normative et pour assurer une relation vivante avec ceux qui travaillent sur le terrain à la lutte contre la faim. Bien évidemment et avec certes des économies possibles, grâce au bon usage des moyens modernes de communication, l'effort que nous demandons entraînera globalement des dépenses supplémentaires.

L'action à mener devrait donc s'inscrire dans un programme pluriannuel, d'une part pour aménager raisonnablement la progression des crédits nécessaires, d'autre part pour s'affirmer dans la durée. Le rôle du personnel de l'Organisation est très important dans ce processus. Il importe donc que le personnel s'y implique. Il importe aussi que le Secrétariat y veille, y compris, bien entendu, dans la gestion des ressources humaines.

S'agissant de la gestion des ressources humaines, je voudrais souligner l'importance que l'on doit attacher à la question de la capacité linguistique du personnel de l'Organisation. A commencer, bien entendu, par ceux qui occupent ou sont appelés à occuper des postes d'encadrement et de responsabilité. Nous croyons que le rapport du Secrétariat devrait être plus approfondi et nous suggérons que l'examen à conduire s'appuie sur un état des capacités linguistiques du personnel de l'OAA, notamment des administrateurs de haut niveau; une analyse de langue de travail au sein du Secrétariat et de ses conséquences au niveau de la langue d'origine des documents produits par le Secrétariat, ainsi que du déséquilibre qui en résulte finalement, faute de moyens de traduction suffisant, comme c'est le cas actuellement pour la diffusion de l'information sur WAICENT.

Toujours pour mieux apprécier la situation, nous souhaiterions avoir communication des rapports d'activités du nouveau Comité de la communication qui remplace désormais le Comité des publications. En conclusion, la délégation française souhaite que le Conseil, puis la Conférence générale, donnent au Secrétariat les instructions et les moyens d'assurer la restauration et l'expansion du plurilinguisme effectif de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture. La délégation française souhaite dans ce sens, que des crédits nouveaux apparaissent dans le budget prochain, et que le renouveau du plurilinguisme se manifeste dans le comportement du personnel et dans la gestion des ressources humaines de l'Organisation.

Javier PIERNAVIEJA NIEMBRO (España)

En primer lugar, la delegación española apoya la declaración de la Comunidad y sus Países Miembros presentada por nuestra presidencia alemana. Nuestra declaración sería complementaria de la importante declaración comunitaria. A su vez, compartimos ampliamente los criterios expuestos por la delegación francesa, que me ha precedido en el uso de la palabra y, repetimos y solicitamos la información anteriormente demandada sobre el organismo sustitutivo del Comité de Publicaciones. En este contexto quisiera destacar que España apoya el multilingüismo dentro de nuestro propio país. En la Comunidad Europea, ejemplo de comunidad multilingüe, como ha señalado la declaración alemana y en la FAO según se recoge en sus normas fundamentales.

Quisiera agradecer, adicionalmente, no ya el apoyo y el trabajo realizado por la Secretaría, sino específicamente a todos aquéllos que han colaborado en la elaboración del documento sobre el que estamos trabajando. Porque basado en datos objetivos y mensurables, revela que -pocas veces lo decimos- estamos trabajando en una Organización, la FAO, en la que la calidad es una de sus características. Es de agradecer la transparencia de la información suministrada en el documento.

Ha llegado el momento de dar un cambio en la política y en las prácticas de funcionamiento de los idiomas en la Organización. Porque la política lingüística no es una política más sino que el multilingüismo en la FAO, es decir, el uso en la Organización -según sus normas- de los idiomas árabe, chino, francés e inglés (cito por orden alfabético) debe impregnar explícita e implícitamente la esencia de la Organización. No hay que ser un experto en teoría de las organizaciones para considerar que en una organización universal, los idiomas de la organización son una manifestación de la diversidad cultural, enriquecedora del mundo y de la propia FAO y esencial para que pueda basar su trabajo en la propia realidad del mundo. Por tanto, la política lingüística debe incorporarse con objetivos concretos, explícitos, en todas las políticas horizontales y sectoriales de la FAO. Quisiera referirme brevemente a algunas de ellas: en primer lugar, la política de personal, la incorporación y verificación adecuada de los conocimientos del

personal de la FAO requeridos para las vacantes anunciadas, es el punto de partida fundamental. En segundo lugar, tiene que haber una evaluación periódica de los conocimientos lingüísticos del personal de la FAO, así como la incentivación correspondiente para proceder a su mejora profesional y económica. El tercer punto es que consideramos muy importante la dedicación explícita de un programa de formación lingüística del personal, que conocemos y apreciamos en su situación actual, pero al que nuestro país estaría dispuesto a mejorar y a apoyar explícitamente, estudiando las necesidades de las distintas categorías de personal y buscando formaciones específicas para cada uno de ellos.

Otra cuestión, para nosotros fundamental, es el apoyo a las asociaciones culturales del personal de la FAO que, como en el caso de la Asociación de Hispanohablantes, refleja la diversidad cultural y lingüística de la Organización en el mejor espíritu de apertura a otras culturas y, a su vez, destacando, de manera clara, la esencia del funcionamiento de las Naciones Unidas. Los apoyos a estas asociaciones no son una política más de personal, sino una política importante para apoyar el multilingüismo en la propia Organización.

Otro punto que quisiera brevemente señalar es el idioma español en el funcionamiento y en la práctica de la FAO. En numerosas ocasiones delegaciones españolas, participantes en varias reuniones, han manifestado su insatisfacción por la recepción tardía de las documentaciones en su idioma o incluso por otras situaciones producidas sobre la marcha en el mismo momento de la reunión.

No quisiéramos alargar nuestra intervención, pero sí señalar que todo el proceso de producción, desde la elaboración de los documentos, traducción, revisión, publicación en los distintos soportes, papel, Internet, deben seguir la normativa que ya existe en la propia FAO y que no se cumple de manera sistemática; si bien es cierto que esto sucede diferenciadamente según los Departamentos. Esta cuestión merecería un análisis más detenido. En este sentido, quisiéramos destacar dos áreas muy importantes por su posición estratégica en la Organización en el momento actual y en el futuro. En primer lugar, el WAICENT, al que nuestro país apoya de una forma clara. Este es un programa de una gran importancia para la Organización; el hecho de que tengamos un centro de información agraria mundial exige el multilingüismo en su funcionamiento. En nuestro caso, sabemos que WAICENT hace intentos para que, efectivamente, ese multilingüismo se produzca, pero estamos muy lejos de llegar a un funcionamiento medianamente satisfactorio de su política lingüística.

A su vez, hemos señalado ya en otras ocasiones como el *CODEX Alimentarius* es un elemento discriminatorio en el uso de los tres idiomas que en este momento se emplean para su trabajo interno. Me refería al tema en el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria; pienso que no es el momento de insistir, pero sí decir que cuantificadamente, es decir que nosotros hablamos con datos cuantificados por los responsables de cada una de las reuniones, sabemos que de veinticuatro reuniones, en catorce no se cumplieron sistemáticamente los plazos en los que se tuvo que contestar en Español sin existir documentación de base en este idioma - cuestión no aceptable.

Por último, quisiera muy brevemente hacer una referencia a la política de calidad. Como han declarado anteriormente otras delegaciones y como el propio documento refleja, especialmente en el párrafo 18, hay una insatisfacción por la calidad de la documentación en español - calidad que se debe, seguro, a dos cuestiones: falta de personal en el sector de traducción y deficiente calidad en las traducciones registradas fuera. La cuestión de la calidad no es una cuestión baladí cuando estamos hablando de aspectos normativos importantes en los que los países tienen posiciones serias que defender. En segundo lugar, la interpretación -cuando existe-, somos testigos de las dificultades con las cuales ese trabajo se realiza: funciona con solamente un 15 por ciento de los intérpretes de los que normalmente actúan. Sería lamentable que en los largos años de trabajo de la FAO, con una enorme calidad de conocimiento en el sector lingüístico, con diccionarios, reconocidos en su trabajo y con una experiencia de profesionales notables, se pierda por una reducción drástica de los recursos económicos.

Finalmente, y como conclusión, tal como decía anteriormente la delegación alemana en nombre de los Países Miembros de la Comunidad Europea, y también Francia, un funcionamiento efectivo

del multilingüismo requiere una seria política presupuestaria que refleje realmente los objetivos a conseguir y que nuestra evaluación en el Consejo y la Conferencia permita mejorar en el más breve plazo posible.

Mame BALLA SY (Sénegal)

En vous écoutant lire la liste des orateurs, j'ai un problème de conscience, puisque nous voilà engagés dans un débat qui sera très long pour dire la même chose, parce qu'il n'y a aucune délégation qui puisse contester la nécessité du pluralisme linguistique. La seule chose qu'on devrait dire ici, sans être vraiment trop long en développements, c'est que jamais un Secrétariat n'a rédigé des textes fondamentaux, jamais un Secrétariat n'a créé des programmes, jamais un Secrétariat n'a pu prendre une initiative quelle qu'elle soit. Ce sont les États qui ont décidé de tout cela, ce sont les États qui devraient, à mon avis, se donner les moyens de leurs objectifs.

Mais quand nous faisons de plein droit, et j'appuie toutes les déclarations faites, assurer l'égalité entre les langues est un droit que nous revendiquons. Dire que ce n'est pas fonction de moyens me paraît vraiment étonnant. Je crois qu'il faut être conséquent sur deux choses: "nous voulons cela...", "il faut que nous essayons de donner au Secrétariat qui agit seulement..."", ce discours je l'ai entendu dans toutes les organisations, mais on ne peut pas vouloir quelque chose et son contraire. Deuxièmement, l'idée fondamentale soulevée par la France est importante, le rôle du personnel d'un secrétariat d'une organisation internationale est fondamental.

Compte tenu des considérations liées à la carrière et à certaines choses, il arrive qu'une langue domine sur d'autres parce que tout simplement, cela régit et oriente l'avenir des fonctionnaires qui servent dans cette organisation. D'où la nécessité, je pense, de revoir fondamentalement les capacités linguistiques du personnel chargé d'animer au niveau le plus élevé des organisations, de manière à encourager tous les fonctionnaires possédant les langues de travail d'une organisation puissent s'y exprimer le plus rapidement possible, que ce soit par écrit, que ce soit verbalement, de manière à ce qu'on puisse arriver à cet équilibre. Mais souvent, vouloir uniquement baser l'efficacité d'un agent ou ses qualités, sur cette langue, parce que c'est seulement celle-là que possède celui qui est appelé à le juger, c'est là le fond du problème.

Pour conclure, je pense qu'on aura beau discuter jusqu'à demain, on sera d'accord sur une chose: il faut assurer cette égalité. On sera aussi d'accord si on veut l'avoir, qu'il faut donner les moyens nécessaires à l'organisation, à laquelle on demande de faire cela, quelle qu'elle soit. Nous sommes là pour exécuter ce que nous voulons qu'elle fasse en lui donnant naturellement les moyens de ses objectifs. Je crois qu'aller au-delà, c'est très bien; on fera beaucoup de littérature, on parlera, on argumentera, mais la solution est toute désignée. Il suffit d'une simple volonté, de savoir si nous le voulons, ou si nous ne le voulons pas.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

Los que llevamos algún tiempo en estos predios, conocemos que esto no es un tema nuevo. No es un tema nuevo, ya que despierta —como usted lo ha visto— un interés muy marcado. Hasta ahora, desde que el Dr. Bommer hizo su presentación, hemos oído con mucha atención y hasta ahora, creo que compartimos todo lo que hemos escuchado, tanto el Reino de Arabia Saudita, Egipto, Unión Europea, China, Francia, España y Senegal y usted Señor Presidente ha leído una lista bastante larga. Como dijo Senegal, más o menos se van a referir en esta misma dirección.

Nosotros podemos decir que la Región de América Latina y el Caribe fundamentalmente usa el idioma español. En todo este tiempo hemos tenido una vinculación muy estrecha con la Representación de España, con la cual hemos tenido reuniones. Recordaba hace poco una carta que siendo y ocupando el cargo de Presidente del GRULAC nos hizo la Representación de España con relación a este caso, en la cual me apuntaba una publicación que sacara el periódico *El País*, que yo creo que es interesante leer por lo menos sus titulares. Decía: "... los organismos internacionales relegan el español. Bajo el presupuesto, éste es utilizado como excusa para imponer el inglés. El español está siendo relegado en los grandes organismos internacionales, pese a ser, en la mayor parte de ellos, una lengua oficial junto al inglés, francés, chino y árabe ...". Según testimonios recogidos por este diario entre funcionarios de la ONU, más tarde decía —el

mismo periódico- es inconcebible que un idioma hablado por tantos cientos de miles de personas no tenga en estos foros una representación que responda a esa realidad. Nuestra lengua se habla hasta en África. Guinea Ecuatorial habla español. Decía el periódico la importancia del inglés es indiscutible, pero el español es tan importante como el inglés, yo completaría es tan importante como el chino y tan importante como el árabe. Porque en definitiva son los idiomas oficiales de los organismos multilaterales. Pero a donde vamos Señor Presidente, quisiera ser muy breve, como usted nos ha solicitado.

Nosotros tenemos que decir y reconocer que la interpretación simultánea aquí en la FAO es muy buena. Yo quisiera hacer un reconocimiento a esos trabajadores que nos están poniendo a cada uno en función de podernos comprender en este mundo tan complejo en que vivimos - complejo en todo sentido. No queremos hablar de la complejidad porque creo que todo el mundo la conoce y ellos son los que nos ponen en conocimiento lo que pensamos uno de otro. Lo que pasa que cada vez que hay un recorte en el presupuesto, pues sencillamente no es al inglés al que recortan - sólo a los demás idiomas. Cuando hay personal pues sencillamente -personal de interpretación- recortan no precisamente al inglés. Como decía la Representación de España, en los funcionarios de la FAO, nuestro idioma no es necesario.

A nosotros nos encanta que lo hablen, nos gustan todos los idiomas sobre todo con la elocuencia que habla el francés, el chino, el árabe, son idiomas maravillosos. Pero nosotros nos gusta la lengua de Cervantes, Señor Presidente, y nos encanta que nos hablen en ella. Es un idioma romántico, amoroso y por eso nos gusta que a nosotros nos hablen en nuestra lengua. Cuando viene una carta en un idioma que no es el nuestro, nosotros la devolvemos. En primer lugar, porque no la entendemos y luego porque nos gusta nuestro idioma. Cuando hay un recorte fundamental en una de las cuestiones que hablaba México, en la cuestiones de la divulgación, de las publicaciones, pues sencillamente y esto no es una cuestión que pasa sólo en FAO, en otros organismos internacionales también pasa (no vaya a creer que es sólo en FAO) se empieza a ahorrar quitando el español. Ese es el ahorro que se concibe, o quitando al chino o quitando al árabe.

Yo no quisiera seguir ahondando más, Señor Presidente, yo quisiera precisar este problema porque no quisiéramos hablar una vez más sobre esta situación. Los países de América Latina y el Caribe conjuntamente con la Representación de España nos reunimos para que sencillamente el español no sea un idioma olvidado, y no sea un idioma al que inmediatamente cuando se intenta ahorrar. Son las expresiones que tenemos que decir en este sentido fundamentalmente en nombre de mi delegación y recogiendo la opinión que sabemos que están en esa misma dirección de todos los países de habla hispana de América Latina y el Caribe, es fundamentalmente teniendo en cuenta a la Madre Patria España.

CHAIRMAN

I would suggest that we should not be too emotional. Please consider also, for instance, that the mother language of the Chairperson is neither English, nor Spanish, nor Arabic, nor Chinese nor French. I can be emotional too, but I think this debate is very good because we should follow what is written in the Basic Texts.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Después de las elocuentes palabras del Embajador de Cuba y del distinguido Representante de España, creo que nos queda poco por decir en cuanto a lo que ya usted anticipara, que es una defensa del idioma español, preocupación que compartimos con todos los delegados que han precedido en el uso de la palabra, que han hablado en nombre de la Unión Europea, del Grupo Asiático, del Grupo Africano, creo que en esto hay prácticamente unanimidad. Consideramos que la cuestión del tratamiento igualitario de los idiomas oficiales constituye un aspecto fundamental en el cumplimiento de los objetivos de la FAO. La diversidad lingüística representa también un elemento clave en todo el sistema multilateral como base para lograr un mejor entendimiento entre los Países Miembros.

Como bien lo señala el informe del Comité de Programas, motivo de discusión de este tema, la disminución de las publicaciones en todos los idiomas va en detrimento de las funciones de la Organización como Centro de Excelencia. En tal sentido, apoyamos todos los pronunciamientos que sobre el particular se han hecho. Creemos que la Organización debe realizar todo lo necesario para aplicar las disposiciones correspondientes, en particular para que el español tenga un tratamiento debido muy en especial en las publicaciones de la FAO y en los trabajos del *CODEX Alimentarius* que tanta relevancia tienen para nuestros países.

En esta línea nos gustaría preguntar a la Secretaría sobre el número de recursos con los que se dispone en este renglón, y también acerca de la viabilidad para que se hiciera una transferencia de otros programas. Sabemos que por las restricciones presupuestarias difícilmente se haría algo sin afectar a los programas esenciales, pero aún así nos gustaría conocer qué posibilidades habría en este sentido.

Adnan BASHIR KHAN (Pakistan)

First of all, I would like to thank the Programme Committee for considering that this document, PC/81/6-FC/92/13 should be brought before the June Council. Having said that, we would not like to further dwell on the importance of the multilingualism for the functioning of FAO, as it has been adequately addressed by all the distinguished delegates who have taken the floor before us, and we lend our support to them.

I would just like to refer to paragraph 36 of this document, which is FC/92/13, and state that we should not be frightened by cost implications in following a policy of improved multilingualism. The way the cost figures have been given here, they will certainly frighten anybody in following such a policy, so we should be mindful of that.

The second point that I would like to make is regarding paragraph 69 of the report contained in CL 116/14. I would quote from that: "It supported the Director-General's proposal in this direction contained in the document and requested that these be reflected, to the extent possible, in the various scenarios....". I find this statement to be very defensive and, on the basis of this statement, I do not think much improvement can be made in making this Organization more multilingual. We suggest that a considerable improvement from the existing position should be reflected in each scenario being developed for the Programme of Work and Budget 2000-2001, and information on this count be separately provided, as a part of priorities accommodated, indicating that this is a specific request for the secretariat.

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Chile)

Ya el Grupo Regional de América Latina y el Caribe se expresó claramente sobre esta materia, subrayando la importancia de brindarle igual oportunidad a todos los Estados Miembros de esta Organización y a la participación en los debates. Lo anterior cobra mayor significado cuando se debe discutir, negociar y adoptar normas que tendrán una validez universal, repito, normas que tendrán una validez universal, es decir trascienden esta Organización. Esto es particularmente trascendental cuando la FAO es depositaria de dos referencias normativas internacionales, a saber el *CODEX Alimentarius* y la Convención Internacional Fitosanitaria. Por lo tanto, tiene la responsabilidad de asegurar un acceso equitativo a la información.

Dichas normas, como se conoce, constituyen los elementos esenciales que posteriormente van a servir para redimir contiendas o diferencias comerciales en el ámbito del Acuerdo de Medidas Sanitarias y Fitosanitarias y por ende en la Organización Mundial de Comercio. A este respecto, como ya lo dijera el distinguido Representante de España en nuestro Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria, se entregó valiosa información sobre el trato desigual que reciban los idiomas en la preparación de los documentos de los diferentes comités del *Codex*. Es esencial que este Consejo promueva una adecuada disposición de los recursos financieros para un trato igualitario de los idiomas.

Mohamad Walid TAWILL (Syria) (Original language Arabic)

My delegation would like to support what was said by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Libya, Egypt, France, Germany and all of the speakers who have taken the floor thus far and have addressed the issue of the *FAO language Policy*.

We would like to call this Council's attention to the need for the Arabic language to be treated on a level of equality and equal footing with the other working languages. The Arabic language is a language which is to be used in meetings and the publications of this Organization, which are of interest for the 20 Arabic-speaking countries, also have to be translated into Arabic. This is absolutely crucial for the millions upon millions of people who speak the Arabic language. In addition, and quite obviously, this is very important for the transfer of technical knowledge and expertise to people who work in the field, to farmers, the vast majority of whom only speak Arabic.

One of the main objectives of FAO is to develop competencies, to develop human skills to ensure capacity building so that people can work. Without greater efforts in this regard there would be a regression in people's skills. We all seek to progress, to move forward.

By way of conclusion, I would like to cite an example of this imbalance in the use of languages which I have noted today. For example, with regard to the first table in document CL 116/LIM/3, we see an imbalance in the different titles published and, after having listened to what has been said by the various speakers, I feel that this matter must be reflected upon in depth and studied in full.

Akeel HAATOOR (Qatar) (Original language Arabic)

I would like to express my full support to what has been said by the distinguished Representatives from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Libya, Egypt, Syria and as we heard, refers to the equal utilization of working languages of this Organization for Committees, Commissions and publications of this Organization.

Melainine OULD MOCTAR NECHE (Mauritanie) (Langue originale arabe)

La délégation de mon pays voudrait appuyer tous les orateurs qui nous ont précédés et qui ont insisté sur la nécessité d'une utilisation sur un pied d'égalité de toutes les langues officielles de l'Organisation et particulièrement de la langue arabe qui malheureusement n'est pas traitée sur un pied d'égalité avec les autres langues officielles. Et pour être bref, nous aimerions que toutes ces préoccupations soient prises en compte afin que l'on parvienne à l'utilisation égale de toutes les langues de travail, dans l'intérêt de tous.

Ms Mitzi GURGEL VALENTE da COSTA (Brazil)

I think these were five of the most common greetings that we hear every single day in every single meeting that we hold here at the FAO. This just goes to show that we have an extreme diversity here in these meetings. Like you Mr Chairman, my native language is neither Spanish, nor English, nor French, certainly not Arabic or Chinese, and I do not mean to belittle these languages, it is just that they are written in a completely different way, and it goes with what I am going to say in the next few minutes.

I have always wondered what I would do if by some horrible glitch within FAO all of us here were presented with a document that was written only in Chinese, for example, since only the Chinese delegation, I would imagine, and some other people would be able to speak this language, how we would be supposed to discuss it if we cannot even see or realize what is written in it. The same would apply to an Arabic language document which I certainly would not be able to understand. So, I really do not know what we are doing here at this point, discussing this when we have a huge agenda in front of us.

The FAO Basic Texts say that we have five official languages. That is that, it just has to be obeyed.

Mohammad Saeed NOURI-NAEENI (Iran, Islamic Republic of)

In order to fully respect your request, my delegation fully associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on behalf of the Near East, and I fully support the point raised by delegates of Egypt, Syria and Libya.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italie)

Je partage entièrement la déclaration faite par l'Allemagne, au nom de la Communauté européenne, des États Membres. Je parle naturellement avec l'objectivité de quelqu'un dont la langue n'est pas une langue officielle de l'Organisation. Même si l'italien est aussi "amoroso" que l'espagnol, comme a dit l'Ambassadeur de Cuba. Néanmoins, je soutiens totalement ce qui vient d'être dit par plusieurs délégations qui m'ont précédé. Je dois faire moi-même un *mea culpa* de parler plutôt en anglais qu'en français, et pour des raisons de facilités.

En général, les documents sont traduits en anglais avant le français, et surtout le Secrétariat parle plutôt en anglais qu'en français, même dans des comités restreints, comme le Comité financier, dans lesquels de temps en temps j'essaie de parler en français, mais la plupart des discussions sont en anglais, en espagnol et en arabe. Donc, je crois que c'est plutôt une question culturelle qu'une question de réorganisation ou d'économie. J'ai cité, à plusieurs reprises, je m'en excuse avec les collègues avec lesquels je l'ai fait, le cas du criquet pèlerin, qui est un désastre qui affecte surtout les pays arabes et dont les textes ne sont pas en arabe. Alors, on me dit justement que c'est pour des questions d'économie. Cela me rappelle une fable de La Fontaine que je vais essayer de lire ce soir et de distribuer parmi les délégations, et que si on ne tient pas compte des pays qui sont le plus intéressés à certaines questions, je comprends très bien ce que vient de dire le délégué du Brésil et je le partage. Mais si il y a des cas particuliers, ils devraient être au moins traduits dans la langue des pays les plus affectés.

Donc, il devrait y avoir deux langues plus universelles, comme l'anglais ou le français, mais en même temps l'arabe, par exemple, en parlant du criquet pèlerin. Si il y a un autre cas qui affecte une autre région de la Chine, il faudrait que les deux documents qui sortent soient en anglais et en chinois.

Il faut une certaine flexibilité, mais il faut quand même tenir compte des intérêts prioritaires qui sont en question. Je crois qu'une délégation a parlé des moyens techniques. Mais des moyens techniques peuvent aussi porter à des économies, pas nécessairement à une augmentation des dépenses. C'est une question d'organisation et surtout, je crois, que c'est une question de réforme de mentalités et une prise de conscience des enrichissements culturels que la connaissance de plusieurs langues peut provoquer parmi les pays membres. Je voudrais conclure en vous remerciant en chinois: cheche.

Fakhr Eddine ES-SAAIDI (Maroc) (Langue originale arabe)

Je voudrais juste indiquer que je suis d'accord avec ce que les orateurs précédents ont dit. Au nom de la délégation marocaine, je voudrais attirer l'attention sur le fait que les pays insistent tous sur un traitement équitable des langues de travail de cette Organisation, et nous sommes entièrement d'accord sur ce qu'a dit le Royaume de l'Arabie Saoudite, l'Egypte, le Qatar, ainsi que d'autres pays ayant participé à la discussion. Notre impression est que ce souhait insistant reflète des aspects matériels, cependant un traitement équitable peut également mettre en évidence les opinions des personnes lorsqu'elles les expriment dans leur propre langue. Nous espérons que le Conseil prendra des décisions qui assureront une utilisation identique des langues.

Lyall W. SMALL (Barbados)

My delegation would wish to support the positions taken by Germany, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, China, France, Spain, Senegal and the other delegations that spoke of the apparent disproportionality in the qualitative and quantitative use of languages in various aspects of the FAO system.

We consider that every effort should be made by the Secretariat to expand the multicultural and multilingual nature of the Organization. We think that some consideration should be given to such assistance and should not exclude the provision of translation services for regional meetings held at Council, Programme Committee and Conference; where the Regions are represented by countries speaking a variety of languages. For example, the GRULAC Region where Spanish, English, French and Dutch are the official languages of Member Nations and where English, Dutch or French speakers, if they are not fluent in Spanish, could be at a distinct disadvantage at those meetings.

In conclusion, I would like to once again state that my delegation is in support of the expansion of the multilingual and multicultural nature of the Organization.

Paimir SUHARNO (Indonesia)

I think there is nothing left to be raised here but our delegation would like to fully support the points raised by several distinguished delegates who took the floor before us, in that there should be equal treatment on the official languages in various aspects of FAO's activities.

We are of the view that the cost figures should not encourage FAO to discriminate in terms of language use.

Rajesh AGGARWAL (India)

My delegation would also like to join the other delegations in expressing the sentiments expressed for the expansion of multilingual policy of the Organization.

As you know, we are a country of almost a billion people but we are not demanding, as you had said earlier, that our own language is also not part of the UN System. Still, we support any effort made by the delegations in promoting multilingual policy.

The budget constraint should not come in the way of promotion of such a policy.

Pedro PINTO da SILVA (Observer for Portugal)

I wish to thank you for giving Portugal the possibility of participating in this crucial debate in its status as an Observer.

Portugal fully supports the statement made by the distinguished Representative of Germany on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. Portugal equally supports the statement made by the distinguished Representative of Libya on behalf of the Middle Eastern States.

Portugal is a country whose culture evolved in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries within a truly global context. This was a time when Portuguese discoverers provided the first global view of the world with all its wonderful, magical cultural diversity expressed in a wonderfully rich array of languages, meeting and dialoguing with the others in almost every corner of the earth.

As you so justly noted, multilingualism was endorsed by the last Council in what is arguably its strongest statement, paragraph 71: "The Council agreed on the great importance of the linguistic diversity in the official languages of the Organization in terms of translation of publications and documentation, interpretation for meetings and for other activities, and stressed the equality of all languages while giving this question utmost priority for facilitating communication and understanding of the issues at hand".

In closing, let me state that behind multilingualism is the preservation, not just of a statically-considered cultural diversity but dynamically of cultural evolution itself, cultural evolution of the human species. Sad indeed would be the day where only one language would prevail, to be soon followed by only one culture, for a world with only one culture would be a world with no culture at all. FAO exists for us humans and it would be a bitter and perverse paradox that an Organization of our cherished United Nations, one that so strongly fights for the preservation of genetic resources and their diversity would, by not fully endorsing multilingualism, objectively position itself against the preservation of cultural diversity and cultural evolution of the human species.

Ahmed Ali Hummed AL-HAWRI (Observer for Yemen) (Original language Arabic)

In the name of God, the Immaculate and Compassionate.

Yemen is, perhaps, one of those countries which should support one language and not the others, and yet we support all the languages of the Organization, including Portuguese and all those languages that are not official languages of the Organization.

I have a number of comments that I would like to make.

We should support all those languages we have agreed to use, in order to avoid having a lengthy debate. Nevertheless, there is something that struck me in what Spain said and that was with respect to the quality domain and need to take competence of the work done into account. Yes, that is true, but I think we need to agree in advance if we want to agree on something in advance. It is better to be agreed on the basis of quality and competence rather than material aspects like money because, after all, we all pay our contributions to the Organization, whether we come from Arabic-speaking, Spanish-speaking, English-speaking countries or any other area of the world.

We need to insist on quality and competence. There are some very extremely important areas and extremely important points on which we need to reach agreement. If, for example, we agree with groups who do a certain task and ensure that they work competently in a specific language, then we need to find a solution to the problem that we might be facing. For example, if a group insists on using just the one language, then we insist that the documents be translated into the other four working languages as well.

Likewise, we should give assistance to all countries by ensuring translation services for them in no matter what area, for example, if a country receives a document in Chinese, then there has to be a translator at hand who is able to translate that document into another language. This is most important for some subjects. There are perhaps other matters which are of secondary importance, for which we could provide, say, just summaries in all the working languages. This is the point I wanted to make and it is important whether we are talking about Arabic, Spanish or Chinese. I think it is an extremely important point and I think it could help us resolve a number of problems without engaging in a debate, perhaps even a confrontation, and without have to devote more than an hour to the discussion of the item.

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

In the name of God, the Immaculate and Compassionate.

Sudan represents the Group of the Near and Middle East in the Finance Committee and we, in the Finance Committee, defended the use of Arabic tooth and nail. We plan to do so again in September so that we can reach a peak of transparency and logic in the use of the working languages of the Organization. Then we can be sure that all the working languages are given equal treatment in all the Committees and Commissions of the Organization.

Mme Hariba YAHIA-CHERIF (Observateur de l'Algérie) (Langue originale arabe)

Je vais parler très brièvement. La délégation de mon pays voudrait appuyer ce qu'a dit la délégation d'Égypte, également toutes les autres délégations pour ce qui est de l'utilisation des langues de travail, les langues officielles de cette Organisation, et la nécessité de trouver les fonds nécessaires pour cette utilisation à égalité.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

I think it is clear that this issue is extremely important and I think, without exception, countries have said that we must adhere to the policy that we have on languages and work to implement that policy to the fore.

I think that, as my colleague from Sudan mentioned earlier, during the Programme Committee we heard many of these arguments and it is, in fact, the Report of the Programme Committee that we are now discussing. I believe that the Report of the Programme Committee accurately reflects

these particular concerns, and so I hope that the conclusion of this Council is, in fact, a very full endorsement of the conclusions of the Programme Committee.

We also heard mention made of the requirement to improve language capability in the *Codex Alimentarius Commission* and I note that yesterday, in our debate on agenda Item 4, when we discussed the *Report of the Committee on World Food Security*, we approved a recommendation that this Council draw the language policy to the attention of *Codex*. I note that we have already taken action on that particular issue.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL

This has been a very stimulating and enlightening session, and I think all of us who have been listening very attentively have been sensitized to the importance that you attach to this subject. I do want you to know that we, in FAO, know very well that we need to do better. It is obvious, and I would like to share with you the Director-General's commitment that the Organization does show significant and rapid improvement from this situation.

We clearly have particular problems with Chinese and Arabic, but we also have significant and major shortcomings in Spanish and French languages in the Organization. We have heard from a number of delegations who have pointed to the need to have more of our publications available in all the languages where the material is relevant. We have certainly heard from you to have more interpretation in our major meetings, and I think we have got a clear signal from you that you want us to make some very rapid improvement on putting information on the Internet in more languages.

I think many of you spoke to the importance of using the *Codex Alimentarius Commission* into having the various languages available in reports and in the discussions of *Codex*.

Some delegations also talked about the importance of recruiting staff who have multiple language capabilities. I would like to assure you that we do make a great effort to do that right now. Language fluency in more than one language is a normal selection criteria. I must confess, though, that in certain parts of the world we have had difficulty in attracting individuals who have language capabilities in more than one language of the Organization. We have, on occasion, had a tendency to relax that requirement, but to supplement it by offering training once they are hired. We do have an active training programme in the Organization to try to increase the language capabilities of our staff members now.

As I said, we know we have a great deal of progress to make. I think that I heard a number of delegations recognize that it is not going to be possible, because of the budget situation, to turn the entire situation around over night. I thought I heard a number of delegations mention that they viewed this as being a multi-year process.

We will incorporate, into whatever budget level you approve, significant advancement of the implementation of the language policy. I do not know if Mr Wade wants to talk any more about the budget but we know we have budget constraints. I would simply like to reassure you that whatever budget level you approve, we will do our best to make dramatic improvement on the language situation in the Organization.

(continue en français)

Finalement, je voudrais assurer M. l'Ambassadeur de France, qui est parti maintenant, que j'ai pris bonne note de son désir que les hauts fonctionnaires de l'Organisation puissent communiquer dans plusieurs langues de l'Organisation, mais ce n'est pas facile.

LE SECRÉTAIRE GÉNÉRAL

Je tenais simplement à vous dire, en tant que responsable de la production des documents et publications et du Département qui a subi la majeure partie des récentes coupures budgétaires, que nous avons pris note de l'unanimité qui s'est révélée à travers ce débat très riche. Donc, il n'y a pas beaucoup de questions auxquelles il faut répondre, mais je veux simplement souligner un point soulevé par le délégué du Sénégal, à savoir que si nous sommes arrivés à ce point, où

manifestement nous n'avons pas pu assurer l'égalité de traitement des langues, c'est à la suite de décisions qui ont été prises par vous. Mais comme l'a dit M. Harcharik, nous avons pu constater votre désir que le budget soit orienté vers une position où on peut assurer pendant un temps, si j'ai bien compris une période pluri-annuelle, la diversité linguistique et un traitement plus équitable de toutes les langues de l'Organisation.

Toutefois, il y a un point de clarification qui reste à faire. Si vous me le permettez, je voudrais répondre à la question qui avait été posée sur l'impact des coupures budgétaires sur le programme de formation linguistique. Et bien, je tiens à souligner que ce programme se porte relativement bien; il y a une très nette augmentation de la demande de la part du personnel, et je suppose que le personnel a été très sensible au débat à l'intérieur de l'Organisation ces derniers temps, parce que le Directeur général a voulu souligner, dans toutes les discussions avec le personnel et les dirigeants de l'Organisation, l'importance qu'il attache à l'aspect linguistique.

Toutefois, les ressources sont relativement limitées, et le programme est en partie financé par la contribution des membres du personnel. Je tenais donc à souligner que le personnel attache une certaine importance à cela, puisqu'il contribue au programme de formation linguistique.

CHAIRMAN

Distinguished delegates, there is no doubt that there is a unanimous and very forceful request that we should implement the language policy as it is stated in the Basic Texts. It is with this that we endorse the Report of the Programme Committee.

We have also been heartened to listen to the remarks by the Deputy Director-General.

This concludes our agenda for this morning.

The meeting rose at 12.35 hours

La séance est levée à 12.35 h

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.35 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixteenth Session Cent seizième session 116º período de sesiones
Rome, 14 – 19 June 1999 Rome, 14 – 19 juin 1999 Roma, 14 – 19 de junio de 1999
SIXTH PLENARY MEETING SIXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEXTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
16 June 1999

**The Sixth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.50 hours
Mr Adnan Bashir Khan,
Vice-Chairman of the Council, presiding**

**La sixième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 50
sous la présidence de M. Adnan Bashir Khan,
Vice-président du Conseil**

**Se abre la sexta sesión plenaria a las 14.50 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Adnan Bashir Khan,
Vicepresidente 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)

19. Reports of the 91st (Rome, 11 January 1999) and 92nd (Rome, 3-7 May 1999) Sessions of the Finance Committee (CL 116/15; CL 116/16; CL 116/16-Sup.1; CL 116/INF/10; CL 116/INF/11; CL 116/INF/12; CL 116/INF/13)

19. Rapports des quatre-vingt-onzième et quatre-vingt-douzième sessions du Comité financier (Rome, 11 janvier 1999 et 3-7 mai 1999 respectivement) (CL 116/15; CL 116/16; CL 116/16-Sup.1; CL 116/INF/10; CL 116/INF/11; CL 116/INF/12; CL 116/INF/13)

19. Informe del 91º (Roma, 11 de enero de 1999) y del 92º (Roma, 3-7 de mayo de 1999) períodos de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas (CL 116/15; CL 116/16; CL 116/16-Sup.1; CL 116/INF/10; CL 116/INF/11; CL 116/INF/12; CL 116/INF/13)

19.1 Financial Position of the Organization (CL 116/LIM/1)

19.1 Situation financière de l'Organisation (CL 116/LIM/1)

19.1 Situación financiera de la Organización (CL 116/LIM/1)

19.2 Budgetary Performance 1998 (CL 116/16 paras. 17-22)

19.2 Exécution du budget 1998 (CL 116/16 par. 17-22)

19.2 Ejecución del presupuesto de 1998 (CL 116/16 párrs. 17-22)

19.3 Scale of Contributions 2000-2001 (CL 116/16 paras. 29-33; CL 116/16-Sup.1)

19.3 Barème des contributions 2000-2001 (CL 116/16 par. 29-33; CL 116/16-Sup.1)

19.3 Escala de cuotas para 2000-2001 (CL 116/16 párrs. 29-33; CL 116/16-Sup.1)

19.4 Other Matters Arising Out of the Reports

19.4 Autres questions découlant des rapports

19.4 Otras cuestiones planteadas en los informes

CHAIRMAN

We have one item, Item 19 of the Agenda, which is an unfinished item from the morning session, which we should take up now. Then we have several other items, which were to be taken up in the afternoon session, which we need to complete before the end of the afternoon session. So I would seek your indulgence in moving forward as quickly as possible.

We now move on to Item 19, Reports of the 91st and 92nd Sessions of the Finance Committee, which has several sub-items, and I would like to thank the Chairman of the Committee, Dr Thomas, for being with us on the podium.

The financial position of the Organization is presented to the Council for information in document CL 116/LIM/1. The Council will note that as at 4 June 1999, the Organization had received over US\$ 165 million in respect of 1999 assessments. This represents nearly 52 percent of the total and compares favourably with receipts at the same time over the last four years. Receipts of arrears of contributions have amounted to US\$ 9.6 million, which is substantially in line with the recent past. It is disappointing to note, however, that as of 4 June, over 60 percent of the membership of the Organization, 106 Member Nations had made no payments towards their 1999 assessments. In addition, 91 Member Nations still had arrears outstanding from 1998 and previous years.

No decision is called for on this item, at this time. It is customary, however, for the Council to emphasize the importance for all Member Nations to honour their financial obligations towards the Organization.

The Council may wish to include a statement to this effect in its Report.

Sub-item 19.2 relates to Budgetary Performance 1998. The relative document is appended to the Finance Committee Report.

For sub-item 19.3, Scale of Contributions 2000-2001, dealt with in paragraphs 29 to 33 of CL 116/16 and the supplement, document CL 116/16-Sup.1, there is a Draft Conference Resolution which the Council is required to forward to Conference.

I should now like to ask Dr Thomas, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, to introduce the Reports.

Julian A. THOMAS (Chairman, Finance Committee)

Thank you for this opportunity to present the Reports of the 91st and 92nd Sessions of Finance Committee, which took place in January and May of this year.

At its January Session, the Committee unanimously re-elected Ambassador Luigi M. Fontana-Giusti, the Representative from Italy, as its Vice-Chairman for 1999, who I wish to thank here for his support during these meetings. This also applies equally to other Members of the Committee, who worked extremely hard to achieve the results that we have in front of us.

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 questions of oversight, including the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and the Director-General's comments thereon, and the Budgetary Performance and Strategic and Financial Plan of the World Food Programme.

In this presentation, I will highlight those points which are of general interest, or which require action by Council and confine myself to matters affecting FAO. I will also exclude agenda items that were dealt with earlier this week on the *Strategic Framework* and the *Summary Programme of Work*, which were examined earlier, and of course also will exclude the *Language Policy* issue, which was touched on and dealt with by the Finance Committee, but was exhaustively dealt with this morning.

May I add that it is a particular pleasure for myself and other members of our delegation to be with you here today as it is a public holiday in South Africa and it is also the occasion when our new President is being inaugurated, so we are very pleased to be with you on this auspicious occasion for us.

This allows me to turn to Item 19.1. I will be dealing with just four items: the three you see on your agenda, and then a fourth which I will raise under *Other Matters Arising Out of the Report*.

The first one is the *Financial Position of the Organization*. The Committee at its 92nd Session considered the financial position of the Organization as at 3 May 1999, and expressed satisfaction with the encouraging rate of receipt of contributions compared to the same date last year. As you will have heard a moment ago, the Chair updated you on the situation as reflected in the document CL 116/LIM/1 that was given to you during the course of this meeting.

As expressed by our Chairman of this Council, the Committee was, however, concerned over the number of nations with arrears and in particular, the number that risk losing their right to vote at the Conference later this year. Accordingly, it renewed its appeal to all Members with contributions outstanding to pay their assessment contributions and arrears in full as soon as possible.

Now turning to Item 19.2, *Budgetary Performance for 1998*, the Committee reviewed the Director-General's 32nd Annual Report of Budgetary Performance to Member Nations. The Report provided data on the overall Regular Programme Budgetary out-turn for 1998, which is attached as Annex 1 to document CL 116/16. The Committee noted that other income had fallen short of the budgeted amount by US\$ 7.1 million in 1998, and that this required corresponding reductions

in the Programme of Work to remain within the appropriation of US\$ 650 million for the biennium.

It also noted that staff cost variance was currently forecast to total US\$ 7 million for the biennium, and that use of the Special Reserve Account, for the amount of US\$ 5 million, was foreseen to cover the unbudgeted extra costs arising from the judgement of the ILO Administrative Tribunal, which was adverse to FAO with respect to General Service salaries in Rome.

The Committee regretted the projected need to transfer resources from the technical and economic programmes. It recognized, however, that this was largely as a result of the factors mentioned and of unbudgeted costs in essential areas of non-technical programmes, such as the development costs of ORACLE.

With regard to the third item, Item 19.3, *Scale of Contributions 2000-2001*, the Committee noted that according to past practice the proposed FAO Scale of Contributions for the years 2000 and 2001 had been derived directly from the United Nations Scale of Assessments in force for the calendar year 2000, as established by General Assembly Resolution 52/215, adopted on 22 December 1997. The Committee recommended to the Council that an enabling resolution be submitted to the Conference, and this is found in paragraph 32 of document CL 116/16.

The Committee noted that the largest contributor intended to negotiate the reduction of the maximum rate of contribution with the UN Committee on Contributions in New York, from the current 25 percent to 22 percent. The Committee was informed that in this instance, the largest contributor would request that the Conference Resolution be amended to allow for the modification of the Scale for the year 2001, subsequent to the adoption of a new Scale by the United Nations for the period 2001 to 2003.

Moving now to *Other Matters Arising Out of the Report*. I said that I would just deal with one which I thought was the most important and this deals with oversight matters.

The Committee emphasized the importance of oversight of the financial and management operations of the Organization, and decided to review the following matters in relationship to each other. We first had a progress report on implementation of the External Auditor's recommendations and the Committee took note of the status of implementation of the various recommendations and of the Organization's intention to implement all the reported recommendations. The External Auditor expressed satisfaction with his relationship with the office of the Inspector General and the Finance Division. The Committee invited the External Auditor to provide, in future, a brief comment on the progress made by the Organization in implementing each of these recommendations.

We also considered a document which provided the Annual Activity Report of the Office of Inspector General for 1998. The Committee noted it was the third year that the Director-General had made this internal report available to members of the Finance Committee. The Committee also expressed its appreciation to the Director-General for the new initiatives that he announced at the Joint Meeting with the Programme Committee, in particular, the development of a Charter for the Office of Inspector General.

The Committee was provided with a UN Joint Inspection Unit Report entitled *More Coherence for Enhanced Oversight in the United Nations System* and together with this Report, we had comments from the Director-General and from the ACC. The Committee emphasized the importance and relevance of Joint Inspection Unit documents, noting in particular the usefulness of this report in its contribution to reflection on the oversight function. The Committee recognized the validity of the JIU's emphasis on providing information to Member Nations on organization compliance with oversight recommendations.

And the last document we had was the UN Joint Inspection Unit Report dealing with a work programme of the JIU for 1999. We took note of the studies included in the work programme and the Committee indicated that several of the proposed reports were of particular interest. So just to

emphasize the importance attached by the Committee to the whole issue of oversight, which it will continue to pay attention to.

In conclusion, these sessions of the Finance Committee were productive and in particular, I believe that it was possible to address a number of important financial and budgetary issues facing the Organization. On behalf of the members of the Committee, I would like to extend our appreciation to the Secretariat for its assistance in our deliberations and our gratitude to the Member Nations of FAO for providing this opportunity to further the important work of the Organization.

I would be pleased to provide any further explanations you may wish regarding our reports.

CHAIRMAN

You have heard a very succinct introduction given by the Chairman of the Finance Committee. We will have Mr Mehboob give us some additional information which the Secretariat wants to bring to the notice of the membership.

K. MEHBOOB (Assistant Director-General, Administration and Finance Department)

Just to provide some further information since the preparation of document CL 116/LIM/1, two countries have made payment: one is Algeria, which has paid US\$209 192, and the other one is Mexico which has paid US\$605 913.

Kazuo TANAKA (Japan)

The Japanese delegation would like to express its appreciation to the Finance Committee for its serious deliberations on various financial issues, and to the Secretariat for the preparation of the report, document CL 116/16, which we received regrettably only half a day before our departure from Tokyo. However, today we would like to make a brief comment on the report, in particular, on the issue of *Scale of Contributions 2000-2001*.

It seems acceptable for our delegation to apply UN Scale of Assessments, already in force, to the FAO Scale of Contributions for the year 2000, but not for the year 2001 for the following reasons.

Firstly, since the adoption of the UN Scale of Assessments in December 1997, many countries have experienced serious economic setbacks, and this would certainly affect the calculation of the UN Scale of Assessments which will be discussed next autumn.

Secondly, according to paragraph 33 of the document CL 116/16, and as you have mentioned earlier, the largest contributor intends to negotiate the reduction of the ceiling rate – that is the maximum rate of contribution – with the UN Committee of Contributions in New York. This would again affect to a great extent each Member Nation's Scale of Contributions of the UN in general, and FAO in particular. In addition, we feel that we should not make a prejudgement, at this moment, on the outcome of the negotiations.

Since the Council is not fully informed of serious implications which the above negotiation might bring about, our delegation would like to request the FAO Secretariat to prepare an information document based on the proposed ceiling rate for the largest contributor and its implications for other contributors. Based on this information, we propose that the next Council should discuss the issue of Scale of Contributions, and present the conclusion to the Conference for its decision.

Jonathan PRATT (United States of America)

First, my delegation would like to say we greatly appreciated the statement made by the Director-General to the Finance Committee with regard to the creation of a Charter for the Office of Inspector General. We look forward to hearing more about the Secretariat's plans and progress in this important initiative.

Second, the United States wishes to take this opportunity to provide information to other FAO Members on an issue involving the UN Scale of Assessments on which the FAO Scale is based.

As some Council Members may be aware, the United States made these points as well during the FAO Finance Committee in May. I would like to inform the Council that the United States hopes to begin discussions at the United Nations in New York on the Scale of Assessments. It is our hope that these discussions in New York can begin very soon.

I wish to be as honest and open as possible, so I will tell you as well that our goal in these discussions in New York will be to reduce the maximum or ceiling rate of assessments from 25 percent to 22 percent. If these discussions are successful, that is from our point of view, in reducing the ceiling rate to 22 percent, then the FAO Scale would require some adjustment as well.

The timing of these discussions in New York is a material factor in the FAO Scale. We hope to conclude the New York negotiations by December 2000, or at the end of the first year of the coming biennium.

If these discussions in New York lead to a mutually acceptable change in scale by December 2000, the US would propose to adjust assessment rates for the second half of the biennium to reflect the new rate.

Some Council Members will recall that such a proposal was adopted by the FAO Conference in November 1997. The United States hopes to present a revised Resolution to Conference in November of this year to reflect our proposal, which would mirror the FAO Resolution on the scale that was adopted in 1997.

This is part of a concerted effort by President Clinton and Secretary Albright to resolve our financial relationship with the United Nations System, including FAO, as soon as possible.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy)

I will be very short because I would recall what I said on the afternoon of our first day of discussions. I think we can discuss further with Mr Wade on this new kind of "editorial" of the different items of the budget, but mainly because I want to draw attention to paragraphs 53 and 54, regarding the Headquarters Accommodation, and to repeat that the question is still open between the Host Country and the Organization itself.

Julian A. THOMAS (Chairman, Finance Committee)

Nothing other than having taken note of Japan's request and the statement made by the United States, I certainly do not have any observations, but I suspect that the Secretariat may want to respond, particularly to the proposal by Japan.

LEGAL COUNSEL

Of course, this happened at the last Session of the Conference. There was indeed a provision in the Resolution adopted by the last Session of the Conference indicating that if a new Scale of Assessments was adopted by the UN General Assembly before 31 December 1998, a new Scale of Contributions should be developed for FAO, based on the new UN Scale of Assessments for the last year of the biennium. In fact, this was done.

I understand that the question from Japan, however, was whether it would be possible for the Secretariat to prepare a paper giving some assessment of the possible implications of a change in the Scale of Assessments. I do not know whether this is really a question for me to answer. It is probably more of a question for the financial people in FAO to answer; whether it is possible to prepare such an assessment based on the various scenarios. I presume it would be possible, but I think this is more a question for Mr Mehboob or Mr Ruddy to answer.

M.E. RUDDY (Consultant/Director ad interim, Finance Division)

It should not be a problem to prepare the information paper you request. We would have to necessarily take the difference between the United States share of the scale at 22 percent, and redistribute the difference proportionally across all of the donors, since we do not have any other

changes that we know of to take into account. I would suggest that we submit this first through the Finance Committee for its September meeting, if that is agreeable.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Las delegaciones de Japón y de Estados Unidos han anunciado - así lo he entendido - dos propuestas que tendrán un gran efecto, de ser el caso de aprobarse en las cuotas que actualmente cubrimos todos los Países Miembros en la Organización. Yo quería hacer una pregunta en relación con estos dos planteamientos.

Primero, como recordaba el señor Moore, en la Conferencia de 1997, con la Resolución que aprobó, la Conferencia se estableció un *link* para que automáticamente la cuota de 1998 se ajustara a lo que decidieran Naciones Unidas, porque hasta ese momento, cuando concluyó la Conferencia, el V Comité no había llegado a un acuerdo. La pregunta es en el sentido de cuánto y qué período cubre este acuerdo del V Comité de Naciones Unidas, ¿cubre hasta el 2001 como lo señaló Japón, o solamente cubre el trienio 1998-2000?

Kyeong-sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

Thank you, Mr Chairman, and congratulations on your chairing. I hope you can proceed with this Committee very successfully.

First of all I would like to confirm paragraph 33, as we can see from the last part of the paragraph saying that "...it would request that the Conference Resolution be amended to allow for the modification of the Scale of the years 2000-2001 subsequent to the adoption of a new Scale by the United Nations for the period 2001-2003." This means the Finance Committee requests that, but if this Council cannot accept that Conference Resolutions be amended to allow for modification, etc., then there is no possibility for Conference to decide on the proposal from the largest contributor or not. Does "would request" mean this Council should approve, or we will discuss and approve what was said. I need clarification whether we will decide on this proposal or not.

LEGAL COUNSEL

I understand that the question - correct me if I am wrong - is what timescale does the present UN Scale cover, and what timescale does the new UN Scale cover when it comes into force.

The present UN Scale covers the years 1998-99 and the year 2000, and the new Scale, which is a three-year Scale, would cover the years 2001, 2002 and 2003. As you note, there is a difference between the time-period of the Scale of Assessments in the United Nations - it covers a three-year period - and the time-scale of the Scale of the Contributions in FAO, which covers a biennium only. It is, thus, always slightly out of sync with the United Nations.

K. MEHBOOB (Assistant Director-General, Administration and Finance Department)

I believe the concern of the Korean delegation regarded who would request that the Conference Resolution be amended. I believe the confusion is being caused by the word "it". I think "it" here refers to the largest contributor. The largest contributor would make the request, and then that request would follow the normal course of review by the Finance Committee and the Council, before it reaches the Conference.

CHAIRMAN

I believe Mexico has a further query, but I would seek Mexico's indulgence to let the Korean question get settled.

Kyeong-sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

In this sentence "it" means the largest contributor. Then what is the role of the Council in this sentence?

K. MEHBOOB (Assistant Director-General, Administration and Finance Department)

It is the Council which submits the Draft Resolution to the Conference. So that the Draft Resolution has to go through the Finance Committee and the Council prior to its submission to the Conference. The role of the Council is to review the Draft Resolution and put it forward to the Conference, so it would be a decision for the Council to make then.

CHAIRMAN

Could I request Korea to take up the issue bilaterally and discuss it with the Secretariat, and get to a resolution on that?

Kyeong-sang-RHO (Korea, Republic of)

We have to decide, that is, the Council has to decide whether we will accept this paragraph or not.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Disculpe la insistencia. Creo que estamos en un tema muy importante como lo señalé anteriormente, que va a tener implicaciones para todos los Estados Miembros. Quiero referirme a lo señalado por la delegación de Estados Unidos. Ellos comentaron que en la próxima Asamblea General solicitarán que se reduzca del 25 al 22 por ciento la contribución que ellos hacen a todo el Sistema de Naciones Unidas. Pero sin embargo, se refiere a una Resolución que se presentaría en la próxima Conferencia. Dado que la Escala de Cuotas actual cubre hasta el 2000, me queda un poco confuso cuál sería el objeto de esta Resolución que presentaría, dado que esta Conferencia cubrirá 1999 y 2000.

LEGAL COUNSEL

I am not sure whether I should attempt to try to clarify the matter or whether the United States would like to. As I understand it, the proposal of the United States was that they would wish to have the same kind of Resolution as was adopted at the last Session of the Conference, which indicated that if there was a change in the UN Scale of Assessments adopted by the United Nations General Assembly before 31 December 1998 -- then that Scale, the new Scale, should be used in order to revise the Scale of Contributions in force for FAO for the second year of the biennium. I presume they are saying they would wish the same thing for this Conference. In other words that they wish the Conference to adopt a Resolution, saying we, the Conference, adopt the Scale of Contributions for the year 2000 and 2001. However, if there is a change in the Scale of Assessments adopted by the United Nations General Assembly before 31 December 2000, that this should be the basis for revising the Scale of Contributions of FAO for the last year of the biennium to bring it in line with the new Scale of Assessments adopted by the United Nations General Assembly covering that period.

I think that is the main line of what the United States was suggesting.

Jonathan PRATT (United States of America)

That is a perfectly accurate interpretation of our goal, and let me reiterate that we would like this to take effect as soon as possible so that it would take effect during the second half of the biennium rather than the 2002-2003 biennium, in the interests of resolving our financial interests with the United Nations System as soon as possible, including the FAO, and not delay that another year.

CHAIRMAN

I think the combined clarification from United States, as well as the Legal Counsel, probably has clarified the issue for Mexico.

P.W. MISIKA (Namibia)

Namibia welcomes the report prepared by the Finance Committee under the chairmanship of Dr Julian Thomas. We have a few comments on the Report.

Firstly, we would like to congratulate the Committee for a very-well-prepared report. Starting with the *Annual Report of Budgetary Performance and Programme and Budget Transfers*, paragraph 21 refers to transfers that were effected because of underbudgeting. While our delegation understands the reasons advanced for such transfers, we would like to caution the FAO Secretariat to try and minimize issues of underbudgeting wherever it is possible to do so, because this could be a cause for concern in the sense that it could tempt people to utilize the available discretion of expenditure to effect side transfers without the approval of either Council or Conference.

Secondly, on the statement of income and expenditure and changes in the reserve and fund balances, starting with the income side, Namibia appreciates the increase in voluntary contributions, as well as the increases reflected under "Miscellaneous". However, we are disappointed by the dramatic decline in funds received from intergovernmental arrangements and we would, if that is not asking too much, seek clarification on the reasons for that. On the expenditure side of this statement, we welcome the increases in excess of income of expenditure, but we note that the decrease in net excess of income of expenditure does not really present an encouraging situation. Moreover, the negative balance reflected in this statement is a real cause for concern.

With regard to paragraphs 31 and 32, and having noticed that the proposed Resolution for submission to Conference is a result of a United Nations Resolution, the Namibian delegation would like to support that this Resolution be submitted as such.

We also concur with the Committee's invitation to the External Auditor provide, in future, brief comments on progress made by the Organization in implementing each recommendation, as reflected in paragraph 39, and would request that the FAO Secretariat proceeds urgently in implementing these recommendations.

We also align ourselves with the priority accorded to the key initiatives of organizational change, resource and short-term financing, the government food aid and the financial and management improvement programmes, which were supported by the Committee as reflected in page 56 of this document. We feel this is of crucial importance, and that the key areas are in order.

Lastly, we appreciate and endorse the reported expenditure level reflected in the Annex 1, attached to this Report, clause 7, bullet number 3, where it is indicated that the expenditure level for the first year of the 1998-99 biennium is 97.7 percent. It is our belief that this expenditure level will ensure that, in the second year of the biennium, there will be no rushed end-of-the-biennium expenditure. In other words, expenditure would be accordingly spread throughout the biennium, and therefore we regard this as an improvement to what has been happening during the past years, where expenditure in the first year of the biennium used to be around 50 percent of the total biennium appropriation. This is for us a welcome improvement.

Jonathan PRATT (United States of America)

First, I would like to say that the United States is relieved that the Legal Counsel has returned. We also apologize for requesting the floor on multiple occasions during this discussion.

We would like to clarify something with the Legal Counsel. We do not feel that the issue of whether Conference could modify a Resolution that has been recommended by Council was fully resolved. So our question would be, to put it in simple terms: Can Conference modify a Resolution -- in this case, the draft decision or Resolution on the Scale of Assessments -- that has been put forward by Council?

LEGAL COUNSEL

To be quite brief and simple, the answer is yes. The Conference is sovereign, it has the power to modify a recommendation made by the Council and, in fact, at the last Session of the Conference, that is exactly what happened. A Draft Resolution was put forward by the Council, and that Resolution was modified before it was adopted by the Conference. The Conference is sovereign, and it has the power to modify recommendations put to it by the Council.

M.E. RUDDY (Consultant/Director, ad Interim, Finance Division)

I think that there was a question about the decline in voluntary contributions in 1998, as reported in this statement. This is primarily due to a drop in the volume of UNDP disbursements, or contracting, that we were doing in 1998 compared to two years before, the comparable period in 1996.

The question on the expenditure side, or the reserve side, I guess it was, as you expressed dissatisfaction to see that the balance of the general fund is in the negative by US\$22.2 million. This really mostly reflects the uneven flow of income into the Organization between the two years of the biennium, so that the net effect showing up in the fund reserve balance is that we have drawn down our funds somewhat in the first year of the biennium, but we expect this to be offset in the second year with an increased flow of assessments from the Member Nations.

III. ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP (continued)

III. ACTIVITÉS DE LA FAO ET DU PAM (suite)

III. ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y DEL PMA (continuación)

5. Report of the 62nd Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems

(Rome, 12-15 January 1999) (CL 116/6)

5. Rapport de la soixante-deuxième session du Comité des produits

(Rome, 12-15 janvier 1999) (CL 116/6)

5. Informe del 62º período de sesiones del Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos

(Roma, 12-15 de enero de 1999) (CL 116/6)

CHAIRMAN

We can move on to Item No. 5, *Report of the Sixty-second Session on the Committee of Commodity Problems*, which was held in Rome in January this year. The relative document is CL 116/6.

In the absence of the Chairman of the Committee on Commodity Problems, I should like to invite Dr de Haen, Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Department, to introduce this item.

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

The Committee on Commodity Problems held its Sixty-second Session in Rome in January 1999, and page 2 of the Report of the Committee draws the attention of the Council to a number of issues. Just to facilitate the discussion, I thought I should quickly highlight a few of these issues which the Council may wish to endorse.

First, the Committee emphasized the need for continued close monitoring of the world commodity situation. Indeed, several Members of the Committee expressed the need for future reports to give greater attention to the special trade problems of the Least- Developed and Net-Food Importing Developing Countries with regard to food security.

Second, with regard to Conference Resolution 2/79, which is on Commodity Trade, Protectionism and Agricultural Adjustment, the Committee noted the continued monitoring of the levels of support and protection to agriculture, but asked that the Secretariat adjust its reporting activities in the light of the Uruguay Round Agreements and other developments since the Resolution was passed twenty years ago. So it is natural that the provisions in that Resolution no longer fit the new situation.

Third, the Committee endorsed the reports and recommendations of the seven Intergovernmental Commodity Groups and of the Consultative Subcommittee on Surplus Disposal, with regard to the reforms and the structure and activities of the IGGs. While taking note of the positive innovations achieved so far, the Committee supported the need to further consolidate the reforms.

Fourth, with regard to the Medium-term Commodity Projections, the Committee noted the importance of this work and requested that the projection studies should be updated more

frequently, with the inclusion of more commodities, alternative scenarios and food security implications. So the workload is growing.

Finally, the Committee requested the Secretariat to undertake additional analysis on the impact of the Uruguay Round, particularly on food security. In particular, the Committee recognized the growing need for technical assistance and urged FAO to continue helping countries in the implementation of the Uruguay Round provisions and in building the capacity of developing countries in these areas.

These are the five points that I wanted to summarize, and I would just like to report that, in pursuance of the Committee's request for further analysis of the impact of the Uruguay Round, the Secretariat is currently preparing a more comprehensive analysis, with particular reference to the issue of food security. This analysis will be available before the Seattle Ministerial meeting in November this year. With regard to the need for further technical assistance in Uruguay Round-related matters, the Secretariat is just launching an umbrella programme to provide training for officials of some 150 developing countries, all Member Nations of FAO, with the participation of approximately five per country, in a series of regional training workshops between now and approximately mid-2000.

In addition, as was already said on another occasion in this Council, FAO is preparing a Symposium, to be held in September in Geneva, to assist developing countries in preparing themselves for the next round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, as far as agricultural trade and related food security problems are concerned. So far my brief introduction to the items.

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

We thank the Secretariat for having prepared that excellent document on this important subject. We would like to emphasize a number of points with regard to commodity problems: the difficulties faced by a large number of developing countries in the field of liberalizing agriculture in the current prevalent conditions; providing assistance and training to the developing countries; the importance of providing technical assistance, with a view to preparing the developing countries to enter the forthcoming round of multilateral negotiations on agriculture in trade, in particular, phytosanitary measures and quarantine and studies on the potential and possible adverse effect of the Uruguay Round of negotiations on the state of food security in the developing countries, making every effort to avoid any negative impact.

Suharyo HUSEN (Indonesia)

On behalf of the Indonesian delegation, first of all, I would like to express appreciation and thanks to the Secretariat for providing us with the document CL 116/6 before us.

Secondly, my delegation would also like to express appreciation and congratulate the Committee on Commodity Problems for its 62nd Session Report, under the Chairmanship of Mr J.R. Alegrett from Venezuela, for the Council's consideration and approval.

Since Indonesia was one of the members of the Drafting Committee of the 62nd Session of the CCP, therefore, in general, we welcome and approve the contents of the Report in document CL 116/6 with some observations as follows:

One, regarding the Review of World Commodity Situation and Outlook, including follow-up to the Conference Resolution 2/79, my delegation is quite in line with the Committee's concern for its future reports. It should give greater attention to the special problems, especially food security issues of the countries covered by the *Marrakech Decision on Measures concerning the Possible Negative Effects of the Reform Programme on Least Developed and Net Food-Importing Developing Countries*.

My delegation agrees with the Committee to request the Secretariat to examine the different periods for price comparisons in future reports, as stated in paragraph 8 of document CL 116/6.

Furthermore, my delegation, is in conformity with paragraph 10 of the Report, that many developing countries were facing difficulties with the liberalization of agriculture in the current

market situation, especially in Asia, which is accompanied by economic crisis. FAO is requested to strengthen its technical assistance to developing countries, especially to Least-Developed and Net-Food Importing Countries. In this context, my delegation would also request the Secretariat to facilitate coordination among developing countries for the next round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations in agriculture, such as providing the appropriate related information on the trade situation for agricultural commodities from time to time.

Two, the Indonesian delegation welcomes the new initiative in the arrangements and conduct of some IGG sessions which have led to more intensive and productive technical deliberations including, through the active participation of private sector experts, like IGG on Tea at its Twelfth Session in Bali, Indonesia in 1997. The linkages between food security and trade could also be a matter for future consideration.

Three, regarding the Trade Policy Questions, my delegation welcomes the Secretariat's assessment of the impact of the Uruguay Round on agriculture markets. It is important to note that part of the increase in food import bills of the Least Developed and Net Food-Importing Developing Countries could be attributed, directly or indirectly, to Uruguay Round-related policy changes, as well as to the fact that there was little evidence of much change in world price instability.

Fourth, regarding the Committee's concern on the net cereal import gap of the developing countries which was expected to increase by the year 2005, especially the increase foreseen even at constant prices in the net food-import bill of the Low-Income, Food-Deficit Countries (LIFDCs), the Indonesian delegation agrees with the Committee's emphasis that if this result materialized the LIFDCs would become more vulnerable in terms of their food security. In this context, more studies should be undertaken by the Secretariat to find some alternative recommendations in assisting Member Nations to overcome that unexpected situation.

Finally, regarding the technical assistance related to the Uruguay Round, the Indonesian delegation would like to inform the Council that the Indonesian Government welcomes and appreciates the FAO offer for technical assistance in preparing developing countries for the forthcoming Multilateral Trade Negotiations on agriculture, especially on agricultural policy matters and on developing SPS standards, as well as assisting developing countries in adapting to these standards.

The Indonesian Government also welcomed the new training programme being organized by FAO, and Indonesia will participate actively in that programme by recruiting some related experts to be trained. Besides that, the Indonesian Government will also make a request to FAO for an expert to organize, together with the Indonesian counterpart, a National Seminar on Trade Negotiation for Agricultural Commodities.

Andrew BYRNE (European Community)

On behalf of the European Community and its Member States, I would like to endorse the Report of the *Committee on Commodity Problems* held last January. In view of the important role played by the FAO as a global Centre of Excellence, we are convinced that it can continue to assist Member Nations in preparing for the future Multilateral Trade Negotiations, in particular, developing countries.

The European Community attaches great importance to the principal factors of consumer protection which are based on compliance with environmental, quality and bio-safety standards. We consider that these matters will grow in importance in the years to come, and that the FAO could play an important role in raising awareness and stimulating action in this field.

Masato ITO (Japan)

My delegation welcomes the Report of the CCP, and takes this opportunity to commend the effort made by the Secretariat to address document CCP 99/14 which is a good starter for further discussion of the impact of the Uruguay Round.

My delegation expects that the Secretariat move forward towards this kind of analysis. These works also help formulate a good information base, in particular, for developing countries to participate in the next WTO negotiations. In this connection, it is my pleasure to inform Members of the Council that the Government of Japan will provide extra-budgetary support for FAO's Symposium to be held in September 1999 in Geneva. The purpose of this Symposium is, as introduced by the Secretariat at the beginning of this Session, to support developing countries in preparing for participation of the next WTO negotiations. It is our hope that many officials, in particular from developing countries will participate in this Symposium.

Mohamad Walid TAWILL (Syria) (Original language Arabic)

My delegation wishes to thank the Secretariat for preparing this important document which covers a wide range of issues concerning one of the areas of major concern to developing countries nowadays.

Our delegation would like to stress the need for promulgating regulative and normative texts governing the trade of genetically-modified food commodities, as was mentioned in paragraph 49 in the aforementioned document. This matter is one which arises in many of our countries, and is a matter of concern both to consumers and producers. It also involves research institutes and legislative bodies. We have no clearly-defined opinions on these genetically-modified agricultural products, especially with regard to their impact on the health of humans, and whether these products are truly acceptable to consumers without mentioning the possible impact on the environment and on the genetic heritage of our agricultural products - an effect which could be caused by the production of these genetically-modified agricultural products. Therefore, we believe that FAO should attach greater importance to these matters, and provide assistance to Member Nations by means of appropriate recommendations.

Dato'ANNUAR MA'ARUF (Malaysia)

Let me take this opportunity to congratulate you for being in the Chair for this afternoon's session.

The Malaysian delegation welcomes the *Report of the 62nd Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems* found in document CL 116/6. Specifically, my delegation would like to endorse that more information and analysis on trade protectionism be made available to FAO Members, in particular relating to market access to developing countries, the impact of sanitary and phytosanitary measures, and technical barriers to trade. These reports can be made available in collaboration with other UN Agencies.

My delegation is rather concerned with the new working procedures of the CFC, i.e., the switch from providing grants to loans. In this regard, we recommend that FAO, in collaboration with the CFC, prepare a report on the cost-effectiveness of CFC-funded projects, in particular, in disseminating the results or innovations derived from these projects, so as to benefit other developing countries or regions.

Finally, allow me to take advantage of this occasion to inform Members of the Council, that in relation to the Intergovernmental Group on Bananas and Tropical Fruits (TF-NET), the first session of this Intergovernmental Group in Australia in May this year endorsed the recommendation that Malaysia host the International Tropical Fruit Network. We are indeed honoured by this and would like to thank Members for their support. The TF-NET is located in Malaysia's designated multimedia super corridor which will enable TF-NET to access global data and information on production, trade, technology, research and human resources related to tropical fruit development. TF-NET, a self-funding network with a wide-based network structure, will also collaborate closely with FAO and its membership, and other interested parties including professional and trade bodies. We hope to link TF-NET Homepage to FAO and others in the very near future. We therefore take this opportunity to invite all FAO Members to join TF-NET and together make it a success.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Quisiéramos agradecer al Profesor de Haen por la presentación del documento. Lamentamos que el Embajador Raúl Alegrètt no haya podido estar presente con nosotros en este tema, y quisiéramos expresar nuestro reconocimiento por la excelente labor realizada como Presidente de esta Reunión.

Quisiéramos respaldar la adopción y el contenido de este informe y, en este marco, deseamos enfatizar sobre algunos de los acuerdos que decidió el Comité de Productos Básicos, en especial, a lo que ya se han referido algunas delegaciones sobre el examen de la asistencia técnica de la FAO en relación con la Ronda Uruguay. Además, en este sentido, apoyamos que el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria establezca un vínculo más estrecho con los debates del Comité de Productos Básicos, así como la ampliación del mandato de los grupos intergubernamentales para dar cabida a algunos importantes productos afines, productos de valor añadido, que no consideran otros foros internacionales.

Finalmente, estimamos que resulta apropiado que el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria examine en su próximo período de sesiones, la adaptación de los programas de trabajo de los grupos intergubernamentales al Plan de Acción de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación, así como la función de éstos en las nuevas condiciones y disciplinas del comercio internacional, sin que ello signifique duplicar acciones o interferir con otros foros internacionales, en particular, con la Organización Mundial del Comercio.

Il-ho CHO (Korea, Republic of)

I can remember that my delegation highlighted some important issues at the last CCP Meeting. My delegation welcomes the explanation of the Secretariat, the analysis on the impact of the Uruguay Round on food security, as mentioned in paragraph 36 of the Report, has been proceeding and that the study results will be available prior to the next WTO negotiations.

Further, I would like the Secretariat to finish the work and provide it, as soon as possible, in order to give enough time to Member Nations to review the experienced results.

Secondly, as shown in paragraph 36, my delegation also asks FAO to play a vigorous advocacy role in the coming WTO Multilateral Trade Negotiations in the context of food security issues. Here, we would like to strongly request the Secretariat to establish a concrete Action Plan, to ensure that FAO plays the Bureau's advocacy role for developing countries in the next WTO Round, in the context of food security issues as described in paragraph 36 of CL 116/6.

B.M. MOLOPE (South Africa)

I want to thank the Secretariat for the Report and especially Dr de Haen for his summary of the main points.

While endorsing the Report, South Africa wishes to emphasize the following matters: the need for the Secretariat to undertake additional analysis of the impact of the Uruguay Round, particularly on food security, prior to the beginning of the next round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations; the importance, where necessary, of assisting developing countries to prepare for the next round of Negotiations; and, finally, training in relation to SPS and TBT should also be offered generously, where requested.

Sra. Virginia PÉREZ PÉREZ (Venezuela)

También a mí me hubiese gustado que el Embajador Alegrètt estuviera con nosotros. Lamentablemente ha tenido compromisos que le han impedido estar aquí; sin embargo, quisiera agradecer a la Secretaría y a todos los Miembros del Comité que lo han ayudado mucho en el desarrollo de su trabajo.

Mi delegación, por supuesto, apoya el contenido del Informe y acoge la idea de que los próximos informes presten interés a los problemas de seguridad alimentaria que puedan derivarse de la

aplicación de la *Decisión de Marrakesh en los Países Menos Desarrollados y en Aquellos Importadores Netos de Alimentos*. Además, insistimos en que se mejore la información sobre obstáculos no arancelarios al comercio, incluidas las medidas sanitarias y fitosanitarias, y que la FAO incremente su asistencia a los países en desarrollo en relación con el comercio de los productos básicos y la liberación de la agricultura.

En cuanto al mandato y procedimiento de los Grupos Intergubernamentales, compartimos las prioridades enunciadas en el informe y esperamos que su programa de trabajo refleje los acuerdos objetivos y las estrategias del *Plan de Acción de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación*.

Estamos también de acuerdo en que los grupos asuman una función más activa en la evaluación y determinación de prioridades de los Programas de Fomento de los Productos Básicos y en la movilización de recursos para apoyarlos, sobretudo para sufragar la participación de los países en desarrollo en sus reuniones.

Tenemos que seguir evitando que los grupos dupliquen esfuerzos y trabajo y por esto vemos, con gran satisfacción, lo expuesto en el párrafo 23 donde se dice que prácticamente no ha habido ninguna duplicación.

Mi delegación opina que se podría añadir el plátano al Grupo del Banano porque lo tenemos huérfano: lo podríamos adoptar.

Y, por último, me gustaría saber si la supresión de algunos órganos estatutarios del Comité, mencionado en el párrafo 19, trajo como consecuencia la reducción de costos para el mismo.

Lyall W. SMALL (Barbados)

This is just to endorse the report by my delegation. We have noted especially the recommendation, in paragraph 11 of the document, that the international community has a role to play in assisting SIDS in adjusting to the emerging trade environment and requesting FAO to continue its assistance to SIDS, especially in relation to strengthening their institutional capacity to reap the most benefits from the Uruguay Round Agreement.

In this regard, I think we must thank Japan for its decision to provide extra-budgetary support in funding a workshop to assist developing countries for the upcoming round of negotiations.

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

Since my delegation takes the floor for the first time, I would like to congratulate you for presiding over this important Item 5, which was so very well-introduced by Mr de Haen and I also wish to thank the Secretariat for preparing the agenda and to commend them for providing us with such valuable inputs for our discussions on the critical issues before us.

My delegation once more wishes to express its concern that Dominica, as well as other Eastern Caribbean States, are in the prize takers in the international markets and are subject to volatile commodity prices. Our farmers have been particularly harmed by the climbing prices and changes in trading arrangements for our primary agricultural exports, such as bananas. As a lower middle-income economy with a small population, Dominica has a limited tax base to use for development. Dominica and other Caribbean islands are highly vulnerable to the ravages of hurricanes and droughts, which destroy our agriculture and other natural resources. These losses and, above all, loss of life and property, result in often devastating personal losses for those of us caught in the path of a major storm, and can set back our economic development in the Caribbean in important ways.

Nevertheless, with our rich culture and enterprising people, we in the Caribbean islands are and want to be partners in global development but it must involve exchanges of products and ideas or intellectual capital, with our sister nations based on mutual gains and mutual understanding.

My delegation would therefore like to point out that, given the high degree of openness, that is high ratios of export and import surety, and given the narrow export base, for the Caribbean islands having changes in trade regimes cannot but have a particularly devastating effect on our

economies. We would like to ask our larger trading partners to take into account the potential trade diversion effects of those islands.

Dominica and all others are affected by changes in preferential trading arrangements and expansions of free trade areas. We apply to our global partners to be of help to us. We have certainly attempted to steadily reduce barriers to trade and open up markets. We have also looked to expand trading partnerships in agricultural commodity products, not only with wealthier countries to our north, but with regional partners on the continent, and would like to see this strengthened.

We are also trying to work with the cruise ships industries so that they procure more from the destinations that they visit rather than just from their ports of origin.

Finally, by recognizing that we cannot alone absorb commodity production, we must tap the full potential of our domestic markets as well.

In conclusion, if we in the Eastern Caribbean States cannot sell our specific commodities, then our global partners must be aware that that could lead to further food insecurity and political unrest.

I do hope that the Council will adopt and endorse the Report before us. Unfortunately, as an Observer, I cannot endorse the report and therefore I fully agree and support what was said by our distinguished partner, Barbados.

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

Thank you, delegates who commented on this document.

I note that several delegations requested the Secretariat to continue in its close monitoring of the world commodity situation. Reference was made that this monitoring should give special attention to countries covered by the *Marrakesh Decision on Measures Concerning the Possible Negative Effects of the Reform Programme on Least-Developed and Net-Food Importing Countries*.

Others mentioned other special groups of countries, including the *Small Island Developing States*.

The Secretariat was requested to complete the extended study on the impact of the Uruguay Round with particular emphasis on food security, as I stated already, to complete this clearly prior to the beginning of the next round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations.

Several delegates referred to the umbrella programme on training, which covers, as was said, not only the Uruguay Round Agreement on Agriculture but also SPS, TBT and other WTO agreements. This was welcomed, and so was the Symposium that is planned in Geneva with the support of Japan.

With regard to the Common Fund for Commodities, and the fact that this Fund has indicated that a change was envisaged to go to more loan projects rather than grant projects, in this regard concern was expressed that this might have an impact on the effectiveness and acceptability of such projects. The Secretariat was asked, in cooperation with the Common Fund for Commodities, to prepare a report on the cost-effectiveness of projects and the dissemination of results to developing countries. This was noted.

I note that one delegation, Syria, referred to paragraph 49 of the CCP Report and underlined the need for FAO to assist Members in trying to minimize any harmful effects resulting from trade with genetically-modified agricultural products on the health of humans, animals and plants. I confirm that, with regard to biosafety, we have work underway. We also monitor closely and assist the work of *CODEX Alimentarius* in this regard, so this reference to paragraph 49 just reminded me to confirm that we have work underway in this field. Of course, we are not alone by far, this is done in collaboration with others.

On the Intergovernmental Groups on Commodities, delegates expressed the hope that more interaction between these groups and other bodies of FAO, and other bodies of other

organizations, should be pursued, that overlap be avoided, duplication of work be avoided and the streamlining of procedures would continue. We can confirm that we will strive to make more efforts in this regard.

Regarding the particular question of Venezuela as to whether there had been a reduction in costs due to abolition of certain Statutory Bodies, we can respond that some of the Statutory Bodies had not met for many years so the savings are limited, of course. We can also say that significant savings have been made through changes in the working methods of some of the IGGs and reductions in length of documentation, and we have reported on the cost savings in this regard at the CCP itself.

I think that we have all taken note of Malaysia's information about the establishment of the Tropical Food Network and the invitation to Members to join the network on the Internet that is being established, the TF-NET. I can only echo that because it will certainly be to the benefit of all.

Finally, I have noted that many, but not most, who spoke on this item also recommended explicitly that Council endorse the Report of the Committee on Commodity Problems.

6. Report of the 15th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (Rome, 25-29 January 1999)
(CL 116/9)

6. Rapport de la quinzième session du Comité de l'agriculture (Rome, 25-29 janvier 1999)
(CL 116/9)

6. Informe del 15º período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura
(Roma, 25-29 de enero de 1999) (CL 116/9)

CHAIRMAN

We will now consider Agenda Item 6, *Report of the 15th Session of the Committee on Agriculture*.

We have the *Report of the 15th Session of the Committee on Agriculture* which was held in Rome last January. The relevant document is CL 116/9.

An important feature of the Report concerns developments in cross-cutting themes such as biotechnology, organic agriculture, urban and peri-urban agriculture, which reflect a novel focused approach by the Organization. I would like to invite our able colleague, the Chairman of COAG, Mr Humberto Molina Reyes of Chile, to introduce the item.

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Presidente, Comité de Agricultura)

Es un gran honor presentarme ante este honorable Consejo para presentar el informe del 15º *Período de Sesiones del Comité de Agricultura*, como fuera muy bien presentado por el Presidente de este Consejo, que tuvo lugar aquí en Roma desde el 25 al 29 de enero de este año. Quisiera, antes que nada, subrayar un elemento que, a mi modo de ver, es extremadamente importante en un organismo multilateral, específicamente me refiero al excelente ambiente de trabajo alcanzado en nuestras deliberaciones por el Comité de Agricultura; deliberaciones que, a veces, resultaron difíciles. Tuve ocasión de asistir a los trabajos del Comité de Redacción, comprendiendo el buen ánimo de cada una de las partes que participaron en la redacción del informe, y que finalmente el mismo fuera aprobado por unanimidad. La aprobación de dicho informe es un motivo de gran orgullo, personalmente por haber tenido el privilegio de haber conducido los trabajos; puesto que, según me fue informado, por primera vez, después de 15 años de funcionamiento del COAG, se aprobaba un informe de este Comité por unanimidad.

En consecuencia, no quisiera prejuzgar el excelente trabajo que se hizo para la elaboración de dicho informe, puesto que en él hay un buen equilibrio entre una serie de elementos que fueron motivo del análisis mancomunado de todos miembros de esta Organización. Así se realizó el análisis del *Marco Estratégico*, versión dos, y como ustedes saben ha habido un poco de crítica porque había llegado muy encima de nuestras deliberaciones; pero esto no fue obstáculo para comentar sobre él. Después pasamos revistas a las *Perspectivas a Plazo Medio 2000-2005*;

continuamos con la *Vigilancia de los Recursos de Tierra y Agua Dulce*, analizamos un tema, la biotecnología y la agricultura orgánica, que hoy reviste cada día una mayor urgencia, subrayada por los medios de comunicación, y bajo constante preocupación por esta Organización y de todos los Estados Miembros.

Decía que no quería prejuzgar los importantes resultados y decisiones que tomó, en su oportunidad, el Comité de Agricultura, y de consecuencia vengo con una gran humildad a solicitar vuestra indulgencia para aprobar el Informe que tienen delante y que es el reflejo del trabajo realizado por el COAG.

CHAIRMAN

I recollect that I was on the Drafting Committee for this Report, and I also recollect seeing you sitting at the Drafting Committee sessions, which is a reflection of your commitment to this task.

I would now like to open the floor for discussion on this agenda item.

Harald HILDEBRAND (Alemania)

Hablo en nombre de la Comunidad Europea y sus Estados Miembros. En primer lugar, quería agradecer la excelente introducción a nuestro tema dada por el Sr. Molina que en enero presidía las deliberaciones del Comité de Agricultura.

La Comunidad Europea y sus Estados Miembros quisieran endosar el informe de la 15^o Sesión del *Comité de Agricultura (COAG)* realizada en el pasado enero. Los aspectos principales que precisan de la atención del Consejo han quedado bien reflejados en la parte introductiva del documento CL 116/9. Esperamos que estos aspectos sean objeto de un debido seguimiento, en la medida que la labor continúa en el amplio sector de la agricultura.

Suharyo HUSEN (Indonesia)

My delegation welcomes the Report, with some highlight concerns such as with regard to the Regional Office of FAO, should the vote agree to a proposal for their allocation to direct support to Member Nations, including policy advice and requests for an increase in each allocation for Technical Cooperation Programme activities? The alleviation of poverty through sustainable, rural and agricultural development including Integrated Pest Management, disease eradication, soil and water resources conservation and management, and human resources development should be given highest priority in the implementation of the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit.

We stress the importance of technical assistance to developing countries in trade-related matters, including capacity-building in food security and for preparation for the next round of multilateral trade negotiations for agricultural commodities.

The gender issue should be a mainstream in all FAO programmes. Since the food security will still be the main focus and highest priority programme in most Low-Income Food-Deficit Countries, especially at a time when the economic crisis felt by them in recent years, it is requested that the allocation of resources from the *Special Programme for Food Security* should be increased in all UN agencies concerned, including FAO.

Regarding the *FAO Strategic Framework 2000-2015*, as my delegation already stated in previous discussions, once again we would like to stress that in general we are in agreement with overall Strategic Framework 2000-2015 for FAO.

Concerning the Medium-Term Plan 2000-2005, the Indonesian delegation, while highlighting common normative areas of emergencies, preparedness, international fora for discussion and agreement, standard-setting regulatory frameworks and data and information systems, would also stress that the departments should build networks with partners in the UN System, Governments, NGOs and the private sector for complementary actions due to the continuing pressure on financial resources in recent years and also most likely in the future.

Regarding monitoring land and freshwater resources quality and utilization, the Indonesian delegation would like to join the Committee in emphasizing the need to establish guidelines, data

standard and methods, and the need to enhance capacity-building by FAO to ensure harmonized global data allocation and monitoring.

Furthermore, the Indonesian delegation would also like to stress the continued need for direct assistance from FAO in setting up systems and in establishing relevant and global network data and information systems.

Regarding biotechnology, the Indonesian delegation is in agreement with the contents of the Committee on Agriculture Report, in paragraphs 44 to 48, and requests FAO to help the Member Nations in drafting national bio-safety legislation and in setting up the regulations at the regional and sub-regional levels.

FAO should continue and enforce its normative and advisory work in coordination with other Agencies.

In conclusion, concerning organic agriculture, the Indonesian delegation concurs with the Committee's opinion that many aspects of organic farming were important elements of a systems approach to sustainable food production, including in developing countries, both for domestic consumption and export, as stated in paragraph 54 of the Report.

It is important to note that FAO's work on organic agriculture be undertaken in collaboration with assisting public and private institutions such as national and international agricultural centres, national programmes, consumers' associations and competent NGOs.

The Indonesian delegation fully supports the Committee's request to FAO that FAO should assist the developing countries to assess international markets through technical information on production requirements, trade information on market opportunities, and capacity-building.

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

We would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing these excellent documents on this important item. We would like to thank the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture for his excellent presentation of the Report. In this field, we would like to underline some of the main points.

The World Food Summit played a major role in deepening the awareness of agricultural problems and poverty eradication. Technology and investments should be provided. We should emphasize the role of the Organization in facing emergencies and in the field of Early Warning and Integrated Pest Management projects, plant and animal genetic resources, and sanitary and phytosanitary measures.

We have to underline the importance of technical assistance that is being provided to the developing countries in trade-related issues, and for further preparation for the multilateral Uruguay Round. The gender perspective should be incorporated in all the programmes of the Organization, as well as the Special Programme on Food Security and the TeleFood programme.

The Organization should pay attention to training and exchange of information to the developing countries, particularly in the field of biotechnology.

Research and training should be further emphasized.

Organic agriculture will help in achieving sustainable development, either for local consumption or for export. Taking into account the importance of this point, this needs further research work because organic agriculture is still playing a modest role at the world level. There is no doubt that the next century will witness a great development in the field of organic agriculture, taking into account the increase in the rate of trade in organic agricultural products.

Urban and peri-urban development should further be supported because it contributes to the achievement of food security.

We also have to pay as great attention to animal genetic resources as we are doing to the plant genetic resources.

These are the major points that should be underlined when it comes to this important item.

B.M. MOLOPE (South Africa)

My delegation welcomes the *Report of the Committee on Agriculture* and hopes that this report will be endorsed by this Council.

Recognizing the importance of animal production in global food security, our input is restricted to an item starting on page 9, paragraphs 65 to 70 of the Report, an item on farm animal genetic resources for food and agriculture.

Animal production is the most important agricultural activity in South Africa and a number of other African countries where up to 80 percent of the total area available for agriculture can only be used for this purpose. In these areas, adopted farm animal breeds are of critical importance.

The ongoing development of the global strategy for the management of farm animals, genetic resources, is therefore most welcome and reflects FAO's commitment to the sustainable use of animal genetic resources as a critical factor in global food security.

South Africa has a number of indigenous and locally-developed breeds. Some of the indigenous breeds are endangered as a result of years of cross-breeding and receipt of often negative information on the potential of these animals for sustainable production. Others have been used to develop composites such as the Bosmara cattle breed and the Dopa sheep.

Efforts to characterize all these resources have increased as means of the conservation through sustainable use initiative.

South Africa has an established NGO, the Farm Animal Conservation Trust, which is actively involved in the conservation of indigenous and endangered international breeds, and legislation has been adopted to facilitate the monitoring of our land-raised breeds in terms of the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity. The Animal Improvement Act, that will most probably come into operation in August of this year, makes provision for the regulation of exports of land-raised breeds as well as biological impact studies to precede any import of new breeds.

Seeing the importance of animal genetic resources, South Africa is hosting the SADC FAO/UNDP project on the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources and has an established National Coordinator, National Coordinating Committee and National Focal Point. In addition, South Africa has come up with an integrated registration and animal genetic information system, Inter GIS 2000, and this tool is nearing completion.

The system will have the capacity to accommodate independent databases from all the SADC countries and will be available for those who wish to use it.

In conclusion, South Africa recognizes the importance of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture, and has initiated activities that are in line with global directives. Funds will be needed to complete the Web, particularly when it comes to *ex situ* conservation and an updated report on the state of animal genetic resources in the country. The latter could be part of the SADC FAO/UNDP project on the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources.

Lastly, matters listed in this Report and requiring Council's attention are pertinent and should be endorsed by this Council.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Ante todo queremos agradecer y felicitar al señor Humberto Molina Reyes por la presentación de este informe, y por el excelente trabajo que desarrolló al frente de los trabajos de este Comité.

Al endosar el informe del 15° período de sesiones, queremos resaltar la importancia de que la FAO continúe su trabajo en temas que fueron motivo de discusión en esta ocasión y que están vinculados estrechamente tanto con la producción agrícola sostenible como con la seguridad alimentaria, en particular la biotecnología, la agricultura orgánica y la agricultura urbana y peri-urbana. En esta línea queremos refrendar asimismo el acuerdo del Comité de Agricultura sobre la prioridad que se debe brindar a las actividades del *Codex Alimentarius*, en especial en lo que se refiere a la importancia de brindar asistencia técnica a los países en desarrollo en cuestiones

relacionadas con el comercio y con la creación de capacidad en materia de inocuidad de alimentos.

Finalmente, deseamos resaltar también la importancia que queda reflejada en el informe sobre el establecimiento de asociaciones sólidas con otras organizaciones del Sistema de las Naciones Unidas, con instituciones financieras, con donantes y con organizaciones no gubernamentales, consideramos esta decisión particularmente importante a la luz de la contribución que pueden hacer al Programa Ordinario y muy en especial al Programa de Cooperación Técnica.

Dato' ANNUAR MA' ARUF (Malaysia)

The Malaysian delegation thanks the Secretariat for preparing this comprehensive Report of the Committee on Agriculture in document CL 116/9.

Malaysia recognizes the important role of urban and peri-urban agriculture (UPA) in increasing food security, employment, income and nutrition. In this regard, Malaysia fully endorses FAO's initiatives, namely incorporating UPA into existing FAO programme, support for UPA activities in Member Nations, and the need for coordination and cooperation with partners.

Malaysia is also pleased that FAO has taken the responsibility to give organic agriculture a legitimate place within the sustainable agriculture programme of FAO and to assist Member Countries in their efforts to respond to farmers' and consumers' demand in this sector. Technical assistance from FAO in promoting and supporting the growth of organic farming through knowledge, skill and technology transfers, and by developing organic standards and certification programmes are essential steps to developing organic farming.

Referring to biotechnology, my delegation takes cognizance of the potential contribution of biotechnology in enhancing and intensifying agricultural production. However, much more work needs to be undertaken by FAO to put biotechnology on a stronger footing in developing countries, especially in countries where infrastructure and technical capacity are inadequate or lacking. However, in its efforts to promote biotechnology in agriculture it is imperative that FAO applies a precautionary approach. In this regard, FAO should lend support to the continuing effort to develop a Bio-safety Protocol which is undertaken within the ambit of the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD).

With the inclusion of the Bio-safety protocol in the CBD, countries dealing with, for example, genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are obliged to adhere to such Protocol where the precautionary principle is paramount.

With these comments, my delegation is happy to endorse the Report found in CL 116/9.

Masato ITO (Japan)

My delegation endorses the *Report on the Committee on Agriculture* and we would like to highlight paragraph 39 of this Report relating to the duplication of work. My delegation expects the continuous effort of the Secretariat to avoid overlapping activities among FAO Departments and programmes.

Ms Ratana THANOMSAKYUTH (Thailand)

First of all, my delegation welcomes the *Report of the Fifteenth Session of the Committee on Agriculture* in document CL 116/9. We would like to endorse the Report as well as to emphasize that, in order to achieve the objective of the *World Food Summit and Plan of Action* on global food security, Thailand fully supports the recommendation made by the Committee in calling on FAO to provide Member Nations with more technical assistance, including information exchange, capacity-building and policy advice, on technology, sustainable food and agricultural development, biotechnology and organic agriculture, as well as international trade-related matters, as stated in paragraphs 10, 30, 46, 50 and 57 of the Report.

P.W. MISIKA (Namibia)

The Namibian delegation would like to thank the Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture and its Members for a report well prepared. The Namibian delegation endorses and supports this Report and recommends its adoption.

With regard to the *Medium-Term Perspectives* for the years 2000 to 2005, we fully support the interdisciplinary approach to the main priority areas, that is the areas mentioned in paragraph 26, with special emphasis on the development of data and information and systems for developing countries of particular importance. Namibia believes that effective information flows and management within and between countries will serve as an important tool for improving national food security situations.

With reference to the same paragraph, that is paragraph 26, we are also in agreement that employment creation and poverty alleviation issues should not be singled out as priority areas *per se*, but rather are supposed to be seen as end objectives which we should all strive to achieve through other programmes and activities.

When considering specific strategies for activities described in paragraph 33, mainly the pest and disease prevention, the *International Plant Protection Convention* and also sanitary and phytosanitary measures, and technical barriers to trade in paragraph 36, it is important to realize that it is very difficult for countries with small economies to build the full capacities required for these purposes, and therefore there is a need for the FAO Secretariat to assist Member Nations beset by this dilemma to formulate solutions to these problems. The possibility of finding solutions on a regional basis should also be explored.

With regard to biotechnology, Namibia realizes that biotechnology will serve as a very important tool for addressing the future demand for food and for meeting alarming population growth rates. At the same time we, like our Malaysian colleagues, would like to approach the subject with great circumspection. In this respect, we are in support of the risk management measures proposed in the document of which the following are fully endorsed by us: the need to assist Member Nations in building capacity and to develop balanced policies through which the process could be directed in a responsible way; the need to support individual countries in drafting biodiversity or biosafety legislation and regulatory mechanisms; the need to set up international standards in relation to GM or genetically-modified production practices; and the need to introduce mechanisms and procedures for the labelling of food products originating from biotechnology and organic agriculture so as to enable consumers to make a choice as to what they should eat and what they should not eat.

In this regard, we would also like to support the call from the South African delegate indicating that proper risk management issues and mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that biotechnology does not erode the indigenous animal livestock that we have. This is in view of the fact that not only the SADC Region, but Africa as a whole, is heavily dependent on livestock production.

Having said that, on organic agriculture our only comment would be that in order to get certain products certified and the labelled as organically-produced, we would appeal that the bureaucratic measures should not be allowed to strangle efforts in this regard because, if they are allowed to do so, then only biotechnically-produced products may get through at the expense of organically-produced products.

Lyall W. SMALL (Barbados)

The Barbados delegation generally endorses the report COAG; however, we have one slight reservation related to the rigour with which one area has been treated.

The treatment of terminator technology in section 53 is, in our view, not as explicit as it could have been and does not adequately deal with possible future dangers posed, not only to agriculture and its profitability in developing countries, but world agriculture as well, if there is widespread

adoption of that technology. Terminator technology is a pernicious and, apparently, very dangerous new technology that is meant to guarantee immense profits for those multinational companies which have developed it by guaranteeing the sterility of any plants developed from seed planted with the terminator gene.

FAO needs, as proactively as possible, to set up an urgent study on the possible negative, and positive, ramifications of this technology, advise Member Governments of the possible ramifications of its use and, if necessary, identify strategies for combatting its use.

Philip MOUMIE (Cameroun)

La délégation du Cameroun souscrit entièrement au document CL 116/9, qui présente une vue claire des actions à entreprendre par la FAO dans le but d'améliorer la production agricole. Nous voulons intervenir essentiellement sur le paragraphe 62 afin de souligner l'importance qu'il y aurait, en ce qui concerne l'agriculture urbaine et périurbaine, à ce que la FAO collabore très activement avec le Programme alimentaire mondial dans le cadre de ses activités de lutte contre la pauvreté en milieu urbain et périurbain, collaboration qui pourrait consister effectivement, dans le cadre de projets de vivres-contre-travail, à intéresser les nombreux jeunes, jeunes filles et jeunes hommes, qui sont disposés à travailler pour améliorer la sécurité alimentaire dans les zones urbaines. Nous voulons donc encourager la FAO à mettre rapidement en oeuvre les recommandations qui sont contenues dans le paragraphe 62 et à aller de l'avant dans le cadre de cette collaboration avec le Programme alimentaire mondial.

Yohannes TENSUE (Éritrea)

My delegation welcomes the document and supports the adoption of this report.

While expressing our satisfaction, we have noted, in paragraph 77, mention of future sessions. During the previous COAG meeting I personally expressed the need for including inputs from the engineering unit. While several other departments of the Organization have contributed to and enriched the substance of the document, input from the Agriculture Engineering Unit has never been included in such a document.

In the last session, I remember, when the Assistant Director-General of Agriculture said, "In Africa we take the easy job and leave the hard job to a woman", my reply was "Let us leave it to mechanization, the machine will do the job".

So that is my intention to say that the Agricultural Engineering Unit, the Engineering Programme, could contribute to the solution of the engineering problems. My suggestions at the time, was to include the contribution from the Engineering Unit. In paragraph 77, it only talks about post-harvest operations, that is not the only engineering. Biotechnology is there, but the technical aspect is not shown.

So in future discussions, I feel that the role of the Engineering Unit should be discussed in the COAG sessions.

Onyeabo Emmanuel ONWUKEME (Nigeria)

Mr Chairman, my delegation would like to congratulate you on presiding over this afternoon's session.

Nigeria fully endorses the *Report of the Committee on Agriculture*. However, we wish to further stress the need for the actualization of paragraph 52 of the Report, which deals with agricultural research and adequate extension systems. Nigeria has already set up a Bio-safety Committee to draw up guidelines. We would appreciate the assistance of FAO in drawing up procedures to realize the goals of the Committee.

Giuseppe VASTA (Observateur de l'OCDE)

Je vous remercie de m'avoir donné la parole. S'agissant du rapport sur l'agriculture, je me permets d'intervenir, parce que je l'ai trouvé très intéressant. J'ai eu aussi l'honneur de participer à ce Comité. Il m'est revenu en mémoire que, pendant ma résidence à Paris durant 14 ans, j'ai dû

presque me battre quand un collègue disait que l'agriculture se trouvait en déclin. Chaque fois, j'ai combattu, car pour moi l'agriculture n'est pas en déclin, on ne pourra jamais se permettre le luxe de dire qu'elle est en déclin. Aujourd'hui, j'ai l'impression que j'avais raison et je confirme encore une fois qu'elle n'est pas en déclin. En lisant dans le rapport ce qui a été fait, ou en écoutant les interventions d'aujourd'hui, je vois que les intervenants ont parlé avec leur cœur. Et c'est comme ça que je parle, en me souvenant aussi de ce qu'a fait le Président Molina Reyes pendant cette réunion de janvier. Je sortais d'une intervention chirurgicale, mais après cette réunion, je vous avoue que je me sentais plus fort et plus content; ce que je suis en train de faire aussi très modestement aujourd'hui.

Je voudrais remercier tous les représentants qui ont parlé, parce qu'ils ont confirmé ce que l'OCDE aujourd'hui est en train de faire, surtout dans le secteur de la biotechnologie. Et surtout le fait que la biotechnologie est en train, et l'a déjà fait, de passer dans les pays en voie de développement. Je vous remercie de m'avoir donné la parole. C'est encore un peu difficile pour moi de m'exprimer après l'opération récente que j'ai dû affronter. Une nouvelle fois mes meilleurs vœux et mes remerciements, parce que j'aime la terre et j'apprécie ce qu'on fait pour la terre. J'espère que la FAO continuera sur ce problème de toute son âme.

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

My delegation would like to thank Mr Molina Reyes for giving us an excellent report on agriculture. However, I would like to stress that, due to Dominica's limited land areas, our challenges are concentrated on our abilities to diversify or compensate for a constraints. Therefore we should look to FAO, not only to provide solutions of broad relevance to economies with underdeveloped agriculture sectors but also to specific solutions, and in particular challenges faced in our Sub-region of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Therefore, let me first preface my remarks on agriculture by noting that it has been suggested that Dominica and other Small Island States should make use of their beaches, forests and national parks for eco-tourism, and that we should look beyond agriculture to industrial development as an alternative path for development in these sectors. We in Dominica are indeed pursuing opportunities wherever we feel we have a comparative advantage. We should recognize in this forum that agriculture will always play an integral part in food security and economic development, and that we must seek solutions here that make the agricultural sector most efficient, vibrant and productive.

I have noted that we often think first of all of the inputs we need to grow more, in order to produce more crops, but I would like to submit that the starting point of our thinking on agriculture must be that ultimately there have to be the markets involving mutual beneficial exchanges for our agricultural sector to thrive. In the same way, diversification is often put forward as a simple solution to our agricultural challenges, and we are indeed open to diversification exploring viable solutions. However, I would ask the proponents of diversification, whether there is a market for the proposed alternatives. Without looking at what consumers want, where they are located and the prices they are willing to pay for agricultural products, we cannot begin to build a sustainable agricultural sector.

The first requirement is therefore market information, so that our farmers can make informed choices about what to grow. While our Dominica Export/Import Agency plays an important role, in particular with our private sector, in collecting and disseminating information for exchanges, I would like to invite my distinguished colleagues at this Council to consider ways in which the availability of market information can be improved. Through that, it should be possible to develop much improved data on bids and offers, quality and phytosanitary requirements and so on. For example, I would like to note that Mexico has attempted something along the lines of computerized information for all producers, through their agency called ACIRCA.

In conclusion, the overriding objective must be to produce consistently high-quality agricultural products. To do so requires, first and foremost, investment in human capital, that is solid, relevant research and practical advice to farmers on planning, production and handling of agricultural

products, because within these categories advice will be needed by FAO, in particular in such areas as soil and water conservation, infrastructure on transport and small animal husbandry, Integrated Pest Management, application of available plant genetic resources and proper storage, packaging and handling to reduce post-farm gate crop losses.

Clearly, advice alone is not enough. Farmers need access to affordable inputs, including high quality seeds, wherever possible for hives, fertilizers, pesticides and irrigation schemes that are technically-financially-and ecologically-feasible. We also need to look immediately beyond the farm gate to the scope for adding value through agro-processing, such as juices, copra and milling.

FAO has played, but must continue to play, an even more important role in providing both technical and financial resources in these areas, in partnership with our agricultural producers, marketing agencies, governments and with our multilateral and bilateral donors.

Some Council Members today mentioned organic agriculture. This could help, of course, in our effort for diversification, provided that FAO provides us with the necessary infrastructure, because organic crops can lead to more susceptible pest diseases. There would be a need for quarantine for original growth products, the need for standards through *Codex Alimentarius*, and the right market and enormous time-consuming marketing and studies. I hope FAO knows that they can be helping us. I do not know yet where we are going from here.

A. SAWADOGO (Sous-Directeur général, Département de l'agriculture)

En fait, je voudrais tout d'abord remercier les intervenants pour les paroles élogieuses envers le travail qui a été fait par le Comité de l'agriculture, et aussi pour les conseils qu'ils nous ont donnés.

Il y a en particulier une forte insistance sur la nécessité de renforcer les capacités humaines, de promouvoir la formation dans tous les domaines, depuis les domaines législatifs jusqu'aux domaines purement techniques. Je voudrais, pour ma part, dire que les travaux du Comité de l'agriculture ont montré que notre Organisation pourrait et devrait servir davantage de forum pour la discussion de questions sensibles, parce qu'elles concernent la vie de tous les jours de chacun d'entre nous, mais dans un cadre scientifique et dans un cadre qui permet des réflexions approfondies. Et nous avons des mécanismes déjà en place que nous allons essayer d'utiliser au maximum, que ce soit le *Codex Alimentarius* ou bien la *Convention internationale sur la protection des plantes*, et ce principe de précaution sera entièrement pris en charge. Je terminerai en remerciant le délégué de l'Erythrée, sa question sera prise à part, nous verrons avec lui comment aller plus loin dans ce domaine-là.

Et si vous permettez, Monsieur le Président, je pense que mes deux collègues ont des réponses plus précises à apporter sur certaines des questions qui ont été soulevées. Vous pourriez peut-être leur passer la parole.

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

Après avoir également remercié les Membres du Conseil pour avoir confirmé les directives du Comité de l'agriculture, je m'attacherai simplement aux questions que beaucoup d'entre eux ont souligné et qui ont trait au principe de prudence, concernant l'usage des biotechnologies, ainsi qu'à l'analyse nécessaire des risques, qu'il s'agisse de leurs aspects techniques ou de leurs aspects institutionnels et de formation.

Ce sont des directives du COAG avec lesquelles nous nous sentons en pleine harmonie, et que nous nous préparons à mettre en œuvre avec plus de vigueur qu'auparavant. J'ai donc le sentiment que nous sommes en pleine concordance de vue sur ce point. S'agissant de deux questions précises, la première ayant trait à la sécurité biologique, nous avons en son temps, je pense il y a un ou deux ans, apporté notre connaissance technique, nos capacités et notre concours technique exclusivement à la négociation. La négociation, bien entendu, appartenant à vos Etats, et j'espère qu'elle se renouera un jour et qu'elle pourra aboutir.

En ce qui concerne la terminologie dite "Terminator", nous avons travaillé sur le plan technique avec la *Convention sur la biodiversité*, et apporté notre concours aux instances scientifiques de cette *Convention*, en particulier par la révision des documents techniques à ce sujet qui seront examinés dans le cadre du Comité technique, le SBSTTA, de la Convention de la biodiversité, à la fin du mois, à Montréal.

Nous sommes également tout à fait disposés à communiquer en tant que de besoin, et à leur demande, aux États Membres des informations leur permettant de mieux comprendre les divers aspects de cette technologie parfois contestée. Je crois que ce sont les éléments de notre intervention en cette matière.

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Presidente, Comité de Agricultura)

Me complace poder responder a las expresiones de felicitaciones brindadas por muchos de los delegados aquí presentes por el excelente trabajo realizado por los miembros del COAG. Sin duda alguna, dichas felicitaciones recaen en cada uno de los miembros del COAG y, muy en especial, en la Presidenta del Comité de Redacción, que en dicha oportunidad en el momento de aprobación del informe, en enero de este año, no pudo recibir nuestro agradecimiento puesto que tuvo que abandonar de forma imprevista Roma y las sesiones del COAG. Así que quisiera aprovechar esta oportunidad para agradecerle muy cordialmente el excelente trabajo realizado en dicha oportunidad y nuevamente agradecerle a usted por la indulgencia de haber aprobado este Informe.

9. Negotiations on the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources (CL 116/INF/8)

9. Négociation de l'Engagement international sur les ressources phytogénétiques (CL 116/INF/8)

9. Negociaciones relativas al Compromiso Internacional sobre los Recursos Fitogenéticos (CL 116/INF/8)

CHAIRMAN

We now move on to Item 9, *Negotiations on the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources*.

The Report of the 8th Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture is in document CL 116/INF/8. At its 115th in November 1998, the Council gave a mandate to the Chairman of the Commission to convene a Meeting of Experts. This Meeting was held in Switzerland in January 1999. The Chairman subsequently prepared a Composite Draft Text, which the Commission is now using as the basis for its negotiations.

The April 1999 Session of the Commission made very significant progress and countries urged the rapid conclusion of negotiations by the 119th Session of the Council in November 2000.

At its 115th Session, the Council requested Ambassador Gerbasi to report to this Session on progress in the negotiations. Ambassador Gerbasi was unable to absent himself from his official duties as Ambassador to his country, Venezuela, and has accordingly sent a Report which he has asked Mr Rose, who is the Vice-Chairman of the Commission, to read on his behalf. This is available as document CL 116/LIM/5.

After Mr Rose has done so, Mr Esquinas, Secretary of the Commission, will introduce the other matters in the Commission's report.

Ronald ROSE (Vice-président, Commission des ressources génétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture)

Au Canada, nous avons une expression pour dire que nous avons deux langues officielles, mais que je ne parle ni l'une, ni l'autre.

Le Conseil de la FAO, lors de sa 115^{ème} session, tenue du 23 au 28 novembre 1998, a reconnu les progrès réalisés par la Commission des ressources génétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture au cours des négociations relatives à la révision de *l'Engagement international sur les réseaux phytogénétiques* et a appuyé à l'unanimité la proposition du Président de la Commission

visant à tenir une réunion informelle d'un groupe d'experts qui, tous en même temps, présenteront à titre personnel les différentes raisons et positions afin d'examiner les questions étroitement liées ci-après, c'est-à-dire partage des avantages, droits des agriculteurs, mécanismes financiers, statut juridique et engagement révisé, et le cas échéant, d'autres questions telles que l'accès aux réseaux phylogénétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture. (Continues in English)

Further to the decisions taken at the 15th Session of the FAO Council under the responsibility of Ambassador Gerbasi, and with the invaluable contribution and collaboration of the Swiss Government and the financial support of the Governments of Switzerland, the United States of America and Germany, Ambassador Gerbasi invited experts from 21 countries and the European Community to an informal meeting from 19 to 22 January 1999 in Montreux, Switzerland. The FAO Secretariat and Director-General of the IPGRI also provided assistance.

With your permission, I understand the interpreters have copies of this speech, I might proceed a little more rapidly on the understanding that the presentation will be available to the delegates.

The participants of this informal meeting discussed the legal status of the *Revised International Undertaking* and the majority felt that this should be an internationally-binding instrument with the Secretariat provided by FAO and operating closely with both FAO and the *Convention on Biological Diversity*.

The structure of the *International Undertaking* should be such that all its operational and administrative aspects could be easily modified. It was suggested that comprehensive agreement on the multilateral system of access to and sharing of benefits, could be facilitated if a less ambitious text were drafted with elements likely to encourage a broad consensus.

The system would initially cover a limited selection of crops determined on the basis of criteria of food security and of interdependence. This would be reviewed and possibly expanded periodically. The collections of the international agricultural research centres would also form part of the systems on terms previously agreed with those centres.

As regards *Farmers' Rights*, these would have to be recognized internationally, it being clearly understood that responsibility for realizing these *Rights* lay with each government.

With respect to the financial resources needed to implement the *International Undertaking*, these resources would be acquired through commitment to a funding strategy, involving a wide range of sources, on the basis of agreed and predictable contributions to implement agreed plans and programmes, in particular, in developing countries.

The discussions that took place at this informal meeting enabled Ambassador Gerbasi, with the help of all those present, to draw up a series of *Chairman's Elements* which, although presented under Ambassador Gerbasi's sole responsibility, reflected a broad consensus and offered a solid basis for continuation and advance of the negotiations on the revision of the *International Undertaking* in harmony with the convention on biological diversity.

Ambassador Gerbasi then drafted a series of legal provisions that reflected the *Chairman's Elements* for submission to all Member Nations of the Commission on Genetic Resources at its 8th regular session, which was held from the 19 to 23 April 1999.

In addition, and so that these legal provisions might feature in the full text of the *International Undertaking*, he asked the Secretariat to prepare a *Composite Draft Text* for revision of the *International Undertaking*. This draft had three aspects:

One, it incorporated in the consolidated negotiating text, resulting from the 5th Extraordinary Session of the Commission, the legal provisions derived from those *Chairman's Elements* in place of the corresponding articles.

Two, it included the necessary changes to the other articles of the consolidated negotiating text with the aim of preserving internal consistency.

Three, it added the legal and administrative provisions required to convert the *International Undertaking* into a legally-binding instrument.

At its 8th Regular Session, the Commission established a Contact Group which, on the basis of the *Chairman's Elements* and of the *Composite Text for the Revision of the International Undertaking*, undertook wide-ranging discussions of Article 11, which is the multilateral system of access and benefit sharing; Article 12, coverage of the multilateral system; Article 13, facilitated access within the multilateral system; and Article 15, which dealt with *Farmers' Rights*; and succeeded in drawing up texts for Articles 11, 12 and 15.

This prompted the Commission to recognize that very significant progress had been made. In the opinion of Ambassador Gerbasi and the entire Bureau greater progress could have been made if the countries participating in the informal meeting through their experts, had put forward their arguments on the basis of the consensus reached at that meeting and reflected in the *Chairman's Elements*.

The Commission also agreed to give top priority, in its future Programme of Work, to the continuation and completion of the negotiations on the *Revision of the International Undertaking*.

The Commission stressed the need to build upon the considerable progress that had been made over time with a view to submitting the *Revised International Undertaking* to the Governing Bodies of FAO as soon as possible.

The Commission decided, therefore, to authorize the Chairman, Ambassador Gerbasi, to convene, in consultation with the Director-General, further sessions of the Contact Group as required to advance the negotiations on the basis of the *Chairman's Elements*, which were derived from the Montreux meeting.

It also authorized the Chairman, when he believed that a point had been reached where the Commission might adopt the final text, to request the Director-General to convene an Extraordinary Session of the Commission so that the results might, at the very latest, be submitted to the 119th Session of the Council in November of the year 2000. The Commission recognized that this process would require extra-budgetary funds, both to convene meetings and to facilitate the participation of developing countries, and appealed to donors to provide adequate resources for this whole process. FAO has already asked these countries to make the necessary funds available for both purposes.

To sum up, we believe the necessary grounds exist to continue our negotiations and that the countries have the political will to reach a broad consensus. However the timeframe for the negotiations has had to be revised so that everyone can participate actively and positively in the process.

This Council has always understood the significance of what is at stake. This Council has been quick to support our initiatives and has authorized us to convene the informal meeting of experts in Montreux which produced a body of elements that confirm our belief that solid grounds exist for continuation of the negotiation process, even though more time will be required.

You have given us a mandate to which we have devoted all of our energy, our intellectual capacity and much of our time. Now more than ever we need you to reiterate your support and to provide us with the financial means needed to conclude successfully the negotiations on the *Revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources* in harmony with the convention on biological diversity.

J.T. ESQUINAS-ALCAZAR (del Personal de la FAO)

El documento CL 116/INF/8 contiene el informe de la *Octava Reunión Ordinaria de la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos para la Alimentación y la Agricultura*.

Durante esta Reunión, además de la continuación de las negociaciones para la *Revisión del Compromiso Internacional sobre Recursos Fitogenéticos*, la Comisión discutió otros temas de su Programa Regular tanto sobre los recursos fitogenéticos como sobre los zoogenéticos y sobre todo

definió las prioridades para los dos próximos años. En cuanto a las prioridades, la Comisión consideró dar máxima prioridad a la conclusión de las negociaciones del *Compromiso Internacional*. Con respecto a los recursos zoogenéticos, la Comisión juzgó necesario dar, también, prioridad a sus actividades en esta materia. Examinó el informe de la Primera Reunión del Grupo de Trabajo Técnico Intergubernamental sobre Recursos Zoogenéticos y convino en que este Grupo de Trabajo debería reunirse de nuevo en el próximo bienio para perfilar con mayor claridad el marco y definir las prioridades de los elementos constitutivos de la Estrategia Mundial para la Ordenación de los Recursos Genéticos de Animales de Granja. La Comisión convino, asimismo, en que la FAO debería coordinar la elaboración de un primer Informe sobre la Situación de los Recursos Zoogenéticos Mundiales para lo cual serían necesarios fondos extrapresupuestarios.

Con respecto a los recursos fitogenéticos, la Comisión examinó los progresos realizados en la aplicación del *Plan de Acción Mundial para la Conservación y Utilización Sostenible de los Recursos Fitogenéticos*, o sea el plan procedente de la Conferencia Internacional de Leipzig. Asimismo, examinó las actividades de seguimiento y facilitación de la aplicación del mismo Plan de Acción. También discutió los avances realizados en el sistema de información y alerta mundial sobre recursos fitogenéticos y el desarrollo de la red internacional de colecciones *ex situ* bajo los auspicios de la FAO. La Comisión convino en que, sujeto a la disponibilidad de recursos financieros, el Grupo de Trabajo sobre Recursos Fitogenéticos se reuniera también en el próximo bienio para supervisar y dar orientaciones sobre la aplicación del *Plan de Acción Mundial*. La Comisión consideraría la elaboración de un segundo Informe sobre los Recursos Fitogenéticos en el mundo y la revisión del Plan de Acción Mundial sólo una vez que se hayan concluido las negociaciones para la revisión del Compromiso Internacional.

Por último, la Comisión pidió a la Secretaría de la FAO que presentara, en su novena reunión regular en el año 2001, un informe sobre la situación del *Proyecto de Código de Conducta sobre la Biotecnología y del Código Internacional de Conducta para la Recolección y Transferencia de Germoplasma Vegetal*, de manera que la Comisión pudiera estudiar las medidas a adoptar sobre estos dos códigos de conducta a la vista de los resultados del compromiso internacional revisados.

Kazumasa SHIOYA (Japan)

I would like to touch upon the International Undertaking very briefly. My delegation fully understands the importance of this negotiation. Taking this opportunity, I would like to express our great appreciation for the skillful chairmanship of Mr Gerbasi, the Chair of this Commission and his excellent and tremendous patience. I myself participated in the Chairman's Contact Group. I felt that opinion gaps existed for many years, apparently narrowed down and we moved forward to agreement. I hope that the participants of this negotiation keep the same spirit of flexibility and concession as during the last meeting for the coming negotiations.

Finally, in this regard, we are prepared to share some portion of the funds necessary to hold the next Extraordinary Session in order to accelerate the negotiation of the *International Undertaking*.

Dato'ANNUAR MA'ARUF (Malaysia)

The Malaysian delegation appreciates the significant progress made in the 8th Regular Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, in particular, the negotiation of the revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. However, we would like to express our concern with the other priority areas of work of the Commission that need urgent attention, such as, the implementation of the Global Plan of Action (GPA) for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. This Plan which was adopted by representatives of 150 countries during the International Conference on Plant Genetic Resources in June 1996, is the first ever action-oriented global plan for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, in particular, for ensuring food security of present and future generations.

We are concerned that, after three years of its adoption, there is still no formal structure and effective mechanism to review the progress and guide the implementation of this Global Plan. In this regard, Malaysia strongly recommends that the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on PGR-FA, which has not met at all during the current biennium due to lack of resources, to convene immediately, as soon as possible, to elaborate an effective mechanism to monitor the progress and guide the implementation of the GPA, as well as to review and consolidate programmes and activities at the international, regional and national levels.

With regard to the negotiation on the International Undertaking, Malaysia would like to express its deep concern over the extremely slow progress in the negotiations, and notes that there are many difficult issues yet to be resolved. The 1999 deadline for successful conclusion of the negotiations is not likely to be met, but we fully support the extension of this deadline to November 2000. We, therefore, urge FAO to solicit necessary resources to enable the convening and participation by developing countries at meetings, so that the negotiations can be successfully concluded.

Malaysia has, and will continue to put forth, very accommodating proposals, consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity, to conclude the negotiations as soon as possible. We hope other countries will do likewise, so that the Commission can concentrate its efforts on the equally important and urgent task of reviewing and guiding the implementation of the GPA and the development of country-driven reports on the State of the World Animal Genetic Resources and the Global Strategy.

On this note, Malaysia would like to endorse the Report and its recommendations.

Harald HILDEBRAND (Germany)

Thank you, Mr Chairman, for giving me the floor again to speak on behalf of the European Community and its Member States. First of all, I would like to thank Mr Rose, speaker on behalf of Mr Gerbasi, the Chairman of the Commission on Genetic Resources and Mr Esquinas for the introduction to this topic.

We have noted that the Secretariat has submitted document CL/116/INF/8 containing the full Report of the 8th Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. The European Community and its Member States endorse this Report.

Regarding the main and highly important agenda item of the session, negotiations on the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources, I would like to say the following:

The EC and its Member States welcome the progress achieved in the negotiations on the International Undertaking. We particularly appreciate the clear views expressed by all countries to come to a speedy conclusion of the negotiations, including the broad consensus reached on a legally-binding agreement with close links to both FAO and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Therefore, we would urge FAO and its Members to make all efforts possible to allow for further meetings of the Contact Group, in order to continue negotiations, and for an Extraordinary Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources, to adopt a revised text of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources as soon as possible.

Recalling that the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, in Chapter 14 of its Programme of Action, Agenda 21, recommended that the global system on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture be strengthened and that the system should be adjusted to be in line with the outcome of the negotiations of the Convention on Biological Diversity and, recalling also that the mandate for renegotiating the International Undertaking accordingly, was given by the 26th Session of the FAO Conference to the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and this was in 1993, the European Community and its Member States would recommend to have a Progress Report on the negotiations on the agenda of the 30th Session of the Conference, in autumn this year, and to adopt a timeframe for the course of the further negotiations.

Mohamad Walid TAWILL (Syria) (Original language Arabic)

I would like to express my thanks to the Secretariat for having prepared this very important document for the Council because it summarizes all the progress made so far on this very complicated subject. After having read the document carefully, my country's delegation has the following comments to make.

Despite the progress achieved and the revision of the International Undertaking, we think that there are still problems. First of all, after the Leipzig Conference we notice that the international community and its organizations and institutions offered very valuable aid to developing countries, with respect to plant genetic resources. Some of those receiving assistance have now got something to show for it. Despite exploiting the plant genetic resources and the national scientific programmes of developing countries, they are still not receiving enough support.

Moreover, the aid offered to developing countries still takes place for the conservation of plant genetic resources, the protection of these resources, raising awareness among the public and the setting up of adequate legal frameworks. Therefore, I would like to draw your attention to this particularly important matter, that is the need to give developing countries aid so that they too can benefit from their own plant genetic resources, via special programmes and the creation of new species.

Secondly, the setting up of effective mechanisms for revising and evaluating the progress achieved in the various areas linked to plant genetic resources is a very necessary and pressing need, and the Department involved in that, should be able to fulfil its role completely and with the diligence that we are accustomed to from this Organization.

Thirdly, it is necessary for the Organization to notify Member Nations about any novelties with respect to developments in the revision of the International Undertaking, the state of plant genetic resources throughout the world and also with respect to major projects that are being implemented. This could be done through special editions. We do not think it is enough to have the Reports that we usually receive from meetings of the Commission on Plant Genetic Resources. We ask for all this because of the importance and particular nature of this subject.

Fourth and last, guaranteeing Farmers' Rights is a specific responsibility of Governments but we observe that farmers, or rather we know, that farmers have given all of humanity over the years, developed plant genetic resources. That is why we think that to guarantee their rights is a duty and responsibility of the international community, as well as of developed countries and multinational companies - countries and companies that have benefitted and continue to benefit from their endeavours and efforts.

B.M. MOLOPE (South Africa)

Mr Rose has ably reported the course of events and given a true picture of the developments in this regard. The report should be endorsed.

The South African delegation acknowledges progress that has been made in the negotiations on the Undertaking at the 8th Session of the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture that was held in April. This progress is particularly important in light of consensus reached on the recognition and adoption of the proposed article on Farmers' Rights in the Undertaking. There are still, however, major issues to be negotiated before a satisfactory resolution on the Undertaking is possible. These are mainly the scope of the multifunctional system for facilitated access to plant genetic resources, crucial for food security and general consensus on the nature and mechanisms for the sharing of benefits derived from the use of such resources.

The Government of South Africa is generally satisfied with the progress made in the recent negotiations and, in particular, with the revived positive attitude and political will by negotiators, or displayed by the negotiators, during the recent negotiations. We encourage all concerned to

press on with the negotiations, in order to reach agreement in the International Undertaking. Of course, to reach such agreements as envisaged in the year 2000.

WANG ZHANLU (China) (Original language Chinese)

The Chinese delegation appreciates very much the efforts made by the PGRFA with a view to revising the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources. We also note that important progress has been made in the course of negotiations. Having said that, I would like to reaffirm the following points with respect to this Undertaking.

With respect to the multilateral system of access and benefit sharing, we think that all countries have a sovereign right over their own plant genetic resources, and that authorization of access belongs to them and should respect the legislation in force in each country.

Starting on this basis, we do hope that FAO will contribute actively to setting up a multilateral system that would be effective and transparent so as to ensure a fair and equitable sharing of all benefits coming from the use of these resources, and also respecting the rights of farmers.

In its future activities, the negotiations should be speeded up for the revision of the Undertaking and international cooperation should be increased in order to protect the genetic resources of the food and agriculture. With respect to the conservation and utilization of genetic resources, FAO and developed countries should strengthen assistance and help in the transfer of technology to developing countries in order to protect plant genetic resources that are in danger of disappearing. We subscribe to the Report of the Commission and recommend that it be approved by Council.

Georges RUPHIN (Madagascar)

Je serai très bref. Madagascar, ayant participé à la huitième session de la Commission des ressources génétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture, et en tant que membre du Groupe de travail sur les ressources génétiques, voudrait présenter au Secrétariat ses remerciements pour la qualité du document qui nous est présenté. Ma délégation attire cependant l'attention du Conseil sur la nécessité de continuer les négociations sur la révision de l'Engagement international sur les ressources phylogénétiques, et espère que la Conférence de novembre 1999 approuve les textes définitifs. Enfin, ma délégation souscrit à l'adoption qui nous est présentée.

Sumpeno PUTRO (Indonesia)

On behalf of the Indonesian delegation, I would like to commend the Secretariat for preparing an excellent and concise document to facilitate rapid progress of the discussion.

Let me touch upon various important issues currently under discussion.

Firstly, on animal genetic resources, the Indonesian delegation would like to reiterate our endorsement that FAO should continue to shape more clearly the framework and the development of the constitutional elements of the Global Strategy in consultation with Member Nations.

We would also like to emphasize that FAO should provide adequate Regular Programme budgetary funds to develop the constituents on the Global Strategy, as well as to coordinate the development of a country-driven Report on the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources.

Secondly, on plant genetic resources, the Indonesian delegation also underlines the important role of regional plant genetic resources for food and agriculture networks in promoting implementation of the Global Plan of Action, and the need for countries and organizations to strengthen particular activities in order to promote balanced implementation of the Global Plan of Action.

We also recognize that greater transparency in financing the implementation of the Global Plan of Action is highly imperative, and FAO should develop normative activities to facilitate implementation.

In this context, we would like to re-emphasize the importance to recognize *Farmers' Rights* as well as equal sharing of benefits emanating from commercial use of plant genetic resources in the revised draft of International Undertaking.

Finally, the rapid growth of biotechnology is an important tool for the conservation and improvement of genetic resources for food and agriculture. The preparation of the draft Code of Conduct on Biotechnology as it relates to Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and the International Code of Conduct for Plant Germplasm Collection and Transfer is of high priority, especially in the light of the revised International Undertaking.

With the above remarks, we would like to endorse the Report.

E. Wayne DENNEY (United States of America)

Thank you Mr Rose for reading the excellent summary submitted by Chairman Gerbasi, as well as the summary provided by Mr Esquinas.

We support both the content and spirit of the reports. Our sentiments are similar to those expressed by South Africa.

In particular, we agree that very significant progress has been made in the negotiations and that there is a genuine political will to conclude the negotiations as soon as possible.

We are hopeful that the United States will be able to respond positively to the Secretariat's request for support for additional negotiating sessions, although we regret that we are unable to make a more firm commitment at this time.

Finally, we are encouraged by the progress being made on animal genetic resources and hope to be able to provide support to that effort as well.

We are pleased to endorse the Report of the 8th Session.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Agradecemos a los Sres. Rose y Esquinas la presentación de este tema. En la Reunión de la Comisión de abril pasado, sin duda, se lograron importantes avances en aspectos medulares del Compromiso Internacional. No obstante, aún se requerirán grandes esfuerzos para concluir el ejercicio de revisión de este documento. En tal sentido, esperamos que en la próxima Reunión Extraordinaria se mantenga el espíritu y la voluntad política para avanzar, en este sentido, sobre la base de los grandes principios acordados, particularmente, el reconocimiento de la soberanía de los países sobre sus recursos fitogenéticos, la distribución justa y equitativa de los beneficios derivados de su uso, y el reconocimiento de los derechos del agricultor.

Quisiéramos subrayar también, la importancia de lograr avances en la aplicación del Plan de Acción de Leipzig, al que se han referido varias delegaciones. En este sentido, apoyamos la adopción del informe que hoy es sometido al Consejo.

Sra. Virginia PÉREZ PÉREZ (Venezuela)

Quisiera aprovechar esta oportunidad para agradecer a todos los Miembros de la Comisión, la confianza que depositaron en Venezuela al escoger nuevamente al Embajador Fernando Gerbasi como Presidente de este Comité.

Quisiera indicar que los avances logrados demuestran que la voluntad política y el trabajo conjunto son el mejor medio para alcanzar los objetivos deseados.

Agradecemos, además, la ayuda de la Secretaría y la colaboración que todos los Miembros prestaron a la Presidencia. Mi delegación espera que inicie, lo antes posible, la elaboración del informe sobre la situación de los recursos zoogenéticos y sus directrices.

En cuanto al Plan de Acción para la Conservación de los Recursos Fitogenéticos para la Agricultura y la Alimentación, es importante seguir monitoreando su aplicación. Es de mucha urgencia e importancia concluir las negociaciones para la revisión del Compromiso Internacional. Pero, para que esta aspiración se haga realidad deben asignarse mayores recursos al Programa Ordinario, y también al Sector Fitogenético/Zoogenético.

Acogemos y refrendamos, por lo tanto, todas las recomendaciones contenidas en el Informe y, sobretudo, aquellas relacionadas con el Compromiso Internacional sobre Recursos Zootenéticos/Fitogenéticos y con los Códigos de Conducta desarrollados por la Comisión.

Ms Mitzi GURGEL VALENTE da COSTA (Brazil)

May I first of all say that it is a pleasure to see you sitting on the podium in front of us, for a change.

I would also like to thank Mr Rose for his comprehensive report on the difficult negotiations that took place recently. I would tend to agree with what he has said in the sense that the decisions that we reached in Montreux were not followed through afterwards in the meeting that took place here in April of this year.

There have, however, been some advances in the meetings that have taken place with regards to the on-going re-negotiation of the International Undertaking. In spite of that, I think that I have to agree with what some of my predecessors here have said, that we still have a very long way to go. There are very important issues here that need to be discussed and we are just now starting to see them. The issues that we have been discussing have enormous strategic, financial, economic and political implications that we cannot, and should not, ignore if we are to succeed in reaching a just and balanced final agreement, which will benefit all countries alike.

All efforts must be made to ensure free access by all to plant genetic resources that are important to agriculture, that is to the production of food, so that we may achieve world food security in line with what we have endorsed in the World Food Conference.

Brazil is among the countries that are negotiating the sustainable universal access to plant genetic resources that will ensure world food security. It must, however, be stressed that Brazil means the production of food - food to feed the hungry people, food to feed the world. We do not include in the definition of plant genetic resources such resources that can be used for other purposes.

Mrs Neela GANGADHARAN (India)

We are very happy to see you in the Chair. We thank Mr Rose and Mr Esquinas for giving us an outline of the progress made so far.

We are particularly happy that, in the last session, consensus was arrived at on the issue of Farmers' Rights. Much remains to be done, of course, and like many developing countries who spoke before us, India has consistently been emphasizing the need to recognize the issue of facilitated access to plant genetic resources and technologies, fair and equitable benefit sharing, Farmers' Rights and the international fund as important components of the Undertaking.

India reaffirms its 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 that are vital for ensuring food and national security and preservation of bio-resources.

India is in favour of adopting the revised International Undertaking as a legally-binding agreement and in harmony with the CBD. It should also cater to the realization of the Global Plan of Action.

We hope that consensus will be arrived at soon on other articles of the revised International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources, including on the vital issues of coverage and access to the multilateral system, equitable and fair sharing of benefits and funding mechanisms for realizing the goal of sustainable agriculture and global food security.

Ahmed AFAILAL (Maroc)

Je voudrais tout d'abord remercier le Secrétariat pour l'excellente qualité des documents présentés, ainsi que l'excellente intervention, la présentation de M. Rose. Le Maroc adhère à la quasi-totalité des composantes du système mondial sur les ressources phytogénétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture, en particulier l'Engagement international, le réseau des banques de gènes placé sous les auspices de la FAO. Il fait également partie du Groupe de travail de la Commission des

ressources génétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture, aux travaux de laquelle il participe régulièrement depuis 1995.

La Commission négocie depuis 1994 la révision de l'Engagement, en vue de l'harmoniser avec la Convention internationale sur la diversité biologique. Le rythme d'avancement des négociations est ralenti par les divergences de points de vue des Pays industrialisés et des Pays en développement, à quelques nuances près. Toutefois, nous enregistrons avec satisfaction les minces progrès réalisés lors de la dernière session de la Commission. Les divergences portent, pour le moment, sur les Articles 11, 12, 13 et 14, concernant respectivement le système multilatéral d'accès aux ressources phytogénétiques et de partage des avantages découlant de leur utilisation, couverture pour le champ d'application du système multilatéral. Cela concerne également l'accès facilité aux ressources phytogénétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture au sein du système multilatéral. Cela concerne également le droit des agriculteurs.

Le Maroc est solidaire du Groupe des 77, et les thèses défendues par ce groupe se présentent comme suit: le partage des avantages découlant de l'utilisation des ressources phytogénétiques est garanti par la Convention sur la diversité biologique, notamment en ce qui concerne l'accès à l'information, la participation à la recherche et le transfert de technologies. La liste des ressources phytogénétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture doit être la plus courte possible. Elle pourra être élargie au fur et à mesure que le partage des avantages aura fait ses preuves. La participation du secteur privé au système est une affaire interne aux parties.

L'Article 13 parle de la facilitation de l'accès aux ressources phytogénétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture d'un côté, et d'instituer les droits de propriété intellectuelle de l'autre. Ces deux choses sont incompatibles. Il est difficilement concevable d'ouvrir le système à des parties non contractantes.

S'agissant des ressources génétiques des animaux d'élevage pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture, il conviendrait de recommander quelques actions. J'en citerai quelques-unes. Premièrement élaborer des directives en accord avec les pays, afin qu'elles soient utilisées pour la préparation du Rapport sur l'état des ressources zoogénétiques dans le monde; développer la capacité et les potentiels régionaux de gestion des ressources zoogénétiques pour renforcer l'efficacité et la coopération; associer la communauté scientifique et les ONG à l'élaboration et à la mise en œuvre de la stratégie mondiale, visant, notamment la conservation des espèces animales d'élevage menacées, la connaissance et l'utilisation des races indigènes, et la valorisation des savoirs locaux dans ce domaine.

Je souhaiterais, pour finir, exprimer le vœu de voir le Groupe de travail sur ces dernières ressources zoogénétiques se réunir dans l'avenir et essayer de mobiliser les ressources nécessaires à ce faire.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italie)

Je me demande, en faisant suite à mes interventions précédentes, quel est le rôle de l'IPGRI dans cet exercice, et s'il ne pourrait pas être invité à être impliqué encore davantage. Si, par exemple, un représentant de l'IPGRI ne pourrait pas siéger à la table de la présidence et donner des avis sur les thèmes que nous débattons aujourd'hui.

Je voudrais aussi répéter ce que j'ai dit à une précédente occasion sur l'importance de renforcer le rôle du Secrétariat de la FAO. Je crois que c'est une priorité que l'Organisation est en train d'envisager. Je sais qu'il y a un gros poids sur les épaules des directeurs présents autour de cette table, et je me demande s'il ne faudrait pas ajouter d'autres forces pour progresser encore davantage.

Je ne fais que répéter et souscrire tout à fait à ce que l'Allemagne, au nom de la présidence de la Communauté européenne et de ses États Membres, a déjà dit, mais je souhaite aussi que la prochaine Réunion ministérielle soit une occasion pour faire avancer les procédures de la négociation. Personnellement, j'ai pris part à toutes les séances de la Commission sur les ressources génétiques, et j'ai l'impression que, malgré les grands efforts et les progrès qu'on a

réalisés, surtout au sujet de l'article 15 sur les droits de l'agriculteur, il y a beaucoup de chemin à faire et beaucoup d'obstacles à surmonter. C'est la raison pour laquelle la prochaine rencontre des Ministres de l'agriculture, la prochaine Réunion ministérielle, la Conférence générale, doivent être les occasions idéales pour donner un impact plus politique et essayer ainsi de surmonter les nombreux obstacles techniques de différente nature qui encore sèment le chemin de la révision de l'*International Undertaking*.

Steinar HELGEN (Observer for Norway)

Norway welcomes this Report and the progress made so far in negotiations on the International Undertaking, in that we support the statements made by several other delegations, including the European Community.

We will particularly underline our appreciation for paragraph 26, which reads that the Commission's highest priority will be given to the completion of the negotiations for the Revision of the International Undertaking.

CHAIRMAN

We have had an illuminating debate and the Council clearly endorsed the Report of the 8th Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and its recommendations, as well as the mandate given to its Chairman to advance the negotiations.

The Council has supported the work of the Commission, and has stressed the need for countries to show flexibility and a spirit of compromise in these important negotiations, and to maintain and increase the momentum so as to meet the deadlines that have been set.

The Council also urges donors to make adequate extra-budgetary resources available in a timely manner, including to facilitate the participation of developing countries in the negotiations.

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

I should like to thank the Secretariat for this excellent document. I should like to congratulate them for the excellent performance under the chairmanship of Mr Gerbasi.

I should also like to thank Mr Rose for his introduction of this item.

We would like to pay tribute to all those countries that made this progress possible. Fully in line with the position of the Group of 77, I should like to state our position, namely our support of the concept of Farmers' Rights, bearing in mind the fact that this possibility for the farmers is of paramount importance. They are the ones who conserve the natural resources.

The distinguished Representative of Morocco referred to animal genetic resources. We do hope that the Undertaking will be broadened so that it can include both plant and animal genetic resources.

With regard to IPGRI, the distinguished Representative of Italy referred to the possible participation of IPGRI. The distinguished Representative of Italy wondered if it would be possible to involve IPGRI in our work and would it be possible also to entrust IPGRI with the task of dealing with animal genetic resources, in addition to plant genetic resources.

J.T. ESQUINAS-ALCAZAR (del Personal de la FAO)

Muchas gracias a todos ustedes por el apoyo recibido a las distintas recomendaciones de la Comisión. Hay una pregunta de Italia en relación con la cooperación con el IPGRI que posteriormente ha sido hecha también por Sudán. La cooperación con el IPGRI en estos momentos es excelente, sobretodo en las negociaciones sobre el Compromiso Internacional y en la elaboración y seguimiento del Plan Mundial de Acción sobre Recursos Fitogenéticos.

El IPGRI además, como ustedes saben, presenta periódicamente informes a la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos sobre la Agricultura y la Alimentación y en esos informes recoge también las actividades del resto de los centros internacionales incluyendo aquellos que se ocupan de los recursos zoogenéticos y de los recursos genéticos forestales y pesqueros. Por tanto, los Miembros

de la Comisión tienen la oportunidad de hacer recomendaciones al IPGRI, quien generalmente las agradece y las lleva a la práctica.

Con respecto a los dos casos específicos de cooperación intensa de los que he hablado: uno en la elaboración del Plan Mundial de Acción durante la preparación de la Conferencia Internacional de Recursos Fitogenéticos de Leipzig; el programa del IPGRI ha sido modificado sustancialmente para ponerlo en línea con el Plan de Acción aprobado. Otro es en la negociación del Compromiso Internacional: el IPGRI ha participado como observador en todas las reuniones de negociación del Compromiso, ha elaborado al menos en cuatro ocasiones distintos documentos técnicos de apoyo a las negociaciones y estuvo también presente en la Reunión de Montreux en Suiza expresamente invitado por el Presidente de la Comisión.

Con respecto a la función del IPGRI en recursos zoogenéticos - y respondo a la pregunta específica de Sudán - esto obviamente corresponde al Grupo Directivo del IPGRI el decidir hasta qué punto se ocupan sólo de plantas o también de animales. Por ahora, incluso en su nombre: "Instituto Internacional de Recursos Fitogenéticos", se refiere exclusivamente a plantas, si bien otros centros internacionales se ocupan de animales.

Hubo otra pregunta, procedente de la delegación de Malasia, en relación con el interés de que haya una Reunión en el próximo bienio del Grupo Intergubernamental Técnico Subsidiario de la Comisión para Recursos Fitogenéticos, para impulsar una mayor velocidad a la implementación del Plan de Acción. Otras delegaciones han hecho alusión también a la importancia de la Reunión en el próximo bienio del Grupo Subsidiario para Recursos Genéticos Animales.

Bien, yo les puedo decir con satisfacción que la FAO, en su borrador de Programa y Presupuestos para el próximo bienio, tiene incluida una Reunión de cada uno de estos dos Grupos Subsidiarios de Trabajo.

A. SAWADOGO (Sous-Directeur général, Département de l'agriculture)

Ce ne sont pas des observations, je voudrais simplement exprimer la reconnaissance du Secrétariat aux pays qui ont d'ores et déjà annoncé qu'ils envisagent de soutenir la poursuite des négociations sur la Révision de l'Engagement international sur les ressources phytogénétiques. J'espère que d'autres pays imiteront leur exemple.

Je crois qu'en effet, il faut, comme vous nous l'avez conseillé dans la planification stratégique que nous faisons, des limites de temps à chaque chose. Cette négociation ne peut pas se poursuivre indéfiniment. Ou bien elle a des chances d'aboutir, tel semble être le cas actuellement, et dans ce cas, il faut faire le maximum d'efforts, ou elle n'a pas de chance d'aboutir, alors les Pays Membres verront quelle autre directive donner au Secrétariat.

Je voudrais donc vous remercier tous, et remercier plus particulièrement ceux qui ont décidé d'apporter un soutien tel que les pays en voie de développement puissent participer activement à la poursuite des négociations.

S. JUTZI (Director, Animal Production and Health Division)

First of all I have noted with pleasure that the Council has endorsed the recommendation of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture for the further development of the Global Strategy on Animal Genetic Resources and also for the preparation of the First Report on the State of the World on Animal Genetic Resources.

The Council earlier this week received the Director-General's submission as to how he intends to construct the Zero Nominal Growth budget scenario requested from the Secretariat, and you have noted there that genetic resources activities are to be protected from budget reductions. With this, we will be in a position to accommodate the concerns tabled here with regard to genetic resources, both in the plant and in the animal sectors.

Much of the current Regular Programme investment of FAO in animal genetic resources deals with both the global strategy development and the preparation of the Report on the State of the World Animal Genetic Resources. The preparation of the Report on the State of the World

Animal Genetic Resources is a major one-off undertaking which will essentially rely on extra-budgetary resources, and we are encouraged to note the position signalled to us by a number of donors who are supporting that approach.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy)

I want to thank the Secretariat for the answer it gave to me. I thank particularly Dr Esquinas for what he said. I am aware that IPGRI is already involved in the exercise, but what I was asking is a major involvement, to dramatize, in a sense, the problem. I agree with the Assistant Director-General Sawadogo about the fact that the negotiations cannot go on indefinitely.

The next general Conference would be an occasion for the politicians to decide and give a necessary push for progress, and at the same time a major involvement by IPGRI could help.

I repeat my appeal for the Secretariat to direct major forces for this effort that we hope will be decisive.

The meeting rose at 18.55 hours

La session est levée à 18 h 55

Se levanta la sesión a las 18.55 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixteenth Session Cent seizième session 116º período de sesiones
Rome, 14 – 19 June 1999 Rome, 14 – 19 juin 1999 Roma, 14 – 19 de junio de 1999
SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING SEPTIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SÉPTIMA SESIÓN PLENARIA
17 June 1999

**The Seventh Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.40 hours
Mr Sjarifudin Baharsjah
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding**

**La septième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 40
sous la présidence de M. Sjarifudin Baharsjah
Président indépendant du Conseil**

**Se abre la séptima sesión plenaria a las 9.40 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Sjarifudin Baharsjah
Presidente Independiente del Consejo**

III. ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP (continued)**III. ACTIVITÉS DE LA FAO ET DU PAM (suite)****III. ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y DEL PMA (continuación)****7. Report of the 23rd Session of the Committee on Fisheries (Rome, 15-19 february 1999)**

(CL 116/7; CL 116/INF/19)

7. Rapport de la vingt-troisième session du Comité des pêches (Rome, 15-19 février 1999)

(CL 116/7; CL 116/INF/19)

7. Informe del 23º período de sesiones del Comité de Pesca (Roma, 15-19 de febrero de 1999)

(CL 116/7; CL 116/INF/19)

CHAIRMAN

I call the seventh meeting of the 116th Council Session to order.

The first item on our agenda today is Item 7, *Report of the Twenty-third Session of the Committee on Fisheries*, or COFI. The document is CL 116/7.

The February 1999 Session of COFI reviewed the trends, policies and issues in world fisheries, progress in the implementation of the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries* and the implementation of FAO Conference Resolution 13/97 regarding the review of FAO Statutory Bodies, the FAO Programme for Fisheries 1996-1998, the Strategic Framework for the years 2000 to 2015 and the Medium-term Perspectives for major FAO Programme 2.3 on Fisheries.

The deliberations and outcome of the Session once more confirmed the Committee as the major international policy and technical forum on fisheries issues, and an effective mechanism for appraisal of the world fisheries sector.

S.M. GARCIA (Directeur, Division des ressources halieutiques)

En février dernier, lors de sa vingt-troisième session, le Comité des pêches a tenu à souligner le rôle croissant de la pêche et de l'aquaculture dans les eaux intérieures, pour la production halieutique et la nutrition humaine. A cet égard, il a insisté sur les avantages d'une gestion intégrée des ressources et sur la nécessité de protéger l'environnement, et de renforcer la coopération entre les organisations gouvernementales, les pêcheurs et les autres parties prenantes.

Le Comité a pris connaissance des expériences déjà réalisées pour la mise en œuvre du *Code de conduite pour une pêche responsable*. Il s'est déclaré satisfait des efforts consentis par la FAO pour promouvoir l'application du Code, mais il a également reconnu qu'une assistance supplémentaire serait nécessaire pour garantir le succès des progrès dans ce domaine. Après avoir commenté de manière positive la mise en œuvre par la FAO du programme des pêches pour la période 1996-1998, le Comité a vivement recommandé une augmentation sensible de la proportion des ressources du Programme ordinaire de la FAO qui seront consacrées au "grand programme pêche".

Le Comité a adopté les Plans internationaux pour la gestion de la capacité de pêche, pour la conservation et la gestion des requins ainsi que pour la réduction des captures accidentelles d'oiseaux par les palangriers. Il a exprimé son soutien au programme FAO d'assistance au secteur des pêches des États insulaires en développement, mais s'est inquiété du peu de progrès accomplis par la mobilisation des ressources nécessaires à l'exécution de ce programme. Le Comité a approuvé le Rapport de la sixième session du Sous-comité du commerce du poisson et a accepté l'invitation de tenir la septième session de ce Comité à Brèmes, en Allemagne, en l'an 2000. Le Comité a reçu le Rapport de la Consultation technique sur la question de savoir s'il est possible d'élaborer des directives techniques non-discriminatoires pour l'étiquetage écologique des produits de la pêche, réunion qui s'est tenue à Rome en octobre 1998.

Le Comité a insisté sur le fait que tout système d'étiquetage écologique devrait être notamment transparent, facultatif et non-discriminatoire, et ne devrait pas créer d'obstacles au commerce. Le Comité a estimé que la deuxième version du *Cadre stratégique de la FAO pour les années 2000-*

2015, représentait une nette amélioration tout en suggérant que la Version 3.0 devrait être plus concise, moins descriptive et accorder la priorité à la satisfaction des besoins des États Membres, en s'appuyant notamment sur les points forts de l'Organisation et en respectant l'équilibre nécessaire entre les activités normatives et les activités de terrain.

En approuvant les perspectives à moyen terme pour le programme des pêches, le Comité a accordé une priorité élevée aux activités d'appui et à la mise en œuvre du *Code de conduite pour une pêche responsable*, ainsi qu'à l'exécution des trois Plans d'action internationaux adoptés pendant la session et également aux activités de soutien au développement d'une aquaculture durable. Le Comité s'est également félicité des mesures envisagées et prises pour renforcer les fonctions et responsabilités des organisations régionales des pêches de la FAO ainsi que leur coopération avec les organisations ne relevant pas de cette Organisation. Mesdames et Messieurs, je reste à votre disposition pour toute clarification que vous jugerez utile.

Paul ROSS (Australia)

Firstly, we would like to acknowledge the hard work of the Fisheries Department, particularly Dr Garcia and Dr Satia, in running the COFI Session and the Fisheries Ministerial Meeting so well.

Australia considers the Report from the Twenty-third Session of the Committee on Fisheries to be an accurate record of the meeting, and should be adopted by the Council. The Report notes that there will be a substantial increase in the workload of the Fisheries Department if the actions proposed are to be undertaken in the next biennium. The work proposed is an important element in the international community's efforts to ensure the world's fisheries are managed on an ecologically-sustainable basis. Whilst Australia recognizes the challenge of allocating scarce resources within the context of a preferred Zero Nominal Growth budget scenario, we continue to support funding being allocated to the Fisheries Programme which reflects the high priority programme to the broader membership. In this regard, we note that in the initial ZNG scenario presented by the Secretariat to this Council, funding to the Fisheries Programme has been protected.

We would like to emphasize a few of the issues covered in COFI's Report. The Plans of Action adopted by COFI for the management and conservation of sharks, and the incidental capture of sea birds, are a significant step forward in the global management of these two issues. Australia strongly recommends that Council endorse these Plans of Action.

While Australia considers that the Global Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity does not contain all the elements we would have preferred to see to make it fully effective, we nevertheless also recommend Council endorse it. It is clear that States urgently need to measure overcapacity in their fleets and then take steps to reduce it. We would expect that measures and mechanisms for the effective reduction of capacity, including vessel disposal, will be considered in the proposed Technical Consultation mentioned in paragraph 36 of COFI's Report. We hope that this Consultation can be held soon.

One of the most serious emerging issues which threatens achievement of fisheries sustainability is illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing, or IUU fishing as it is known. IUU fishing has the potential to undermine even the most careful management regimes. We believe that IUU fishing should be addressed through a global strategic approach. At its Session, COFI discussed our proposal that a Global Plan of Action, under the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*, be developed to deal with this issue. We are very pleased that the Fisheries Ministers declared, at their March meeting, that they will develop a Global Plan of Action to deal effectively with all forms of IUU fishing. Australia calls on the Council to direct FAO to implement the Ministers' decision as expediently as possible. Australia intends to work closely with the Fisheries Department in further refining a strategic approach to the development of the Plan of Action.

Finally, Australia is of the view that aquaculture has a significant contribution to make towards food security, and we would highlight for Council the proposal contained in paragraph 79 of the

Report that COFI establish a Sub-Committee on Aquaculture. We believe that this is an important initiative.

Mrs Prudence FOX-LEWIS (United States of America)

The United States also is very pleased that FAO has been quick to address critical fisheries environmental issues and COFI Members adopted three Plans of Action for Management of Fishing Capacity, Conservation and Management of Sharks and for Reducing By-catch of Sea Birds and Long-Line Fishing. We ask that the Council Session recommend that the Conference approve these three Plans of Action supporting Australia.

These three Plans of Action are important aspects of implementation of the FAO *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*. To maintain the wide support and to cement this role for the FAO, it is critical to provide adequate Regular Programme funds to ensure effective implementation of the Code and of these three Plans of Action.

Finally, we commend the Director-General for convening the FAO Fisheries Ministerial Meeting in March and thank the Mexican chair, Minister Caradías, for her invaluable role in making the Ministerial a success.

Andrew BYRNE (Communauté européenne)

La Communauté européenne souhaite que le Conseil de la FAO adopte les conclusions du Rapport de la vingt-troisième session du COFI qui ont déjà été approuvées par la Communauté européenne et ses États Membres. Toutes les conclusions du COFI sont importantes dans la mesure où elles vont permettre à la communauté internationale d'avancer sur plusieurs sujets. Les positions de la Communauté européenne sur les principaux sujets traités, à savoir l'étiquetage, les pavillons de complaisance et les trois Plans d'action internationaux, ont été prises en compte lors de la réunion du Comité des pêches. En ce sens, la Communauté européenne ne peut que se féliciter des résultats du COFI qui a inclus la possibilité de la convocation d'une Consultation technique sur l'étiquetage et s'en appelle à la FAO et à l'IMO pour étudier le lien substantiel entre les navires de pêches et l'Etat des pavillons et sur l'adoption par le COFI des trois Plans d'actions internationaux.

D'autre part, le COFI a aussi permis d'initier une réflexion sur la pêche illégale, non régulée et non reportée et sur le besoin de combattre ces activités de pêche par le biais d'un Plan d'action international. La Communauté européenne souhaiterait donc que le Conseil de la FAO adopte formellement les trois Plans d'action internationaux et souligne l'importance du combat, au niveau international, contre la pêche illégale. Cela a, par ailleurs, conduit, lors de la Réunion ministérielle, à approuver le principe d'un Plan d'action international dans ce domaine. Finalement, la Communauté européenne souhaiterait également que le Conseil appuie les recommandations envisagées en moyens termes concernant la mise en œuvre du *Code de conduite pour une pêche responsable*.

Khairuddin Md. TAHIR (Malaysia)

The Malaysian delegation compliments the Secretariat for preparing and introducing document CL 116/7. We find the document well prepared and focused on a series of important topics of great interest to FAO's membership.

Malaysia endorses FAO's Integrated Resource Management approach to ensuring sustainable inland fisheries development. We have implemented a similar scheme, called Aquaculture Development Areas, and found this approach useful in optimizing our resource use.

We fully share the high potential of the inland fish production system in contributing to food security, income generation and alleviating poverty among targeted sectors of the rural population. We are also fully aware of the need to take cognizance of the adverse environmental impact of inland fishery activities on the eco-system, as well as competition for scarce water and land resources, and the need to involve various agencies and stakeholders in the planning process of such activities.

In this connection, my delegation welcomes FAO's efforts in this area, in particular in developing appropriate integrated aquaculture-agriculture farming systems and integrated utilization of small and medium-size water bodies.

We also welcome FAO's support in strengthening regional institutions such as the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA). The recently established Sub-Committee on Aquaculture is also an important step in the right direction, and resources should be made available for its first meeting to be held as soon as possible.

With regard to the implementation of the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*, my delegation welcomes greater efforts by FAO in developing the necessary framework and guidelines in order to accelerate the implementation of the *Code* and to monitor its progress. We endorse the priorities that have been identified in this area, as indicated in paragraph 19, including training, capacity-building and institutional strengthening.

Moving on to the *International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity*, we are pleased to endorse it. However, we would like to reiterate the urgency of enhancing technical capacities of developing countries in measuring and assessing fishing capacities, especially in countries with multi-species and multi-cohort species. We strongly urge FAO to conduct more Regional Consultations and Workshops in this area.

Concerning the eco-labelling scheme for products from marine capture fisheries, we view FAO as the most competent and appropriate body responsible for elaborating the technical guidelines for eco-labelling. Hence, we support FAO's further work in this area, especially in convening a second open Technical Consultation.

In conclusion, a lot more work needs to be done to implement the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*. In this connection, the Rome Ministerial Declaration has affirmed the important areas that need to be addressed. Malaysia would like to emphasize that adequate resources should be made available in the next biennium to enable the Fisheries Department and Member Nations to undertake these very important tasks and responsibilities in the fisheries sector.

Takanori OHASHI (Japan)

We wish to draw the attention of the Council to a couple of issues in this Report. My delegation is pleased with the report of COFI, and we feel that it very clearly indicates the areas where FAO should continue to be involved.

Japan fully supports the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries* and urges Member Nations to implement its provision as soon as possible. In this regard, the recent developments of the *International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity*, *Sharks and By-Catch of Seabirds*, are important instruments to address specific problems and they will, in turn, contribute to the implementation of the *Code of Conduct*. Having said that, Japan would like to endorse the three Plans of Action.

The major challenge we are now facing is how to deal with the issue of over-exploitation of fisheries resources. In this sense, Japan regards the *Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity* as an initial step to address over-fishing and, in order to adequately ensure the implementation of the Plan of Action, Japan urges FAO to fulfil its role as indicated in several paragraphs in this Report.

My delegation fully concurs with the proposal put forward by Australia regarding IUU fishing. Japan also recognizes the magnitude of the problem of illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing activities, including the "Flag of Convenience". Obviously, I believe, that both IUU activities and the over-fishing issue are part of the same problem, that is to say, over-exploitation of fisheries resources.

In this regard, I would like to point that, in several cases, market forces for the effective and efficient use of fisheries resources on the contrary encourage IUU activities, causing over-

exploitation of fisheries resources. Having said that, Japan expects FAO to take the initiative towards a common solution of the problem relating to over-exploitation.

Let me move on to eco-labelling. I know the issue of eco-labelling was very controversial at the last COFI meeting. I think, much more conservation and attention are necessary to address this issue. Japan believes that there is a clear role for FAO in further conservation eco-labelling.

I would like to make some reference to the eco-system approach. My delegation strongly supports the Committee's agreement on the development of a more ecosystem approach to fisheries development. I would like to stress that the eco-system approach involves taking into consideration both the effects of fishing activities and feeding induction which, in turn, provides a scientific rationale for harvesting marine life resources in a sustainable manner.

Let me take this opportunity to touch upon a fish trade issue. As explicitly recognized in the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*, trade in fish products should not compromise the proper management of resources. This brings me to the point that, in order to ensure responsible fish trade, as noted in the *Code of Conduct*, fisheries resources should be managed in a responsible and sustainable manner.

In this context, I would like draw your attention to the fact that the Committee on Trade and Environment in WTO will be held around the end of June in Geneva, where, I suppose, fish trade issue, including subsidies, will be discussed. My delegation strongly hopes that the FAO Fisheries Department will participate, monitor and provide technical advice and inputs, as appropriate, to the coming CTE and subsequent related meetings, since I believe FAO is the only Specialized Agency within the UN System with a broad and extensive range of fisheries expertise.

Finally, as many delegates indicated under the agenda item on the *Programme of Work and Budget* for the next biennium, my delegation considers that fisheries is FAO's comparative advantage and FAO should do more in this field.

Sumpeno PUTRO (Indonesia)

On behalf of the Indonesian delegation I would like to praise FAO for the timely and good implementation of the Fisheries Programme in the 1996-98 period, and particularly the efforts made to assist Member Nations in the implementation of the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*.

In this connection we would like to give our endorsement to the draft Plan of Action submitted to the Council, but at the same time would like to reiterate our stand that this Plan of Action should not be used to regulate trade in fisheries and fishery products, which are already governed by relative trade agreements.

With regard to the Report on the 6th Session of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, we would like to capitalize our endorsement that further assistance should be given to developing countries, in order to improve their capacity-building and enable them to implement stringent health-related import regulations, particularly in the field of quality-control and hazard analysis.

Our delegation also supports the introduction of eco-labelling and endorses the comment made by our colleagues from Malaysia, as well as the Report on the Consultation of the FAO *Ad hoc* Expert Group on Listing Criteria for Marine Species under CITES. This is due to the fact that eco-labelling is one of the important measures which could be effectively used to implement the Plan of Action of the *Code*.

However, our we would like to stress that any eco-labelling scheme must be transparent and not be used as disguised restrictions to trade, that it must be voluntary, non-discriminatory and comply with all relevant international agreements.

Recognizing the important role of inland capture fisheries and aquaculture in fish production for human nutrition as well as poverty alleviation, we would like also to support the establishment of a Sub-Committee on Aquaculture.

Finally we would like to concur the endorsement on the Medium-Term perspectives after the adequate information on the budget has been furnished. In particular, we would like to urge the ratification of the "Compliance Agreement" in the light of the apparent increase of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

With these remarks, we are delighted to endorse the Report.

Abdellatif BERRAHO (Maroc)

Le Maroc félicite le Secrétariat, ainsi que le Comité de rédaction, duquel il a d'ailleurs fait partie, pour l'excellent document qui a été préparé par le Conseil. En effet, celui-ci fait la synthèse de tous les débats qui ont eu lieu au sein du Comité et présente les principales idées et recommandations qui ont été exprimées par les différents pays.

Le Maroc, comme vous le savez, a joué un rôle actif dans l'élaboration du Consensus de Rome sur le *Code de conduite pour une pêche responsable*, de même qu'il a été également actif dans le cadre de la préparation de la *Déclaration de Kyoto relative à la contribution des pêches et de l'aquaculture à la sécurité alimentaire*. Le Maroc se réjouit que ces deux instruments, dont le rôle pour une gestion durable des ressources halieutiques et aquacole est indéniable, aient été mis en exergue dans le Rapport qui nous a été présenté, car nous sommes convaincus que l'utilisation efficiente et efficace de ces deux instruments permettra de réduire l'effort excessif de pêche qui est exercé actuellement sur les stocks mondiaux, et permettra à terme, selon le planning qui a d'ailleurs été préparé dans le cadre de ce document, document que nous approuvons, ainsi que ses trois plans d'action, et permettra donc à terme d'atteindre un équilibre entre les capacités de pêche des flottilles mondiales et le potentiel de capture offert par les ressources.

Je saisi l'occasion qui est donnée à ma délégation pour rappeler les actions qui nous paraissent essentielles à une gestion durable des ressources, et qui, en même temps, garantissent la sécurité alimentaire. Il s'agit premièrement de mettre au plus vite des indicateurs sur la durabilité des pêches et améliorer le suivi mondial des stocks; deuxièmement, renforcer la pluridisciplinarité dans les études halieutiques et développer parallèlement des approches écosystémiques appropriées; troisièmement, réduire le gaspillage des ressources halieutiques en évitant, notamment, les rejets en mer et les pertes à terre, et ce par le développement et l'utilisation de technologies plus appropriées, comme par exemple l'utilisation d'engins de pêche sélectifs; et quatrièmement, accorder une priorité à l'aquaculture durable, aussi bien dans les eaux intérieures qu'en mer, et à ce propos, le Maroc appuie fortement la création d'un sous-comité de l'aquaculture, idée qui a été débattue au sein du Comité des pêches.

Enfin, la dernière action qui nous paraît fondamentale est d'accorder aux organisations régionales de pêche un rôle plus important, afin qu'elles puissent contribuer plus efficacement à la gestion durable des pêches. A ce sujet, le Maroc, qui, comme vous le savez, assure actuellement le Secrétariat permanent de la Conférence ministérielle sur la coopération halieutique entre les États africains riverains de l'océan Atlantique, le Maroc vient d'organiser une réunion du Comité de suivi de cette conférence, qui est actuellement présidée par la République du Cap-Vert, réunion qui va permettre l'organisation prochaine de la quatrième Conférence de cette organisation.

Je voudrais enfin conclure cette intervention en insistant sur un point qui nous paraît fondamental, qui est celui des moyens accordés au Département des pêches de la FAO, en relevant que ce département ne pourrait remplir les objectifs très importants qui lui sont assignés que si ses moyens, notamment ses moyens financiers, se trouvent renforcés et qu'il ait une part dans le budget de la FAO qui corresponde plus à sa mission.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Queremos resaltar la trascendencia del período de sesiones del Comité de Pesca cuyo informe hoy se presenta a este Consejo. En la reunión de abril se refrendó el papel relevante que cumple la aplicación del *Código de Conducta para la Pesca Responsable* como punto de referencia en todas las actividades del sector. En este sentido, se advirtió un unánime respaldo a la instrumentación de

este documento que establece las líneas para la utilización sostenible de los recursos pesqueros mundiales, que tanto contribuyen a la seguridad alimentaria.

Al respecto, queremos recordar el papel que en su promoción original y concretización tuvo la Dra. Margarita Lizárraga. Si bien el tema de la medalla que la próxima Conferencia otorgará en su honor fue eliminado de este programa ante el hecho de que el comité de selección respectivo no ha designado al galardonado, entendemos que este tema quedará incluido en la agenda del Consejo previo a la próxima Conferencia.

Después de difíciles y arduas negociaciones celebradas en el marco de sendas consultas, el Comité alcanzó acuerdos sobre tres Planes de Acción vinculados con actividades claves de la ordenación pesquera. Al respecto, deseamos resaltar la importancia de que la aplicación de los mismos se realice, como fue acordado, en el marco de la aplicación del *Código de Conducta para la Pesca Responsable*. Reiteramos que este documento debe constituir el punto de referencia para todas las acciones que se emprendan en el sector.

Durante la reunión de Ministros de Pesca, celebrado en marzo pasado, la cual mi país tuvo el honor de presidir, los Países Miembros de esta Organización, además de informar sobre los avances en la aplicación del Código, intercambiaron puntos de vista sobre dos aspectos centrales de dicho instrumento.

En este contexto, deseamos comunicar que la Reunión Técnica sobre la Medición de la Capacidad Pesquera que ofrecimos hospedar, y que copatrocinará la FAO, se celebrará en México del 29 de noviembre al 3 de diciembre próximo. Consideramos que ésta será una ocasión propicia para que los países discutamos dicha cuestión, sobre todos los elementos y aspectos que deben ponderarse, en particular, el principio de la responsabilidad común pero diferenciada.

Con estas observaciones, mi delegación se complace en endosar el *Informe del 23º Período de Sesiones del Comité de Pesca*.

B. M. MOLOPE (South Africa)

This intervention is merely to confirm that South Africa endorses the Report, and to draw attention to the fact that the matter of fish trade examined by the Sub-Committee in Bremen was pursued further at an internationally-convened meeting in Cape Town in November 1998. The subject matter of the meeting was a general discussion of the CITES listing criteria. It is hoped that this matter will be pursued further in due course.

The South African delegation wishes to stress the increasing importance of the role of inland capture fisheries and aquaculture in fish production, and the importance of these activities in human nutrition and poverty alleviation.

In this regard, South Africa echoes the comments made by Malaysia and Morocco that the establishment of a Sub-Committee on Aquaculture is a step in the right direction, and should be supported with all the necessary resources.

Yohannes TENSUE (Eritrea)

I would like to express my appreciation for the excellent document presented in front of us, and I also support the previous speakers in their support of the establishment of a Sub-Committee on Aquaculture.

I welcome the suggestion made by Japan that FAO should actively participate in monitoring and providing technical inputs and advice to the Committee on Trade and Environment, or World Trade Organization, related to fishing activities and fishing business.

The Sub-Regional Fishing Commissions should be supported fully because they must be the best instrument to implement the *Code of Conduct* or internationally-agreed fishing management.

The Committee of Fisheries, while supporting the Medium-Term perspective for major programmes was not able, at that time, due to the vast work it had, to estimate the budget required. Generally speaking, the Committee requested that in view of the importance of the

fisheries and aquaculture and the ever-growing demand on its work, the Committee record that the Fisheries Department be allocated an increased share of the overall FAO budget. We support this proposal, although the budget is not submitted but, at least, its call should be respected and supported as to why it should be increased for its activity.

The Ministerial meeting declared and urged FAO to help developing countries to implement the *Code of Conduct*. We support and call upon FAO to help further the implementation of the *Code of Conduct* to the developing countries, especially the Small Island Developing States.

Ms Ratana THANOMSAKYUTH (Thailand)

First of all, my delegation would like to express our appreciation to the Secretariat for the excellent document. My delegation would like to make some comments on the document as follows:

First, Thailand would like to reaffirm that inland fish production would increase its contribution role to the world food production and would be the effective means for assuring food security and alleviation of poverty and malnutrition. To sustain inland fish production, good care of resource management has to be applied under the capacity and suitability of each country.

Second, Thailand agreed that the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries* is an important international instrument for sustainable fisheries development. Actually, many natures of the Code have been practised or emphasized under the guideline and plan of the national fisheries policies. Thailand is also involved with other Asian countries, to develop a guideline for regional responsible fisheries. It should be noted that the *Code* may not be simply understood by fishermen. Therefore, it might be helpful if an easy version of the *Code* could be launched by FAO.

Thailand reiterated that fisheries play a vital role in providing food security and well-being for the world's population. Since the competition for the use of land is increasing everywhere, it is likely that the world food production is shifting to the aquatic habitat. In this regard, we urge the Council to increase the share of the FAO Regular Programme resources to fishery programmes to help deal efficiently with world fishery development and conservation.

Thailand views that it is premature to put forward the eco-labelling issues. The reason is that FAO has launched the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*, which would be the guidelines for complying to environmentally-friendly fisheries. Since the *Code* reported by FAO is not yet widely-known by most people, it is, therefore, urgent to disseminate it and to assist countries in its implementation, including its application in conformity with regional specifications. FAO should look into the constraints of the *Code*, analyze and make recommendations. When the *Code* is applicable and widely-accepted, it may later take eco-labelling into consideration.

Thailand would like to see FAO prioritize aquaculture as a medium-term perspective for major programmes. It should be noted that its development is not much less important than conservation for the developing countries. As aquaculture makes a great contribution to the livelihoods and the well-being of people worldwide, we urge that the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture be formed and financed through the Regular Programme. This is to secure food for people in more than half of the world.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to support the Report.

Lyall W. SMALL (Barbados)

Barbados wishes to endorse the Report with the caveat that we support those countries who fear that eco-labelling of fish and fishery products in support of responsible fisheries could easily lead to either trade discrimination or disguised restrictions to international trade, and thereby create barriers to market access.

We would therefore wish FAO to use its good offices to moderate the thrust towards eco-labelling, especially in relation to developing and transitional economies, as well as Small Island Developing States.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

En primer lugar, nuestra delegación aprueba este Informe. En segundo lugar, quisiéramos solidarizar, en general, con los planteamientos hechos por la distinguida representación de México y, en particular, sobre la propuesta en la próxima agenda de la medalla "Margarita Lizárraga".

En varias oportunidades lo hemos planteado y quisiéramos que la Secretaría lo recoja, la necesidad de realizar un folleto que reúna los datos de la vida sobresaliente de Margarita Lizárraga. Creemos que, a quién se vaya a otorgar esta medalla debe saber que ella fue una mujer mexicana, latinoamericana, que dedicó su vida al estudio y a la promoción de la pesca, independientemente de su calidad humana. Entonces, quisiéramos pedirle a la Secretaría que, para esa ocasión, se pudiera tener un folleto -repito- que recoja la extraordinaria vida de esta distinguida mujer.

Philip MOUMIE (Cameroun)

Le Cameroun a dans son territoire tout un secteur halieutique qui contribue à l'économie nationale, à l'emploi et par conséquent, à la sécurité alimentaire, parce qu'il occupe près de 15 à 20 pour cent de la population active qui exerce dans les eaux marines et continentales. La délégation camerounaise encourage et félicite la FAO pour le rôle de catalyseur qu'elle joue dans la promotion de la coopération internationale en matière de pêche. L'adoption, en octobre 1995 par la Conférence de la FAO, du *Code de conduite pour une pêche responsable*, a permis à la communauté internationale de disposer d'un important outil de régulation des activités halieutiques mondiales.

Au Cameroun, un séminaire national de sensibilisation sur la mise en œuvre du *Code* a été organisé en janvier 1999. Plus d'une centaine de partenaires des secteurs public et privé et d'organisations non gouvernementales ont pris part à cette réunion, à l'issue de laquelle les participants ont recommandé la création d'un forum de concertation et de consultation. Ce forum pourrait se réunir aussi régulièrement que possible et devrait regrouper toutes les parties intéressées en vue de formuler les stratégies appropriées pour une pêche responsable au Cameroun. Il a été retenu que ce forum soit structuré aussi bien au niveau national, provincial que local. Par ailleurs, ils ont également noté avec satisfaction la révision en cours de nos textes réglementaires en matière de pêche, et suggéré que le *Code de conduite pour une pêche responsable* en constitue le document de travail afin que les dispositions pertinentes dudit *Code* soient incorporées dans la nouvelle réglementation. Ils ont, à ce sujet, souhaité que les aspects portant sur la sélectivité des engins, le règlement des conflits, ainsi que la gestion de la capacité de pêche soient pris en compte. Le Gouvernement fait siennes ces recommandations et est en train de prendre des dispositions appropriées pour les appliquer.

L'application du *Code* nécessite la mise à contribution d'importants moyens financiers actuellement difficiles à mobiliser par les pays en développement. Ainsi la délégation camerounaise sollicite l'aide internationale comme le relève l'article 5 du *Code*. Nous remercions à ce sujet, le Gouvernement britannique, pour avoir offert le financement d'un projet régional pour l'application du *Code* dans 24 pays africains. Par le fait que ce projet touchera les communautés de pêcheurs les plus défavorisées des zones maritime et continentale, il contribuera à la lutte contre la pauvreté, ce qui préoccupe nos gouvernements dans le cadre du développement social et économique de nos pays.

Le problème de la surcapacité constitue pour la pêche africaine, et particulièrement dans notre pays, c'est-à-dire dans le golfe de Guinée dont le Cameroun fait partie, un fléau qu'il faut endiguer dans les meilleurs délais afin de sauvegarder le potentiel biologique et permettre la durabilité des activités halieutiques. En raison du coût élevé des moyens de contrôle et de surveillance, moyens dont ne disposent pas la plupart des pays en développement, ces derniers assistent impuissants au transfert de capacité dans leurs eaux, en provenance d'autres régions. Les conséquences de cette situation sont néfastes pour nos ressources, pour nos économies et pour nos populations vivant de la pêche et généralement pour la sécurité alimentaire, car les produits capturés, au lieu d'être débarqués dans les pays côtiers, sont transbordés en mer vers des marchés plus rémunérateurs et

ne laissent localement et sporadiquement que des déchets constitués essentiellement de juvéniles. En l'absence de statistiques sur les captures réelles et les mouvements des flottilles qui échappent ainsi aux services officiels, il est très difficile de concevoir des politiques réalistes d'aménagement durable.

Afin de remédier à cette situation, le Cameroun soutient les recommandations du *Plan d'action international pour la gestion des capacités de pêche* proposé par la Consultation technique d'octobre 1998 et adopté par la vingt-troisième session du Comité des pêches de février 1999.

Dans cette optique, nous portons une attention particulière sur les efforts de recherche pour mettre au point des techniques mieux adaptées pour apporter une solution à l'exploitation des ressources des pêcheries multispécifiques. Par ailleurs, il est souhaitable que les pays qui entreprennent des programmes d'élimination des navires prennent des dispositions appropriées en vue d'éviter une exportation incontrôlée des capacités à d'autres pêcheries. La délégation camerounaise soutient la tenue urgente d'une Consultation technique sur la mesure des capacités de pêche, comme l'a recommandé la vingt-troisième session du Comité des pêches. Quant à l'étiquetage écologique, notre délégation considère que c'est un problème important. Cependant, les informations pertinentes pour une meilleure prise de décision n'existent pas actuellement. Par conséquent, des études approfondies sur ce problème sont nécessaires. Au cas où la communauté internationale, à la lumière des résultats de ces études, décide d'adopter l'étiquetage écologique, le processus devra être transparent et non discriminatoire en vue de sauvegarder les intérêts des uns et des autres.

Dans le cadre de ses organismes régionaux des pêches et des programmes de terrain, la FAO a joué un rôle primordial pour le développement et l'aménagement des pêches au niveau mondial. Il est essentiel que ce rôle continue et que l'Organisation octroie, dans le cadre de son budget ordinaire, des moyens conséquents au Département des pêches pour l'accomplissement de sa mission.

La délégation camerounaise félicite le Directeur général de la FAO pour avoir pris soin d'instituer, au sein de l'Organisation, le processus du Cadre stratégique pour une meilleure programmation du travail au cours des quinze prochaines années. Dans ce contexte, l'importance doit être mise aussi bien sur les activités normatives que sur les activités de terrain pour une amélioration des capacités institutionnelles, notamment la formation. En effet, dans nos pays, nous avons toujours besoin des opérations de terrain. Ces dernières apportent un support appréciable à la lutte contre la pauvreté ainsi qu'à l'amélioration de la sécurité alimentaire et du bien-être des populations.

Sra. Virginia PÉREZ PÉREZ (Venezuela)

Al endosar el Informe, mi Delegación desea subrayar la necesidad de poner en marcha el *Código de Conducta para la Pesca Responsable* por parte de todos los Miembros. Entendemos que en muchos países en desarrollo, incluso el mío, hay factores que afectan su aplicación y, de allí, la relevancia de la cooperación de la FAO para lograr progresos en su aplicación.

Consideramos de gran importancia simplificar la presentación de cuestionarios que tienden a facilitar la presentación de informes de la aplicación del *Código*, y sobre la elaboración de los planes nacionales y otras medidas solicitadas en los tres Planes de Acción.

Debo reiterar, además, la posición de mi país en el sentido de solicitar mayor atención y apoyo para la utilización de cuerpos de agua existentes, naturales o artificiales, dedicados al desarrollo de la acuicultura sostenible.

Por último, consideramos que los planes de eco-etiquetado no pueden ni deben ser un obstáculo al comercio; esperamos que el mismo no sea utilizado para frenar el comercio de productos pesqueros de los países en desarrollo y solicitamos a la FAO que continúe realizando el seguimiento de este tema.

Del mismo modo, y termino, apoyamos lo dicho por la delegación de Cuba con relación al premio "Margarita Lizárraga" a quién tuve la oportunidad de conocer; de ella recibí muchas orientaciones cuando inicié mis estudios y contactos con el atractivo y complicado mundo de la pesca. Este

mundo por muchos años, al menos en los foros multilaterales, fue terreno exclusivo de los hombres y en este momento lamento no ver una mujer sentada en el podio.

Miss Fatimah HASAN J. HAYAT (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

Since this is the first time I take the floor I have not had the chance, due to some personal reasons, to take part in the discussion of other matters. Since this subject matter is of special importance to my country, I have always been attending those meetings related to this subject. I have not been able to personally take part, but there has been an expert coming from my Capital, and I believe that he has been participating in a very constructive manner.

I will be brief, just to underline what is taking place in Kuwait with regard to this resource upon which we are depending economically. We are planning, within the Five-Year Plan, to have fisheries as a primary source of income. as you know, for the last sixty years, Kuwait has depended on fisheries as part of its economy.

I would like to thank the Secretariat for the comprehensive and clear documents presented to us, and I would like to support what has been included in the Report of the Ministerial Meeting held in March.

I should also like to focus on the importance of the integrated resource management for sustainable inland fish production and aquaculture, in order to achieve world food security and the economic, as well as the social, objectives.

I would also like to support the concern expressed during the Ministerial Meeting with regard to over-fishing capacities, which lead to losses, and income deterioration.

despite the fact that we do not depend solely on marine fisheries, Kuwait has strict laws to curtail fishing, particularly when it comes to shrimps. We call shrimps *robian* in Arabic, regardless of the size, whether they are *scampi* or otherwise. These laws are enforced from the months of April through August so that fishing can be economically beneficial, particularly as shrimp exports have become an important source of income for the private sector. Kuwaiti shrimp products are exported all over the world, and perhaps some of the developed and developing countries have seen the Kuwaiti shrimp products in the supermarkets.

Due to some ecological reasons and some special conditions, in terms of environmental pollution, other laws have been enacted to curtail the fishing of certain species, especially those that are in demand in the Gulf area and in Kuwait for certain periods. These laws have been enforced since last year, particularly during the reproduction period, because it has become necessary to depend on those resources in an attempt to achieve food security.

Kuwait is the biggest producer of shrimps in the Gulf and I, myself, have seen this environmental project presented by the General Authority on Agriculture and Marine Fisheries. They have been implementing projects for over 25 years on a wide-scale. Recently, there has been concrete cooperation between Kuwait and other neighbours in the Gulf area, including the Islamic Republic of Iran in the field of mutual exchange of experiences, particularly since the climatic conditions are similar, and we are exchanging similar species.

This was a brief account of what is being undertaken in terms of activities in my country.

Júlio C. GOMES dos SANTOS (Brasil)

La delegación de mi país desea que se realice una modificación en el Informe del 23° Período de Sesiones del Comité de Pesca, documento CL 116/7, página 37, texto español, donde se lee: párrafo 3 "El Comité de Pesca, COFI, en su último período de sesiones celebrado en 1997, pidió a la FAO que afrontara la cuestión de la capacidad pesquera. La FAO organizó un Grupo Técnico de Trabajo sobre la ordenación de la capacidad pesquera que se reunió en La Joya (Estados Unidos) del 15 al 18 de abril de 1998. Posteriormente del 26 al 30 de octubre de 1998 se celebró la Consulta de la FAO precedida por una Reunión Preparatoria que tuvo lugar del 21 al 24 de julio de 1998." La delegación de Brasil pide que se borre cualquier mención a la Reunión Técnica de

La Joya, como ya fue acordado, tanto en la reunión de julio de 1998 como en la reunión de octubre de 1998 y que terminó con el Marco Estratégico.

Así que pido, por favor, que se borre cualquier mención a la reunión del Grupo Técnico de La Joya, una reunión convocada por la FAO con técnicos convocados aleatoriamente, sin representación equitativa de las regiones y que no contribuyó en absoluto a nada.

La Secretaría de Pesca insiste en llamar la atención sobre esta reunión. Nuestra delegación, así como otras delegaciones de mi Región y no sólo, la rechazan enteramente y piden que esta reunión no se tenga más en cuenta.

S.M. GARCIA (Directeur, Division des ressources halieutiques)

Permettez-moi, tout d'abord, de remercier les Membres du Conseil pour leur évaluation positive et encourageante du travail du Département. Dans les conditions actuelles dans lesquelles nous devons travailler, c'est quelque chose que nous apprécions vraiment et je tenais à vous le dire. Je notais dans le débat qui vient d'avoir lieu, un support unanime pour le *Code de conduite* et pour son application effective et de nombreux pays ont tenu à souligner, l'ensemble des pays a tenu à souligner, l'importance du *Code* pour assurer la contribution durable de la pêche et la sécurité alimentaire et pour réduire la pauvreté.

Dans le cadre de ce support, un certain nombre d'actions particulières ont été soulignées comme étant importantes. J'ai noté les suivantes: mettre en œuvre, le plus rapidement, possible les Plans d'action qui apparaissent donc adoptés par ce Conseil; mention particulière a été faite de la Consultation technique sur la mesure de la capacité que la FAO devrait mettre en place le plus rapidement possible. Il a été souligné également, qu'il fallait aborder le problème posé par la pêche illégale et par les pavillons de complaisance; qu'il était nécessaire de réduire la surexploitation des ressources, les rejets et les prix accessoires, en améliorant en particulier la sélectivité de la pêche; qu'il était important de protéger l'environnement, les ressources halieutiques; de renforcer les capacités nationales en matière de gestion, en matière du suivi du commerce international et en matière de qualité des produits également.

Il a été souligné à plusieurs reprises la nécessité d'accélérer la gestion intégrée des ressources halieutiques avec, en particulier, un certain nombre de points, liés à cette priorité, comme par exemple l'intégration de l'aquaculture et de l'agriculture, l'importance de la gestion des petits plans d'eau, qu'ils soient naturels ou artificiels, la nécessité de protéger l'environnement productif, la nécessité d'adopter une approche éco-système, en particulier pour améliorer les bases scientifiques. Le Conseil a également souligné la nécessité de renforcer les commissions régionales des pêches. De l'ensemble des déclarations qui ont été faites il résulte la nécessité également d'étudier et de développer les bases techniques éventuelles d'un système d'éco-tiquetage des produits de la pêche pour assurer en particulier la transparence des bases scientifiques et pour réduire le risque que ce système soit utilisé pour élever des barrières non tarifaires.

Il a été également souligné qu'il était important d'assurer la cohérence entre les règles du commerce international et la gestion rationnelle des ressources halieutiques et que pour cela la FAO devrait participer aux activités internationales dans ce domaine. Mention a été faite également des critères utilisés par la CITES pour lister les espèces marines exploitées et il a été demandé à la FAO de continuer son effort dans ce sens. Un support général a été exprimé également en ce qui concerne l'importance de l'aquaculture ou en général du système de production des pêches continentales et de l'aquaculture à cause de son rôle particulier pour réduire la pauvreté et augmenter la sécurité alimentaire. Le support à la création d'un Sous-comité de l'aquaculture a été également exprimé.

Un certain nombre de Membres du Conseil ont exprimé la nécessité pour la FAO d'apporter son support aux pays en développement et en particulier, aux pays insulaires en développement pour leur mise en œuvre du *Code de conduite*. Ces efforts devraient porter, surtout sur la diffusion et sur l'adaptation aux spécificités régionales; et a mentionné, en particulier, la nécessité d'améliorer les questionnaires et de développer un système d'indicateurs de durabilité. En ce qui concerne le

prix ou la médaille Margarita Lizárraga, un support général a été bien sûr exprimé pour cette initiative et il a été demandé que ce sujet soit abordé lors du prochain Conseil et que la FAO prépare éventuellement une biographie de Margarita Lizárraga.

L'avantage comparatif de la FAO en matière de pêche a également été souligné; de même qu'a été souligné le rôle important de la Commission de la réunion ministérielle. Finalement, il a été souligné à plusieurs reprises également, que les ressources du Département des pêches devraient être augmentées pour permettre de faire face au Programme de travail qui lui est demandé.

10. World Food Programme

10. Programme alimentaire mondial

10. Programa Mundial de Alimentos

10.1 Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board on its Activities in 1998 (CL 116/13)

10.1 Rapport annuel du conseil d'administration du PAM sur ses activités en 1998 (CL 116/13)

10.1 Informe anual de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA sobre sus actividades en 1998 (CL 116/13)

Jean-Jacques GRAISSE (WFP)

I am here today on behalf of the Executive Director of the World Food Programme, who is travelling and hence regrets that she cannot be with us.

The General Regulations, Article VI, sub-paragraph 3, require that the Board provide an Annual Report on WFP's programmes, projects and activities, including major decisions of the Board, to the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council and to the Council of FAO.

Documents CL 116/13 and CL 116/13-Corr. 1 are before the Council for its review and endorsement.

General Rule VII, sub-paragraph 2 also requires that the Executive Director submit an Annual Report to the Executive Board covering *inter alia* the operational activities of WFP, its resource position and the results of programme and project evaluations. The Executive Director's Annual Report and its two Appendices are available at the Documents Desk outside this room. These documents, if read together, constitute an overview of WFP's activities in 1998, of which I have the honour to present a brief synopsis.

1998 was an almost unprecedented year for the World Food Programme: the floods in Asia, droughts in Africa, the devastating hurricane in Central America, the economic crisis in Indonesia and elsewhere, and the continuation of discord in Angola, Guinea Bissau, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and south Sudan. Many donors responded generously to help us meet these challenges, and the number of people fed by WFP rose to nearly 75 million, the highest in any single year.

WFP staff have sadly continued to find themselves exposed to considerable risk in meeting the needs of those millions: 12 staff members lost their lives in 1998, and most were murdered. To help protect our staff from increasing violence affecting relief workers, we created the Field Security Task Force and we started to implement a Security Awareness Training Programme, which will cover all staff members starting with drivers, warehouse workers and managers in the field. While this training complements the programme conducted by the United Nations Security Coordination Office, this training is specifically targeted towards every staff member in the Programme, in their own language and covers areas such as driving security, field communications, stress management, convoy and field security, and first aid, to name a few.

Three-quarters of the 75 million beneficiaries fed in 1998 were assisted through relief food aid, almost double the number compared with 1997. Women and girls accounted for more than half of all beneficiaries. For the first time in years, most beneficiaries of relief food aid were victims of natural disasters. The following are just a few examples.

Bangladesh suffered from the worst flooding in more than 100 years, and the World Food Programme fed more than 19 million people there.

In China, WFP launched its first-ever emergency relief operation in the country to meet the acute food needs of 5.8 million people who were victims of the worst floods in this country since 1954.

WFP was the first relief agency to begin distributions after the victims of Hurricane Mitch in Central America last November. Within 48 hours, we made the first distributions using in-country stocks, this time for on-going development activities.

In Sudan, WFP is conducting the largest air-drop ever and has increased its aid deliveries ten-fold in order to assist approximately 1.8 million people in the South. We also worked throughout the country because drought, floods and the on-going conflict have exacerbated the plight of the population.

As the Executive Director reported to the Board, total contributions to WFP for 1998 increased by one-third compared with 1997, to a total of US\$ 1 727 million. Not since 1992 has WFP raised resources to this level, an increase which was almost entirely due to contributions from appeals for emergency assistance. WFP handled nearly 70 percent of global relief food aid in 1998, up from 60 percent in 1997. The United States of America was the largest donor, accounting for more than half of the total contributions. The United States gave an additional one million tonne contribution to WFP last year.

Despite such increases, however, several relief operations faced resource shortfalls. In the Great Lakes, for instance, our work was hampered by lack of resources as well as by multiple donor earmarking for specific countries, rather than support for the regional operation as a whole.

Our resources for development were less than hoped for in 1998, with the obvious consequences for the Programme's ability to implement its Development Programme. That same year, the Board recognized the need for thorough discussion of the issues involved in food aid and development, particularly in view of the urgent need to offset this decline, and it endorsed the start of a consultative process with donors, recipients, NGOs, implementing partners, beneficiaries, bilateral donors and United Nations Agencies. I am pleased to report to you that this year-long consultation process, of which we are proud, culminated in the adoption, at its annual session last May, of a series of recommendations which provide definitive direction from the Board, enabling us to put our Development Programme on a solid footing. We strongly believe that these well-defined policies will increase donor confidence and increase resources for development.

WFP is doing its utmost to meet the United Nations' goal for gender equity in staffing by 2001. While the global percentage of women in the professional category rose from 17.1 percent in 1992 to 30.4 percent in January 1999, there is still much to be done. We have now put in place strong guidelines for 1999 that will help give support and direction to hiring managers within WFP to meet the gender targets.

As you know, 1998 was a particularly important year for reform in the United Nations. WFP did its part and, as you will note from the Appendix of the Executive Director's Annual Report, was particularly active in strengthening the Resident Coordinator System and in the UNDAF process. We have contributed to the strengthening of the Consolidated Appeal Process as a programming tool, not just as a resource mobilization mechanism, and we are very active in the United Nations Development Group as well as in emergency relief coordination. Such increased necessary and worthwhile coordination has a price, however.

Appendix II of the Annual Report provides information on the follow-up by the Organization to the provisions of the triennial policy review, major United Nations' Conferences and Summits, and special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance.

In this context, it would be remiss of me not to mention the collaboration between the Rome-based Agencies. While hidden from public view, perhaps, the Members of this Council should be reassured by the solid links between all three Agencies at the executive, operational and field levels, collaboration which is gradually bearing fruit in the overall context of the UN Reform. For example, WFP and FAO have recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Implementation of the Special Programme for Food Security. We also continue to

collaborate on food needs' assessments in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and other key emergencies, and have recently explored ways to collaborate in financial management.

On Governance matters, this Council can testify to the level of activity of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme. Back in 1996, when the Board was first created, apart from its regular meetings, its membership met on an additional 14 occasions. By 1998, this number had risen to no less than 55 additional meetings, on top of regular Board meetings, representing a heightened interaction and flow of information between the membership and the Secretariat, an interaction that we in WFP value highly.

In the same vein, the membership's knowledge of WFP operations increased through two visits to field operations in 1998: one to Ethiopia and the other to Central America, during which Hurricane Mitch struck with devastating effect.

Further on Governance, WFP's revised Regulations, General Rules and Financial Regulations came into force in January 1998 and, in line with the provisions of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 48/162, Working Groups on Rules of Procedure and Distribution of Seats on the Executive Board began their work.

With this, I would conclude my introductory remarks, and stand ready to respond to questions from the membership.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

Valoramos y agradecemos al señor Graisse por su clara y detallada presentación del tema. Entendemos necesario hacer algunas breves consideraciones sobre este tema no sin antes dejar sentado el respaldo de nuestra delegación al informe que se nos ha presentado y que responde al trabajo desarrollado por el PMA durante 1998 recogido en los documentos CL116/13, CL 116/13-Corr.1, así como también las normas generales del reglamento.

Permítame reconocer sinceramente a la Directora Ejecutiva del Programa y al personal del PMA por la labor que ha desarrollado en 1998, año que sin lugar a duda ha sido de mucha importancia, donde las múltiples tareas cumplidas pudieron cubrir en su mayoría las expectativas previstas. El PMA continúa con sus objetivos de trabajo realizando análisis y acciones en un marco de transparencia y equilibrio. Es oportuno destacar la manera dinámica en la que se ha desarrollado el ejercicio del Gobierno dentro de la Junta Ejecutiva, manteniéndose correctamente la coordinación entre sus miembros y la Secretaría, cuestión que ha consolidado los métodos de dirección del Programa. En otras ocasiones, nos hemos referido a los innovadores métodos de consulta, es decir no sólo a las reuniones oficiales sino a las Consultas oficiosas y a los Grupos de Trabajo creados para el análisis de una temática específica.

Destaco todas estas iniciativas, como punto de contacto permanente entre los períodos de sesiones que tiene establecida la Junta durante el año, para considerar que se ha constituido un importante paso en el fortalecimiento y en el flujo de información entre los Estados Miembros así como el conocimiento y profundización de todas las tareas que realiza el Programa, ya sea en la sede como en el campo. Estos nuevos métodos de trabajo sin duda se han visto fortalecidos en estos dos últimos años por la visita al terreno que los Miembros de la Junta han realizado en distintos países para corroborar el desarrollo de los proyectos que realiza el Programa al interior de los mismos.

El 1998 -ya lo dijo el señor Graisse- fue un año cargado de acontecimientos. El Programa recibió, según los datos suministrados, una buena inyección de recursos aunque lamentablemente algunas operaciones previstas quedaron aún con un bajo perfil. Aprovechamos la ocasión para recabar de la comunidad de donantes toda la ayuda necesaria para que el PMA pueda cubrir todos sus compromisos contraídos evitando las disminuciones de estas contribuciones multilaterales.

Como decíamos anteriormente, muchas han sido las actividades que ha desarrollado el PMA en 1998, por lo que solamente me voy a referir a algunas. Tuvimos la ocasión de participar durante el año en un Grupo de Trabajo creado por la Junta Ejecutiva cuyo objetivo era la revisión y análisis de la distribución de puestos en la Junta Ejecutiva. Tanto el grupo creado en Nueva York como el nuestro en el capítulo de Roma, presidido de manera profesional y constante por la señora Laurie

Tracy de los Estados Unidos, trabajó intensamente en un largo proceso hasta alcanzar ambos grupos una posición de consenso.

Un ejercicio que reafirmó la universalidad del Programa y que involucró a todos los países en 1998 y que culminó hace pocos días de manera satisfactoria; fueron consultas sobre la ayuda alimentaria al desarrollo dentro del PMA. Los países de la Región de América Latina y el Caribe tuvieron una constante participación, manteniendo con firmeza la posición que la ayuda al desarrollo, dentro del PMA, debe continuar revitalizándose para que no se desvirtúe el objetivo inicial del Programa, es decir su doble función tanto para el desarrollo como para las situaciones de emergencia. Las dos últimas consultas, bajo la coordinación de la Embajadora de Suecia y el Embajador de Brasil, constituyeron sendos ejemplos de lo que es capaz de lograr la política multilateral: el equilibrio y la transparencia.

De todos modos hay una propuesta de México, que nosotros creemos necesaria que sea el propio México quien la proponga. Demás está decirle que Cuba la apoya.

Confiamos que las recomendaciones recogidas y aprobadas en el período anual de la Junta hace solamente un mes, dan nuevas indicaciones al Programa así como los recursos necesarios para dar cumplimiento a tan noble tarea de vital importancia para todos los países en vías de desarrollo.

Permítame, antes de finalizar, aprovechar este marco para dar las gracias nuevamente al PMA por la atención que siempre ha brindado tanto a nuestro país como a la Región de América Latina y el Caribe, en sus proyectos de desarrollo como en las situaciones naturales de emergencia como el Huracán del siglo ocurrido en Centro América recientemente y con una respuesta inmediata del PMA que por designación de los países de América Latina y el Caribe reconocemos y agradecemos.

Deseamos finalmente hacer un llamado a los países donantes que han hecho y hacen posible que el PMA pueda seguir brindando esa asistencia a nuestros países para que redoblen sus esfuerzos en este noble y justo empeño.

Sra. María de los Angeles ARRIOLA AGUIRRE (México)

Ante nada queremos agradecer al señor Graisse por su excelente resumen de las actividades y de los acontecimientos que tuvieron lugar durante 1998 y agradecer, al mismo tiempo, a los donantes por su efectiva colaboración, en particular a la delegación de Estados Unidos, que permitió participar de la mejor forma a todos los países que sufrieron desastres naturales.

Mi delegación aprueba también este Informe y desea hacer mención a algunos de los temas que ese señala. Por lo que respecta a la visita de los Miembros de la Junta Ejecutiva a los países en donde el PMA realiza actividades de desarrollo, consideramos se trata de un ejercicio muy positivo ya que permite a estos representantes darse cuenta de cuál es la realidad de las personas, cuál es el impacto de la ayuda que les da el PMA y también la importancia del doble mandato de la Organización.

Por lo que se refiere al reglamento recientemente adoptado nos parece adecuado, tal como lo expresáramos en su oportunidad al apoyar su aprobación en la Junta Ejecutiva.

En cuanto a la distribución de puestos, manifestamos nuestra satisfacción por el acuerdo alcanzado en este sentido y agradecemos a los miembros del Grupo de Trabajo por su dedicación y buen ánimo que permitió alcanzar un acuerdo conveniente y satisfactorio para todas las partes.

En materia de política, nuestra delegación desea resaltar la importancia de la celebración de la Consulta sobre Desarrollo, tanto en sus resultados positivos a favor del doble mandato del Programa como por la manera de realizarse este ejercicio, siendo la primera vez en la historia del PMA que se realiza una Consulta en la que participan todos los Estados Miembros de Naciones Unidas y de la FAO sin que hubiera diferencia entre quienes actúan como Miembros de la Junta Ejecutiva y quienes son Observadores. Lo anterior permitió que por primera vez en el Programa se llegara a una decisión, a través de la Junta Ejecutiva, que reflejara con equidad la posición e intereses de todos los miembros de la comunidad internacional que participaron en la Consulta,

mostrando así su carácter universal. Sobre este tema, como lo ha señalado la Presidencia del GRULAC a lo largo de todo este ejercicio, reiteramos la importancia de que haya un equilibrio entre las actividades de desarrollo y las actividades de emergencia.

Por lo que respecta al tema de la multilateralidad de la ayuda, si bien como señala el documento, se reconoció la importancia de dicho carácter y la necesidad de atender las contribuciones de este tipo, lamentamos que en la práctica se siga privilegiando la asistencia multilateral dirigida, que desde nuestra perspectiva, no es otra cosa que una ayuda bilateral disfrazada de multilateralidad, que daña el espíritu de los organismos internacionales y específicamente, en el caso del PMA, encarece y entorpece su actividad y su acción y capacidad de respuesta a los problemas que se presentan en los diversos países y regiones del mundo.

Por lo anterior, y como ya lo señalara el representante de Cuba y tal como lo hemos mencionado en el período anual de sesiones al mismo tiempo que en la Junta Ejecutiva, alentamos a la Secretaría para que organice un ejercicio similar a la Consulta sobre el Desarrollo pero para lograr un acuerdo formal que permita corregir el rumbo de las contribuciones y continúe imperando la multilateralidad y la universalidad en este organismo.

Por último, deseamos manifestar nuestro absoluto respaldo a la necesidad de avanzar en el análisis y formación de un nuevo mapa cartográfico que permita identificar donde se ubican los grupos poblacionales vulnerables que padecen hambre, independientemente del país en que se encuentren, para lo cual instamos al Programa a consultar a los centros de información estadística y de informática de los países que cuenten con ellos, para obtener información actualizada y fiable que contribuya a sus trabajos en tal sentido.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italia)

Je voudrais remercier M. Grasse pour son exposé qui était tout à fait complet et convaincant. Je ne voudrais pas répéter tous les compliments qui ont été faits au PAM, parce que je l'ai déjà fait à plusieurs reprises. Je vais quand même me référer aux personnes victimes du travail qui sont mortes dans l'accomplissement de leur mission. Parmi elles, il y avait un Italien. Je voudrais leur rendre hommage en cette occasion.

J'ai aussi été touché par la référence au chapitre du développement, et aussi par la référence aux liens solides qui existent entre les organisations romaines des Nations Unies. J'avais souligné l'année dernière, à l'occasion de notre Conseil de novembre, après l'intervention de M. Ngongi, l'importance de nos rencontres, comme celle que nous avons aujourd'hui, et recommandé qu'elles ne soient pas réduites à une pure formalité. Il faudrait vraiment un débat. D'ailleurs, je comprend qu'il y ait un côté formel, parce que les décisions ont été discutées et mises au point dans une autre enceinte, c'est pour cela que j'ai recommandé que cette enceinte aussi ait une fonction dialectique et formatrice d'orientations que nous tous souhaitons dans l'Organisation pour réaliser au mieux ces objectifs.

J'ai, lors du Conseil de novembre, parlé pour la première fois de l'initiative d'une alliance pour le développement agricole entre la FAO, le PAM et le FIDA, et je n'exclus pas l'IPGRI, naturellement.

(continues in English)

I am sorry to switch to English but the document CGRFA-8/99/11.1 says that IFAD is building on the *in situ* conservation approach by supporting, through its Technical Assistance Grant Programme, an initiative by the International Plant Genetic Resource Institute (IPGRI). So these links between FAO and IPGRI which we discussed yesterday evening and the relations between IPGRI and World Food Programme that we are discussing today indicate the complementarity of the activities of the four organizations.

(continué en Français)

L'idée de l'alliance a été reprise à plusieurs occasions au niveau politique. Je rappelle l'intervention du Vice-Président du Conseil italien au Conseil des gouverneurs du FIDA. J'ai

rappelé dans mon intervention de lundi aussi le Vice-Ministre des affaires étrangères; j'ai nommé aussi un sous-secrétaire qui a parlé à la réunion ministérielle des pêches et des forêts. Tout ceci dans la vision d'une coopération stratégique et opérationnelle élargie, pour maximiser les synergies entre les organisations romaines des Nations Unies. Naturellement, ce serait le noyau central, il y a naturellement d'autres relations avec d'autres organisations internationales, dont M. Graisse a fait justement mention, ce n'est pas limitatif, il s'agit de créer un noyau dur autour duquel construire.

Nous dédions ici, au Conseil de la FAO, une demi-journée, même moins, à l'examen des problèmes du PAM. Dans notre proposition, il s'agirait de dédier une journée entière à une rencontre conjointe des trois organisations romaines des Nations Unies. Cela paraît, et est en fait, très simple, seulement la réunion serait élargie aux trois conseils des organisations. Il faudrait donc qu'il y ait aussi un représentant du FIDA. La réunion serait élargie aux Membres du Conseil d'administration du PAM, par exemple, qui ne sont pas Membres du Conseil, de façon à ce que les trois organismes décideurs soient présents et que les États Membres puissent donner aux trois organisations, ou quatre éventuellement, les directives nécessaires pour opérer ensemble. Ceci aurait aussi l'avantage pour les trois ou quatre organisations de préparer des documents communs, donc de penser stratégiquement en commun. Il n'y a rien de mieux pour concentrer les esprits que de mettre par écrit quelques idées qui sont intéressantes, mais qu'on peut consolider.

Ce ne sont pas de nouveaux documents qu'on demande, parce que nous sommes déjà submergés par une masse assez consistante de documents, mais ce serait un document qui pourrait synthétiser les orientations stratégiques des trois ou quatre organisations sur lesquelles les Membres du Conseil élargi pourraient se prononcer. Je donne deux exemples, mais je pourrais en donner beaucoup d'autres: l'Italie est Membre du Conseil, et n'est pas Membre, cette année-ci ni l'année dernière du Conseil d'administration du PAM; les Pays-Bas, tout en étant le principal contributeur volontaire à la FAO, sont Membre du Conseil d'administration du PAM et ne sont pas Membre du Conseil de la FAO. Ce serait une occasion pour tous les Membres qui sont les plus actifs et les plus impliqués dans les activités des organisations, de se rencontrer, de décider et donner des orientations communes, dans un conseil décisionnel conjoint comme celui que je viens de proposer.

On pourrait s'exprimer dans des lignes stratégiques des trois organisations, dont les activités sont de plus en plus complémentaires. J'avais cité le cas de l'IPGRI et du FIDA, auxquels, peut-être, on ne serait pas porté à penser normalement, en pensant à toutes les réunions qui ont lieu. Je dois donner acte aux trois organisations des relations sûrement améliorées au cours des trois dernières années, intensifiées. Mais avoir des relations sur le plan personnel est une chose: il faudrait traduire ces relations en des normes constitutionnelles, de telle sorte que cette obligation de rencontre soit mise dans des règles. Je m'arrête, parce que j'ai dit l'essentiel.

Mame BALLA SY (Sénégal)

Permettez à la délégation du Sénégal, dont le pays est évidemment membre jusqu'à présent du Conseil d'administration du PAM, de se réjouir de la qualité de la présentation faite par M. Graisse de ce document, que nous approuvons, pour avoir contribué sous la direction très éclairée de notre collègue des États-Unis d'Amérique, à faire un travail louable. Cela dit, à l'analyse du document CL 116/13 et de son correctif, nous sommes persuadés que l'année 1998 a été une année très riche d'activités, vu les événements parfois très tragiques survenus dans le monde et auquel le PAM a pu faire face de la manière la plus efficace, grâce notamment à l'esprit de sacrifice et d'abnégation de certains de ses membres. Je voudrais, au nom de la Délégation sénégalaise, les rappeler à notre mémoire avec beaucoup de respect et de compassion envers leurs familles éplorées car ils ont donné leur vie pour l'humanité.

Qu'il nous soit aussi permis d'exprimer notre profonde reconnaissance envers les pays donateurs, en respectant la représentation à la tête desquels se trouvent les États-Unis qui ont su, par leur générosité et leur solidarité, se lever au bon moment en venant au secours des populations qui ont vécu des drames particulièrement poignants. Pour le PAM, l'année 1998 a été surtout caractérisée par une série de consultations importantes. Je citerai pour preuve celles relatives à l'aide

alimentaire et au développement. Cette série de consultations dirigées de manière très intelligente et efficace par les deux grands groupes représentant l'OCDE et le Groupe des 77, ont permis d'arriver à des conclusions faisant espérer que le PAM est de plus en plus sur la voie de répondre aux besoins et aux espoirs des populations en détresse. Nous souhaitons également que cette situation puisse rapidement disparaître pour laisser place à un environnement beaucoup plus serein pour ne pas perdre de vue que, si l'aide alimentaire d'urgence est très importante, l'aide pour le développement l'est aussi parce qu'il est beaucoup plus important d'apprendre aux populations à se prendre elles-mêmes en charge plutôt que de rester éternellement dépendant d'une assistance.

Je ne voudrais prolonger outre mesure ce débat que pour m'insérer dans la dynamique très logique de mon collègue de l'Italie qui trouve comme nous tous, et le paragraphe 20 du document en parle assez longuement, cette démarche très pertinente. Les Organisations romaines devraient envisager plus de collaboration, qui existe déjà comme on peut le voir sur le panneau à l'entrée, et des accords signés entre les différentes organisations; je me réfère aux exemples donnés par M. Graisse, mais aussi voir cela d'une manière beaucoup plus large dans le système des Nations Unies. En effet, on peut y trouver des cadres d'accueil très pertinents comme l'UNDAF qui permet de créer des synergies non plus au niveau strictement romain, mais au niveau du "système onusien" pour un grand bénéfice des populations qui attendent de la communauté internationale une aide beaucoup plus dynamique. Je pense que l'idée est à creuser. En tout cas, nos pays en ont été saisis. Ils l'examinent. Nous n'avons pas encore le *feedback* nécessaire, mais c'est un processus d'analyse et d'examen auquel nous saurons en temps opportun répondre de manière très efficace et positive.

TANG ZHENGPING (China) (Original language Chinese)

The Chinese delegation believes that the annual report of WFP operations in 1998 is comprehensive, concise and informative, reflecting the fruitful work done by WFP in 1998. We particularly appreciate WFP's activities in the following aspects.

First of all, in 1998 WFP made a special effort in strengthening forward-looking analysis and vision in its strategies and existing main programmes. For instance, it organized consultations on food aid and development and adopted new policy proposals for development assistance. The new policy orientation for development assistance, approved by WFP's Executive Board, and the efforts made by Member Nations will help to ensure and strengthen WFP's resource base for development assistance by improving the quality, targeting and cost-effectiveness of development projects. This has improved the availability of WFP's resources. The Chinese delegation maintains that increasing resources for development assistance and enhancing such assistance will facilitate WFP to make effective contributions towards realizing the goal set forth at the World Food Summit of cutting by half the number of the world's hungry and malnourished people by the year 2015.

Secondly, after active and extensive consultations, the working group on WFP's long-term financing and resource policies put forward constructive proposals which will help WFP to attain stable, multilateral resources so as to better reflect its multilateral nature.

Thirdly, the year 1998 was marked by various unprecedented events caused by natural and man-made disasters. Under such circumstances, WFP responded rapidly, with forceful measures, thus playing a pivotal role in providing emergency assistance with the support of donor countries. In the year, WFP helped more people than in any other single year before. Hereby, I would like to thank WFP, particularly some donor countries. You know that in China, last year, we were hit by the worst floods since 1954, and 5.8 million people were provided with timely assistance.

Fourthly, WFP organized visits to project sites by Representatives of the Executive Board member states which achieved very positive results, for these field visits helped Executive Board Members gain first-hand knowledge of the implementation of WFP's food aid policies and the benefits and impact generated by its projects, thus enabling the Executive Board to formulate practical and feasible policies. Therefore, we hope that more such activities will be organized in the future, and we welcome relevant country Representatives to visit development assistance

projects in China. We hope you will come to China for a visit, especially to see the projects funded by WFP and you can how they have played an important role in our goal of assisting the poor.

The Chinese Government values this assistance very much. We assure you that we will make use of every grain of assistance provided. We hope, and we assure everyone, that all assistance will play its due role in China.

Paimin SUHARNO (Indonesia)

I will be very brief in my intervention. Firstly, the Indonesian delegation wishes to endorse the report of WFP activities in 1998, as they appear in the document CL 116/13, for the adoption by the Council.

Finally, we would like to extend our sincere appreciation to WFP and donor countries for the emergency assistance, in the form of food aid, provided to our country through WFP Emergency Operation (EMOP) in Indonesia starting in 1998, in response to the economic crisis.

Mrs Laurie J. TRACY (United States of America)

Like Indonesia, we endorse the Report. It is clear and well written and honest, and that is, in our opinion, a winning combination.

We express profound regret about, and sympathy for, the families of the 12 WFP employees who were killed in the line of duty last year. We, particularly now, would like to state that we appreciate the Executive Director's initiatives on training and security, which Mr Graisse mentioned, and the strong priority that she has given to improving security and enhancing security for WFP staff who often find themselves in very dangerous situations.

We laud WFP's responsiveness, this past year in 1998, to the victims of the myriad of natural and man-made disasters. I think WFP again showed us all how well and quickly it responds in its response in Kosovo to the tragedy that unfolded there. The United States supported efforts around the world with substantial contributions in both food and cash last year and I expect, given our level of satisfaction with WFP's responsiveness and the way it manages all of its activities, that we will continue to provide a high level of support, as our budget will permit.

We would also like to state that we endorse the conclusions of the year-long consultative process on food aid for development. I think the representative from Cuba, Ambassador Nuiry Sánchez, mentioned that this was one example of the many participative, inclusive efforts in which the Secretariat has encouraged Members to become involved in identifying solutions to on-going issues. We certainly appreciated that and we strongly support, as well, WFP's leadership in the UN System coordination effort, both here in Rome and in the field, and in New York in the UNDG process. In that regard, with all due respect to our Italian colleague's proposal for formal joint meetings, I do not think they are as cost-free as advertised. I do not intend to get into a debate here, but I would point out that there are other aspects to this proposal which I think, as the Ambassador from Senegal noted, need to be fully explored. There are opportunity costs to running big meetings like this.

Secondly, we have heard, and we see regularly, the strong commitment of the Agencies to work together. You walk into this building and the first thing you see is the billboard put up, I think, by the Director-General, which is demonstrative of the commitment, indicative of the commitment, that FAO has made to work closely together with its Sister Agencies here in Rome and we see that all the time in the field. Most recently, we got our food assessment on the drought situation in Jordan, which was a joint effort, and was extremely well done and reflective of a very strong synergistic relationship. I would also question what value this proposal for Joint Board Meetings adds to the Governance process that we already have, and I think that we need to think about that very thoroughly.

I think, finally, that there are implications for the authority and the autonomy of each of the Agencies which need to be taken into account and need to be fully explored.

Finally, with respect to the distribution of seats, I would like to thank the Members of the Working Group, and I would ask whether the Cuban Ambassador would like to suggest whether the plane has landed.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

No solamente aterrizó, sino que aterrizó muy bien. Parece que los pilotos eran muy buenos y más que aterrizar, se deslizó.

Ahmed AFAILAL (Maroc)

Je m'exprime au nom du Groupe africain et souhaiterais remercier M. Graisse de l'introduction qu'il a faite de ce point sous examen concernant le rapport annuel du Conseil d'administration du PAM. Je souhaiterais dire que le Groupe africain, à l'instar des autres groupes régionaux, encourage toute initiative visant à rationaliser le fonctionnement de toute organisation dont les activités portent sur l'alimentation et l'agriculture. J'ajoute que nous soutenons la coordination entre les différentes institutions.

Je note qu'à New York et dans d'autres instances, il y a ce souci de coordination. Je pense que nous pourrions certainement attendre des résultats positifs de telles actions conjointes.

Le Gouvernement de l'Italie a fait référence à des initiatives d'actions conjointes. Il faut réfléchir très attentivement à une telle proposition. Le Groupe africain a discuté d'une Alliance éventuelle entre les trois organisations basées ici à Rome, mais je crois qu'il faut attendre encore un peu de temps et réfléchir pour faire mûrir la réflexion.

On a cité une réunion conjointe des différents organes directeurs. Effectivement de l'avis de notre Groupe, je pense que cela pourrait être utile, mais il faudrait que cette réunion conjointe soit vraiment très bien préparée si on veut qu'elle soit d'une utilité quelconque. Pour l'instant, les éléments nécessaires ne sont pas réunis et notre Groupe africain fera état de sa position en temps utile.

Philip MOUMIE (Cameroun)

Tout en adhérant entièrement à la déclaration qui vient d'être faite au nom du Groupe africain, je voudrais quand même revenir sur le rapport qui a été présenté si brillamment par M. Graisse, et dire que le Cameroun, qui était Membre du Conseil d'administration du Programme alimentaire mondial en 1998, a suivi attentivement ses activités qui ont été effectivement très diverses et très intenses. Il nous est donc loisible d'en témoigner et, avant tout, nous voulons féliciter le PAM pour ses documents et sa clarté, et surtout pour la manière dont il a été présenté par M. Graisse.

Le rapport soumis au Conseil est très résumé, et c'est certainement une bonne chose, car sa lecture est très aisée, ainsi que sa compréhension. Tout en recommandant son adoption par le Conseil, nous voulons revenir sur quelques aspects évoqués dans ce rapport. D'abord, en tant que pays ayant bénéficié d'une assistance d'urgence du PAM en 1998, nous nous attendions naturellement à ce que le Cameroun figure sur la liste des pays cités au paragraphe 42, et nous voulons surtout saisir cette occasion pour remercier le PAM et les autres pays qui sont intervenus et ont soutenu l'action du PAM, pour lutter contre la famine dans la partie septentrionale de notre pays. Je voudrais citer ici les Etats-Unis d'Amérique, le Canada, la Norvège, l'Angleterre, car leur action, à côté de celle de l'Union européenne, conjuguée à celle du Gouvernement et du chef de l'État camerounais à titre personnel, a permis à près de 300 000 familles de traverser moins douloureusement cette période. Nous tenons à les en remercier et à remercier le PAM pour ce qu'il a fait.

Nous voulons souligner l'importance qu'il faut attacher à l'étude proposée au paragraphe 41 sur les achats locaux dans les pays en développement. L'expérience que nous avons eue lors des interventions signalées tout à l'heure nous amène à encourager le PAM à étudier et à mettre rapidement en place des mécanismes facilitant les achats locaux, lorsque cela est possible. Les achats locaux constituent une solution de célérité pour les actions, notamment dans les cas d'urgence. Ils constituent également une réponse indirecte du PAM à son engagement de

contribuer à la lutte contre la pauvreté dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre du Plan d'action du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation.

Nous voulons également dire combien notre pays a apprécié la Consultation sur l'aide alimentaire et le développement organisée par le PAM et qui a permis de définir des orientations claires dans ce domaine. Nous adhérons à la déclaration de l'Ambassadeur du Sénégal, déclaration adressée aux donateurs dont la générosité permet au PAM de remplir sa mission.

P. W. MISIKA (Namibia)

Namibia welcomes the *Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board to ECOSOC and the FAO Council on its Activities in 1998*.

Although our delegation did not receive the Annual Report of the Executive Director and its Appendices, referred to in paragraph 3, in time for us to study it thoroughly, we are satisfied with the presentation on the report made by the WFP representative, and therefore join the African Group in declaring our support for the adoption of the Report by Council.

It is our sincere conviction that, despite the constraints faced by WFP, it has nevertheless fulfilled its mandate by rising to the challenges of feeding an ever-increasing number of food insecure people. Against this background, and appreciating that Namibia is one of the recipients of WFP relief food aid, the Namibian Government and indeed the people of Namibia are distressed by the continued loss of life by the staff of WFP in the line of their noble duty. In this regard, we wish to extend our most heartfelt condolences to WFP, the countries and governments of origin, and the families of these gallant soldiers of peace, who lost their precious lives while saving the lives of millions of destitute and helpless people. To this end, we welcome the security awareness campaign initiated by WFP, and hope that this will save the lives of these brave soldiers of peace.

Our delegation urges WFP, without undue delays, to redouble its efforts in pursuing and implementing the recommendations contained in paragraphs 15, 16, 18, 19, 22 and 27, as Namibia, like any other recipient of WFP relief aid, has particular interest in these issues.

Having said that, our delegation wishes to seek clarity on the linkages between the vulnerability-mapping analysis, (VMA) by WFP and the FIVIMS by FAO as we foresee potential duplication. It is our conviction that vulnerability-mapping and/or analysis is the same, irrespective of whether it is done under VMA by WFP or FIVIMS by FAO. We seek to be advised of any particular differences between the two that makes it impossible for WFP and FAO to collaborate in pooling efforts and resources in one concerted and all-encompassing programme.

We also seek clarity on the concept of full-cost recovery referred to in paragraph 26, and what implications it will have on destitute recipients. In the same vein, we would request to be informed on the exact meaning of "up-front" and "untied contributions" stated in the same paragraph.

Lastly, we once again wish to thank WFP and the major donor community for the valuable support they have rendered to our country.

Ms Mitzi GURGEL VALENTE da COSTA (Brazil)

First of all, I would like to thank Mr Graise for his very clear and concise information on this document, and I would like to say that my delegation does endorse both documents, as presented.

I would like to fully support the security measures that WFP has been implementing with regard to increasing the security of the field staff of WFP abroad. I think that 12 murdered employees is a very sad statistic, and we have to make all efforts to reverse this situation.

I would also like to commend WFP on its rapid response to the very many man-made and natural disasters that have afflicted our countries in 1998. I think this is especially true for our region which saw several very difficult natural disasters occur in that year, that is the *El Niño* effects, Hurricane George, and finally, Hurricane Mitch which devastated three countries in Central America.

I would like also to join with the distinguished delegate of Mexico when she expressed concern about the rising tendency towards emergency aid in detriment of development aid. I think that without development, the food aid burden will only increase in the future. In that sense, I would like to support the proposal made by the delegate of Mexico that we do hold a consultation on the multilateral character of food aid.

Furthermore, I would also like to commend WFP on the gender issues and the important steps that they have been taking in the gender issues. I think women need to be targeted because they are a very vulnerable group of our society.

Finally, I would like to thank Mrs Laurie Tracy for having chaired the very difficult Working Group negotiations that took place in 1998. I would disagree when she said that she managed to land the plane. I think she managed to land a 747.

Mohammad Saeed NOURI-NAEENI (Iran, Islamic Republic of)

My delegation associates itself with all other delegations who praised WFP for an outstanding performance in 1998. We express sympathy for the WFP employees who lost their lives in the line of duty, and support every measure in increased staff security in this regard.

My delegation especially commends the new initiative of aid for development. This is a first step in the right direction, and we hope to see it improved and expanded in the future.

My delegation not only supports the idea of increased cooperation between the Rome-based United Nations Agencies, but supports the idea of a deeper consideration of this issue, as was mentioned by the distinguished Representatives of Italy, Senegal, United States, Morocco and others.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has been hosting on average more than 3 million refugees during the past 20 years. However, since these refugees are not kept in camps and are enjoying a normal life like all other Iranians all over the country, they have not received any assistance from WFP in the past. In 1999, in addition to a sharp decrease in income due to a decline in petroleum prices, the Islamic Republic of Iran is facing an unprecedented drought. My delegation feels that now the scene is set and the need is there for WFP to increase its support to out-of-camp refugees to a much larger extent to that approved recently; that is only a part of food aid to only 40 000 refugees.

Mrs Nahed EL ASHRY (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

At the outset, I should like to thank Mr Graisse for the clear and concise presentation of the item under consideration. In this context, we would like to praise the Report included in CL 116/13 which gives us an overview of the performance of the WFP.

The Report indicates that the year was full of tragic events, yet the WFP has been able to face them and is still deploying its efforts in this field. We express our heartfelt condolences for the loss of lives of those staff members.

On this occasion, I would like to express our deep appreciation for the generous role played by the donor countries.

I would like to praise the Programme of Work that has been quite active in terms of field visits to the Member Nations in order to get acquainted with the activities undertaken by WFP in those countries. Such visits will create a constant link between WFP and its Member Nations.

On the other hand, I would like to congratulate WFP for the Working Groups that have been established regarding the distribution of seats on the Executive Board. In this context, I would like to congratulate Mrs Laurie Tracy, on behalf of Egypt and on behalf of the African Group as well, for her excellent work in presiding over the Working Group relevant to the distribution of seats, as well as for the excellent work undertaken by this Working Group.

Moreover, I would like to pay tribute to WFP with regard to the sessions of consultations on food assistance, which have been quite effective and which reflected the close cooperation between the Member Nations which are parties to the OECD Group and the Group of 77.

I would also like to congratulate WFP for integrating the gender perspective, which was an initiative of the United Nations, and is being implemented by the Agencies of the United Nations.

We would like to emphasize the dual character of WFP in terms of submitting and extending food aid, and we insist that WFP should extend development assistance and food assistance in order to realize sustainable development.

The proposed Alliance among the Rome-based Agencies is an idea that aims at further cooperation among all the organizations working in the field of agriculture and development. There is actual partnership among those organizations within the policy adopted by the United Nations. However, we believe that this initiative deserves further time and contemplation in order to study its many aspects in achieving the desired goals. I do support the previous speakers, that is the distinguished Representatives of Senegal and Morocco, and all those who spoke on this subject before me.

Hassan KATANA (Syria) (Original language Arabic)

We would like to express our appreciation for the *Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board*, and for the excellent presentation on the activities undertaken by WFP.

My delegation would like to thank WFP for the assistance it extended to us in developing fragile agricultural areas subjected to multiple environmental factors and suffering from poverty, which previously lead to the devaluation of soil and vegetation cover.

With regard to paragraph 40, and the Executive Board directing its support to the gender perspective policies, I should like to emphasize that this programme was initiated in Syria several years ago, and it has had positive results and great achievements. Therefore, we call for greater support for these activities and for helping the developing countries to secure the necessary funding for their implementation, taking into account the responsibilities of the governments in their implementation. Such support and contribution would help our countries to apply the integrated sustainable rural development approach and promote the participation of women, while giving prominence to their productive role in society.

In paragraph 41, on the question of support for WFP for purchases of food and non-food items, the application of this approach at the local level had a positive impact by taking advantage of the available surpluses of food and non-food items.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask WFP to redouble its efforts in order to secure our allocations of food assistance according to the project agreements that have been signed.

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

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

My delegation would like to commend WFP for the document, and for their performance and quick response to the tragedies that took place in the world.

We found that WFP has implemented its ambitious programmes in Kosovo, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Southern Sudan, Liberia and in some parts of Latin America. We would like to say that the performance of WFP is increasing by the day, and donors have our thanks because they enable the Programme to implement its activities and achieve this improvement in performance.

Field visits should be discussed and they should be praised as the valid methodology which would help WFP Members to understand what is going on in the field. I speak from personal experience because I took part as a Member of the delegation. I visited Bangladesh two weeks ago and the report of that mission is being completed. This will reflect what WFP is doing in cooperation with

the other UN Agencies and with Non-Governmental Organizations, be they national or international.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the donors who are helping Sudan now in order to feed two million people in southern fringes. WFP has the lion's share in this. We look forward to more aid and assistance in order to support peaceful villages in the South, and we hope the Programme will enable us to implement some development projects for these villages also.

Food aid will not always be the ideal solution. We have to encourage people to work the land and to produce in order to be self-sufficient, and I hope that WFP will help us achieve this.

Kiala Kia MATEVA (Observateur de l'Angola)

Avant tout, au nom de ma délégation je voudrais adresser mes remerciements à M. Graisse pour la présentation claire du Rapport du Conseil d'administration du PAM et un autre document au titre de ce point. Ma délégation voudrait également féliciter le PAM, son Directeur exécutif et le personnel, pour le travail réalisé en 1998 et contenu dans ce Rapport.

L'Angola est Membre du Conseil d'administration du PAM et a participé activement aux activités du Conseil d'administration du PAM comme indiqué dans ces deux documents. Elle a suivi toutes les mesures et le programme indiqués. C'est pourquoi ma délégation appuie la délégation du Maroc qui a parlé au nom du Groupe africain et du Sénégal.

Pour terminer permettez-moi de remercier le Groupe de travail pour la redistribution des sièges du Conseil d'administration du PAM et, en particulier, Mme Laurie Tracy qui a su piloter l'avion qu'on lui a confié pendant un an et qui a atterri en douceur.

Jean-Jacques GRAISSE (WFP)

First of all, I would like to express my deep thanks to those delegations that have expressed sympathy for the victims who died in the service of the Programme in 1998. Regrettably 1999 has not started on a much better note, and we are still unfortunately experiencing more tragic accidents this year.

I would also like to welcome all those of you who have expressed support for the idea of field visits. Having participated myself in a field visit to China, I do realize how impressive the learning curve is for delegates to participate in them. It is fascinating to see things on the ground, and I am sure this programme cycle of field visits will be continued and increased in the future.

There was a very specific question related to VMA and FIVIMS. It was only last Thursday that my colleagues responsible for VMA and myself came here to meet with Mr de Haen and his colleagues to precisely discuss further strengthening of the existing collaboration between our VMAs and FIVIMS, as well as and our support for this inter-agency effort represented by FIVIMS.

I will come back perhaps later to the issue of full-cost recovery, but very briefly, let me reassure the distinguished Representative of Namibia that full-cost recovery has absolutely no negative effects, so to speak, on the beneficiaries of our programmes.

I also welcome very much the encouragement by Mexico, supported by Cuba, for strengthening the multilateral character of the Programme, and this gives me an opportunity to make, perhaps a brief, reference or answer to the question related to up-front and untied contributions. "Up-front contributions" mean contributions made in full at the time of their being offered to WFP, and an "untied contribution" means a contribution that does not require food commodities, services or non-food items to be obtained from any particular source or country.

(continué en Français)

Je voudrais maintenant appuyer les remarques exprimées par de nombreux délégués en faveur du Programme de développement du PAM et voudrais vous dire, en passant, que si nous avons eu les remerciements du Conseil sur nos actions, par exemple au Kosovo ou en Amérique centrale à l'occasion de Mitch, je voudrais simplement vous dire qu'il n'aurait pas été possible au Programme

de réagir de manière aussi rapide si nous n'avions pas précisément en place du personnel qui opérait dans le cadre de nos projets de développement ou qui a pu être réaffecté rapidement dans les opérations d'urgence.

Je voudrais, enfin, remercier les délégués qui nous ont encouragé à intensifier notre coopération avec nos deux agences sœurs à Rome. Croyez bien que les rencontres fructueuses entre M. Diouf, Mme Bertini et M. Al Sutan ne sont que le sommet de l'iceberg. Nous sommes à tous les niveaux, personnellement avec mes collègues de Hean et Regnier par exemple, mais M. Ngongi également avec ses deux collègues, Directeurs généraux adjoints, nous sommes en contact fréquent non seulement pour le plaisir de nous rencontrer, qui est toujours là, mais pour faire progresser nos partenariats entre les trois agences.

Quant à l'Alliance qui était proposée par le Représentant de l'Italie, nous sommes, bien entendu, entre les mains de nos conseils respectifs.

10.2 Amendments to the General Regulations and Rules of WFP (CL 116/17)

10.2 Amendements au Règlement général et aux Règles générales du PAM (CL 116/17)

10.2 Enmiendas a las Normas Generales y al Reglamento del PMA (CL 116/17)

CHAIRMAN

I think we have to push on and I would like go on to Sub-item 10.2, *Amendments to the General Regulations and Rules of WFP*. The relevant documents are stated here and relate to the distribution of seats on the Executive Board and amendment of Article XXIII, paragraph 3. There is a draft resolution for on forwarding to Conference in document CL 116/17-Sup.1.

I would again ask Mr Graisse to introduce the items.

Jean-Jacques GRAISSE (WFP)

Following the review of WFP's resources and long-term financing policies, the Executive Board, at its first regular session, endorsed the proposed changes to WFP General Regulation 13.2. The revised Regulation will strengthen WFP's ability to attract multilateral contributions on a full cost-recovery basis. Increased multilateral contributions should enable WFP to be more effective and efficient in carrying out its mandate.

Resolutions 9/95 of the Conference of FAO and 50/8 of the United Nations General Assembly mandated that the distribution of seats of the Executive Board of the WFP be reviewed, within two years, after the establishment of the Board and, that the review should be conducted in parallel, by the General Assembly and the Conference of FAO, taking into account the inputs of ECOSOC and the FAO Council. Parallel consultations were carried out in New York and Rome throughout 1998 and part of 1999 until the New York and Rome Working Groups agreed on a consensus position. ECOSOC endorsed the draft on 25 March, and the United Nations General Assembly, approved the new distribution of seats on 7 April.

The Executive Board, at its annual session, endorsed the draft Parallel Resolution proposing the revision to Appendix B to the General Regulations. With the Council's endorsement and the Conference agreement, the amendments to WFP General Regulations will enter into force on 1 January 2000. The amendments to WFP General Regulations are therefore, hereby, submitted for the Council's decision.

Mohammad Saeed NOURI-NAEENI (Iran, Islamic Republic of)

Being a member of the Working Group on the Distribution of Seats of the Executive Board of WFP or, in other words a crew member of Captain Tracy's team, and having attended a dozen very hard meetings of this Working Group, it is a great pleasure and relief for me to fully endorse the amendment related to Distribution of Seats which has already won the approval of the WFP Executive Board.

My delegation strongly recommends adoption and submission of the Draft Resolution to FAO Conference for approval, as is mentioned in the documents here in front of us.

Abdoukarim DIOUF (Sénégal)

Comme vous le savez, le Sénégal est également membre du Conseil d'administration. Nous avons, par ailleurs, participé au Groupe de travail sur le financement à long terme du PAM, ainsi qu'au Groupe de travail sur la répartition des sièges. Vous comprendrez donc que nous ne pouvons que recommander l'adoption de ce rapport.

Je voudrais saisir l'occasion pour féliciter les Membres du Groupe de travail sur la répartition des sièges, en particulier, Mme Laurie Tracy qui a dirigé avec beaucoup d'expérience et de maîtrise chaque réunion du Groupe de travail, et également associer à ces félicitations aussi bien les Membres du Groupe de travail que l'Ambassadeur Montjoye de la Belgique, qui a également contribué à la recherche d'une solution qui satisfasse tout le monde. Je termine en suggérant au Conseil d'adopter ces rapports.

Sra. María de los Angeles ARRIOLA AGUIRRE (México)

Ya hemos hecho mención a este tema en nuestra anterior presentación, por lo que no insistiremos en algo que ya aprobamos. Solamente queríamos pedir que quedara reflejado en el Informe el agradecimiento que hemos hecho abiertamente aquí a la Sra. Laurie Tracy por la excelente tarea realizada en la conducción de estos trabajos.

Sra. María Eulalia JIMÉNEZ de MOCHI ONORI (El Salvador)

Disculpe que le solicite el uso de la palabra; ya la delegada de México hizo referencia a lo que quería decir mi delegación, ya que El Salvador, habiendo ocupado la presidencia de la Junta Ejecutiva durante 1998 y habiendo solicitado, en esa oportunidad, a la Sra. Tracy el realizar este difícil trabajo, no quería dejar pasar esta ocasión sin expresarle, también en el seno de este Consejo, el reconocimiento por el excelente trabajo realizado para que, en esta oportunidad, podamos aprobar este Proyecto de Resolución.

Mrs Mariann KÓVACS (Hungary)

Since my country belongs to the group of countries which was really interested in the result of the Working Group, I would just like to echo the voice of those delegations who commented on the activity of this Working Group and especially the results. I would like to congratulate the whole crew as the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran, nominated the Members. I would like to agree with my colleagues from El Salvador and Mexico, to thank our colleague from the United States for the very valuable work.

P.W. MISIKA (Namibia)

We welcome the Report, and endorse its adoption by Council. However, in our lack of information or maybe ignorance, we seek to be informed of the mechanism that would be put in place to avoid a situation whereby, according to the recommendation on page 4, under 7.1 (a), eight members would be elected from the States included in List A; four members to be elected by FAO and four by ECOSOC. What mechanism should be instituted to ensure that one country is not elected by both?

LEGAL COUNSEL

The answer to that is that the elections take place at different times, and there is coordination between ECOSOC and FAO on this particular matter; and that itself avoids that we have this kind of situation.

Kiala Kia MATEVA (Observateur de l'Angola)

Je vous demande la parole pour la deuxième fois. Je me suis déjà prononcé sur ce point, mais je voudrais appuyer la proposition de la délégation mexicaine.

CHAIRMAN

I think it is very clear now that the Draft Conference Resolution and Amendment to the WFP General Regulations are endorsed by the Council, and will be transmitted to Conference for

formal adoption. I urge the Drafting Committee to take note of the proposals put on the table by Mexico and the others.

I hereby conclude the discussion on Item 10 on the World Food Programme and the session.

Jean-Jacques GRAISSE (WFP)

Just a word Mr Chairman. Thank you, Laurie. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

The meeting rose at 12.40 hours.

La séance est levée à 12 h 25.

Se levanta la sesión a las 13.25 horas.

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixteenth Session Cent seizième session 116º período de sesiones
Rome, 14 – 19 June 1999 Rome, 14 – 19 juin 1999 Roma, 14 – 19 de junio de 1999
EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING HUITIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE OCTAVA SESIÓN PLENARIA
17 June 1999

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

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

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

III. ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP (continued)
III. ACTIVITÉS DE LA FAO ET DU PAM (suite)
III. ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y DEL PMA (continuación)

- 8. Report of the 14th Session of the Committee on Forestry (Rome, 1-5 march 1999)**
 (CL 116/8; CL 116/INF/18)
8. Rapport de la quatorzième session du Comité des forêts (Rome, 1er-5 mars 1999)
 (CL 116/8; CL 116/INF/18)
8. Informe del 14º período de sesiones del Comité de Montes (Roma, 1-5 de marzo de 1999)
 (CL 116/8; CL 116/INF/18)

8.1 Venue of the Twelfth World Forestry Congress (CL 116/8-Sup.1; CL 116/8-Sup.2)

8.1 Lieu du douzième Congrès forestier mondial (CL 116/8-Sup.1; CL 116/8-Sup.2)

8.1 Lugar de celebración del XII Congreso Forestal Mundial (CL 116/8-Sup.1; CL 116/8 -Sup.2)

8.2 Other Matters Arising Out of the Report

8.2 Autres questions découlant du rapport

8.2 Otras cuestiones planteadas en el informe

CHAIRMAN

I call the Eighth Meeting of the 116th Session of the Council to order.

As Members are aware, the Committee on Forestry, COFO, did not make a recommendation to the Council on the venue for the World Forestry Congress.

Therefore, the Council is required to make a decision at this session.

Yesterday, the Bureau of the Council and the Secretary-General tried to find a way to handle the Sub-item which would be effective and, at the same time, make optimum use of the limited time available. Again I would like to remind all of us that we are now on Item 8.1, *Venue of the Twelfth World Forestry Congress*. The documentation is CL 116/8-Sup. 1 and CL 116/8-Sup. 2.

The proposed matter with which the delegations of Canada and Guatemala, the prospective host countries for the Congress, were in agreement with was : firstly, to deal with this item immediately after lunch; secondly, to give each candidate country ten minutes to make a presentation on the merits of their candidacy; thirdly, to open a brief debate in which Council Members would also have an opportunity to seek clarifications from the candidate countries; fourth, if there is no consensus on those countries, to have Council proceed to vote by secret ballot on the venue.

Can I take it that Council has no objection to this plan?

Before giving the floor to Canada and Guatemala to make these presentations, I should like to invite the Assistant Secretary-General, Mr Pérez de Vega, who recently went on a fact-finding mission to the candidate countries, to take the floor.

EL SECRETARIO GENERAL ADJUNTO

Permítame unas palabras, ante todo y sobretodo para agradecer a los distinguidos Representantes de Canadá y de Guatemala las muchas atenciones que recibí durante mi visita a sus respectivos países en relación a sus candidaturas para ser la sede del próximo Congreso Forestal Mundial. En ambos lugares me fue facilitada toda la información que podía necesitar, tuve todas las entrevistas que me podían ser útiles, así como la colaboración de numerosos funcionarios que dedicaron todo su tiempo a ayudarme a cumplir con los objetivos de mi viaje. El principal de estos objetivos era el de transmitir al Consejo, con el fin de facilitar la toma de decisiones, datos e informaciones sobre la logística e infraestructura necesarias para la celebración de un convenio internacional de la magnitud del Congreso Forestal Mundial. Los resultados han sido sometidos a la consideración

del Consejo y no voy a entrar en ellos. Lo que sí me interesa resaltar, es que si algún mérito tiene el informe es debido a la educación, esfuerzo y dedicación de los canadienses y guatemaltecos que me ayudaron a prepararlo. Los defectos corren exclusivamente por mi cuenta y si algo puedo decir como atenuante, es que el informe se preparó a marchas forzadas principalmente en salas de espera de aeropuertos y en aviones con el fin de que llegara a tiempo al Consejo. Pido anticipadamente disculpas a mis anfitriones por cualquier omisión o inexactitud que hayan podido detectar.

Video Projection

Projection de vidéo

Proyección de video

Yvan HARDY (Canada)

Canada is eager to welcome the international forest community to the Twelfth World Forestry Congress in the year 2003. Our submission meets and exceeds all the criteria established by FAO in its rules of procedures.

Canada's proposed venue, Quebec City, offers an excellent site for this large and important event, with a state-of-the-art Convention Centre that can house the entire Congress under one roof, has most hotels within a ten-minute walking distance and is home to a vibrant community of professional foresters, forest companies and forest researchers. Canada is a forest nation, has extensive experience in forest practices, possesses the latest technology and has world class educational institutions where foresters from all parts of the world are trained.

Let me elaborate on some of the reasons Canada's bid should be given every consideration.

Firstly, there is wide support in Canada. When Canada announced its candidacy at the close of the last Congress in Antalya, Turkey in October 1997, it did so with the full backing of all levels of government and key players in the Canadian forest community. Since that time, interest and commitment to make the next Congress an unqualified success have grown and solidified.

Secondly, on the basis of regional geographic rotation, it is Canada's turn. Only one Congress of the eleven held was in the North American Region, in the United States, 40 years ago. The only Congress to have taken place in a country with boreal forests was in 1949, more than half a century ago.

Thirdly, Canada has the infrastructure. The World Forestry Congress of 2003 would take place at the Congress Centre in Quebec City. It encompasses an extensive exhibit area and, with its meeting facilities, can accommodate up to 10 000 participants, providing them with state-of-the-art technology. In addition, it forms part of a vast complex of hotels, restaurants and a commercial centre.

Fourth, Canada has the financial and human resources available now. Canada is ready to move to the next stage. The Congress Secretary-General would be named within the year. The organizing committee would be established immediately. A web page announcing the Congress is ready. The estimated Canadian \$ 10 million that it will cost to ensure the unqualified success of this event are secured.

Fifth, Canada has a special fund to assist with travel and related expenses. Our budget includes a provision to facilitate representation from developing countries and from countries with economies in transition. Participants will be eligible for reduced registration fees and assistance will be provided to cover costs related to their travel, accommodation and daily subsistence allowances.

Sixth, state-of-the-art communications technology will increase access to information and documentation. As an additional way to reach out to participants from all corners of the world, the Congress will have its own website, providing information on pre- and post-Congress events and on local activities. The site will also be used to post papers as soon as they become available.

Thanks to the newest information technology, the Congress will also open up new "virtual" audiences who will be able to take part in electronic conferences and discussion papers.

Seventh, the climate is favourable. The ideal time to hold the Twelfth World Forestry Congress is in early fall, when the forest is in colourful splendour. At this time of the year, participants can expect enjoyable temperatures hovering around 20 degrees Centigrade.

(Continué en Français)

La région du Québec offre des occasions d'échanges et de rencontres nombreuses et variées. Le Québec est à la jonction de la forêt décidue et de la forêt coniférienne. Plus de mille professionnels forestiers demeurent dans la région immédiate du Québec. Les participants auront accès à des universités et collèges de renommée pour leur enseignement en foresterie et à quatre centres de recherche forestière, à des firmes d'ingénieurs conseils forestiers œuvrant partout dans le monde, à des usines et centres de transformation du bois tel que pâte à papier, sciage, meubles et autres, à des forêts expérimentales et des aménagements intégrés et à un centre de coordination de lutte contre les incendies forestiers unique au monde. Cette profusion d'expertises et d'activités se fera dans un cadre favorable aux échanges, à l'établissement de liens durables et au développement de collaborations ultérieures.

Le Congrès forestier mondial sera l'occasion pour tous les participants d'élargir leurs connaissances et leurs compétences et d'essayer tous ensemble de collaborer à l'élaboration de nouveaux outils nécessaires pour la gestion durable des forêts. De nombreuses excursions seront offertes aux participants du Congrès. A vingt minutes des hôtels du centre ville, une personne peut se retrouver en forêt. Le vaste éventail d'activités forestières dans les environs de Québec permettra d'organiser plusieurs excursions de courte durée, riches en expériences et découvertes, sur des thèmes forestiers actuels. De plus, l'organisation du Congrès a déjà fait savoir qu'elle rendrait disponibles des excursions allant jusqu'à une semaine dans les autres régions du Québec et provinces du Canada, dont les maritimes, la Colombie britannique et les régions nordiques ainsi que dans le nord-est des Etats-Unis. Finalement, le Québec, le Canada et la ville de Québec elle-même, en particulier, sont des destinations touristiques reconnues offrant tout un éventail d'activités. Par exemple, à partir de la ville de Québec, il est possible de faire des excursions sur le fleuve Saint-Laurent où l'on peut facilement observer des baleines, ou encore observer des centaines de milliers d'oies blanches qui se réunissent lors de leur migration annuelle.

Le Canada est un partenaire actif aux niveaux régional et international parce que les forêts sont importantes pour les canadiens. Nous voulons mieux comprendre les défis et les opportunités auxquels fait face le secteur forestier sur la scène internationale. Nous croyons que nous pourrions en apprendre beaucoup lors du prochain Congrès forestier mondial et que nous pourrions partager, notamment nos expériences sur la mise en œuvre de la gestion durable des forêts et de notre participation dans des projets forestiers dans des pays en développement. En tant que principal forum de la communauté forestière, le Congrès au Canada sera l'occasion de discuter tous les aspects de la foresterie, de faire des recommandations aux niveaux régional et international, d'identifier de nouvelles tendances et de susciter l'intérêt des décideurs, du public et des autres parties intéressées. En tant que partenaire, le Canada s'assurera que le Congrès sera une rencontre réellement mondiale et qu'il suscitera un sentiment d'appartenance auprès de tous les acteurs du secteur forestier. La ville de Québec est reconnue pour son caractère multiculturel, son accueil chaleureux, sa sécurité, et ses activités artistiques. Elle dispose de toutes les qualités pour assurer le succès du Congrès. Le Gouvernement du Canada et du Québec se sont engagés à faire du douzième Congrès forestier mondial un événement mémorable et n'épargneront aucun effort pour que les bénéfices en soient profitables à long terme.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Video Projection
Projection de vidéo
Proyección de video

Luis Alberto CASTAÑEDA AMAYA (Observador de Guatemala)

Señores Delegados, como primer punto, quisiera felicitar al Señor Presidente por su excelente trabajo al frente de esta Asamblea. Adicionalmente deseo agradecer a todos los delegados por darnos la oportunidad de exponer brevemente los principales aspectos relacionados con la propuesta de Guatemala como sede del XII Congreso Forestal Mundial. En esta exposición plantaremos cuáles son las razones por las cuales Guatemala desea recibirlos en el año 2003, qué representa este evento para la Región Centroamericana y qué ventajas tiene para el mundo la organización del Congreso en nuestro país.

La historia de las relaciones entre los bosques y nuestra sociedad, se remonta al primer milenio de nuestra era cuando los Mayas habitaron la parte norte de Guatemala y desarrollaron una cultura reconocida a nivel mundial. Los Mayas construyeron ciudades que, como Tikal, se yerguen actualmente en medio de la Reserva de la Biosfera Maya, que es uno de los bosques tropicales más extensos y mejor conservados de Centroamérica.

Guatemala es un país tropical ubicado al norte de Centroamérica, donde convergen las formaciones vegetales neárticas y las formaciones tropicales. Esta convergencia unida a las variaciones altitudinales de su territorio, tiene como consecuencia el desarrollo de múltiples ecosistemas que albergan una gran diversidad de especies, tanto de bosques de coníferas como de selvas tropicales, todo ello en apenas 108.000 kilómetros cuadrados. Esta gran variabilidad ecológica agrupada en 16 zonas de vida es correspondida también con una asombrosa diversidad cultural que hoy, en tiempos de paz, son capaces de expresar ampliamente sus 24 etnias. Básicamente Guatemala es un país indígena.

Luego de tres décadas de conflicto con el apoyo de la comunidad internacional, en diciembre de 1996, se firmó en la Ciudad de Guatemala el Acuerdo de Paz que puso fin al conflicto armado interno más antiguo de América Latina.

Obviamente, con la sola firma de la paz no se resuelven los problemas de un país. No obstante el proceso de paz está conllevando al país hacia la consolidación de la democracia, el fortalecimiento de las instituciones y la apertura a la participación de amplios sectores antes marginados, lo cual se ha traducido en un crecimiento sin precedentes de la infraestructura del país, especialmente de toda aquella referente al desarrollo turístico, rubro que ocupa el segundo lugar en la economía nacional. Esto ha permitido a que en el país se desarrollen en los últimos tres años una serie de eventos internacionales de gran envergadura entre los que se encuentran la Cumbre Iberoamericana de Presidentes y la Asamblea General de la Organización de los Estados Americanos (OEA) celebrada hace dos semanas en la ciudad de Antigua, Guatemala.

La celebración del XII Congreso Forestal Mundial en la Ciudad de Guatemala, indudablemente se constituirá en un factor de unificación nacional; éste es un evento de todo el pueblo que apuntalará el proceso de paz y los programas centroamericanos y mesoamericanos que los distintos países han iniciado a favor del desarrollo y medio ambiente en Centroamérica.

Actualmente el país cuenta con una cubierta de bosque natural de 29.000 kilómetros cuadrados que en su mayor parte son bosques tropicales, los cuales abarcan casi el 30 por ciento del territorio nacional. De hecho, el 51 por ciento del territorio nacional es de vocación forestal.

Al igual que muchos países en desarrollo, los bosques son fundamentales para la sostenibilidad de las actividades básicas de la economía del país, como lo son: la agricultura, el turismo y la agroindustria. En función de ello, se ha puesto en marcha un modelo de desarrollo que parte de una nueva política agraria basada en el ordenamiento del territorio en función de la vocación de uso sostenible del suelo, rompiendo de esta manera los paradigmas tradicionales que llevaron a la destrucción de los bosques tropicales del país y de la región. Esta política tiene como meta revertir

el proceso de avance de la frontera agrícola y llevar a cabo, a partir de los bosques, un proceso de desarrollo sostenible y equitativo para la sociedad guatemalteca.

En el año 1985, finalizado el inolvidable IX Congreso Forestal Mundial, un grupo de delegaciones deliberó sobre la importancia y el significado que para los bosques del mundo tenía dicho evento. En medio de estas reflexiones destacábamos la necesidad de la amplia difusión y seguimiento de las conclusiones en una época en la cual la importancia de los bosques para el mundo no era todavía reconocida ampliamente por todos los sectores. Hoy, después de casi quince años, el tema forestal es prioritario en la agenda del desarrollo del mundo, por sus ya reconocidos vínculos con el cambio climático, la conservación de la biodiversidad, la conservación del agua y del suelo y su rol en la producción sostenible de alimentos. Es por ello que el Congreso Forestal Mundial más que ser un evento académico, debe estar revestido de una importancia estratégica para el futuro de la humanidad. Esta situación exige del evento una mayor eficiencia en el planteamiento de respuestas de carácter estratégico global a los problemas forestales y mejores sistemas de difusión, de compromiso y de seguimiento a sus acuerdos y conclusiones. Es importante destacar que nueve de los once congresos mundiales han sido realizados en países en donde predominan los ecosistemas templados, siendo los bosques tropicales los más amenazados del planeta y donde la deforestación avanza a un ritmo alarmante. En todo caso, Guatemala presenta la posibilidad de tener vivencias en ambos ecosistemas: los tropicales y los templados.

El interés de Guatemala de ser sede del próximo Congreso Forestal Mundial trasciende los límites del sector forestal nacional y se constituye en el anhelo de todo un pueblo y en un punto relevante a nivel de país y de región. Situación que se comprueba por los compromisos ya adquiridos por el Gobierno en su conjunto, por el sector privado organizado, por las organizaciones de desarrollo y conservación no gubernamentales y por los organismos regionales de Latinoamérica que apoyan este evento.

Por otra parte, el Congreso vendrá a consolidar los esfuerzos de Centroamérica en materia ambiental que, como corredor biológico mesoamericano, apuntan a la conservación de los recursos naturales de la Región y de banco genético de importancia mundial.

Antes de plantear su candidatura, que oficialmente fue puesta como el primer país en dicho planteamiento según el informe puesto en sus manos, Guatemala analizó minuciosamente la magnitud del evento y los requerimientos logísticos necesarios para un encuentro de tal envergadura. Dicho análisis a nivel nacional no dejó ninguna duda. De la misma manera que el análisis efectuado posteriormente por la Secretaría General de la FAO, en el mes de mayo del presente año, no deja ninguna duda sobre las amplias capacidades logísticas de Guatemala para realizar el próximo Congreso Forestal Mundial. En efecto, el documento CL 116/8-Sup. 2, titulado: *Lugar de Celebración del XII Congreso Forestal Mundial: examen de la logística y de la infraestructura de las posibles sedes del Congreso*, puesto a disposición de los Miembros del Consejo por la Secretaría, confirma el análisis planteado.

De manera complementaria, hemos recibido ofrecimientos de apoyo de países con mucho peso en el sector forestal, tanto en el plano económico como en el técnico científico, para garantizar aún más el alto nivel del evento y así facilitar la trascendental asistencia de representantes de países en vías de desarrollo. Esto complementa las previsiones financieras hechas por el Gobierno, el sector privado guatemalteco y así como por el apoyo del Banco Centroamericano de Integración Económica (BCIE), comprometido desde ya en el financiamiento de este evento.

En adición, nos permitimos señalar otras ventajas de esta sede como lo son: el bajo costo de los servicios de hostelería, alimentación y transporte, la cercanía del aeropuerto internacional ubicado a menos de 10 minutos de los centros de convenciones y exposiciones y de los principales hoteles. Sobre todo, compartir con ustedes el regalo que Dios le ha dado a la capital guatemalteca en términos de clima: todo el año contamos con clima soleado y temperaturas agradables. El carácter centroamericano del evento se manifiesta en las giras de campo en las que se propone, además de visitar los diferentes ecosistemas y relaciones entre la sociedad y los bosques del país, compartir con Honduras una visita a Copán, sitio arqueológico de particular importancia por la combinación

entre el ecosistema natural y la arqueología precolombina. Adicionalmente, poder tener la oportunidad de visitar la Reserva de Biosfera el Trifinio, parque trinacional ubicado en el vértice de tres países centroamericanos: Honduras, El Salvador y Guatemala.

En resumen, confirmamos que la realización del Congreso en Guatemala podría apoyar el proceso de paz y el desarrollo del país y contribuiría a la consolidación de los programas de protección del medio ambiente y de los recursos naturales de Centroamérica y, desde ahora, garantizaríamos además un evento exitoso altamente participativo en un lugar donde se viven los principales problemas del desarrollo del mundo. Hoy, en 1999, ya estamos listos para recibirlos en el 2003.

CHAIRMAN

We have listened to and seen two equally splendid presentations by Guatemala and Canada.

Now we shall go into debate and I urge Council Members to be brief in their interventions, during which they may also seek clarification from the candidate countries.

Rubén OCAMPO (Paraguay)

La representación del Paraguay solicita tenga usted a bien conceder la palabra a la señora Presidenta del GRULAC, Grupo Latinoamericano y el Caribe, quien expondrá la posición oficial consensuada dentro de este grupo a los efectos de decidir la sede del XII Congreso Forestal Mundial. Esta posición obviamente la acompaña el Paraguay, por tanto solicito el uso de la palabra para la señora Presidenta del GRULAC.

Sra. María Eulalia JIMÉNEZ DE MOCHI ONORI (Observador de El Salvador)

El Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe, antes de abordar el tema que nos ocupa, desea hacer llegar un reconocimiento al Presidente Independiente del Consejo señor Baharsjah de Indonesia, por los esfuerzos que ha realizado para propiciar un consenso sobre el tema de la sede del XII Congreso Forestal Mundial.

Deseo ahora referirme al punto 8 de nuestro programa para informar que a partir de la presentación de la candidatura de Guatemala para hospedar el XII Congreso Forestal Mundial durante el 14º período de sesiones del Comité de Montes, el Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe acreditado en Roma ha realizado un análisis profundo de esta candidatura, concluyendo que este país de América es el país para compartir con el mundo este evento de trascendental relevancia.

El endoso que el GRULAC hace de esta candidatura está plenamente justificado. Guatemala, con una extensión de 108.000 kilómetros cuadrados, y ubicado en el centro geográfico del continente americano, comparte el territorio del istmo de Centroamérica. Guatemala es un país que luego del conflicto armado interno que lo golpeó por más de tres décadas, se ha propuesto el gran reto de impulsar un nuevo modelo de desarrollo que permita a sus habitantes mejorar su calidad de vida y convivir en paz y armonía.

El territorio guatemalteco comparte con la región centroamericana, a la que pertenece mi país, una diversidad natural y cultural únicas en el mundo. Guatemala posee un territorio esencialmente montañoso y volcánico, en el cual se ubican 16 zonas de vida y 5 regiones fisiográficas. El 51 por ciento del suelo guatemalteco tiene una vocación forestal. Este país es centro de origen y convergencia de innumerables formaciones y especies vegetales tanto de bosques, de coníferas, como de especies tropicales.

El Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe puede afirmar que al inicio de una nueva era de paz, Guatemala ha redefinido su política agraria dirigiendo esfuerzos hacia la consolidación del desarrollo económico y social de una nación multiétnica, pluricultural y plurilingüe, iniciativa que a su juicio merece el apoyo de la comunidad internacional. La recién promulgada política forestal, primera en la historia del país, retorna al concepto de una tierra de árboles, significado de la voz Nagual que dio origen al nombre de Guatemala. Por la magnitud de las metas que se ha trazado el país, el GRULAC puede también afirmar que las mismas trascienden los planes de un gobierno, y se traducen en compromisos y anhelos de los distintos sectores que conforman la sociedad guatemalteca.

Precisamente en esa nueva era de paz, también ha permitido a Guatemala proyectarse como Centro Internacional de Convenciones, desarrollando para ello modernas y eficientes instalaciones, lo cual, como se acaba de indicar hace un momento, se evidencia en el documento CL 116/8-Sup.2, que la Secretaría ha puesto a disposición de ustedes.

El Congreso Forestal Mundial representa para Guatemala, para la Región Centroamericana y para América Latina y el Caribe, una oportunidad sin precedentes para impulsar nuevas formas de desarrollo sostenible, reforzar iniciativas regionales como el corredor biológico mesoamericano y compartir con el mundo el legado milenario de una cultura Maya, reflejado en templos, ruinas y estelas de múltiples sitios arqueológicos, rodeado de una riqueza natural que lo convierten en el entorno ideal para discutir sobre los graves problemas que enfrenta el sector forestal principalmente en los países en desarrollo.

Guatemala es un país en desarrollo que confía en la solidaridad de los países que se encuentran en su misma situación, que pueden comprender muy bien la importancia que tiene para un país pequeño hospedar un evento de esta magnitud. Confiamos también en la de los países desarrollados que desde ya han dado su respaldo a nuestra aspiración.

Por todo lo anterior, el Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe solicita el apoyo decidido de los Miembros del Consejo de la FAO para que Guatemala sea designada sede del XII Congreso Forestal Mundial en el año 2003.

Dietrich LINCKE (Alemania)

Hablo por Alemania, mi país cumplirá con su promesa. Votamos por Guatemala porque reúne buenas condiciones para preparar el Congreso y para tratar particularmente los problemas de los bosques tropicales.

Consideramos que celebrar el XII Congreso Forestal Mundial en Guatemala, país tropical, centraría la atención de los expertos y políticos forestales como también de la opinión pública mundial en el problema más candente del diálogo internacional y de las acciones alrededor del manejo sano de la preservación y del desarrollo sostenible de los bosques: ¿Cómo poner fin a la pérdida y la degradación de los bosques tropicales?.

Mario MOYA PALENCIA (México)

Mi país suscribe íntegramente la declaración hecha por la distinguida delegada de El Salvador en nombre del Grupo Latinoamericano y el Caribe, simplemente subraya que hemos analizado con toda atención las condiciones que revela la documentación que nos ha sido presentada sobre el ofrecimiento que tanto Quebec en Canadá como la Ciudad de Guatemala en Guatemala hacen para ser los anfitriones del XII Congreso Forestal Mundial.

Creemos que ambos países, como dice el Informe, tienen una infraestructura suficientemente adecuada para ser la sede de este importante Congreso y que en ninguno de estos lugares, estoy citando el punto 59 del Informe, se ha celebrado anteriormente un acontecimiento internacional de las dimensiones del Congreso Forestal Mundial.

A nosotros nos gustaría mucho que la sede fuera Guatemala por varias razones que subrayaré después, pero queremos también comentar que Quebec es una ciudad que ya ha acogido en forma excelente a la FAO en el pasado, como en octubre de 1995 la FAO se trasladó a Quebec para celebrar los 50 años de nuestra Organización y fuimos espléndidamente recibidos por nuestros amigos canadienses.

Precisamente por esto, creemos que en esta coyuntura el próximo Congreso Forestal que es muy importante debe celebrarse en un país del mundo en desarrollo, un país que, como se ha dicho aquí, implica un escenario tanto de los ecosistemas templados como de los tropicales, de las fibras duras o largas y de las fibras cortas.

Creo que en Guatemala, más allá del origen de la palabra que identifica al país con el bosque, se reproduce ancestralmente un diálogo entre el bosque y el hombre. En Guatemala, como en toda Centroamérica, y yo vengo de un país que es parcialmente centroamericano, los árboles, los

hombres, las mujeres y los niños hablan entre sí, hay una comunicación que va más allá de lo industrial o de lo comercial entre el árbol y el hombre; es una relación no con el *homo faber* sino con el hombre que vive en la cercanía del bosque y al que el bosque presta su sustento. Por eso hay una intención totalmente preservadora, conservacionista, en nuestros países, como también en Guatemala, respecto al bosque y a los árboles.

Estamos convencidos que Guatemala es un ejemplo no sólo de biodiversidad sino de lo que el tercer mundo necesita para que el resto de la humanidad se fije en él: ser centro de grandes eventos, lo cual permita que en el escenario de nuestros países se lleve a cabo también el diálogo político internacional.

Sólo por eso preferiríamos que Guatemala fuera la sede del próximo Congreso y confiamos en que el resto del mundo en desarrollo, nuestros amigos africanos, nuestros amigos asiáticos y nuestros hermanos de América Latina piensen igual que nosotros.

Guillermo E. ALVARADO DOWNING (Honduras)

Para mí es un honor y una gran impresión estar por primera vez en un evento de esta categoría y también estoy impresionado por la ciudad de Roma, cuna de la democracia y de la razón. En este caso quiero apelar al sentido del bienestar que se puede generar con una Organización con la finalidad que tiene la FAO. Dentro de las circunstancias actuales, creo que el mayor beneficio se puede hacer teniendo la sede del Congreso en Guatemala por ser una zona de reciente explotación del bosque.

En Honduras tenemos problemas similares a los de Guatemala, donde desaparecen cientos o miles de hectáreas al año de bosque tropical latifoliado. Llamando la atención a este problema creo que la FAO haría mucho mejor, en términos relativos, obteniendo como sede Guatemala para este evento.

E. Wayne DENNEY (United States of America)

It is unfortunate that this debate is focused on political interest rather than focusing very much, in our view, on the abilities of each of these fine countries to support the next World Forestry Congress.

We certainly appreciate the Governments of both Canada and Guatemala for offering host the next World Forestry Congress, and the presentations we have witnessed demonstrate a genuine enthusiasm on the part of both countries. It is unfortunate that COFO was unable to make a recommendation, and similarly regrettable that Council must now have to make this very important decision.

You may recall that, during the last World Forestry Congress, the United States also expressed a brief interest in hosting the next congress but our interest was very shortlived, after we confirmed that Canada was far advanced in its planning and we were just contemplating it.

Further, as noted by Canada and we want to particularly underscore this point, it is Canada's turn. It is their turn both in terms of rotation within our Region and among all Regions. If countries are sincere about the principle of geographic rotation and we certainly have heard from time to time that this is a factor -- maybe it depends on the situation as to whether or not it is a factor -- Canada is the only venue for this prestigious event. Quebec City is indeed a hospitable city and the hosting of the 50th Anniversary Celebration of FAO in Quebec should add to, not detract from, what it can offer and should no way be viewed as suggesting that Quebec City might have had its turn so we should now move elsewhere. In fact, anyone who went to Quebec City in 1995 observed an excellent city. It is well organized, the Quebec Government and the Federal Government of Canada both collaborated to provide an excellent event and we are sure that if Members agree to host the next World Forestry Congress in Quebec City, a similar experience will be realized.

Ignacio TRUEBA JAINAGA (España)

En primer lugar quiero felicitar a la Secretaría por la preparación de los documentos CL116/8-Sup.1 y CL 116/8-Sup.2, donde se pone claramente de manifiesto que las dos candidaturas y los dos países tienen la infraestructura y los servicios adecuados para mantener y organizar un congreso de tanta importancia como el Congreso Mundial Forestal del año 2003. Quiero felicitar también a las personas que han expuesto los programas de cada una de las ciudades; son realmente dos candidaturas excelentes y es una pena que tengamos que pronunciarnos por una de ellas; pero si me gustaría que quedase de manifiesto este sentimiento de carácter general.

Quería hacer unas breves consideraciones. En este momento, es un problema importante el tema de los bosques tropicales. Los bosques tropicales y la biodiversidad forestal son puntos que se han tocado de una manera importante en la Cumbre de la Tierra y en el desarrollo de la Agenda 21 de dicha Cumbre. Evidentemente, Guatemala, tiene una riqueza importante en este tipo de bosques tropicales, una grandísima biodiversidad, encontrándonos también con problemas en este punto. Creo que es importante que un gran Congreso de esta naturaleza también se acerque a los países donde hay este tipo de problemas y donde hay esta biodiversidad y tanta experiencia en el tema de los bosques tropicales. Pero quisiera además añadir otro tema importante. Guatemala es un país en desarrollo, con problemas importantes de seguridad alimentaria.; también en el Programa Estratégico de la FAO, se nos está diciendo que hay que intentar resolver los problemas de la seguridad alimentaria de los países en un equilibrio con la gestión adecuada de los recursos naturales. En este sentido, Guatemala puede constituir un botón de muestra para intentar resolver esta doble problemática en este ámbito. Por otra parte, debo decir que España ha venido colaborando con Guatemala en el proceso de paz; en mi país, este tema, lo vivimos de una manera muy importante.

España colabora también con Guatemala en el Programa Especial de Seguridad Alimentaria. En esa línea, me atrevería a proponer que es muy importante en estos momentos, a principios del siglo XXI, dar una oportunidad a un país en vías de desarrollo, a un país que quiere abrir sus puertas a todo el mundo y que de alguna manera se pueda contribuir a la resolución de los graves problemas que tiene este país; lo que está claro es que el entusiasmo y la dedicación de los guatemaltecos por organizar ésto lo tenemos garantizado.

CHAIRMAN

It seems to me that clearly there is no consensus yet and we proceed to the secret balloting.

May I ask the delegates wishing to speak if they could briefly present their intervention. After Australia we can go to the ballot, because it seems to me that there is no way that we can have a consensus here.

Enrique A. PAREJA (Argentina)

Intentaré ser muy breve. En primer lugar, mi delegación suscribe todas y cada una de las palabras pronunciadas por la Presidenta del Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe, y apoyamos, sin lugar a dudas, a Guatemala como sede del Congreso Forestal Mundial.

En segundo lugar, quisiera hacer un llamamiento a la distinguida delegación de Canadá, para hacerle notar un aspecto que, hasta ahora, creo no se ha mencionado de forma directa y clara y que, para nosotros, es sumamente importante. Ya lo dijo nuestra Presidenta del Grupo Regional, Guatemala está saliendo de un proceso de conflicto doloroso interno que duró más de tres décadas. La atracción de la atención mundial sobre este país hermano de América Latina es algo a lo que tampoco nosotros nos podemos abstener, como miembros del Consejo, cuando justamente es un tema de máxima importancia política. Debemos dar la oportunidad a Guatemala para que continúe en esta ruta y en este esfuerzo de salir de ese doloroso proceso interno que acaba de clausurarse.

Finalmente, quisiera exponer que, por ser vecinos de Brasil y Paraguay, nosotros tenemos bosques tropicales, y creo que en este momento, como lo señaló el distinguido Representante de Alemania,

la acción y el diálogo internacional deben estar centrados en los bosques tropicales como un problema urgente para resolver entre todos.

Victor Manuel REBOLLEDO GONZÁLEZ (Chile)

Nuestra delegación quiere expresar su apoyo a la intervención de la Presidenta del Grupo Latinoamericano y el Caribe. Quisiéramos, sin embargo, señalar que no es una decisión fácil a la que se está sometiendo el Consejo. Lamentamos que no se haya podido tomar una decisión sobre el tema y que no se haya logrado un acuerdo. Y repito que ésta es una difícil resolución, y para mi país también lo es, porque se trata de dilucidar entre dos países americanos, en primer lugar, entre dos países amigos de Chile, en segundo lugar, entre dos países que, como ha quedado en evidencia por la brillante y excelente exposición que han hecho aquí ante el Consejo, y por el Informe que ha hecho la Secretaría y que agradecemos, ambos cuentan con la infraestructura y las condiciones materiales para garantizar el éxito de este evento. Y, sin embargo, frente a este equilibrio, quisiera señalar que nuestra motivación de participar de la resolución del Grupo Latinoamericano y el Caribe y respaldar la postulación de Guatemala para hospedar el Congreso tiene que ver con consideraciones que aquí se han formulado y que quiero sintetizar.

La región de Centroamérica, particularmente Guatemala, como se ha señalado, durante tres décadas ha vivido un proceso de conflicto que se puede calificar de trágico, con consecuencias dramáticas para toda la zona y esos países. Afortunadamente han encontrado el camino de la paz. Esa región y la propia Guatemala, en el curso de este conflicto, han recibido estímulos de muchos actores de la comunidad internacional que fueron soportes materiales para el desarrollo de ese mismo conflicto tan dramático; teniendo en cuenta la posibilidad de Guatemala de garantizar un exitoso XII Congreso Forestal Mundial, creo que es muy pertinente que la comunidad internacional, por la vía de una resolución del Consejo de la FAO, le dé un respaldo a la oportunidad que está buscando Centroamérica y, particularmente Guatemala, después de tantos años de dificultades, de encontrar un camino de progresar en paz.

Julio C. GOMES dos SANTOS (Brasil)

No había pensado en hablar, pero he cambiado de idea porque en el curso de este debate la delegación de Brasil tuvo que oír cosas que son muy serias, en lo que concierne a la posibilidad de los dos países de ser sede de este evento. Pero hay otras cosas que no le gustaron. Antes de tocar y abordar este tema, en nombre de mi delegación, y puedo decírselo en nombre de todo el GRULAC, me gustaría agradecer a la Dirección General de este Organismo y, en especial, al Sr. Pérez de Vega por haber ido a Canadá y Guatemala y haberse dado cuenta que los dos países tienen, en realidad, las condiciones para hospedar este evento. Siendo dos grandes países no se trata de disputar quién tiene más o menos condiciones, uno por razones de dimensión será un poco más chico, pero Guatemala es un gran país. Las razones por las cuales presentamos nuestros argumentos los que hablaron antes de mí fueron razones más bien técnicas que políticas, porque hablando alguien nos reportó a la Cumbre de la Tierra en Río de Janeiro en 1992, cuando los bosques tropicales eran el blanco de toda la discusión: la Amazonia; recuerdo que también, en aquel entonces, Río de Janeiro no tenía las condiciones para hospedar, ya no un Congreso como el que se realizará en Guatemala o Canadá, sino un Cumbre con más de 120 Jefes de Estado, y fue un éxito extraordinario.

Así que nuestros países tienen condiciones de hacerlo: son dos grandes países. Como dijo Chile, es muy difícil hacer una opción entre Canadá y Guatemala, porque ambos trabajan seriamente por el bien de la humanidad. Sin embargo, si vamos a hablar de bosques tenemos que pensar en la gente que vive de ellos y a raíz de ellos; y si pensamos en esto, pensamos en desarrollo sostenible, y no hablamos de áreas con 1 habitante por kilómetro cuadrado sino en áreas densamente pobladas. Este ejemplo está en Guatemala: bosques tropicales de difícil acceso pero donde la gente toma su sustento de los recursos forestales. Por estos motivos, sobretodo técnicos y objeto de discusión en todos los foros y también en la Cumbre de la Tierra, entonces pensamos en Guatemala. No hablemos comparando facilidades: por supuesto que si uno quiere a un lugar para hacer compras no irá allí; si uno quiere ir a bailar de noche o comer en los mejores restaurantes tampoco irá a Guatemala. Pero esto me hace acordar alguien que decía: yo vuelo en tal compañía

porque es muy confortable y no porque la comida sea mejor, pues yo no entro en un avión para comer ni tampoco voy a un restaurante para volar.

Lo que me ha hecho disertar no es repetir lo que otros ya han dicho. Una delegación se lamentaba que el debate se basaba en la política y aclaró: intereses políticos. Aquí nadie habló de intereses políticos. La finalización de una guerra de 40 años, una guerra civil con participación de un país que recientemente pidió disculpas por haber participado en ella, no es interés político, es apenas un consenso mundial para que este país tenga la posibilidad de recomponerse y la movilización nacional entorno de este Congreso Forestal es uno de los elementos más importantes de recomposición de esta gran nación guatemalteca. No hay interés político en esto; es la pura realidad de una reconstrucción sobre la paz de una guerra que duró casi 40 años.

Y, para finalizar, realizo un apelo a los países del Grupo de los 77 para que vean en eso una oportunidad de cooperación Sur-Sur.

Paul ROSS (Australia)

Like the United States, we would have preferred that the discussion not have become a political discussion. As we understood your directions, this debate was an opportunity to seek further advice and clarification from the candidates arising from their presentations.

We have two excellent candidates before us and it is a very difficult decision that each Member of this Council faces in choosing between them. Like the two candidates, Australia takes a very keen interest in the issues of sustainable forestry on a global level. The two candidates have presented excellent cases. They have both shown to us that, without doubt, they have the capabilities to host this event and, importantly, they have both shown their strong commitment to FAO and its membership.

That said, Australia believes strongly in the notion of regional rotation and we consider it is Canada's turn. Quebec City has shown to us that it will be an excellent venue for this significant event. We trust that Guatemala will understand our position, and allow me to say that we have the greatest respect for them.

CHAIRMAN

As there seems to be no consensus, as agreed earlier, we will now have a secret ballot to decide on the venue. I would like to ask the Secretary-General to outline the procedure.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Council Members will be called to the voting area at the back of the room where each voter will be given one ballot paper. On this they are required to place a cross beside the country they wish to select. Any ballot paper carrying more than one cross will be considered defective, while any paper left blank, or on which is written "abstention", will be counted as an abstention.

CHAIRMAN

Two-thirds of the membership of Council constitutes a quorum for voting purposes and since there are at least 33 members present, we can proceed. May I kindly request delegations of Cameroon and Italy to serve as tellers, and proceed to the voting area.

Delegates are reminded that once voting has commenced, no delegate may interrupt, except to raise a Point of Order in connection with the vote. If the tellers are ready, we will commence the vote. The Assistant Secretary-General will call the countries one- by-one to the voting area.

Vote

Vote

Votación

CHAIRMAN

Voting has ended and the tellers will withdraw to carry out the count of votes. While the votes are counted, we will go on and continue to examine Item 8, *Report of the Fourteenth Session of the Committee on Forestry*, documents CL 116/8 and CL 116/INF/18.

I would like to ask Mr. El-Lakany, Assistant Director-General of the Forestry Department, to introduce the Report.

H. EL LAKANY (Assistant Director-General, Forestry Department)

As the report of the 14th session of the Committee on Forestry is available to delegates, I do not need to summarize it at length. Instead I would like to highlight some of the main outcomes of COFO.

As many of you who attended COFO will recall, the meeting was characterized by brief and well-illustrated presentations and a constructive and lively debate.

SOFO 1999 was presented and made immediately available in five languages. It is recognized as an FAO flagship publication current forestry issues and knowledge.

The Forestry Department's new Website was launched at COFO and demonstrated to participants. It represents our resolve to be the leading source of qualitative, comprehensive, timely and easily accessible knowledge on forestry matters. The reaction from the delegates was very favourable. The fact that we received some proposals for corrections and additions indicate that we are on the right track.

The main items discussed at COFO were:

The UNCED follow-up and the discussion, included recommendations on further work on criteria and indicators, national forest plans and continued efforts in capacity-building.

Under the global forest sector outlook, COFO appreciated FAO's work and recommended high priority to regional and global outlook studies.

The discussion on national forest policies for sustainability: national and international challenges resulted in acknowledgement of FAO's role in addressing multifunctionality of forests and intersectoral issues and that the achievement of Sustainable Forest Management is not as much constrained by lack of adequate forest policies but more by inadequate policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

In the discussion of FAO's Strategic Framework 2000-2015 and implications for the medium-term for forestry programmes COFO concluded that:

Firstly, FAO has a comparative advantage in forestry and that forestry should be given greater prominence in the Strategic Framework.

Secondly, the mission, goals and objectives given in the Strategic Plan for Forestry should be more closely integrated into the Strategic Framework, and

Thirdly, more focus is required on areas in which FAO had a comparative advantage, such as data collection, analysis and dissemination, technical advice on sustainable forest management, capacity building and national forest programmes.

I am happy to report that the report of COFO was adopted in block by consensus. This is the first time this has happened in COFO.

On another matter, I would like to draw the attention of the distinguished delegates to the outcome of the Ministerial Meeting on Forestry that followed COFO, given in document CL 116/INF/18. I would be happy to provide any information in this regard.

I. Nyoman ARDHA (Indonesia)

As a country with fortunate blessings from God, Indonesia is still very much dependent on its tropical forestry areas which occupy more than 140 million hectares of the country. Therefore the forestry sector is contributing significantly to the economic development of our country, as well as to the social dimension of the country.

Therefore, our delegation would like to support the adoption of the *Report of the 14th Session of the Committee on Forestry*, which is now under discussion.

Having said that, our delegation would like to stress the need to focus FAO priority activities on forestry on the areas in which FAO has a comparative advantage, as stated in paragraph 48 of the Report.

Our delegation also noted the recommendation by the Committee that forestry be given greater prominence in the Strategy Framework and that the mission, goal and objectives given in the Strategic Plan of Forestry should be more closely integrated into the Strategic Framework, as stated in paragraph 45 of the Report.

Furthermore, our delegation would like touch the point on the efforts to develop global conventions on forests. Our delegation is very supportive to the initiatives. We are of the view that a forest convention is expected to remedy the problems of legal uncertainty and lack of predictability impressed in the national cooperation governing the global forestry. But, in our opinion, we still need a further consultation to see the integration of inter-parliamentary consideration into the forest sector ensuring more efficient activities which are now under separate instruments, such as conventions on: biodiversity, to combat desertification, and on climate change.

The Indonesian delegation would like to stress that our concept of global forest conventions is not a treaty focusing only on trade but a comprehensive mechanism which balances conservation, development and economic issues in forestry.

Mario MOYA PALENCIA (México)

Al considerar el informe del XIV período del Comité de Montes sometido a este Consejo, deseamos resaltar algunos aspectos; en especial concordamos con la recomendación formulada en el sentido de que los recursos asignados al Departamento de Montes de la FAO deben ser incrementados en consonancia con la creciente función que esta oficina desempeña en favor de los Países Miembros de la Organización.

De igual manera, en relación con las actividades de la FAO en este campo, estimamos conveniente continuar otorgando prioridad a los estudios de perspectivas regionales y mundiales, particularmente en los aspectos que desempeñan una función decisiva para la ordenación forestal sostenible.

Permítame señor Presidente hacer referencia a un tema que por su relevancia fue discutido en el marco de la Reunión Ministerial celebrada en pasado marzo. Me refiero a los incendios forestales, fenómeno que durante 1998 afectó a muchos países incluyendo a México. La prevención y combate de los incendios constituye sin duda un elemento central de las políticas forestales en cuanto tienen un importante impacto en el uso y manejo sostenible de los bosques. Con el apoyo de la FAO, mi país organizó en agosto del año pasado un foro regional sobre la materia, en el que funcionarios gubernamentales y de otros sectores interesados, intercambiaron políticas para manejar, controlar y prevenir dichos desastres, los cuales tienen importantes efectos económicos, sociales, ecológicos y, a veces, hasta políticos.

Una de las causas principales que inciden en los siniestros de los incendios forestales deriva del uso y manejo del fuego en las actividades agropecuarias. Como todos sabemos, este tema resulta complejo frente al hecho de que en esta práctica coinciden variables culturales y de otra naturaleza. Advirtiendo la importancia de discutir este tema, mi país hospedó a finales de marzo

pasado un foro internacional sobre la materia, en el que se discutieron alternativas para la sustitución del fuego en las prácticas agrícolas y ganaderas.

En esta reunión se realizaron también debates entorno a los efectos de los incendios en diversos ecosistemas, en particular aquellos de tipo árido, templado y tropical. Este foro internacional significó un avance en el manejo integrado de los incendios ya que los mismos fueron abordados desde su compleja e intrincada causalidad y sus consecuencias.

Con estas observaciones mi delegación se complace en respaldar el *Informe del XIV período de sesiones del Comité de Montes*.

Dato' ANNUAR MA'ARUF (Malaysia)

The Malaysian delegation welcomes the document CL 116/8 and is pleased to endorse it. We wish to reiterate our earlier intervention under agenda item on the Programme of Work and Budget that forestry be given due recognition and its fair share, of the organizational resources so that forestry programmes can be effectively and efficiently implemented in the next biennium. We also support the recommendations in the document, the need for balance and synergy between normative and field activities.

Malaysia wishes to highlight the following important areas of work for FAO in the forestry sector.

As for UNCED follow-up, we urge FAO to:

One, continue to facilitate regional processes in the development of a set of internationally-agreed criteria and indicators for assessing and monitoring sustainable management of all types of forest or areas of similar ecological zones.

Two, assist the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests on the identification of elements of international arrangements and mechanisms, to promote management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forest.

With regard to *Global Forest Sector Outlook*, we urge FAO to continue to broaden its work on the collection, exchange and dissemination of information and to include in its analytical studies the trends in wood substitutes, as well as utilization of less environmentally-friendly materials.

In connection with the *National Forest Policies for Sustainability*, we urge FAO to intensify efforts in capacity-building and technology transfer, including conducting workshops on trade-related matters, so as to assist developing countries to better understand and appreciate the significance of mutually-supportive trade and environmental relationships in enhancing sustainable forest management.

In conclusion, we would like to highlight three areas where FAO can provide the leadership role, in collaboration with other UN Agencies and networks, as well as taking advantage of in-house multidisciplinary strength:

One, strengthening national and regional institutions and infrastructures on environmental disaster monitoring and emergency response systems, such as those in forest fire management;

Two, assessment of non-wood goods and services, and

Three, acceleration of intersectoral activities on rural landscape planning and management, agro-forestry, diversifying the utilization of forest products and forest genetic resources utilization. All of this within the context of multifunctionality of forestry and with a view to increasing food security and reducing rural poverty.

Mohamed Walid TAWILL (Syria) (Original language Arabic)

My delegation would like to express its full support for this excellent document, and I would like to congratulate the Secretariat and the Forestry Department for preparing this excellent Report.

At the same time, my delegation would like to underline the following:

Firstly, the necessity of enhancing forestry studies and their development and promotion in developing countries, so that they can apply the results of the modern agriculture techniques which are environmentally-friendly and in order to move them into the natural forests. Thus, scientific research could be of benefit for these countries, particularly with regard to some forest problems, since these developing countries have achieved some good results in the investment of scientific research in the field of crops.

Secondly, further attention should be given to the Mediterranean forests in the that are suffering from lack of rainfalls and which are exposed to some strong deterioration. We have to exert every effort to protect them, to promote and develop such areas. FAO could play a major role in cooperation with Governments in this respect.

After having said that, I would like to make reference to the hosting by the Syrian Government of the Regional meeting for the Forestry Department in the Near-East, which was held in Damascus this year. Under the supervision of FAO and the Department of Forestry, this meeting was very successful and recommended certain points, among which are those that I have dealt with previously.

I would like to join the Mexican delegate who spoke about forest fires. The forest fires in the Mediterranean Region, particularly during dry summers, are a real challenge against the efforts exerted to protect and develop forests in Syria. Despite the great efforts deployed and the major financial and human resources available and provided by the Government of Syria and its people, there is a necessity, and we do need FAO assistance, as well as that of the international community, to support such efforts in order to provide experience, training and communication in forest fire fighting.

Dietrich LINCKE (Germany)

Speaking on behalf of the European Community and its Member States, I would like to endorse the *Report of the 14th Session of the Committee on Forestry*. Allow me to refer to some specific matters in document CL 116/8 which the Council has been requested to consider.

The European Community and its Member States express their appreciation for the efforts by FAO to ensure preparation for the follow-up work of the inter-agency processes under CSD.

Likewise, we commend FAO's assistance in developing criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management. FAO should also play a leading role in joint efforts to advance the use of such criteria and indicators.

The forest-related decisions of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development have given an enormous impetus to the international debate on forestry. We are aware in the EU that further work is required to develop common understanding and to build on a consensus on the full scope of matters related with international arrangements and mechanisms to enhance the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and the way to go in the coming years, as stated in the mandate of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests.

The EU sees the need for the international community to have appropriate arrangements in place as from the year 2000 on, to secure consultation and promotion of forest-related issues at the international level, and to strengthen the forestry sector worldwide.

Likewise, there is a need in all Member States to secure monitoring and reviewing the implementation of sustainable forest management at national level. We see an enhanced role of FAO in these activities. This enhanced role should also be clearly reflected in the priorities to be established in the context of the Strategic Framework.

The global *Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) 2000* is one of the key activities of FAO in the normative field. This comprehensive and worldwide assessment of the state of forest resources in the year 2000 constitutes the very basis for national, as well as international, forestry planning and

decisions. The European Community and its Member States request the Secretariat to ensure that FRA 2000 be funded from the regular budget of the Organization.

Let me add a remark on the *Strategic Plan for Forestry*. In general, we think that FAO should continue to strengthen its normative activities and complementary field activities which are mutually supportive. FAO work is much needed, mainly in the following fields:

- Global Forestry statistics and information;
- Technologies and methodologies for management, conservation and the sustainable use of trees and forests;
- Institution strengthening and capacity building with special emphasis on national forest programmes, as defined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, and
- Contribution to international processes.

This should be adequately reflected in the *Strategic Plan for Forestry*, which was not yet approved by the 14th Session of COFO. We are looking forward to the revised and definitive version of that document to be adopted at the next Council Session.

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

To begin I would like to thank the Secretariat for the careful preparation they have put into these documents before us, the *Report of the Fourteenth Session of the Committee on Forestry* which we support. The socio-ecological and human role played by forestry is necessary in developing countries in meeting the requirements of people living in these areas, especially in rural areas, and also in order to reduce poverty in these areas.

The Organization is making every effort to collect information and distribute it so that it can contribute to the preparation of regional plans and projects and help countries, and so that it can draw up codes of conduct for sustainable management and operation of our forests in order to conserve them and also integrate them in fire-fighting.

We need therefore to improve the capacities of different sectors of developing countries and also help them in research, scientific issues and cooperation. Consequently, we recommend that the resources for these activities be increased. With respect to countries where there is small forest cover and those that are subject to drought and deterioration in climate, they too need particular help from the Organization. This is what IFAD does, as does the Secretariat for the Convention on Bio-diversity. Undoubtedly the establishment and putting into practice of the parameters necessary for sustainable management of forestry will be an important factor in the sustainable management process, and it will also help if we can strengthen our institutions through technical assistance and training.

These are all important points that need to be taken into account with respect to forestry in both developed as well as developing countries, so that we may optimize them and also acknowledge their repercussions on our well-being and our climates.

Mostafa JAFARI (Iran, Islamic Republic of)

My delegation would like to thank Dr El Lakany for his presentation of this document. As a Member of Council, my delegation wishes to endorse this Report while bringing up a small point for consideration.

In paragraph 49, first bullet, referring to reforestation and afforestation in countries with low forest cover and facing drought and subject to desertification, the active role of FAO in this regard should be highlighted. As the Rome Ministerial Declaration on Forestry urged and adopted unanimously, adequate financial resources should be allocated. Moreover, in the cooperation of FAO and other international organizations should be mentioned in the meeting which will be held in Teheran in October of the current year. Furthermore, in FAO's Strategic Framework, clear guidelines should be given to FAO and Member Nations for further activities to fulfil this need.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy)

I'd like to make a few remarks in line with the German declaration, that we fully support of course, to express and to renew appreciation for the *Report of the Fourteenth Session of the Committee on Forestry*.

First, in particular we wish to stress the importance and need for FAO's assistance in developing criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, as the European Union Presidency already pointed out. The recent changes in some FAO programmes, as the ongoing process of re-orientation towards normative functions in technical programmes and the strengthening in the operational work in investment support, yield the need for a suitable methodology of assessment and evaluation. In this regard, we appreciate the effort made by FAO in developing the approach to the programme reviews presented in the already discussed document C 99/4.

Second, nonetheless, we wish to underline the need for a more widespread adoption of some effective tools, as for instance the logical framework analysis, in preparing both programmes and individual projects. This tool, that could be more systematically used by FAO, can improve noticeably the coherence of the design-one of the most important items in reviewing and evaluating programmes. These tools, in most cases, also imply the gathering of systematic information and can allow the consistent use of a selected set of indicators, aimed at testing effects and impact on programmes and projects.

Third, paragraph 39 of the document says that "The Committee stressed that the Strategic Framework should be consistent with the goals of the World Food Summit Plan of Action". In such a context, we wish to underline the importance of the rational management of forestry resources in contributing to the improvement of the food security at the local level, because of non-wood goods and the role played by forests in areas under degradation.

Fourth, moreover, we fully share the need for support to community forestry programmes, including efforts in participatory forest management, as stated in paragraph 36 of the document. This issue should not be neglected or considered as marginal, because the active participation of concerned populations may represent both a strong factor of promotion of better living conditions for rural population and vulnerable people, and a fundamental factor in achieving success in the rational management of forests. It may also contribute to a better diffusion of good governance culture at the grassroots level, that could lead to a more shared concept of rational management of natural and productive resources. In this regard, we see that good results have been achieved in a number of initiatives, some of them supported by Italian Cooperation, where local communities and institutions are actively involved in identifying, planning and using the forestry resources in a sustainable way.

Let me repeat the importance that my Government has always attached to the forestry dimension of FAO.

Miss Fatimah HASAN J. HAYAT (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

I apologize for asking for the floor at the last minute, but I did want to thank Mr El Lakany for the very detailed report that he has given us. I would like to say that I agree with everything that was said by the distinguished Ambassador of Egypt with respect to the need to increase resources in this Organization in order to resolve problems of desertification in the Near East, because these are problems which countries of that Region have to cope with.

We have worked together with the Organization and ICARDA in order to coordinate efforts in recent years and to benefit from the Organization's experience, but it is not enough. We see that we need to strengthen the Organization's experience at the international level and that means it needs resources in order to help us overcome and combat desertification. Unfortunately, things have developed for the worse, in recent years. That does not mean that coordination has been lacking between the Organization and countries, but unfortunately adverse climatic conditions, especially in our Region, and drought, for example, in Jordan, have been particularly bad this

year. The climate in the Gulf Region last year and this year too, I am thinking of my own country too, has been rather drastic. We have reached temperatures that have never been reached in the last 50 years.

We are not an agricultural country, but desertification is a matter of great concern to us. It is something that the Gulf Region suffers from. Therefore, we would urge this Organization to assign additional resources to help us tackle this awful problem, which is a very serious matter for all the Near East.

H. EL LAKANY (Assistant Director-General, Forestry Department) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the Forestry Department of the Organization, I would like to thank all the delegates who have been so kind as to show particular interest in the forestry activities of the Organization.

Secondly, I would like to insist upon the fact that some of the Department's priorities are being reordered in the light of recommendations adopted at the last session of the Committee on Forestry. Some delegates are recommending that more resources be given to our Department, and we are very grateful to them for that.

With respect to forest fires, here too we have an issue which we pay particular attention to because it is becoming increasingly serious and important, especially with respect to policies designed to cover trees and forests. We are also making efforts to identify zones and forest areas at risk.

With respect to sustainable management of forestry, here too we are giving the matter our full attention. Coming to cooperation with the IPF, and in pursuit of the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on the Environment, we said at the last meeting of the Committee on Forestry that this is something that is ongoing.

Some delegates have referred to analytical studies and collecting information. This is certainly part of our programme and we have put a great deal of effort into it. Another activity in which our Organization is fully engaged and which is making significant progress and has done so for the past ten years, are our national programmes, especially when it comes to the transfer of technology and the link between trade, the environment, goods and non-wood goods and services that can be provided by forests. We follow the recommendations of the Committee on Forestry in all these matters.

Coming now to support for Forestry Research Institutes and institutes engaged in forestry activities in areas with low forest cover, a point which was made by the Islamic Republic of Iran, there is going to be a conference on this risk before long and, of course, there is the question of arid areas and all areas subject to desertification.

Coming now to *The State of Forestry throughout the World*, this is something that we shall continue to produce, despite the fact that it does call for significant financial resources. However, one of the most important jobs of the Committee has been to produce this Report and many countries have agreed. In fact, we sometimes receive requests for more. Some Arabic countries have been able to get a copy of the document via Internet, which also reflects progress. Including the social, cultural, economic and ecological roles of forests is part of a strategy that we are carrying on in the Organization.

Introducing forestry as part of the global strategy, we need to put into practice the recommendations. It is something that we are giving all our attention to.

CHAIRMAN

We now have the result of the vote.

REPORT OF BALLOT RESULTAT DU SCRUTIN RESULTADO DE LA VOTACION	No. 1	VENUE OF THE 12 TH WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS LIEU DU 12eme CONGRES FORESTIER MONDIAL LUGAR DE CELEBRACION DEL XII CONSEJO FORESTAL MUNDIAL
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1. Ballot papers deposited Bulletins déposés Papeletas depositadas	48
2. Defective ballots Bulletins nuls Papeletas defectuosas	0
3. Abstentions Abstentions Abstenciones	0

4. Valid ballots Bulletins valables Papetetas válidas	48
5. Votes cast Suffrages exprimés Votos emitidos	48
6. Majority Majorité Mayorla	25

Elected - Elus - Elegidos		Not elected - Pas Elus - No Elegidos		Eliminated - Eliminés - Eliminados	
CANADA	25	GUATEMALA	23		

Tellers/Scrutateurs/Escuradores

Signature P. MOUNIE
Firma _____
Cameroun

Signature P. Parodi
Firma _____
Italie

B. Linley

17. 6. 99
Date
Fecha

Elections Officer
Fonctionnaire electoral
El oficial de elecciones

Yvan HARDY (Canada)

Au nom du Canada et de toute sa communauté forestière, je remercie le Conseil de la confiance qui nous a été accordée aujourd'hui pour l'organisation de ce Congrès forestier mondial, dans la ville de Québec, en 2003.

(continue in English)

It is true that both candidacies made for a difficult choice but, having said that, Canada is delighted to now move forward to make the Congress the best it can be. To Guatemala, I would like to express my appreciation for a fair competition and a good challenge. Let us continue our cooperation in the spirit of friendship that characterized our campaign.

Sra. Rita CLAVERIE de SCIOLLI (Observador de Guatemala)

La delegación de Guatemala presenta, en primer lugar, su felicitación a la honorable delegación del Canadá y le desea el mejor éxito en el desarrollo de este Congreso Forestal que debe ser, como se ha dicho en esta sala, de proyección a los países en desarrollo y al mundo precario en el tema del Desarrollo Sostenible.

La delegación de Guatemala no puede dejar pasar desapercibida esta ocasión para que con el mecanismo democrático del voto agradecer a aquellos países que, con su confianza en el proceso de paz y en el desarrollo de Guatemala, nos han dado su apoyo.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

H. EL LAKANY (Assistant Director-General, Forestry Department) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the Forestry Department of this Organization, I would like to voice my deep appreciation to Canada and Guatemala who offered their services to host the Twelfth World Forestry Congress. I think it is a reason for our Forestry Department to be proud that two great countries competed for the organization of this Congress, and we cannot wait to start working with Canada to organize that Congress and make it a success.

III. ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP (continued)**III. ACTIVITÉS DE LA FAO ET DU PAM (suite)****III. ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y DEL PMA (continuación)****12. Preparations for the Conference on the Multifunctional Character of Agriculture and Land (Maastricht, Netherlands, September 1999) (CL 116/INF/17)****12. Préparation de la Conférence sur le caractère multifonctionnel de l'agriculture et des terroirs (Maastricht, Pays-Bas, septembre 1999) (CL 116/INF/17)****12. Preparativos para la Conferencia sobre el Carácter Multifuncional de la Agricultura y la Tierra (Maastricht, Países Bajos, septiembre de 1999) (CL 116/INF/17)****CHAIRMAN**

We now come to Item 12, *Preparation for the Conference on the Multi-Functional Character of Agriculture and Land*.

FAO actively supports the initiative taken by the Netherlands to organize this Conference, which will take place in Maastricht in the Netherlands from 12 to 17 September 1999.

I have therefore invited Ambassador Berteling of the Netherlands to join us on the podium to provide information on this event.

The overall objective of the Conference is to identify both the new practices and the necessary enabling environment that will lead to increased sustainable agriculture.

I should first like to ask Mr Carsalade, Assistant Director-General of the Sustainable Development Department, to introduce the item, and then Ambassador Berteling will speak afterwards.

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

Comme vous l'avez souhaité en novembre dernier, j'ai le plaisir de vous présenter l'état d'avancement de la préparation de la Conférence FAO/Pays-Bas sur le caractère multifonctionnel de l'agriculture des terroirs qui se tiendra, comme vient de le rappeler le Président, à Maastricht, aux Pays-Bas, du 12 au 17 septembre 1999. Les invitations à cette Conférence seront envoyées aux Pays Membres de la FAO très prochainement. Le document d'information, CL 116/INF/17, préparé pour cette session du Conseil, rappelle le contexte historique de la Conférence, car ce n'est pas la première fois que la FAO et le Gouvernement des Pays-Bas ont travaillé ensemble pour faire face au défi de l'agriculture de demain, en particulier en organisant, en 1991, la Conférence sur l'agriculture et sur l'environnement qui s'est tenue à Den Bosch.

La Conférence de Maastricht de septembre 1999 fait partie du processus de préparation de la huitième session de la Commission du développement durable qui aura lieu en avril de l'an 2000 à New York. Cette huitième session fera le point des progrès accomplis dans la planification et la gestion intégrée des ressources en terres dans le secteur économique de l'agriculture ainsi que dans certains domaines intersectoriels. C'est dans ce contexte que s'inscrit pour la FAO qui, je le rappelle, est maître d'œuvre des chapitres 10 et 14 d'Agenda 21, la Conférence de Maastricht.

L'objectif général de cette Conférence est d'identifier les pratiques nouvelles et les environnements porteurs qui permettront d'accroître la durabilité. L'accent sera mis sur la diversité des contributions possibles de l'agriculture et des terroirs pour la durabilité et pour la sécurité alimentaire. La Conférence FAO/Pays-Bas de 1999 répond aussi, d'autre part, à l'engagement 3 de la déclaration de Rome sur la sécurité alimentaire adopté par acclamation des Chefs d'États et des Gouvernements lors du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation de Rome en 1997. Je vais la relire. Je cite: "Nous poursuivrons des politiques et des méthodes participatives et durables de développement alimentaire, agricole, halieutique, forestier et rural dans les régions à potentiel élevé comme dans celles à faible potentiel qui sont essentielles pour assurer des approvisionnements alimentaires adéquats et fiables aux niveaux des ménages ainsi qu'aux échelons national, régional et mondial, et lutterons contre les ravageurs, la sécheresse et la désertification considérant le caractère multifonctionnel de l'agriculture". Dans ce contexte le caractère multifonctionnel de l'agriculture et des terroirs exprime le fait qu'au delà de la production de cultures vivrières, de fibres, de produits énergétiques, forestiers, de poissons et de produits de la pêche, l'activité agricole peut, dans certaines circonstances, remplir des fonctions sociales, écologiques, économiques et culturelles et produire des biens et des services qui peuvent contribuer au développement rural et à la durabilité.

Le but de la Conférence est d'identifier, de façon objective, des moyens de multiplier ces effets positifs. La FAO appuie activement l'initiative prise par les Pays-Bas d'organiser cette Conférence technique internationale. Cet appui se traduit essentiellement par la fourniture de contributions techniques au processus de préparation. Un nombre croissant de pays et d'organisations internationales collaborent à ce processus en fournissant un large éventail de contributions complémentaires de grande qualité.

La FAO coordonne la préparation des deux principaux apports techniques à la Conférence, à savoir: premièrement le document d'inventaire (stock-taking paper), et deuxièmement le document de travail (issue paper). Ces deux documents se complètent mutuellement et devraient constituer ensemble le point de départ des débats de la Conférence. Ils ont en commun plusieurs thèmes et préoccupations, mais pour suivre des objectifs fondamentalement différents. Le document de travail vise essentiellement à présenter les concepts, les questions et les politiques, tandis que le document d'inventaire passe en revue de manière empirique les processus, les scénarios et les tendances. Ensemble, ces deux documents devraient fournir une analyse ouverte, intégrée et cohérente des questions relatives au caractère multifonctionnel de l'agriculture et des

terroirs qui devrait intéresser aussi bien les responsables politiques que les techniciens et les praticiens.

Le processus de révision de ces documents entre actuellement dans sa phase finale avant que ces derniers soient traduits et imprimés. Ils devraient être prêts pour distribution aux participants fin juillet/début août. Le programme de la Conférence technique sera envoyé prochainement. Il va inclure la présentation comme élément de discussion dans certains nombres d'études de cas, autant d'expériences empiriques sur le caractère multifonctionnel de l'agriculture et des terroirs. Cette Conférence technique internationale devrait aboutir à des recommandations concrètes et à la formulation de propositions en matière d'agriculture durable et de gestion des terroirs, s'appuyant sur les connaissances les plus récentes et l'ensemble de ces résultats sera utilisé pour le rapport que la FAO présentera à la Commission du développement durable à New York l'année prochaine.

Pour terminer, je voudrais saisir l'occasion pour vous faire connaître les derniers développements intervenus depuis la production du document d'information qui a été soumis à votre Conseil, une nouvelle page Internet accessible sur la première page de la FAO sera lancée lundi prochain et tiendra à jour en permanence l'état des préparatifs.

Une nouvelle conférence internationale, suite à celle qui s'est tenue en février et mars 1999, débutera en juillet et s'insérera dans un site de conférences virtuelles pendant la Conférence technique de Maastricht. Elle permettra à ceux qui ne peuvent pas participer à Maastricht de contribuer aux discussions techniques et au succès de la Conférence.

Jan BERTELING (Observer for Netherlands)

Thank you for the opportunity to give some further information to the Council of FAO.

In addition to the introduction by the Assistant Director-General for Sustainable Development, Mr Carsalade, I would like to highlight a few general points and some elements for which, in particular, the Netherlands Government is responsible in the organization of this Conference.

Early last year, my Government took the initiative to organize an international conference to prepare for the Eighth Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, CSD-8, which has on its agenda the topics of land resources and sustainable agriculture. We decided to seek close cooperation with FAO. I should like to emphasize that the FAO/Netherlands Conference on the Multi-Functional Character of Agriculture and Land is very much a joint undertaking.

We are essentially following a participatory approach in the preparatory phase and intend to continue to do so during the Conference itself. Let me be very clear; with participatory we mean participation by all countries and all other relevant organizations.

All Members of FAO and the UN will be invited, as well as a number of Intergovernmental Organizations and International Non-Governmental Organizations. The Netherlands, supported by some others, will provide travel and per diem costs for developing countries that are eligible for World Bank loans. In doing so, we sincerely hope that a large number of countries and a variety of international organizations are in a position to attend the Conference in Maastricht and contribute actively to its results.

As has been mentioned already by Mr Carsalade, it is not the first time the Netherlands is organizing, together with FAO, an international conference. Some of you may still recall the Den Bosch Conference in 1991, where the elements for Agenda 21's Chapter on Sustainable Agriculture were discussed in preparation for the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro. In September this year in Maastricht, we want to achieve equally successful results as in the Den Bosch Conference eight years ago.

Maybe I should apologize here for the pronunciation of the names of these cities, which are very difficult for foreigners, but those are the names of the cities, Den Bosch and Maastricht.

The Netherlands Minister for Agriculture, on his own initiative, has requested ten colleagues from various parts of the world as to whether their countries would be prepared to become a partner and become actively involved in the whole process. Another nine international organizations have agreed to be involved in the Conference as partners. These partners have been asked to play a role in the preparatory phase during the Conference itself, and in the follow-up process towards CSD-8 in April 2000.

In order to discuss with the partners the possible role of the Conference, a Partner Seminar has been planned in South Africa in a few weeks from now, from 5 to 7 July. Here, I would like to mention the special role played by the International Fund for Agricultural Development, IFAD, as a partner organization, which provides the funds for this Seminar.

Finally, I hope that the Council could recommend that the outcome of the Conference in Maastricht, which will probably be in the form of a concluding summary of a few pages, be submitted to the FAO Conference in November this year for endorsement and incorporation into the CSD-8 process.

I am really looking forward to seeing representatives from all your countries in Maastricht.

B.M. MOLOPE (South Africa)

I think it is appropriate for South Africa to take the floor since, as the Ambassador has said, South Africa has accepted the invitation from the Netherlands to be a partner country in the forthcoming Maastricht Conference on the Multi-Functional Character of Agriculture and Land.

In accepting the invitation, South Africa joins the second partner country from Africa, Mali.

In preparation for the Conference, South Africa, as has been said, is hosting a Country Partner Seminar from 5 to 7 July 1999, that is next month. During this Seminar, South Africa will be presenting a case history on dryland conservation and the impact that this has on food security.

The participation of South Africa is based on the premise that the deliberations of the Conference and the Seminar will be of a technical nature. South Africa has a long and proud history of dryland conservation, and therefore considers that it can make a meaningful contribution to the Conference and Seminar.

South Africa perceives this to be a high-level technical forum, which will enhance our international understanding of the complex issues surrounding the multi-functional character of agriculture and land and its crucial link to environmental sustainability. We are conscious that, in addition to its conventional role as a primary food supplier, agriculture has other multiple roles. One can think here of conservation of land, water resources and of course the natural environment; formation of good landscape; and of course, most importantly, agriculture has been very strategic in the maintenance of cultural traditions, more so in the developing countries.

On this premise, South Africa has accepted to become a partner in this event.

Ariel FERNÁNDEZ (Argentina)

Agradezco a la Secretaría y al Embajador Berteling por la presentación que hicieron de este Informe. Quisiera referirme ahora a este documento en particular. Nuestro país no ignora que la agricultura o cualquier otra actividad económica puedan considerarse multifuncionales, sin embargo, hasta ahora no existe un consenso pleno sobre el alcance de dicho concepto, como tampoco a la denominada producción no alimentaria de la agricultura. Hasta ahora las organizaciones que encararon los trabajos técnicos parecen encontrar muchas dificultades para definir su alcance y ésto es lo importante, el alcance mismo de este proceso; también así para establecer una metodología que permita medir el valor económico de estas actividades. Aquí se han señalado muchos factores, culturales, psicológicos, medio ambientales, etc., lo que sí es cierto es que la reunión permitirá contar con un espíritu constructivo enfocado a tratar de lograr este objetivo de definir el concepto y el alcance. No obstante, tenemos algunas dudas que expresar en cuanto a la vinculación de todo el proceso.

En particular, en el párrafo 5, del documento presentado, este proceso está vinculado a la Comisión de Desarrollo Sostenible, para la cual se elaborará un informe sobre la evolución del tema sectorial de la planificación integrada y la ordenación de los recursos tierra. Luego, aparece un concepto económico, como así también un tema intersectorial, que es Recursos Financieros, Comercio e Inversión y Crecimiento. Una de las cosas que quisiera solicitar nuestra delegación es saber cómo se van a complementar estos aspectos técnicos incorporados en la primera parte de ese párrafo con la segunda parte, es decir si el objetivo tiene dos componentes básicos que son la Integración y Ordenación de los Recursos de la Tierra así como también el Sector Económico de la Agricultura en su vinculación con términos financieros como comercio, inversión y crecimiento, y también de qué manera este proceso puede confluir en la CDS 8. Por último, deseamos que la evolución de la Conferencia no establezca una vinculación con lo que se ha dado en conocer como 'sistema de precios sosten'. Porque normalmente estos sistemas tienen algún tipo de repercusión en los aspectos de sostenibilidad y generalmente tienen una consecuencia negativa para aquellos países que hacen una producción eficiente en la agricultura.

Quisiera hacer una última referencia al párrafo 26 del documento presentado. Dentro de un proceso lógico de desarrollo de los trabajos que se van a realizar aquí, estimaríamos que en principio es prematuro que la Conferencia recomiende por adelantado directamente en su 30º Período de Sesiones, la declaración que se va a adoptar en el mes de septiembre. Preferiríamos en todo caso que el proceso lógico que siempre se ha seguido en la Organización es que después de una conferencia técnica tan importante como ésta, sus resultados se den al próximo Consejo y éste analice cuales sean los resultados de modo tal que a través del debate la Conferencia pueda tener un Informe conciso y de allí remitirlo al CDS-8. En ese espíritu, nuestro país, seguramente, cuando llegue la invitación que nos formularán los organizadores concurrirá con la mejor delegación que se pueda integrar, y como dicen los italianos con un poco de *ramarico*, lamentamos que no se nos haya considerado entre los países que podían dar sus aportes en este proceso preparatorio dadas las experiencias de la agricultura en la Argentina, en cuanto a sostenibilidad.

Estaremos en Maastricht aportando nuestra experiencia con espíritu constructivo para tratar de alcanzar este difícil objetivo, que es definir este concepto multifuncional.

Mohamed Saeed NOURI-NAEENI (Iran, Islamic Republic of)

First of all, let me thank Dr Carsalade, the Assistant Director-General of the Sustainable Development Department, and Ambassador Berteling for introducing this document.

We have already had the chance to have discussions with Ambassador Berteling on two other occasions. We asked the questions and he kindly provided the answers. Everything is clear to us.

The only point that I found out was that the Near East Region has not received its share in the preparatory parts of the Conference. From each Region, two countries have been invited, except for the Near East Region, where only one country has been invited. That is history now, but we hope that, in future activities, in the technical aspects, this would be compensated.

I am saying this because the multi-functionality of agriculture in that part of the world is very profound. In the Persian Gulf area and essential Asian countries, agriculture is more of an art, because in an area where you have five centimetres of rainfall per year, you can see orchards and people producing livestock. This is because of the multi-functionality of agriculture, and the techniques they use have been devised and learned over thousands of years. I think there is a lot of valuable experience that can be transferred to this Conference at Maastricht, and we hope that we can have our share in that Conference.

Jae-han KWON (Korea, Republic of)

We appreciate the Secretariat's efforts to provide this informative document on the Preparations for the Conference on the Multi-functional Character of Agriculture and Land in September and we also thank the Ambassador of the Netherlands for his explanation on the seminar in South Africa.

My delegation thinks that this document should have also reflected the content of the Ambassador of the Netherlands' earlier presentation. We are very interested the Preparatory Meeting in South Africa as well, as we stated in CFS meeting.

I am very pleased to say that my country will also do its best to contribute to the Conference on the Multi-Functional Character of Agriculture and Land, and to the seminar in South Africa in every possible way.

Masato ITO (Japon)

Je remercie le Secrétariat de la FAO et l'Ambassadeur des Pays-Bas pour l'information donnée sur cette conférence. Ma délégation a apprécié l'effort de la FAO et du Gouvernement néerlandais pour la préparation de la Conférence sur le caractère multifonctionnel de l'agriculture et des terroirs.

Nous soulignons l'importance de la notion de multifonctionnalité de l'agriculture, qui a été adoptée à l'unanimité par acclamation par les chefs d'Etat au Sommet mondial de l'alimentation en 1996. Nous félicitons pour leurs efforts le Secrétariat de la FAO et le Gouvernement des Pays-Bas pour la réalisation de la Déclaration qui est adoptée à Londres. Nous voudrions aussi souligner l'importance de cette conférence, non seulement comme la suite du Sommet de la planète Terre en 1992, mais aussi comme la suite du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation en 1996. A cet égard, nous appuyons les vues qui sont exposées au paragraphe 26 du document CL 116/INF/17. La Déclaration adoptée à la Conférence de Maastricht devrait être soumise à la Trentième session de la Conférence de la FAO.

Pour terminer, ma délégation voudrait indiquer sa volonté de participer activement à la Conférence de Maastricht et d'apporter une contribution à la discussion lors de la phase préparatoire.

Paul ROSS (Australia)

Australia very much appreciates this Netherlands initiative and we would like to thank them, through Ambassador Berteling, for their commitment to host this Conference. We note FAO's active support for this initiative. In the document before us, we would note the strong emphasis on the technical nature of the Conference, and we believe this is very appropriate. This Conference must remain technical. It must not become a political forum.

In paragraph 26 of the document, there is the suggestion that this Council should recommend that the statement of the Conference go forward to the FAO Conference in November for incorporation into the CSD-8 process. We share the view, expressed by Argentina, that this suggestion is premature. There must be an opportunity for Members to carefully review the outcome of the Netherlands Conference before consideration is given to putting these outcomes forward to the FAO Conference.

We have learnt only recently about the IFAD-funded Seminar that is to be held in South Africa in early July to discuss preparations for the Netherlands Conference. As we have already mentioned to Ambassador Berteling, we would have preferred to see more information on this Seminar sooner. We would also note that no country from the South-West Pacific region of FAO was invited to the Seminar.

Australia wants very much that the Netherlands Conference be successful. To this end we believe we have a lot to offer. We believe our experiences and approaches to agriculture and rural development provide a useful model for others to draw on. We have already been involved in the E-Conference earlier this year, and we welcome the chance to participate fully in FAO's preparatory process.

We hope, therefore, that we can receive a report on the IFAD seminar in South Africa promptly after its conclusion, and that we will be able to be fully engaged in the development of the draft statement for the Conference.

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Chile)

En primer lugar, quisiéramos felicitar a la Secretaría por la elaboración de este documento. En segundo lugar, agradecer al Gobierno de los Países Bajos por haber tenido esta iniciativa tan loable para estudiar y profundizar el carácter multifuncional de la agricultura y la tierra, conferencia técnica que nos parece interesante porque creemos que es un buen aporte de los Estados Miembros de la Organización para que se continúe avanzando sobre ciertos conceptos en los cuales aún no existe claridad a nivel universal.

Dicho esto, quisiéramos hacerle algunas preguntas a la Secretaría y al Representante de los Países Bajos sobre algunos aspectos que, quizás, puedan parecer sólo detalles, pero creo que puede asegurar una mejor participación de todos los Estados Miembros del sistema de las Naciones Unidas. Me refiero, específicamente: ¿cuál es el rango de participación de los diferentes Organismos no Gubernamentales en la Conferencia Técnica? ¿Cuál será el nivel respecto a los Estados en esa Conferencia? ¿Participarán al mismo nivel que los Estados Miembros? ¿Habrá limitación del cupo de técnicos para que los Estados Miembros puedan estar representados en la Conferencia? ¿Cuál será la forma de organización del Informe Final de la Conferencia en los Países Bajos? ¿Cómo se considerará ese Informe por parte de los órganos de Gobierno de esta Organización?

El otro comentario es que no entiendo bien la relación entre una Conferencia Técnica organizada por el distinguido estado de los Países Bajos, Miembro de esta Organización, con el apoyo técnico de la FAO, cuyo informe final será técnico pero viene un órgano de Gobierno que es político, por lo tanto y eventualmente, la Conferencia, si es que se decide eso, será obviamente una decisión política.

De allí que las preguntas formuladas nos parecen especialmente relevantes. Chile es un país que está muy preocupado sobre el carácter multifuncional de la agricultura y la tierra, puesto que cree que es un interesante concepto que debe ser analizado y profundizado, pero también entiende que puede representar algunos peligros para los pequeños estados que tienen la necesidad de tener un vigoroso nivel de exportaciones para asegurar la seguridad alimentaria y de esta manera alimentar a miles de trabajadores que están vinculados con el sector silvoagropecuario. Es cierto que es importante preocuparse del bienestar del paisaje. También creemos que es importante lograr un adecuado equilibrio entre ambos enfoques.

Quisiera, en nombre del Gobierno de Chile, apoyar la presentación que ha hecho Argentina y Australia; creemos que es extremadamente importante la Conferencia organizada por el Gobierno de los Países Bajos, por la capacidad técnica de la FAO, pero también nos parece que es más importante aún que sea el Consejo de esta Organización que pueda ver los resultados para que no se prejuzguen los mismos; muy por el contrario, creo que sería enormemente enriquecedor que todos los Estados Miembros de esta Organización pudieran participar con sus impresiones y sus opiniones con la experiencia que tenemos en la aplicación del concepto del carácter multifuncional de la agricultura y de la tierra.

Para finalizar, quisiera hacer una pequeña observación. Tuvimos la suerte de participar, como muchos de los aquí presentes, en la discusión y en todo el proceso de desarrollo de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación y nos parece interesante que se haya aprovechado mencionar la Cumbre al final del párrafo 7 del documento CL 116/17, en el cual se reproduce el compromiso del cero, pero como se recordará el proceso de discusión de la Cumbre fue un todo muy rico, un intercambio de opiniones y distintos aspectos que logramos en un equilibrio muy difícil, y muchos recordarán que se hizo, incluso, en altas horas de la noche o de la madrugada. Por ejemplo, recuerdo el Compromiso 4° que quisiera leer y, quizás, sería bueno hasta incorporarlo dentro de este documento, que dice: "Nos esforzaremos por asegurar que las políticas de comercio alimentario y agrícola y de comercio en general contribuyan a fomentar la seguridad alimentaria para todos a través de un sistema de comercio mundial leal y orientado al mercado." Creo que puede ser muy enriquecedor incorporar el concepto de Seguridad Alimentaria, que es, a nuestro

modo de ver, una de las bases fundamentales sobre las cuales descansa el Plan de Acción de la Cumbre y no puede ser mencionado de manera segregada.

E. Wayne DENNEY (United States of America)

The United States has been an active collaborator with FAO and the Government of the Netherlands since this idea was conceived well over a year ago. The FAO/Netherlands Conference will help fulfil FAO's responsibility as a Task Manager for a portion of FAO's responsibilities for Agenda 21. We expect that the Maastricht Conference will provide invaluable technical input to CSD-8 next year. We would hope that the Thirtieth FAO Conference might be able to endorse the conclusions of the Maastricht Conference, but we agree with others that the next Council should render a judgement on those conclusions before forwarding it to Conference.

Ms Mitzi GURGEL VALENTE da COSTA (Brazil)

I would like to thank the distinguished delegate of the Netherlands for his very precise and clear presentation of the document we have in front of us. At this point, I would like to join with some of the delegations that have spoken before me, such as Argentina, Australia, Chile and now the United States, with regard to the submission of the Report of this technical meeting directly to the Conference in November. I think we should first of all see it and discuss it before we can then move to do something about it.

I am also looking forward to listening to the answer to the question posed by the distinguished delegate of Chile with regard to how the Netherlands envisages the participation of the NGOs in this meeting. I would also like to know if it would be possible to have a list of the NGOs that have been invited to this session.

Harald HILDEBRAND (Germany)

I take this opportunity to speak on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.

First of all, we would like to thank the Secretariat and the Netherlands for the introduction they have given on the preparations for the FAO/Netherlands Conference on the Multi-Functional Character of Agriculture and Land. We welcome the initiative taken by the Netherlands to organize an international technical conference on this topic. We believe that the Conference will increase the understanding of this complex issue and that it will contribute to further progress with regard to the implementation of Chapters 10 to 14 of Agenda 21, which is the Plan of Action of the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro.

We propose that the outcome of the Maastricht Conference be submitted to the Thirtieth Session of the FAO Conference for information and discussion, with a view to its incorporation into the CSD-8 process.

Mario MOYA PALENCIA (México)

Seré breve para agradecer al distinguido Embajador de Países Bajos y a la Secretaría por la presentación de este tema. Solamente queremos resaltar la trascendencia de que se discuta esta temática todavía no conceptualmente acordada y con un gran impacto futuro en toda la agenda agrícola. Esperamos que haya una asistencia que represente las posiciones y los intereses de todos los países.

CHAIRMAN

Thank you for the very constructive debate, and I would like to call upon Mr Carsalade now to give us a brief overview of the major issues and answer any questions that have been placed.

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

Si vous me le permettez, je demanderai en premier lieu à Mme Fresco, qui coordonne avec ses collègues hollandais l'organisation de la Conférence, d'apporter un certain nombre de précisions, en particulier sur la nature des documents qui devraient être produits au terme de la réunion de Maastricht.

Ms L.O. FRESCO (Director, Research, Extension and Training Division)

Let me try and give you a feeling for the kind of documents that we will see as the outcome of the Maastricht Conference.

First of all, as you have heard, we are preparing a number of background documents that are near completion. There are two main documents, the Issues Paper and the Stocktaking Paper, as well as a number of Technical Background Documents. These documents will obviously form the heart of the Maastricht Report, complemented by the reflection of the technical discussions during those five days. At the end of the Maastricht Conference, it is obviously necessary to come to some kind of a conclusion, a kind of summary conclusion that reflects the full width and breadth of the discussions.

We hope the full Report of Maastricht will get a very wide circulation to do justice to the many demands you already have to highlight various technical aspects of this subject. This full Report will contain three components: the essential ingredients of the Technical Background Documents and the two Main Documents, the Essential Ingredients of the Discussions as they take place during the Conference, and the Summary Conclusion. That will be the full Report.

Given the timing of the Conference, it is going to be absolutely impossible to prepare the full Report in time for a review, either by the Council or the Conference, in view of the fact that it would need translation and it would need ample time to be sent to all the Member Nations. Hence, what we propose is to prepare very rapidly, in time for all the Member Nations to review it, some kind of a Summary Report which would not be very long, but which would give you the main ingredients of those three major parts, and at least do justice to the summary and to the discussions as they have taken place in Maastricht, assuming that you will all have seen the Background Documents in advance. I think, in that way, we can do justice to the need to get a rapid outcome of the Maastricht Conference, without compromising the need for a full and wide circulation of all the details and all the contributions that will be given during that week.

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

Je voudrais tout d'abord remercier l'ensemble des intervenants, qui ont tous sans exception manifesté de façon très positive leur soutien à cette conférence technique. J'apprécie tout particulièrement le fait que certaines délégations qui avaient émis, dans le passé, des inquiétudes par rapport au sujet de la Conférence, ont bien compris son caractère exclusivement technique, sa volonté d'être un lieu de débat sur les concepts et les définitions et d'aider chacun de nous à mieux comprendre de quoi l'on parle, dans la double dynamique de la Commission du développement durable d'une part, et du suivi du Sommet mondial d'autre part. Je crois que ce support nous est tout à fait sensible.

Des questions ont été posées, en particulier par le délégué de l'Argentine, sur le contenu de la huitième session de la Commission du développement durable. Effectivement, le paragraphe 5 du rapport amalgame les différents éléments qui vont constituer l'ordre du jour de cette Commission du développement durable, sans les hiérarchiser. Mais, en fait, ces éléments, qui sont le fruit des décisions de cette même Commission du développement durable, comprennent un élément principal intersectoriel, qui est l'examen des progrès accomplis dans le domaine intersectoriel de l'agriculture. Les domaines sectoriels, qui sont cités en fin de paragraphe, conservent un caractère relativement mineur, et leur intégration à la réflexion n'est pas encore clairement décidée par les instances qui organisent la Commission du développement durable et les pays qui participent aux réunions intermédiaires. Je crois que, de ce point de vue-là, il y a un sujet principal qui est le thème intersectoriel et qui, donc, concerne directement l'activité de la FAO, puisque, je le rappelle, nous sommes *Task Manager* des chapitres 10 et 14.

Pour ce qui concerne l'autre point, qui a été souligné par de nombreuses délégations, c'est-à-dire la façon de traiter le rapport de la Conférence de Maastricht par les instances de gouvernement de la FAO, je crois qu'il appartient fondamentalement à votre Conseil de se déterminer, je crois que c'est votre responsabilité. Je voudrais simplement rappeler que ce rapport, dont Mme Fresco vient de définir le contenu, servira à être le fondement technique de l'apport de la FAO à la Commission

du développement durable dans sa huitième session. C'est ça l'objet principal de ce que nous faisons. Donc il constituera un des éléments techniques principaux; technique je dis bien. Donc il appartient à ce Conseil de se déterminer sur la forme qu'il souhaite donner à ses délibérations, si vous souhaitez que le Conseil l'examine d'abord, ou bien que ce soit envoyé directement à la Conférence. Je pense que c'est une décision qui vous appartient très directement.

J'ajoute enfin que, s'agissant d'un contenu technique, le rapport qui sera produit n'a aucun caractère négocié; il ne peut engager d'une façon ou d'une autre aucun des participants à la Conférence de Maastricht, puisqu'il s'agit d'éléments qui définiront des thèmes de discussion qui auront lieu lors de la Conférence à Maastricht.

Voilà les points que j'avais à souligner.

Jan BERTELING (Observer for Netherlands)

Indeed, I would like to add a few reactions to the questions raised this afternoon to and the comments given.

In the first place, I am very happy to hear how many are interested in the subject of the Conference and in coming to Maastricht. It is clear that we have a very serious problem. We have far too many friends to become partners, so we have to select a very small number and we have done that on the basis of spreading it as much as possible around the world. We did not take the FAO regional structure, but we did take the UN regional structure. We have countries from all over, and although I did not list earlier the countries we have asked to become partners in this exercise, that does not mean that other countries, who are still very much our friends, should not also play a very important role both in the preparatory phase and in the Conference in Maastricht itself. In many different ways that is still possible.

The countries that were asked by the Dutch Minister for Agriculture were Brazil, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, France, Indonesia, Mali, Poland, South Africa and the United States of America.

It was realized by the Dutch authorities that any selection is difficult, and we are fully responsible for that. We hope that this is a group where different opinions do exist and where different experiences have been had. We will all for that reason enjoy the benefits of all these different experiences in the Conference itself.

In the letter of invitation to be sent by the Director-General next week, as we heard earlier from Mr Carsalade, it is mentioned that in view of the purpose and structure of the Conference, the number of the participants is limited to 350. More than 150 countries are expected to participate, maybe even more. Each delegation should therefore consist of a maximum of two participants. There has been a very specific question on what kind of participants. It is said in this letter that participants should be senior experts in agricultural development, food security and/or natural resource and land management. Such experts should ideally come from Ministries and related national public institutions, including universities and research institutes dealing with issues in these fields. That is how we envisage it. Of course it is up to countries to decide for themselves who will represent them in Maastricht.

On the selection of the NGOs, FAO and the Netherlands have consulted also in view of the number of participants possible. First of all, FAO has a number of NGOs that by definition have to be invited for conferences like this, which of course has been met. There are also a number of other important international Non-Governmental Organizations that will be invited. I do not think it is proper for me at this moment to give the full list, but there is a list of international NGOs and I think it can be made available. There are about 25-30 NGOs, as I see it here, and a number of international organizations like the United Nations itself, UNDP, UNEP, Unesco, World Bank, and IFAD. If there are any questions, the FAO Secretariat and myself are fully prepared to give you further details on this particular list outside the meeting room.

I again would like to stress that the question has been asked, that it has been specifically mentioned that from the Southwest Pacific Region, no country was invited and only one from the Near East Region. It is true that it is not enough but I, and I am absolutely sure FAO, will also

take care that we not only inform but also involve as many other countries as possible in the run-up process to the Conference in Maastricht and hopefully also afterwards.

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Chile)

Sólo para recordar algunas preguntas que hice y que me parece que no han sido contestadas y creo que sería muy interesante poder recibir información. Primero: ¿qué número de personas por país serán admitidas y será posible que asistan a la Conferencia?, o quizás se respondió, perdón, y no lo escuché bien. Segundo: ¿cómo será la participación en los debates? Esta pregunta también la hice en relación a ¿cómo participarán las ONG en relación a las representaciones de los países? Otro comentario: ¿también habrá algún esquema de Grupo de Redacción, participarán solamente los Delegados?, en fin ese tipo de detalles creo que también sería muy oportuno poder conocerlos.

Jan BERTELING (Observer for Netherlands)

I will try to give a few answers. As I said, the delegations should not be more than two persons because of the total number that is possible to accommodate at the Conference. The same is basically true for NGOs. They will have the same status at the Conference, and they will have the right to speak and to participate as it is a technical conference on an equal footing. A Drafting Committee is not envisaged at this stage. It is an open discussion which hopefully will lead to very clear conclusions. These are the specific questions that have been raised.

Ariel FERNÁNDEZ (Argentina)

Con relación al punto 26 mi delegación insiste con su postura de que ésto pase al informe, ya que las declaraciones -como bien ha dicho Chile- serán fruto de la intervención de numerosos participantes, no olvidemos que aquí nosotros tenemos una responsabilidad política como Representantes de nuestros Estados.

Con relación a la preparación de los informes no dudamos de la eficiencia de la Organización y del Gobierno hospedante para producir esos documentos lo más rápido posible, de acuerdo al tratamiento de un proyecto en el marco del FIDA que otorgó una contribución de 245.000 dólares para los costos de organización. Se dice que la FAO ha ya movilizado un fondo fiduciario con aportaciones de numerosos donantes. No tengo dudas que, en virtud de ello, seguramente habrá fondos previstos para la publicación, de modo tal que ese punto en particular no lo veríamos como un obstáculo.

Subrayamos la necesidad que éste sea un proceso rico y que el próximo Consejo de la FAO pueda analizarlo, aunque sea un documento informativo. Creemos que está en el interés de todos que antes de la Conferencia nuestras capitales puedan tener un *feedback*; no sólo nuestras capitales sino también organizaciones civiles y ONG que quizás no puedan participar *in situ*. Creemos que un tema tan importante, más que merecer premura necesita reflexión, porque serán los resultados finales de la Conferencia los que harán reflexionar a muchos, de modo tal que tiene que ser un proceso en el cual podamos contar no sólo con la participación sino también con la información y poder, con tal motivo, resguardar los procedimientos previstos para este tipo de informes o declaraciones.

Ms Mitzi GURGEL VALENTE da COSTA (Brazil)

I would just like to ask again the same question that I asked last time. How would the NGOs be participating in the meeting that will be taking place in Johannesburg? Will they be able to participate in discussions on the same footing as the countries, or will they participate as observers?

Kyeong-Sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

Thank you for the explanation about the Conference. Here I need some clarification. In the preparatory meeting – I am not quite sure what it is called -- taking place in South Africa, what will be discussed and how will the result of the meeting for the Maastricht conference be used? Secondly, could the Report of the South Africa meeting be distributed to the Members Nations or not?

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

Je répondrai principalement à la question soulevée par le Représentant de l'Argentine qui concerne l'examen préalable par le Conseil du document qui fera rapport de la Conférence de Maastricht, et je répète que, si il y a consensus entre les Membres du Conseil pour considérer que ce document doit passer d'abord en Conseil, nous n'y voyons aucun inconvénient pour ce qui concerne le Secrétariat.

Jan BERTELING (Observer for Netherlands)

First, I forgot to reply to the question posed earlier by the delegation of the Republic of Korea. The reason why there was no mention of the seminar – it is called a Partners Seminar – in the document is that it was decided to hold that kind of seminar after the document was drafted. The rest is the responsibility of IFAD, together with the Ministry of Agriculture in South Africa and of the Netherlands. That is the second reason in a way. When the document was drafted and submitted for translation, it was still not completely clear how it was to be done.

In answer to the second point of the Representative of the Republic of Korea, and also to other questions regarding participation, is that in a small seminar certainly everybody is on an equal footing. There are no observers in that sense. The NGO representatives, the governmental organizations represented and the Representatives from the partner countries are all talking together on an equal footing.

Regarding the subjects to be discussed, first of all, there is a background paper on dryland from IFAD that is going to be discussed. Secondly, there is one that we are very interested in discussing with partners and that is one of the reasons why we have asked them, not again to exclude any others but to try to find a number of interested countries from all over the world to play an active role in the Conference. For example, in chairing specific meetings, they have to prepare themselves in great detail and to discuss how that has to be done and can be done. Also they need to decide how they could be involved in the process after Maastricht – that means submitting the Report to the FAO Council and Conference and to the CSD. These are the kinds of subjects that are envisaged to be discussed at the Partners Seminar.

At the moment, I do not have precise information on the final document of such a seminar, that depends very much on the kind of discussion that takes place. What I believe can be done, since it is not an FAO meeting, together with my colleagues from South Africa, is to give as much information afterwards, if it is available in writing, otherwise informally in meetings, for example through regional groups as I tried to do last week. A number of countries have already asked for that kind of information which we are very happy to provide. I think it is important to keep it as transparent as possible. The precise form has not been decided upon, but I hope it will be possible to do. As soon as there is anything in writing, we will send it to all Permanent Representations here in Rome with all the available information.

I think these were the questions raised.

Masato ITO (Japan)

During the intervention I supported the proposal from the Secretariat and also from Germany, on behalf of the European Union, which proposed that as this is a technical document we receive the report of the Conference as a Council document for information. So the Council and the Conference receive the information, but I doubt whether the Council is in a position to examine that type of technical report.

So the procedure we would like to support is the proposal from the European Community, made through Germany.

Ms Mitzi GURGEL VALENTE da COSTA (Brazil)

I would like to say now that I think that every technical document, when it is going to be eventually applied to a country, has a political connotation to it so I would be strongly in favour of having it first submitted to a Council meeting before it goes to Conference.

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Chile)

Creo que el procedimiento normal, según lo que tengo entendido, es cuando se producen reuniones de carácter técnico, como en este caso, el ámbito de competencia de esta cuestión técnica debe ser analizada previamente por el Comité al cual pertenece. Como naturalmente no tendremos la posibilidad de que algún comité técnico, que en este caso podría ser eventualmente el Comité de Agricultura, realice las recomendaciones que emanen de esta Conferencia sobre el carácter multifuncional de la agricultura y la tierra, comparto absolutamente lo que han sugerido varias delegaciones en el sentido de que sea el próximo Consejo y que ese Consejo, a su vez, posteriormente decida si cree conveniente enviarlo a la Conferencia o no.

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

Le Secrétariat est un peu préoccupé parce qu'il se dégage quand même deux façons de voir, l'une qui veut que le rapport soit soumis directement à la Conférence avec une proposition précise pour information et pour discussion, qui a été faite par le Représentant de l'Allemagne, et une autre vision qui souhaite que ce rapport soit préalablement examiné par le Conseil. S'agissant du COAG, je crois qu'il y a un problème, puisque les éléments de ce rapport doivent, je le souligne, concourir à l'apport technique de la FAO pour la Commission du développement durable.

Donc, nous avons un problème de séquence de temps qui est insoluble, et il est effectivement extrêmement important que les éléments techniques qui pourront être élaborés à cette occasion soient transmis et portés à la connaissance et aux délibérations de la Commission du développement durable. Revenant au premier problème, vous conviendrez avec moi qu'il est assez difficile de trancher. Ce n'est pas le rôle qui doit être le nôtre que de prendre une position dans un débat de cette nature. Nous avons consulté mes collègues du Secrétariat général du Conseil et le Conseil légal qui pensent les deux solutions praticables. J'exprime donc le souhait que le Conseil puisse trouver un consensus et une formulation qui fasse l'unanimité de ses Membres.

Ariel FERNÁNDEZ (Argentina)

Una pregunta respecto al procedimiento: teniendo en cuenta que la Agenda que aprobamos para este punto decía que este Informe se sometería para debate y no para decisión, ¿estamos en condiciones de adoptar una decisión sobre algo que ha sido sometido y aprobado por este Consejo para debate?.

Ms Mitzi GURGEL VALENTE da COSTA (Brazil)

I would just like to ask at this time if we are merely talking about a technical document. Why have political instances been invited to the Johannesburg meeting? It does not really make any sense.

Jan BERTELING (Observer for Netherlands)

We have, as the Netherlands Government, asked the Ministers of a number of countries, as I mentioned earlier, to be a partner in this whole process. We have asked the Ministers to appoint people. We should not, cannot and will not tell any country who are the experts in those countries or in other organizations, but we have asked – at least that is what our Minister has done – and I believe that IFAD has done the same, in inviting the countries to come to the Seminar in South Africa. They have written a letter to the Ministers, asking them to send experts from the field.

That is, I think, the only way, otherwise it is very difficult to find the specific people that could best come to those meetings. I believe the same is done by FAO in the sense that letters are always sent to Ministers. It does not mean that by definition always Ministers will come to meetings, and this is a technical conference. It is underlined in the document, by the introductions by Mr Carsalade and myself and I think also by most of the delegations.

So it is not in that sense protocol. Of course we have to address Ministers.

CHAIRMAN

I think we have to come to some kind of solution. We cannot go on like this, and there are certain facts, of course, that we have to consider. This is a technical conference that is co-sponsored by FAO, so that has to be taken into consideration also.

It will take place in September, very late if you look at the timetable for the next Council and for the Conference.

There are still some questions regarding the nature of the output because there are some questions here on who will be attending, NGOs, for example, and you ask whether or not the decision is purely technical or if there will be some political implication. So there is something that is still uncertain about this.

This is a conference which is co-sponsored by FAO, so I think that will have to be reported (Mr Carsalade) to the next Conference. I cannot say at this moment whether the output will be in such a form that the Council can discuss and arrive at the decision, or just to take this as information. Then we will decide whether or not it is worth endorsing, and then have the Conference look at it. I think it is premature to come to a conclusion, but the fact is that this is a conference co-sponsored by FAO. So whatever is the outcome of the conference in Maastricht, Mr Carsalade will have the responsibility to inform and to report to the Council.

Harald HILDEBRAND (Germany)

Having heard the discussion on the fate of the so-called "outcome", my delegation speaking on behalf of the European Community and Member States would like only to reiterate what we have said, to reiterate our proposal that the outcome of the conference, as described by Madame Fresco, should be submitted to the 30th Session of the FAO Conference for information and discussion.

Ms Mitzi GURGEL VALENTE da COSTA (Brazil)

My delegation cannot concur with the delegation of Germany.

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

D'abord il faut insister que du point de vue de l'Organisation cette conférence est technique et exclusivement technique. C'est ainsi que nous la préparons et c'est pour cette raison que nous sommes attachés à son succès et à son déroulement. Elle a pour objectif d'analyser les concepts et les expériences en matière de développement durable et de caractère multifonctionnel de l'agriculture et des terroirs; rien d'autre, et de permettre à nos États Membres de bénéficier des acquis techniques qui seront retirés de ces analyses et de ces réflexions. Ceci dit, si vous me le permettez, nous avons essayé de trouver des formulations qui puissent permettre de rapprocher les points de vue et de définir quel peut être le rôle réciproque du Conseil et de la Conférence successive par rapport à ce rapport de la Conférence de Maastricht que nous devons vous présenter. Peut-être, si vous me le permettez, puis-je demander à Monsieur Moore de vous faire une suggestion.

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Chile)

Le agradezco muchísimo que me haya concedido la palabra en un momento en el que esta delegación no tiene claridad en varias cosas. Recuerdo lo que usted muy bien dijo resumiendo lo que había visto desde su puesto, donde naturalmente se ve mucho mejor la participación de todas las delegaciones. Usted dijo que en realidad habían muchas cosas inciertas. Nosotros apoyamos este concepto porque genuinamente a la delegación de Chile le había gustado mucho, por ejemplo, haber sido llamada a participar dentro de los países asociados a esta idea, decisión soberana tomada por los Países Bajos, pero cuando uno empieza a invitar en un tema tan importante como éste naturalmente se hieren susceptibilidades.

Es un tema complejo sobre el cual no conocemos el resultado de la conferencia técnica, más aún, no conocemos siquiera el resultado de la conferencia técnica que se va a preparar para la

preparación de la siguiente Conferencia y nos están pidiendo que nosotros endosemos la idea que sea directamente remitida a la Conferencia.

Perdóneme que le diga, señor Presidente, que me parece inaudito y perdone que quizás use la palabra un poco fuerte en este foro, que se les exija a los Estados Miembros endosar un informe que no conocen; lo que estamos pidiendo, como Estados Miembros del Consejo, es tener sólo el derecho de verlo previamente y decidir en consecuencia. Me parece que estamos prejuzgando.

Pudiera ser o podría darse el caso que estuviéramos todos de acuerdo y endosáramos, como ha ocurrido muchas veces en esta Organización, el Informe de Maastricht, sin problemas. ¿Pero porqué debemos prejuzgar?

Lo que nosotros estamos pidiendo señor Presidente, y yo le rogaría a las distinguidas delegaciones que se han expresado en contra de nuestra idea, tener esa posibilidad de prepararnos bien para que la Conferencia Técnica de Maastricht y ojalá por cierto la que se va a realizar de preparación en Sudáfrica, sea tan buena que podamos ir construyendo un concepto que está en evolución; no es un concepto que está definido y por lo que tengo entendido, incluso en ciertas organizaciones políticas de alto nivel, que reúnen a países desarrollados, aún está en discusión. ¿Porqué, señor Presidente, nos están exigiendo asumir una decisión que me parece que no estamos preparados para tomarla?

La segunda cosa que quisiera agregar, que a la delegación de Chile le parece especialmente importante, es la velocidad de las decisiones. La razón principal que piensa la delegación de Chile, por la cual existe este organismo, es porque es un foro multilateral donde todos los países tienen la posibilidad de dar nuestra opinión. ¿Porqué nos apuran a tomar decisiones? Si no existe el tiempo para preparar un documento ¿porqué se nos exige tener que ajustar un calendario que nosotros no hemos aprobado? Se está sugiriendo que sea endosado en la Conferencia para que después pueda ingresar al consenso dentro del sistema de las Naciones Unidas. Si no se ha logrado un consenso es porque revela que hay diferencias de fondo y que requiere un poco más de tiempo. No todos los países tenemos el mismo desarrollo y por cierto, usted comprenderá, le asignamos diferentes niveles de importancia a nuestra posibilidad de desarrollo nacional.

Sra. Virginia PÉREZ PÉREZ (Venezuela)

Mi delegación no iba a intervenir en este tema, pero me veo obligada a hacerlo por la insistencia del Sr. Carsalade en continuar con este tema. Usted muy bien dijo que no había claridad, y a tal efecto tengo que hacer algunas observaciones.

Cuando nosotros preparamos una conferencia internacional, tal y como lo hicimos con la Conferencia Técnica de Leipzig, hubo una gran participación de los países; nosotros trabajamos los documentos, etc. etc. A lo mejor ésta no es igual, pero es una conferencia a la que están invitados los Estados, con una igualdad de participación entre los Estados y las ONG. Esa decisión no la puedo tomar aquí. Es una decisión que yo tengo que consultar con mi Gobierno porque las ONGs son ONGs y los Gobiernos son Gobiernos, y no podemos aceptar en una conferencia técnica internacional una igualdad de participación. No les negamos el derecho de participar pero no son Estados, los Estados somos nosotros.

Además no hay claridad en qué es lo que se quiere hacer, yo no estoy entendiendo mucho qué es lo que se quiere hacer y de verdad no puedo tampoco en este momento decir al Consejo que mi país está de acuerdo en que esto pase directamente a la Conferencia porque tengo que consultarlo y no puedo decir que pase un documento a la Conferencia que no hemos visto ni se ha analizado en mi Cancillería.

Usted disculpe, Sr. Carsalade, pero siento que nos está presionando y apurando para tomar una decisión.

Mme Rollande LEDUC (Canada)

C'était simplement pour appuyer la proposition que vous avez soumise plus tôt et il nous semble plus raisonnable qu'au prochain Conseil nous puissions recevoir les documents qui nous

expliquent plus longuement les questions que nous sommes en train de poser actuellement. Après examen, nous pourrions décider de son approbation à la Conférence.

LEGAL COUNSEL

I realize this is a delicate matter and I do not want to say anything on the substance obviously.

It seems to me that there are the two positions: people whose countries wish the document to come to the next session of the Council before any decision is taken on the future of the document; and others think that it should at least go to Conference for information or discussion.

I was wondering whether it would not be easier first of all to send the paper to the next session of the Council, when you have the document that comes out of the meeting, send it to the Council for discussion and guidance, as you have right now, so that the Council can take a decision on it. Perhaps also send it to the Conference for information only, and then the Council itself, at the next session, can take a decision on the status of that document when it goes to the Conference. In other words, whether it should only be for information or whether it should be upgraded. At that time, it will have the benefit of having seen the paper, knowing the content, and then it can take a decision at that stage on the status of the document when it gets to the Conference.

E. Wayne DENNEY (United States of America)

I think Mr Moore has latched on to something that maybe we can benefit from because, for us, what is particularly important is for FAO to fulfil its responsibility in reporting to CSD-8, and we do not want to hamper that. FAO has a responsibility for doing that and, by the same token, no-one now knows for sure the results of the Technical Conference in September. We have every confidence that it is going to be a positive one. I am not sure that the difficulties of preparing a short, concise document will get in the way of a timely turn-around of a document for the Council in early November. It would seem to me that Council and Conference in any event will not be able to deal with a massive set of documentation, so what we want is a synthesis of what has transpired with conclusions and recommendations. We would hope that that would not cause the Secretariat any difficulties.

Finally, with respect to the issue of NGOs and government participation, my colleague from Venezuela and I apparently have a different slant on it. We would hope that Governments and NGOs would interact side-by-side, on an equal footing, in the Technical Conference, and that has been the basis of our understanding from our initial involvement in the process. I know that is not exactly the way we do business here in an official intergovernmental meeting, but this is somewhat different from that. We think folks other than Governments can make an active and valuable contribution, and we look forward to that happening.

CHAIRMAN

I think we do have to come to some kind of resolution, and I still think that whatever is the form of the outcome of Technical Conference, the Council has to be informed before it goes even for information to the Conference.

I think other than that, we cannot decide at this moment because there are so many uncertainties on the form the Report will take, whether it will be a summary of the output or whether the whole output will be given to the Conference.

Krassimir KOSTOV (Observer for Bulgaria)

I have no intention to talk on behalf of the silent majority, but as an Observer who has carefully followed the discussion going on for an hour-and-a-half, I would like to appeal to Council to respect this Observer Nation, to give us the opportunity to discuss this very important issue and hopefully the successful outcome of the Technical Conference in Maastricht during the Conference.

I wish success to everybody, including the experts from your countries who will be involved in the preparation of the Technical Conference.

LEGAL COUNSEL

My suggestion was to send it to the next session of the Council for discussion and guidance, send it also to the Conference for information, and then take a decision at the next Council whether you wish to upgrade the status of the document in the Conference to something for discussion and decision, when you have seen the document and when you are in a position to take that decision.

So that at least it will be there for the information of the Conference, and you can decide at the next Session what kind of discussion you want to have in the Conference on it.

Ariel FERNÁNDEZ (Argentina)

La idea que ha propuesto el Consejero Legal me parece aceptable y no pudiera ser de otra manera porque aún sin existir, esto fue presentado en la Agenda para debate no para decisión de este Consejo y quiero subrayar esto, en modo tal que nosotros hemos recibido esta propuesta y hacemos una sugerencia para el próximo Consejo: lo reciba y si así presta su conformidad lo envíe a la Conferencia. Hemos tardado una hora y media en algo que es de un procedimiento absolutamente simple y estaba previsto prácticamente desde el comienzo porque no había otra forma de procedimiento para adoptarlo, de modo tal, que propongo que volvamos a nuestra eficiencia para acelerar nuestros trabajos o sino perderemos nuevamente una hora y media en una discusión que en definitiva en el fondo se resuelve por procedimiento.

CHAIRMAN

So there seems to be agreement now, I think we have concluded this debate.

We still have six items to deal with and it is now 6.30 p.m. We have been too optimistic, but I think we have the right now to adjourn and deal with Item 11.

11. Preparations for the 30th Session of the FAO Conference

11. Préparatifs de la trentième session de la Conférence de la FAO

11. Preparativos para el 30° período de sesiones de la Conferencia de la FAO

11.1 Arrangements for the Session and Provisional Timetable (CL 116/11)

11.1 Organisation de la session et calendrier provisoire (CL 116/11)

11.1 Preparativos para el período de sesiones y calendario provisional (CL 116/11)

11.2 Deadline for Nominations for Independent Chairman of the Council (CL 116/11)

11.2 Date limite de présentation des candidatures au poste de Président indépendant du Conseil (CL 116/11)

11.2 Plazo para la presentación de candidaturas al cargo de Presidente Independiente del Consejo (CL 116/11)

11.3 Nomination of the Chairman of the Conference and of the Chairmen of the Commissions (CL 116/INF/9)

11.3 Nomination du Président de la Conférence et des Présidents des Commissions (CL 116/INF/9)

11.3 Presentación de candidaturas para los cargos de Presidente de la Conferencia y Presidentes de las Comisiones (CL 116/INF/9)

CHAIRMAN

Let us take up Item 11, *Preparations for the Thirtieth Session of the FAO Conference*, sub-items 11.1 *Arrangements for the Session and Provisional Timetable*; 11.2 "Deadline for Nomination of Independent Chairman of the Council"; 11.3 *Nomination of the Chairperson of the Conference and of the Chairpersons of the Commissions*. The documents are CL 116/4, CL 116/11, CL 116/INF/5 and CL 116/INF/9.

Regarding *Nomination of Chairperson of the Conference and Chairpersons of the Commissions*, Sub-item 11.3, this matter is at present the subject of consultations among the Regional Groups,

although we are aware that consensus has been reached on Algeria for Chairperson of the Conference and Italy for Commission I.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Albamo L.T. ASMANI (Observer for Tanzania, United Republic of)

As you can see I am just an Observer but I wish to speak on behalf of the G77 on the agenda Item 11.3 *Nomination of Chairman of the Conference and Chairman of the Commissions*. I wish to inform this house that the Chairman of Commission II is India. We have already finalized the consultations.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

I remember well, this time two years ago, when my own Minister of Agriculture was nominated Chair of the Twenty-Ninth Session of the Conference, the pleasure that I had in informing the Council as to who the actual Chairperson would be. I wonder if we could give the floor to Algeria so that they might introduce to us the person who is going to be the Chairman of our Conference.

Hocine MEGHAR (Observer for Algeria)

I have to say that it is with great satisfaction that I take this opportunity to express the gratitude of my delegation, to the Council, its Members and the Observers, for the decision we have reached on Item 11.3 of our Agenda.

As a matter of fact, my country takes it as an honour to assume the Chairmanship of the Thirtieth Session of the Conference of FAO scheduled to take place next November. It is also my pleasant duty to convey our gratitude to the Africa Group at FAO, who presented Algeria for this nomination. Our thanks go to the G 77 and to all other groups who have been supportive of Algeria.

Algeria has been consistent in contributing to the attainment of the objectives and goals of our Organization. We will therefore spend our efforts to ensure the success and the fruitful conclusion of the next general Conference and, with the support of all Members, Algeria will be, I think, up to the mark for materializing our common objectives.

With respect to the question posed by the Representative of Canada, indeed Algeria will assume its responsibility and indeed the Minister of Agriculture of Algeria will be the Representative of Algeria to Chair the Conference. All the relevant information about this person will be given to you in due time.

CHAIRMAN

As is traditional on conclusion of the consultations, the Director-General will approach the candidates designated and report back to our next session which will confirm the nominations to be placed before the Conference.

I think we can now proceed to Sub-item 11.2 *Deadline for Nominations for Independent Chairman of the Council*, para 17 of document CL 116/11 proposes that 12.00 hours, on 20 August 1999, be the closing date for submission of nominations and that they be circulated to all Members of the Organization by 27 August 1999.

Are there any objections? None.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

CHAIRMAN

We move to Item 11.1, *Arrangements for the Session and Provisional Timetable* for which the main document is CL 116/11. However, you will recall that when Council examined the report of the joint meeting yesterday, we agreed that the question of scheduling separate meetings for ministers would be taken under this item. Accordingly, we also have for consideration document CL 116/4, paras 27 to 31 and document CL 116/INF/5.

Sra. Virginia PÉREZ PÉREZ (Venezuela)

Agradezco la presentación de este Documento a la Secretaría y quisiera sólo realizar algunas observaciones. Estamos de acuerdo con la segunda parte del párrafo 2 y es la discusión en Plenaria del *Estado Mundial de la Agricultura*; fue un gran logro del Consejo que se discutiera este tema que pasó desde la Primera Comisión a la Plenaria.

Del mismo modo quisiera subrayar que, en el párrafo 3, tercer tema, apoyamos que la elección de los Miembros del Consejo por evidente consenso general cuando el número de candidatos fuera igual al número de vacantes, pudiera ser una de las enmiendas que se introdujesen al reglamento, porque favorecerá el proceso de rotación y el acuerdo entre los Estados Miembros.

Quisiera también introducir una pequeña observación en el párrafo 10. Aquí dice: "Normalmente las delegaciones están presididas por los Ministros"; afortunadamente y hasta el presente mi delegación ha sido siempre presidida por nuestro Ministro de Agricultura, pero tal vez este documento pudiera hablar de "exhortación" a los Ministros, la FAO podría invitarlos, como lo ha hecho siempre, a participar.

En cuanto al párrafo 27, quisiéramos expresar nuestro acuerdo con que se traten, además del *Estado Mundial de la Agricultura*, otros temas pero aumentando la gama; no sé si aquí ya se había llegado a un acuerdo en que fuera biotecnología o situaciones de emergencia. En nuestro caso, pensamos en un tema como la *Búsqueda de Mayores Recursos para la Investigación Agrícola*, o las *Actividades de Relanzamiento de Cooperación Técnica*. Para tomar una decisión sobre este tema podrían revisarse las recomendaciones de las Conferencias Regionales en relación con los temas de importancia para los Países y Regiones, y, si fuera conveniente, que los Ministros trataran en ese medio día temas de interés.

Por último, quisiera hacer una pequeña observación que, aunque no se haya tomado en cuenta para esta Conferencia, podría analizarse para otros períodos de sesiones. Para el 28° período de sesiones de la misma, en el Consejo se había decidido tratar de perder menos tiempo, tanto los Países Miembros como la Organización, en cuanto a la duración de la Conferencia se refiere. Comenzaremos el viernes 12 y el sábado 13 tendremos reunión, el domingo no nos reunimos y luego se posterga hasta el otro viernes 19 con reunión, el sábado 20 y el domingo sin ella, regresando el lunes 22 y martes 23. En este caso tenemos nueve días efectivos de Conferencia y tres días que he decidido de llamar perdidos porque para nuestros Gobiernos ésto representa un gasto en viáticos y dietas para sus delegados. Entiendo que, tal vez ahora, no pueda ser tomada en cuenta mi petición pero tratemos de tomarlo en cuenta para las próximas Conferencias, aprovechando los fines de semana incluidos en el período y no, como ha pasado, que nos tengamos que marchar incluso antes de la adopción del Informe Final.

Agradezco nuevamente la presentación del Informe y el documento a la Secretaría, esperando que para futuras oportunidades nuestras observaciones se tomen en cuenta.

Dietrich LINCKE (Germany)

On behalf of the European Community and its Member States, I would like to thank the Secretariat for having provided us with a concrete proposal concerning the arrangements for the Thirtieth Session of the FAO Conference and the Provisional Timetable.

We are in favour of reducing the number of Commissions to two.

We should like to see the General Debate by Heads of Delegations to be efficient and targeted, especially by focusing on a specific topic in the context of the world food situation.

We also support the idea of convening, instead of a Plenary Session, a half-day separate meeting of the Ministers to discuss a subject of common interest. An appropriate topic for such an exchange of views could, for example, be the *Problems Related with the Access to and Control Over Land and Water Resources*. We suggest this particular subject because it is one of the vital concerns of food and income security in rural areas and emanates from the *World Food Summit Plan of Action*.

Jae-han KWON (Korea, Republic of)

I am speaking on the implication of scheduled separate meetings for Ministers during Conference.

As mentioned in the Report of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees, we think it appropriate that the Committees agree, in general, to better focus a General Debate, taking into account cost implications of convening separate meetings for Ministers during Conference sessions.

We consider, nonetheless, that the need to achieve greater interaction among Heads of Delegations during Conference sessions still remains important, even under the present framework of the General Debate.

In this connection, we support the suggestion of the Joint Meeting on the selection of specific topics in the context of the world food situation, on which Heads of Delegations might base their statements.

During the selection of the topic, as indicated in paragraph 29 of the Report, we think it is necessary to take note of the forthcoming major events. My delegation would like to stress that, the various topics in the context of the world food situation, especially the implementation of the goals of the World Food Summit, an advocacy rule of FAO for food security at the forthcoming WTO negotiations and the multi-functional character of agriculture, should be based on Ministerial statements.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

En aras de avanzar rápidamente, mi delegación sólo quisiera hacer un comentario a lo que ya señaló el distinguido Representante de la República de Corea que es sobre el párrafo 27 del documento CL 116/11. Aquí se proponen para el Debate General de la Conferencia, temas como *Biotechnología o situaciones de urgencia en relación con la Seguridad Alimentaria*. Mi delegación propondría que el tema de Debate General fuera más genérico, de interés para todos los Países Miembros, tales como *Acceso y Aplicación de los Acuerdos de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación*. Creo que estos otros no son los que tradicionalmente se incluyen en los debates generales de la Conferencia.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

Canada has been following this particular proposal very closely, since it was first raised by Council and worked its way through the Programme and Finance Committees, with the benefit of reports prepared by the Secretariat.

Speaking personally, and having lived now through two Conferences where it was necessary to pay close heed to the desires of Ministers, it is certainly in my mind very clear that ministers want to do more than spend five minutes delivering a speech and four and a half days listening to other speeches. They certainly want to have an opportunity to interact with their peers at the ministerial level, discussing issues that are of interest to them as Ministers of Agriculture, policy issues that affect all of them.

We strongly supported the concept of having an open debate early on in the Ministerial Session during the Programme Committee, but we accepted the advice that we received that it would not be possible to accomplish all of the work of the Organization and also have the General Debate. We are very attracted to the proposal in paragraph 10 of the document CL 116/INF/5, which tells us that it might be possible to schedule the half-day meeting for Ministers earlier in the

Conference, if there was agreement that this be done in parallel with, that is not interrupting, the General Debate.

If those are the conditions under which we can get a free-flowing debate among Ministers, then Canada would certainly recommend that that is the approach to take. We would urge the Council to support that particular approach, as outlined in paragraph 10.

Concerning topics, we have heard some suggestions today. We had hoped that the Secretariat might have given us some options from which we could make some choices. It is rather difficult for us to sit here and try and think up things that might be of interest to Ministers. Yet, I recognize that time is rather short, and this would have to be decided in the next six to eight weeks in order to give FAO time to prepare and Ministers' time to prepare for that debate.

I think it is important to highlight the proposal that there not be a formal record of this Debate. It would be a free discussion among Ministers with no record produced, so that there would not be a Binding Resolution come from this meeting, nor would there be a Declaration, nor would there be something that would tie Ministers or tie FAO to a particular Plan of Action. It would be a discussion *in camera* or off the record.

With that in mind, I think we are going to have Ministers of Agriculture in Rome very close to the time when Ministers of Agriculture are going to be focused on Seattle. It may be appropriate for us to look at topics that particularly affect preparations for the upcoming round of agricultural negotiations: something in an area where FAO has particular strengths. I would beg the indulgence of my colleague from the Republic of Korea to extend his proposal to look at one aspect: to extend it further to look simply at preparations for the upcoming Round.

CHAIRMAN

Before we continue I would like to ask the Council the following:

First, do we have an agreement on the half-day session for Ministers earlier in the agenda? I think that if we do not have that agreement, we cannot go forward.

Do we have agreement on that? Half-day for the ministers earlier on on the agenda.

Very good. I think on that point we have agreement.

There will be no formal record. So the Ministers will be free to interact with each other. There is also agreement on that? Very good.

Although that invites the question of how do we organize such a thing? Shall the Ministers come up with a Chairperson for the half-day discussions among them? Shall we suggest that? I think that is the best way, actually, even though we can always have alternatives. We can leave it to the Ministers to elect the Chairperson, just for those half-day discussions. Can we do that? Very good.

If we are in agreement, we already have some kind of a picture of what will be going on.

On the topics, we do not have any suggestions from the Secretariat at this point.

Mrs Laurie J. TRACY (United States of America)

It strikes me that the idea suggested by Canada, that is, the topic of preparations for the next Round which will begin shortly thereafter and which will have a heavy agricultural focus, is very timely. I also think that it would enhance FAO's role as a forum for discussion of these issues. I recall that the OECD Ministerial is often used as a springboard for discussions that happen among other groups of countries within a couple of months. It always gives it lots of extra attention in the press and elsewhere.

CHAIRMAN

Can you or Canada elaborate something so that we are clear on exactly what we would like the Ministers to interact on?

Ronald Rose (Canada)

The thoughts behind my proposal were that, since Ministers here in November will be focused on the meeting in Seattle that will launch the next trade Round, they are going to be focused on the broad area of agricultural trade negotiations. My suggestion was that we select a topic that would focus on the process of preparing for, essentially, agricultural trade negotiations. FAO has a particular strength in providing technical assistance to developing countries, but also has an expertise that is applicable to the wide range of countries that will be entering this Round.

I cannot think right now of a specific topic. I provide that as a theme but I would certainly be willing, perhaps Saturday sometime when we are sitting here waiting for the final translated version of the Report, to join with some of my colleagues, any of my colleagues that would be willing to work with us, to come up with a specific recommendation along that line.

I am afraid that right now, that is as close as I can come to this.

Lyall W. SMALL (Barbados)

While I agree with the proposal that there should be a half-day special meeting for Ministers during the Conference, I have a little bit of difficulty in understanding what are the modalities of that occurring in parallel with, and not interrupting the General Debate. How do you expect this will be done? Would the Ministers, while the General Debate and Commissions are going on, take ten minutes off from whatever session they are attending to come and meet in the General Debate and then go back? Who will be listening to the General Debate while the Ministers are having their interactive meeting?

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

There are several implications in this matter, some of which are specified in the document CL 116 INF/5, paragraph 10.

The first implication, of course, is in order to do this, as we do not have the capacity to run four simultaneous meetings for the entire membership because we do not have the rooms, one of the Commissions cannot meet during that time. That is the first clear implication. So I think it should be clear, before taking such a decision, that the work of one of the Commissions, and it might be better if the Council would tell us which Commission, has to be suspended for at least that time.

The problem of logistics between the General Debate and the Ministerial Interactive Meeting is difficult, I understand that, because while the General Debate goes on, it implies that Ministers would be speaking, but speaking to whom, if all the other Ministers are in the interactive meeting?

It was put there as a hypothetical suggestion. Frankly, the Secretariat does not see it as being extremely viable, but if the membership wants it, we will do everything to facilitate the matter. It is a new thing, we will have to work it out ourselves, see how it works. But it should be kept in mind that there is this difficulty, a double one; firstly, one of the Commissions has to suspend its meeting for half a day, and secondly, the Ministers in the General Debate will be speaking to empty rooms.

Mohammad Saeed NOURI-NAEENI (Iran, Islamic Republic of)

My sign on this issue was raised, but it is not a sign of agreement with this half-day seminar. It was more a sign of ambiguity. Now that some answers have been provided by the Secretariat, I really do not think it is a good idea to have half a day with Ministers in the General Debate and half a day for an interactive meeting. It is not at all clear on how it could be arranged. We would have half a day, less than four hours, to discuss an important issue and reach an agreement. What would be the outcome of the debate? It is premature to decide. It needs more discussion.

Dietrich LINCKE (Germany)

As we have heard from others, it may be premature to fix a particular topic for the half-day's Ministers' Meeting.

Kyeong-sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

I would like to comment on two points.

Firstly, who will be the audience when the Ministers deliver their speeches during the General Debate?

Secondly, what is the topic of the Ministers Meeting going to be?

According to the Secretariat, when we are going to have the General Debate by the Ministers, one of the Commissions should be postponed. It may be very difficult. We have two Commissions. Which Commission could be suspended? That is very difficult to decide.

Secondly, the Canadian delegate proposed that this Saturday, as we await the final REPs, we can meet do decide on the topic of the Ministers' Meeting. According to our experience, at the Ministers' Meeting of Forestry and Fisheries, during the debate we selected several topics which were proposed by the Secretariat. If the Secretariat proposes some topics, we can discuss them on Saturday.

The most important thing to know is which Commission, Commissions I or II, can be suspended. That is very difficult. We have to decide that first of all. Then, we can go ahead with the debate on proposed topics.

Masato ITO (Japan)

I would like to refer to the logistical problem, because the meeting and the free discussion among the Ministers was a very good idea. However, Ministers from countries like Japan, whose language is not an official language of this house, are very much disadvantaged for the discussion.

Perhaps we could bring the simultaneous interpreter (Japanese to English) from Japan.

How many countries would bring simultaneous interpreters? Is the Secretariat ready to provide simultaneous booths for all of the interventions?

This is my query, I would like clarification on this. If not, I cannot recommend the Ministers' Meeting to my authority.

Mrs Neela GANGADHARAN (India)

I would agree with the Islamic Republic of Iran in doubting this proposal and how practical it is to have a half-a-day meeting on a very important topic. If, for example, we take something like agreement on agricultural aspects of trade, how is half a day going to be enough? How can we call it an Interactive Meeting. It is once again, going to be a statements' meeting. You cannot have 170 Ministers having an Interactive Meeting in half a day, it would be a General Debate of general statements.

I do not know how it is going to be any different from what a General Debate is. I do not think we will gain anything from it.

Yohannes TENSUE (Eritrea)

In principle, we have a half-day for the Ministers for a free debate provided that the subject is neutral, as has been suggested by Canada, for example following the forthcoming meeting about Indicators. Some Ministers may be well prepared, and others may not be so well prepared, so the discussion will be unbalanced. However, on the issues on which we have not made any decisions in some previous meetings, like the free discussion during the Fisheries Ministerial Meetings, it was very interesting. For example, we can identify trade issues and subsidies which are of interest to everyone. If any one of these subjects was discussed and we were informed it was a free debate and would not be recorded, then we would welcome the interactive meeting. If we have a parallel debate while a ministerial discussion is going on, those countries or ministers who are booked to give statements at that time will not appreciate it. So there should not be any at all, just a free debate for Ministers and the others can listen.

Abdoukarim DIOUF (Sénégal)

Je voudrais juste soulever trois points. D'abord, pour demander au Secrétariat quelles sont les contraintes de temps dont il fait état. Ensuite, pour dire qu'il nous semble un peu difficile d'avoir une réunion parallèle au débat général et nous nous demandons en fait s'il ne serait pas opportun d'avoir une réunion ministérielle après ce débat général. Enfin, concernant les thèmes, nous sommes plutôt attirés par des thèmes comme *l'Accès à l'eau, à la terre ainsi que la relance de la coopération technique*, comme l'a souligné le Venezuela.

Ahmed AFAILAL (Maroc)

Il y a divers aspects qui doivent être pris en compte dans la discussion de cette idée. Jusqu'à maintenant, nous n'avons pas encore pu comprendre tous ses aspects ou les intégrer. Premièrement, pour ce qui est du temps qui sera consacré à cette réunion d'une demi-journée, nous savons qu'en général, il y a entre 80 et 100 Ministres qui assistent à la Conférence générale, sinon plus. Il suffit de faire une opération très simple. Si chaque Ministre parle pendant cinq minutes, le total sera d'un peu plus de huit heures. Nous ne pouvons pas demander à un Ministre de parler pendant moins de cinq minutes. Et nous supposons que chaque Ministre peut prendre la parole et a le droit de prendre la parole, ainsi nous voyons que quatre heures ne suffiront pas à cette Réunion.

Ma deuxième remarque est la suivante: la discussion aura-t-elle lieu et quel sera le sujet discuté? Il faudrait plutôt choisir un seul sujet. Sinon, si on choisit plus d'un sujet, il nous faudrait un peu plus de temps.

Troisièmement, pour ce qui est du choix du Président pour cette réunion, je voudrais vous proposer ce qui suit: puisqu'il y aura un Président à la Conférence, je propose que ce Président préside la réunion des Ministres, sinon nous perdrons beaucoup de temps à chercher à choisir un Président à cette réunion ministérielle, même si cette réunion n'est pas officielle.

CHAIRMAN

I begin to worry that we are going to debate very precious time and we will be criticized again by our distinguished delegate from Argentina. Let us admit it, can we do it or not? There are so many things that have to be planned very carefully first before we can decide that we are going to have a half-day interactive meeting of a 100 or more Ministers, on a topic that we still have to choose, under a very informal - and yet there should be one - Chairman. I think Senegal's proposal, that it will have to be after the Plenary Sessions was very good, and I know very well that Ministers do not spend that much time in Rome after they have made their speech. They hurry back home because they are needed, there, and that is also not very practical.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

The document before us indicates that we are taking somewhat of a risk, a leap of faith perhaps, and people frequently say that perfection is the enemy of the good, and I think we are trying to devise a perfect prototype, if you will. We have to admit we are experimenting here, as is the whole UN System as we have been told.

I think we have to accept the fact that we are breaking new ground, and we are taking risks. A number of points have been raised. We have had questions about the audience. You yourself, Mr Chairman, indicated that once Ministers speak they are not always sitting in the audience. I have yet to see a delegation of one to the Conference. There is usually quite a large delegation from every country. There will always be, if not a Minister, a Vice-Minister or a Director-General or some senior official in the Chair. There will always be an audience. I would see this half-day meeting working in such a way that Ministers would be free to leave the meeting, the free-flowing General Debate, for the 10 minutes required to go to deliver their speech and then come back to this Debate. In terms of timing, we have two suggestions. My concern is that if we wait until after the General Debate we would have lost most of the Ministers, and they are the audience for this

particular experiment. We would not make much progress in this experiment if we ended up not having Ministers participate.

The five minutes per ministerial speech is the sort of thing we are trying to get away from, and I would see this particular experiment working in such a way that Ministers would be free to make 10-second or 30-second comments, reactions to what other people have said, just as when we have a conversation. We do not make 5-minute speeches - myself excluded, I guess - but it would be more in form of a conversation. I think the Secretariat is capable of handling the question of interpretation for non-FAO languages. We do it during the Conference. That I am sure can be handled.

I just appeal to my colleagues on the Council to have a little faith in the Secretariat's ability to organize these meetings. The Members will be fully behind them if we agree to this, and we should try and show that FAO can show some leadership.

Mohammad Saeed NOURI-NAEENI (Iran, Islamic Republic of)

In principle, I think that we should have the General Debate on the issues of the food and agriculture situation, and if you want to have another half-day debate, it should not in any way disturb that General Debate.

Now consider that the Ministers know that on Thursday morning, for example, there is the parallel debate. Which Minister is willing to speak at that half-day debate when he knows that almost all the Ministers have probably gone to the other debate, and it disturbs the General Debate? So it cannot be parallel without their mentioning the General Debate. It should either be prior to that or after the General Debate, if you insist on having a half-day debate.

Then we have to decide on the topic, which is another question. Since I have the floor, I do not agree with this debate on the trade negotiations because, first of all, most of the Ministers who will go to Seattle will not be Ministers of Agriculture. They will be Ministers of Trade and Commerce. Secondly, some countries are still not Members of the WTO, and they might not go at all to that meeting. So it should be some issue which is of interest to all the Ministers.

Masato ITO (Japan)

I am sorry to interrupt you, but I would like to have the confirmation from the Secretariat whether it is possible to know how many countries would bring an interpreter for their own Ministers. Is it really possible to provide simultaneous facilities for all of them? I think the General Debate during the Council would be at the same time the Ministers are engaged. The facility problem might be different. I would like to have an explanation or confirmation in terms of this problem.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

It is indeed an unprecedented situation. We have provided this kind of service but, as the distinguished delegate of Japan says, always on a consecutive basis. In other words, a delegation would come with its own interpreter, interprets for the Minister, goes and another one comes. We have never done it with various interpreters, apart from ours, for a meeting in which interventions can take place simultaneously.

In order to give you an answer, I would have to consult with the Chief Interpreter and see what is the capacity. You see how many booths we have there, but we do not know how many delegations would bring their own interpreters. It is, again, as the Representative of Canada said, breaking new ground. We would just have to live through it and see. If many delegations came with their own interpreters, we would clearly have logistical and technical difficulties in accommodating them all.

CHAIRMAN

I hope that everybody realizes that what we are asking is bringing interpreters from the field here for a translation of probably five minutes for the interactive meeting. What has been done previously is to bring in an interpreter from the capital for a speech, which is very difficult. But

this is for an interactive meeting when, our friend from Canada said, maybe the minister will only speak for a few seconds. Practical things like that should also be considered by us.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

Al igual que el Embajador de la República Islámica de Irán en su primera intervención, nuestro silencio significa que estamos asombrados que hayan más preguntas que respuestas. Estamos en un terreno teórico. Estamos hablando de la última Conferencia del siglo que le tiene que dar respuestas a los acuerdos de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación.

Cada hombre piensa como vive; los Países Miembros pobres que tienen una delegación reducida, y lo sabe quien ha participado en varias conferencias; hemos tenido que estar suplicando para que los participantes en la Conferencia vayan a la Plenaria porque no hay gente!

Así no podemos llegar a ningún acuerdo. Estamos trabajando contra el tiempo; no creo que ningún país en vías de desarrollo pueda traer un traductor. Estamos hablando de Ministros de Agricultura a los que les cuesta mucho trabajo poder participar en una Conferencia aquí en Roma, pues tienen otras tareas que atender que será por lo que efectivamente se evaluará su trabajo. No son Ministros de Relaciones Exteriores. Apelo a que mientras no haya una propuesta más concreta, no se extienda más esta discusión, pues es una conspiración contra nuestro tiempo, son ya las 20.30. Además, lo digo como Miembro del Comité de Redacción, que aún no sé si me tengo que quedar después de las 20.30, si tengo que regresar mañana o si se postergará hasta el lunes.

Sencillamente se está jugando también con mi tiempo. Concreticemos, aquí todos tienen una opinión teórica, pues no he oído nada práctico sobre el particular, y entonces, en nombre de mi delegación solicito que hasta que no se presenten propuestas concretas, no se continúe este debate.

Lyall W. SMALL (Barbados)

I agree wholeheartedly with the statement that was just made by Cuba. I think that the point that was raised by Japan about the translations makes it totally impossible to consider the concurrent conference and the General Debate.

I am wondering if, inasmuch as we are going into the last Conference of the millennium, we could not take some of the ideas that came up earlier. Perhaps, instead of the General Debate on the *State of Food and Agriculture*, we could ask the Ministers to concentrate on a specific area that could come out of this discussion or some other discussion, some topics that have already come out. I suspect that it may be possible for us to identify something coming out of the implementation of the World Food Summit so that every Minister would have had some input, and ask the Ministers to make their presentation based on that area.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Como ha dicho el Embajador de Cuba, hemos dedicado ya muchísimo tiempo a este debate, donde hay más preguntas que respuestas. A este punto propongo que la Secretaría elabore una propuesta muy concreta en los cinco idiomas oficiales con el contenido del debate realizado, y que sea sometida en el momento de la aprobación del Informe. Esto podría facilitar también las consultas con las delegaciones, y que prosigamos con el resto de la Agenda.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

It is clear that there are too many questions to be answered on this experiment. I fully agree with my colleagues from Latin America, both Cuba and Mexico, that we have got to find a way out of this, and we should not spend much more time doing it.

I recognize that this is going to be the last FAO Conference of the century - - I am sure it is going to be of the Twentieth Century, but sometimes I wonder. Rather than simply ask the Secretariat to come back with something tomorrow or on Saturday that we can approve, I would suggest that we send this back to the Programme and Finance Committees that have a standing item on their agenda which looks at Governance issues. We could ask the Programme and Finance

Committees to come up with something more concrete on this proposal, which will obviously have to be for the first Conference of the new millennium.

Dietrich LINCKE (Germany)

We support the position of Canada. The matter has to be clarified. It cannot be clarified this evening, so we should be very grateful if the Chair could facilitate informal consultation for arriving at more precise ideas on the organization of this half-day Ministers Meeting.

CHAIRMAN

What Canada suggested was to bring this back to the Programme Committee, and move this from the possibility of having it at the last Conference of the millennium to the first Conference of the next millennium. I think that is the suggestion.

Abdoukarim DIOUF (Sénégal)

Nous voudrions tout d'abord appuyer la déclaration de l'Ambassadeur de Cuba ainsi que celle qui a été faite par le Représentant du Mexique. Nous pensons que les propositions qui ont été faites sont valables mais que l'essentiel est de préserver le rôle du Bureau de la Conférence et, dans ce cadre, on pourrait peut-être laisser le Président de la Conférence faire des recommandations à soumettre à la Conférence.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

Only one question for the record. Do you mean the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees?

Bandar AL-SHALHOOB (Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of) (Original language Arabic)

I also think that it is difficult to reach a decision when it comes to this matter. Having said this, the only thing that I really understood is that this is an informal meeting that we are suggesting for half-a-day. Is it not an informal meeting of Ministers as well? I believe that we have accepted that principle of having an informal Ministerial Meeting. If you now refer to the Programme and Finance Committees, does that mean that this meeting will now become official or formal in the future? I would like to ask for a clarification on that.

CHAIRMAN

This is a very lofty experiment that we are trying to implement in the next Conference. As we debate this, however, we come to the realization that there are more questions than answers and that it is probably not feasible to do this during this next Conference. So it is natural that we are bring it back to the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees to again work on it and propose to the Council, probably not the next Council close to the Conference because then it will be too close to the Conference. We cannot do anything then at the Conference in the form of experiment. But we can certainly discuss the Report of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees at the next Session of the Council after the Conference namely in November 2000.

Kyeong-sang RHO (Korea, Republic of)

I need clarifications. Will we ask the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees to decide whether or not the Report of this separate meeting in Maastricht will be included at the Thirtieth Conference or Thirty-first Conference? Then, I would like to seek clarification, since in paragraph 27 of the Report of the 115th Session of Council said that there was general agreement that it would be desirable to achieve great interaction among the Ministers during the Conference sessions.

CHAIRMAN

It is not that the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees will then propose something for the next Conference, because we can see now that it is practically impossible to implement this experiment during the next Conference. The Joint Meeting is instructed by us to

work more intensively on this matter and really come up with feasible solutions. It is only the Council that can decide, not the Joint Meeting, whether or not we are putting it on the agenda of the Conference. That is the decision that I propose to Council now.

We have concluded Item 11 and we can go on to Item 20, *Report of the 69th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters*.

Mr Adnan Bashir Khan, Vice-Chairman of the Council took the chair

M. Adnan Bashir Khan, Vice-Président du Conseil, assume la présidence

Asume la presidencia, Sr. Adnan Bashir Khan, Vicepresidente del Consejo

V. CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS (continued)

V. QUESTIONS CONSTITUTIONNELLES ET JURIDIQUES (suite)

V. ASUNTOS CONSTITUCIONALES Y JURÍDICOS (continuación)

20. Report of the 69th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (Rome, 26-27 April 1999) (CL 116/5)

20. Rapport de la soixante-neuvième session du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques (Rome, 26-27 avril 1999) (CL 116/5)

20. Informe del 69º período de sesiones del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos (Roma, 26-27 de abril de 1999) (CL 116/5)

CHAIRMAN

We now move on to Item 20, *Report of the 69th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters*. The relevant document is CL 116/5, the report of the Committee's last session held in April 1999. I understand that the Chairman of the Committee is not available but that the Report of the CCLM will be presented by the Vice-Chairman, Mr. Ly of Senegal.

Moussa BOCAR LY (Vice-Président du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques)

En l'absence du Président du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques (CQCJ), l'honneur m'échoit, en ma qualité de Vice-Président du Comité, de présenter au Conseil le Rapport de la soixante-neuvième session du CQCJ, tenue les 26 et 27 avril de cette année.

Le premier point concerne l'acceptation des pouvoirs, pratique suivie par quelques organisations du Système des Nations Unies. A sa cent-quatorzième session, en novembre 1997, le Conseil avait demandé que la Réunion conjointe du Comité du Programme et du Comité financier examine les procédures et méthodes de travail des sessions de la Conférence et lui présente, à sa cent-quinzième session, en novembre 1998, par l'intermédiaire du CQCJ. La Réunion conjointe du Comité du Programme et du Comité financier a proposé que le processus de validation des pouvoirs soit revu et que les travaux préparatoires de validation des pouvoirs soient effectués dans la mesure du possible avant l'ouverture de la Conférence, par une Commission de vérification des pouvoirs désignée par le Conseil, sous réserve de confirmation ultérieure par la Conférence.

La Réunion conjointe a aussi proposé que la question soit discutée de façon plus approfondie par le CQCJ à sa soixante-huitième session en septembre 1998. Par la même occasion, quant à la forme des pouvoirs, le CQCJ a estimé que la Commission de vérification des pouvoirs devrait disposer d'une certaine marge de manœuvre, comme c'est le cas à l'ONU et dans d'autres institutions du système des Nations Unies.

Le CQCJ a demandé au Secrétariat de préparer un document décrivant la pratique de quelques organisations du système des Nations Unies en matière d'acceptation des pouvoirs. Le rapport qui est devant vous fait état des conclusions auxquelles est parvenu le CQCJ sur cette question et vous est soumis pour examen, et à travers le Conseil, par la Conférence et sa Commission de vérification des pouvoirs.

Le deuxième point concerne les amendements au Règlement général de l'Organisation: d'abord pour l'abolition de la Commission des candidatures, ensuite l'introduction du vote électronique, et

enfin les procédures de vote en cas d'élection. Comme déjà indiqué, le Conseil avait demandé, lors de sa cent-quatorzième session en novembre 1997, que la Réunion conjointe du Comité du Programme et du Comité financier examine les Procédures et méthodes de travail des sessions de la Conférence et lui présente un Rapport à sa cent-quinzième session en novembre 1998, par l'intermédiaire du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques. Les rapports de ces différentes sessions ont été soumis au Conseil à sa cent-quinzième session en 1998, votre organe directeur ayant, à cette occasion, fourni au CQCJ des orientations claires sur cette question. Sous ce point, le Conseil est donc invité, s'il le souhaite, à endosser un Projet de résolution de la Conférence portant amendement du Règlement général de l'Organisation concernant aussi bien l'abolition de la Commission des candidatures et le transfert de ses fonctions à votre Conseil que l'introduction d'un système de vote électronique et les procédures de vote en cas d'élection.

Le troisième point concerne les amendements des articles VII.1 et XV.3 du Règlement général de l'Organisation, concernant les comités techniques de la Conférence. Sous ce point, il est proposé, comme demandé par votre Conseil même, lors de sa dernière session en novembre 1998, la suppression des références aux comités techniques de la Conférence, devenus obsolètes, aux articles VII.1 et XV.3 du Règlement général de l'Organisation. Le Conseil est donc invité à endosser le Projet de résolution de la Conférence portant ces amendements pour transmission à celle-ci en vue de son approbation en novembre prochain.

Le quatrième point, enfin, concerne la suppression de la Commission des pêches pour l'océan Indien et la fusion du Comité du développement et de l'aménagement des pêches dans le golfe du Bengale avec la Commission Asie-Pacifique des pêches. Au titre de ce sous-point, le Conseil est invité à approuver un Projet de résolution permettant les actions suivantes: l'abolition officielle de la Commission des pêches pour l'océan Indien et de ses organes subsidiaires, l'approbation de la fusion du Comité du développement et de l'aménagement des pêches dans le golfe du Bengale avec la Commission Asie-Pacifique des pêches, l'autorisation du Directeur général de convoquer des réunions *ad hoc* des membres des anciens comités pour la mise en valeur et l'aménagement des ressources halieutiques des golfes et du développement et de l'aménagement des pêches dans le sud-ouest de l'océan Indien, le cas échéant, afin d'achever le processus de mise en place des nouveaux organes envisagés, et l'autorisation qui serait donnée au Directeur général de prendre les mesures provisoires nécessaires concernant la gestion des ressources halieutiques des zones couvertes par ces anciens comités, ceci en attendant la création officielle des nouveaux organes.

Voilà en substance l'essentiel des décisions attendues de votre Conseil. Le Rapport du CQCJ fait suite aux indications données aussi bien par la Réunion conjointe du Comité du Programme et du Comité financier que de votre Conseil lui-même.

CHAIRMAN

I propose that we have one debate on all these issues. Of course, Members are free to take up any one of these issues or all of them in their comments. If that is agreeable, I open the floor for debate.

I see no Members wish to take the floor at this point in time, so do I consider the Report adopted?

I wish we did more of this, and I hope that we continue doing it with the remaining items also.

III. ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP (continued)

III. ACTIVITÉS DE LA FAO ET DU PAM (suite)

III. ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y DEL PMA (continuación)

13. Draft Plan of Action on Agriculture in Small Island Developing States (CL 116/18)

13. Projet de Plan d'action sur l'agriculture dans les petits États insulaires en développement (CL 116/18)

13. Proyecto de Plan de Acción sobre la Agricultura en los Pequeños Estados Insulares en Desarrollo (CL 116/18)

CHAIRMAN

We move on to Item 13, *Draft Plan of Action on Agriculture in Small Island Developing States*. The relevant document is CL 116/18.

The FAO Conference, at its Twenty-ninth Session in November 1997, stressed the need to recognize the particular constraints of Small Island Developing States and invited the Organization to hold an International Conference on Agriculture in Small Island Developing States as part of the World Food Summit follow-up. The Conference held last March focussed on the specific problems of agriculture, including fisheries and forestry. The main objective was to develop a Plan of Action consisting of programmes and projects in support of sustainable agricultural development in Small Island Developing States.

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

I have the pleasure to introduce the item, Draft Plan of Action on Agriculture in Small Island Development States, and you have before you the document CL 116/18.

You may recall that FAO organized a special Ministerial Conference on Agriculture in Small Island Development States on 12 March 1999, here in Rome. Delegates from 85 Member Nations of the Organization, including 29 Small Island Developing State Members, of whom 23 were Ministers, attended as did a number of Observers. The Conference formed part of the World Food Summit Follow-Up and highlighted FAO's continued efforts to assist the SIDS in developing their agricultural capacities.

The Conference focused on the specific problems of agriculture, including fisheries and forestry. It unanimously adopted a *Ministerial Declaration on Agriculture in Small Island Developing States*, which now serves as an introduction to the Plan of Action before you. The text of the Declaration is contained in document CL 116/18 for your information. The Conference also considered a draft Plan of Action on Agriculture which focuses on the following five commitments: adjusting to changes in the global trading environment towards a more intensified, diversified and sustainable agriculture; meeting fisheries' needs; ensuring sustainable management of land, water and forestry resources and environmental protection; and capacity-building and institutional strengthening.

Those who attended will recall that, although the delegates accepted the major focus, they found that the *Draft Plan of Action* needed further revisions. These revisions were expected to include, among other things, that more emphasis be placed on the linkage of the Plan of Action with the *Barbados Programme of Action and the UN Follow-Up*; capacity-building and infrastructure development in agriculture, forestry and fisheries; gender issues and regional cooperation among Small Island Developing States; explicit reflection of the role of FAO in the implementation of the Plan of Action, and the deletion of the cost estimates that were specified in the original *Draft of the Plan of Action*.

In view of the time constraints, the Ministerial Conference entrusted FAO to amend the *Draft Plan of Action*, taking into account the views and comments expressed during the Conference, and any written comments subsequently provided by interested Members within two weeks after the adjournment of the Conference.

Finally, the Conference invited the Director-General of FAO to submit a revised version of the *Draft Plan of Action* to the FAO Council for its consideration, and this is where we are now.

Before finalizing the revision of the *Plan of Action*, the Secretariat has had a series of consultations with concerned Members. In addition to the comments received during the Conference of 12 March, FAO has twice extended the deadline to allow more time for Member Nations who provided written comments, including Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, Haiti, Mauritius, New Zealand, United States of America and the European Community. The Secretariat has consolidated all proposals and undertaken necessary consultations with those concerned, and I am

now pleased to inform you that through this process we were able to incorporate most of these suggestions.

We had received further minor amendments from a few countries which have not yet been inserted into the new draft but which, I trust, will receive the consensus of the Council. These changes are the ones that I would like to read out, with your acceptance. I will indicate the changes first, and then read them at dictation speed. There are not many.

These changes that we have not incorporated into the text that is before you are the following.

In the Preamble, paragraph 5, last line, at the end of the sentence the words should be added "in the framework of economic and social development". The sentence would then read in full "By focusing on the specific problems of agriculture, including fisheries and forestry, the Conference deals with a sector that has a key role to play in achieving sustainable food security in the framework of economic and social development". The addition is at the end.

The second change is in Part 2, paragraph 21, last sentence. It is proposed to delete the word "possibly" in the last line and to insert after the words "organic farming" the words "where appropriate" and to add at the end of the sentence the words "possibly with FAO assistance". The last sentence in paragraph 21, would then read "The potential for diversification and intensification of these new crops, under organic farming where appropriate, for niche markets remains largely to be explored, possibly with FAO assistance".

The next change is even smaller, in Part 3, para 30d), where the words "reasonable fishing arrangements" that you will find there, should be replaced by "development-oriented fishing agreements". So the full sentence would read, under 30d), "Pursue policies that promote private investment, the setting up of fair and development-oriented fishing agreements..." and so on.

In Part 5, paragraph 40, the eighth line, after the word "National" there should be the insertion of the word "regional". The sentence would then read "National, regional and international institutions, including FAO, have an important role to play in this endeavour".

I now come to the last change, in paragraph 51, the third line after the word "including" the words "when suitable" should be inserted. The revised sentence would then read "International financial institutions ... should be encouraged to increase their technical," and, as the Representative of Eritrea suggested

Yohannes TENSUE (Eritrea)

Thank you, Mr de Haen, for the excellent introduction and for the necessary amendments made.

I would like to ask your permission to give the floor to the Africa Group, Burkina Faso, to speak on my behalf.

André Anatole YAMEOGO (Observateur du Burkina Faso)

Au nom du Groupe africain, qui compte en son sein des petits Etats insulaires en développement dont il est solidaire du sort, je voudrais rapidement rappeler que la Conférence interrégionale des petits États insulaires, tenue à la Barbade en avril 1992, avait recommandé que les petits États insulaires recherchent des possibilités de mettre en oeuvre les sous-programmes du Programme d'action 21 adopté par la CNUED la même année. L'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies a décidé de réunir une Conférence mondiale sur les petits Etats insulaires qui a eu lieu deux années plus tard à la Barbade.

Cette conférence a constaté les vitales nécessités de s'attaquer aux obstacles entravant le développement durable y compris le manque de ressources foncières, la pression excessive de l'environnement et les ressources des zones côtières et marines entre autres. Nous sommes conscients que, dans le cadre géo-économique actuel, les pays en développement font face à des pressions accrues qui ont une incidence dramatique sur les petits États insulaires en développement. En effet, ces États sont confrontés à une interaction de facteurs, telles que l'exiguïté du territoire, l'éloignement des marchés, la dispersion géographique, la vulnérabilité aux

catastrophes naturelles, une répartition, une structure et une mobilité démographique particulières et la dépendance vis-à-vis d'un petit nombre de produits de marché, ce qui engendre un écart entre les besoins des populations et les ressources disponibles pour survivre et se développer. L'agriculture constitue le principal soutien des populations de ces pays.

Néanmoins, sa contribution économique est réduite du fait de la limitation des moyens disponibles, particulièrement les moyens technologiques pour exploiter les ressources actuelles de façon durable.

La Conférence ministérielle spéciale sur l'agriculture dans les petits Etats insulaires en développement, organisée par la FAO en mars 1999, a permis de focaliser l'attention sur les problèmes de l'agriculture, y compris la pêche et la foresterie, dans le but de réaliser les objectifs de la sécurité alimentaire.

Suite à cette conférence, le Plan d'action a été révisé et nous remercions le Secrétariat d'avoir pris en considération les commentaires et les observations formulés. Nous pensons que le Plan est suffisamment cohérent et complet. Il trace les grandes lignes pour l'adaptation de la production agricole des petits Etats insulaires en développement au changement de l'environnement commercial mondial. Il indique les mesures nécessaires pour intensifier et diversifier l'agriculture, souligne le rôle fondamental du secteur de la pêche, considère les besoins fondamentaux pour une bonne gestion des ressources en terres, en eau et en forêts, et la protection de l'environnement. Pour ce faire, une attention particulière vise le renforcement des capacités et des institutions.

Par conséquent, le Groupe africain fait appel au Conseil pour qu'il approuve la version révisée du Plan d'action afin que celui-ci puisse être soumis comme recommandé par la Conférence ministérielle, à la session spéciale de l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies lors de l'évaluation de la mise en œuvre du Programme d'action de la Barbade en septembre prochain.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

Agradecemos al Dr. de Haen su presentación y sus precisas aclaraciones. En nombre del Grupo Regional Latinoamericano y el Caribe permítame expresar la posición del Grupo que represento sobre el Plan de Acción sobre la Agricultura en los Pequeños Estados Insulares en Desarrollo.

En el marco de seguimiento de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación y en concordancia con el Plan de Acción de Barbados, la FAO organizó una Conferencia Ministerial Extraordinaria sobre la Agricultura en los Pequeños Estados Insulares en Desarrollo. Los resultados de esta Conferencia deberán ayudar a estos Países, tanto en la preparación de las negociaciones de la Organización Mundial del Comercio sobre el Comercio Agrícola, como en su esfuerzo por alcanzar la seguridad alimentaria de frente a la globalización de los mercados y de los cambios climáticos.

Los Pequeños Estados Insulares son particularmente vulnerables a los impactos externos, no sólo a los cambios que se dan en la economía mundial sino también a los desastres naturales como: huracanes, sequía, cambios climáticos a largo plazo causando, entre otros, el incremento del nivel del mar. No olvidemos que el hecho de enfrentar los desastres naturales absorbe más del 40 por ciento del presupuesto nacional de estos pequeños estados insulares y que, los costos del transporte son muy elevados, todo esto unido a una escala de producción considerablemente baja.

Sobre la base de lo dicho anteriormente, el desarrollo sostenible representa un gran reto para este grupo de países constituidos, en gran número, de pequeñas islas. Por esto, pensamos que es fundamental el papel de asesoramiento de la FAO sobre política y asistencia técnica a estos Estados. Creemos que estos países necesitan de un importante nivel de transferencia tecnológica; considerando que un manejo mejorado de los eco-sistemas marinos y costeros es necesario para asegurar una conservación y un desarrollo sostenible respetando al mismo tiempo el ambiente.

De igual manera, pensamos que la comunidad internacional debe ayudar a estos Pequeños Estados Insulares en desarrollo a enfrentar la adversa consecuencia que tanto la globalización como la liberalización de las relaciones económicas y comerciales mundiales afectan sobre sus frágiles

economías, por tanto estas relaciones deben conducirles a obtener un crecimiento económico de auto-sostenibilidad.

Estos países se enfrentan con varios obstáculos en los sectores agrícola, forestal y de pesca; el sector de desarrollo rural se ve afectado por el bajo nivel de los recursos económicos y la predominación de una economía abierta basada en la monocultura, lo que conduce a una situación de extrema pobreza, desnutrición e inseguridad alimentaria.

Sobre el particular, creemos que es necesario invertir en los recursos humanos para poder luchar contra el hambre y la pobreza, en este contexto se debe imponer la aplicación de los principios de dignidad humana como condición *sine qua non* para enfrentar los desafíos y los conflictos internacionales. Quisiéramos resaltar el rol fundamental que debe desempeñar la mujer en la implementación de este Plan de Acción, ya que, en el sector del desarrollo rural la mujer representa, muchas veces, la mayor parte de la población.

En consecuencia, el Grupo Regional de América Latina y el Caribe propone que se endose a este Consejo del *Proyecto del Plan de Acción para los Pequeños Estados Insulares en Desarrollo* tal como se propone en el documento CL/116/18 bajo el tema 13 de la Agenda.

Klaus GARCKE (Germany)

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

As expressed at the special Ministerial Conference on Agriculture in Small Island Developing States in March, the European Union is prepared to contribute in a constructive way to the FAO initiative, aiming at follow-up to UNCED, the Barbados Conference and the World Food Summit.

We are willing to address present and future constraints and habits, as well as appropriate solutions and potentials to sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry development, to countries in need of assistance. The Lomé Convention will continue to offer support to them to overcome vulnerability.

The *Draft Plan of Action* before us rightly places in the centre of consideration several important areas where future concrete action is needed. These are, in particular, assistance to Small Island Developing States, with a view to making them better prepared for the forthcoming multilateral trade negotiations on agriculture, and to enhancing a stronger integration of these states into the world economy. Secondly, appropriate focus is given to the development of sustainable, intensified and diversified agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and improved disaster-preparedness.

We would like to stress that in the implementation of the *Plan of Action*, particular emphasis should be laid on the following elements: full and equal involvement of women and men in development efforts; participation of foreign private investment, which is of particular importance for income and employment in Small Island Developing States; and establishing mechanisms for evaluating the impact of measures and the effectiveness of strategies.

We urge the Secretariat of FAO to do its utmost to submit and make known the concerns expressed by the FAO Council to the next ECOSOC meeting and to the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly in September this year, with regard to FAO's *Plan of Action*, especially Chapter 6, and other activities of FAO in regard to the Small Island Developing States. This would hopefully contribute towards a more coherent approach of the UN System regarding the target countries in question.

Finally, we suggest that FAO take note of the outcome of the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly and incorporate its recommendations in the revised *Plan of Action*.

Lyall W. SMALL (Barbados)

It is indeed with great pleasure that I wish to say a few words on the topic under discussion. My pleasure derives from the fact that I was present at the 1997 FAO Conference when Mauritius, supported by Barbados and the other Small Island Developing States representatives, proposed

that FAO convene a special Ministerial Conference on SIDS to explore the special constraints faced by SIDS and to develop a Plan of Action on Agriculture in Small Island Developing States.

I was also fortunate to be present three months ago in Rome, when FAO, having graciously acceded to our request, convened that Conference. At that meeting I contributed to the Drafting Committee for the draft Plan of Action, and I can tell you that the document you have here today is a vast improvement on the one which was presented to the Ministers for approval at that time. I must sincerely congratulate FAO on the excellent work they have put into refining the document.

My pleasure also derives from the fact that delegates to the Ministerial Conference in March this year, with minimum prompting from Barbados, requested the Secretariat to ensure that the centrality of the *Barbados Plan of Action for Small Island Developing States*, emanating from the 1994 Global UN Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Development States, be reflected in this document. As you can see from paragraphs 3, 4 and 9 in the Preamble, the Secretariat has definitely done that.

The document CL 116/18 succinctly outlines practically all the relevant constraints faced by SIDS in a rapidly changing world environment, and identifies an uneasily read format and methodology for strategically overcoming these constraints. The spirit of the Action Planners, as we understand it, is reiterated throughout the document in the phrase "to this aim Governments in partnership with all actors of civil society and with the support of international institutions will, as appropriate" and then goes on to take certain actions.

This commits the Governments of Small Island States to help themselves in partnerships with private sector organizations and individuals and with necessary support from international institutions. Our Governments therefore have to be in the vanguard of the action, helping ourselves.

Barbados suffers from practically all the generic constraints of a typical Small Island Developing State, and we therefore need the support of the international community to assist us in enhancing our agricultural development. However, we consider that we cannot wait for such assistance to be forthcoming before starting the process of eliminating, or at least managing, the constraints under which we operate.

We are therefore using some of our own slender resources to take steps to modernize our agriculture support systems, a well-developing and enabling climate for our private sector players to invest in and otherwise contribute to the development of the communities from which they derive their sustenance.

I had intended to enumerate a few of the areas where we have started the ball rolling for the transformation of our agriculture in Barbados, using the headings given in the SIDS Action Plan. However, in the interests of time, I will just refer to one. That one deals with addressing new challenges in the global trading environment.

The Prime Minister of Barbados has been at the forefront of the development of a CARICOM regional negotiating machinery to deal with multilateral trade negotiations. This body is currently coordinating the regions negotiations for the FDAA and a successor to the Lomé Agreement.

One high point in the small states lobby over the last year, in our opinion, was when a British Commonwealth ministerial team, headed by the Prime Minister of Barbados, visited various capitals and held in-depth discussions with the IMF, World Bank, WTO, ACP and the EU to raise awareness and sensitivity to the special problems shared by small states in the international finance and trade systems. One important result of this is that there is now a structured debate in the Trade and Development Committee of the BDO on small economies.

I had a lot more to say, but I am going to close at this point before I exhaust your patience. It just remains for me to reiterate that my delegation has great pleasure in endorsing this Report.

Paul ROSS (Australia)

I can be brief, but I just wanted to say that Australia is very pleased to welcome the SIDS *Plan of Action* presented to us this evening.

Australia represents the South-West Pacific Region on this Council and many Members of our Region are Small Island Developing States.

Australia was able to participate in the SIDS Ministerial Conference held in March, and we provided a number of suggestions for improvement of the *Plan of Action* at the Conference.

We thank most sincerely Mr de Haen and his staff for doing an admirable job in taking into account our comments and those from the other Members into the *Plan of Action* before us.

Also we thank the Secretariat for their very hard work with limited resources in preparing the SIDS Ministerial Conference in March.

As can so often be case, we can still see some areas for further improvement in the *Plan of Action*. We are happy to support the adoption by Council of this document, and its submission, as input, to the UNGAR Special Session.

Bill DOERING (Canada)

There is a growing international recognition that Small Island Developing States face important development challenges that are linked to their special vulnerabilities. Several initiatives are underway to assist those states in their development, including the current review of the *Barbados Plan of Action* and the joint initiative of the Commonwealth and the World Bank to deliver a vulnerability index.

Because of the size of the Small Island States, they have limited absorptive capacity and it is important that any multilateral activities be well coordinated with other partners.

That is the main point we would like to make.

Abdoukarim DIOUF (Sénégal)

Je remercie Monsieur De Haen pour son excellente présentation du document CL/116/18 portant sur le *Plan d'action sur l'agriculture dans les petits Etats insulaires en développement*. Nos remerciements vont également au Secrétariat pour le travail considérable qui a été fait et qui a abouti à cet excellent document. Le Burkina Faso a exprimé la position d'un groupe régional sur le document et ma délégation voudrait s'associer pleinement à la déclaration de la Présidente du Groupe africain, ainsi qu'à celle des orateurs qui l'ont précédée. Par conséquent, nous voudrions réitérer l'appel lancé par la Présidente du Groupe africain au Conseil pour adopter le projet du *Plan d'action* qui nous est soumis.

Mohammed Saeed NOURI-NAEENI (Iran, Islamic Republic of)

The Member Nations of the Near-East Group have asked me, on their behalf, to support the adoption of the *Draft Plan of Action on Agriculture in Small Island Developing States*, and we hope that very soon we will witness the fruitful results of its implementation.

Kazumasa SHIOYA (Japan)

Japan is an island state, surrounded by sea. Japan shares the position of Small Islands Developing States wishing to develop in particular fisheries.

The delegation of Japan has pleasure to announce that it will provide a Trust Fund to FAO regarding fisheries to enhance food security in Small Island Developing States.

Mrs Neela GANGADHARAN (India)

We would also like to support and endorse the *Draft Plan of Action* on behalf of the Asia Group.

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

My delegation would like to thank Mr de Haen for introducing the *Draft Plan of Action on Agriculture for Small Island States*. We are looking at a very valuable document. My delegation is very pleased to see the excellent work that has been done by Mr de Haen and his secretariat in revising the *Draft Plan of Action* as instructed by the last Conference.

Therefore, my delegation would just like to say a few things.

Over the last four years, my delegation has constantly voiced its strong concern for the needs of sustainable rural development in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, environment and women in rural and peer areas. Not only do I speak up for the Caribbean islands, but also for all the Island States.

I have constantly tried to bring awareness for the need of the Small Island States to all my global partners and friends, whether in FAO Committees, in FAO's Conferences or as head of delegation in Quebec, when we celebrated FAO's Fiftieth Anniversary.

In conclusion, therefore, my delegation appeals to the Council to endorse this *Plan of Action* on block.

Furthermore, my delegation also appeals to financial donors, as well as to the international funding agencies, to strengthen their support for the implementation of this *Plan of Action*.

I must say that I am almost in tears to have heard all my friends here in the forum, how well they came forward to support us in the endorsement of the *Plan of Action*. It goes to show, if I may say so, that who waits patiently for the last, will last best.

Thank you very much to all my colleagues in this Council and as Observers, I thank you all. You have done something fantastic today for the Small Island States around the world.

Denis CANGY (Observer for Mauritius)

Mauritius fully endorses the intervention made by the Chair of the Africa Group, together with those of the other speakers and would support other donors, including Japan.

Indeed, Mauritius had the honour and privilege to Chair the Ministerial Conference on Agriculture in SIDS, after which we had several consultations in Rome between ourselves and with the technical assistance of the Secretariat. As coordinator of SIDS in Rome, the Mauritius delegation accepts this revised *Plan of Action*, together with the revisions that have been added.

We would also like to join the others, to endorse what Dominica has said, to thank the FAO Secretariat, particularly Mr de Haen and his collaborators. Among these collaborators, we would like to mention the excellent technical documents – and I believe there are three of them – which were produced in order to assist in the preparation of the Ministerial Conference.

I also express the appreciation of my Minister of Agriculture. The Mauritius delegation earnestly requests, like the other speakers, that this revised *Plan of Action* be endorsed by the Council and submitted to the special session of the United Nations General Assembly in September, when the *Barbados Programme of Action* will be reviewed.

Mme Suze PERCY (Observateur de Haïti)

Je tiens tout d'abord à féliciter le Secrétariat de la FAO et tout particulièrement M. de Haen et son équipe, pour l'excellent travail accompli, ce qui nous a permis d'avoir ce *projet de Plan d'action* pour nos petits Etats insulaires. Je voudrais aussi appuyer la déclaration de l'Ambassadeur de Cuba ainsi que de toutes les délégations qui ont eu à intervenir avant moi sur ce point de l'ordre du jour.

Tout en rappelant l'importance fondamentale que revêt pour la majorité des pays, l'agriculture, les forêts, les pêches en tant que principales sources de subsistance, je voudrais mettre quand même l'accent sur deux points.

Premièrement, la place qui doit être donnée à la femme dans ce *Plan d'action* et dans sa mise en œuvre puisqu'elle représente un pilier dans l'économie de nos familles et spécifiquement du monde rural.

Deuxièmement, l'attention spéciale que le *Plan d'action* doit prêter aux problèmes des coûts de transport trop élevés par rapport au niveau de production de nos pays.

Comme vous pouvez le constater, la concrétisation de ce *Plan d'action* peut contribuer en grande partie aux efforts des petits Etats insulaires en développement pour relever les défis du contexte commercial mondial, promouvoir une agriculture plus intensive, répondre aux besoins de la pêche, garantir la gestion durable des ressources en terres et renforcer les capacités et les institutions nationales.

Mais pour ce faire, l'appui de la communauté internationale est indispensable. Nous profitons de l'occasion pour lancer un appel de solidarité et de soutien financier de la part de la communauté internationale à ce *Plan d'action* et nous la remercions pour l'attention particulière et soutenue qu'elle a toujours prêtée aux petits États insulaires en développement depuis la Conférence de la Barbade en 1994.

Pour terminer, nous nous rallions aux autres orateurs pour solliciter l'adoption par le Conseil de ce *Projet de Plan d'action*.

Eduardo Jorge LIMA BARROS SILVA (Observateur du Cap-Vert)

Vu l'heure tardive, je serai très très bref. Un tout petit Etat insulaire en développement, le Cap-Vert ne peut que souscrire les interventions faites par les présidents des différents groupes régionaux: Afrique, Amérique latine et autres. Et nous notons aussi avec satisfaction la solidarité démontrée par les divers membres du Conseil qui se sont prononcés sur ce point de l'ordre du jour.

Evidemment, on ne pourrait pas finaliser notre intervention sans remercier le travail de qualité mené à bien par le Secrétariat et certainement demander encore une fois à ce Conseil d'adopter le *Plan d'action* qui a été soumis.

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

Thank you to all who expressed compliments to the Secretariat. I will certainly convey these thanks and compliments to all the colleagues in the Secretariat and several Departments, in particular the Sustainable Development Department, who worked hard over the last month in bringing this Plan of Action, as well as the Ministerial Declaration, to the stage where it is now. I must say that for all of us, and for me personally, it has been a great pleasure to work with delegations towards to this end and in this endeavour. Of course, we now all very much hope that the work will bear fruit finally in terms of improved food security in the Small Island Developing States.

If I would have to conclude and summarize the statements, we have noted that all who spoke expressed appreciation about the revisions introduced to the version of the Plan of Action that was before the Ministerial Conference. Many recommended adoption. Nobody spoke against adoption of the *Plan of Action* or against recommendations, rather, that the Council adopt this *Plan of Action*. Support was expressed for the submission, by the Director-General of FAO, of the *Plan of Action* to the special session of the General Assembly on the *Barbados Programme of Action on Small Island Developing States*. I am sure, Mr Chairman, that upon completion of your agenda item and adoption of the *Plan of Action*, the Director-General will follow your instructions.

Obviously the Secretariat and Member Nations will also follow with attention and active participation this special session of the General Assembly and, if need be, follow up on the conclusions of that special session and in the implementation of the *Plan of Action* as it is before you.

21. Other Constitutional and Legal Matters:**21. Autres questions constitutionnelles et juridiques:****21. Otros asuntos constitucionales y jurídicos:****21.2 Application for Membership in the Organization (CL 116/20)****21.2 Demande d'admission à la qualité de membre de l'Organisation (CL 116/20)****21.2 Solicitud de ingreso en la Organización (CL 116/20)****CHAIRMAN**

We will now turn to Item 21, *Other Constitutional and Legal Matters*, and specifically to its Sub-item 21.2, *Application for Membership in the Organization*.

As you will see from the relevant document CL 116/20, Council is requested to authorize the Director-General to invite the applicant country Niue to participate in an Observer capacity in appropriate Council meetings, as well as regional and technical meetings of the Organization which may be of interest to it.

Does Council agree to this?

I see a general agreement.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

VI. OTHER MATTERS (continued)**VI. QUESTIONS DIVERSES (suite)****VI. OTROS ASUNTOS (continuación)****22. Revised Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and Other Main Sessions 1998-99**

(CL 116/19)

22. Calendrier révisé des sessions des organes directeurs et des autres réunions importantes de la FAO, 1998-99 (CL 116/19)**22. Calendario revisado para 1998-99 de los períodos de sesiones de los Órganos Rectores y de otras reuniones importantes de la FAO (CL 116/19)****CHAIRMAN**

We now move on to Item 22, *Revised Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and Other Main Sessions, 1998-1999*. I would request the Secretary-General, Mr Zenny, to introduce the item.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Just to say very briefly: document CL 116/19 gives the calendar for the entire 1998-99 biennium, including sessions already held. Council is now invited to approve the dates of its 117th Session, that is from 9 to 11 November 1999.

CHAIRMAN

You have heard the proposal.

Can I take it that these dates are confirmed?

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

23. ANY OTHER MATTERS (continued)**23. AUTRES QUESTIONS** (suite)**23. OTROS ASUNTOS** (continuación)**23.1 Appointment of the Chairperson and Alternate Chairpersons of the Appeals Committee** (CL 116/LIM/4)**23.1 Nomination du Président et des Présidents suppléants du Comité de recours** (CL 116/LIM/4)**23.1 Nombramiento del Presidente y los Presidentes Suplentes del Comité de apelaciones** (CL 116/LIM/4)**CHAIRMAN**

The Council is now requested to consider the *Appointment of the Chairperson of the Appeals Committee*. Document CL 116/LIM/4 outlines the present situation which you recall results from the death last month of the Chairman, His Excellency Rajah Jai Atal, former Ambassador of India to Italy.

I understand that the actual First Alternate Chairman, Ambassador Aké of Côte d'Ivoire, is willing to fill the post of Chairperson.

Emmanuel K. NOUAMA (Observateur de la Côte d'Ivoire) ¹

Monsieur le Président, je voudrais, au nom de la délégation ivoirienne, exprimer au Conseil nos sincères remerciements pour avoir choisi à l'unanimité notre compatriote S.E. Siméon Ake, Ambassadeur de la République de Côte d'Ivoire auprès du Saint-Siège, comme Président du Comité de Recours en remplacement de notre regretté collègue Jai Kumar Atal à qui nous rendons un vibrant hommage. Nul doute que le nouveau Président du Comité, que nos vœux de succès accompagnent, accomplira à votre satisfaction et à celle de tous, l'importante mission qui vient de lui être confiée. Je vous remercie.

Daniel BERTHERY (France)

Sans vouloir allonger les débats, puisqu'il nous faut procéder à l'élection d'un nouveau Président pour le Comité des recours de la FAO suite au décès de Son Excellence, l'Ambassadeur Atal, auquel ma délégation souhaite de nouveau rendre hommage, ma délégation souhaiterait présenter les trois propositions suivantes au Conseil:

Premièrement, j'ai l'honneur de proposer à la Présidence du Comité des recours Son Excellence l'Ambassadeur extraordinaire et plénipotentiaire de la République de Côte d'Ivoire auprès du Saint-Siège, Monsieur Siméon Aké, qui exerce depuis 1998 la fonction de premier Vice-Président de ce Comité. Vous connaissez tous l'Ambassadeur Aké, Docteur en droit, ancien Ministre des Affaires étrangères de son pays. Nous connaissons sa sagesse et nous lui faisons confiance pour présider le Comité des recours.

Deuxièmement, si le Conseil donne une suite positive à cette proposition, nous souhaiterions alors vous proposer à la première Vice-Présidence du Comité, Son Excellence Felipe Paolillo, Ambassadeur de la République de l'Uruguay auprès du Saint-Siège et Représentant permanent auprès de la FAO. L'Ambassadeur Paolillo, éminent juriste, est actuellement second Vice-président du Comité des recours.

Troisièmement, pour compléter le Bureau de ce Comité, je souhaiterais vous proposer pour la seconde Vice-Présidence, notre collègue, Son Excellence Francis Montanaro Mifsud, Ambassadeur de la République de Malte auprès de la FAO. Nous avons tous pu apprécier les compétences juridiques de l'Ambassadeur Mifsud et moi, plus qu'un autre, au sein du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques de la FAO.

¹ Texte reçu avec demande d'insertion dans le procès-verbal

Telles sont les propositions que ma délégation a l'honneur de présenter au Conseil en espérant qu'elles trouveront un écho favorable auprès des membres de cette assemblée.

Mrs Laurie J. TRACY (United States of America)

I would like to, at this point, second the nominations just made by the Representative from France.

Abdoukarim DIOUF (Sénégal)

La délégation sénégalaise voudrait également appuyer la proposition française pour la nomination de ces trois éminentes personnalités au Comité des recours.

Enrique A. PAREJA (Argentina)

Brevemente, para sumarme a los que me han precedido en el uso de la palabra y apoyar calurosamente las nominaciones propuestas por la delegación francesa.

Philip MOUMIE (Cameroun)

La délégation camerounaise s'adjoit aux précédents orateurs pour appuyer les propositions que vient de faire la délégation française.

CHAIRMAN

Do we have any other speakers who would like to take the floor?

Do I take it that the house agrees to the whole proposal?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRMAN

Since I am in the Chair, I would also like to thank all of you for the positive approach which has characterized our proceedings this week. We had a challenging agenda to work through, and I am sure you will agree that our business-like attitude helped us finish ahead of schedule.

The meeting rose at 21.00 hours

La séance est levée à 21 h

Se levanta la sesión a las 21 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixteenth Session Cent seizième session 116º período de sesiones
Rome, 14 – 19 June 1999 Rome, 14 – 19 juin 1999 Roma, 14 – 19 de junio de 1999
NINTH PLENARY MEETING NEUVIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE NOVENA SESIÓN PLENARIA
19 JUNE 1999

**The Ninth Plenary Meeting was opened at 10.40 hours
Mr Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding**

**La neuvième séance plénière est ouverte à 10 h 40
sous la présidence de M. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Président indépendant du Conseil**

**Se abre la novena sesión plenaria a las 10.40 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Sjarifudin Baharsjah,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo**

**ADOPTION OF REPORT
ADOPTION DU RAPPORT
APROBACION DEL INFORME**

**DRAFT REPORTS, PARTS I – XV (CL 116/REP/1 – CL 116/REP/15)
PROJETS DE RAPPORT, PARTIES I – XV (CL 116/REP/1 – CL 116/REP/15)
PROYECTOS DE INFORME, PARTE I – XV (CL 116/REP/1 – CL 116/REP/15)**

CHAIRMAN

I call the Ninth Meeting of the 116th Council Session to order. I kindly invite all delegates to ensure that they have before them the various parts of the Report which the Council is called upon to adopt. There are fifteen parts, numbered consecutively from CL 116/REP/1 to CL 116/REP/15.

I would kindly ask Ms Neela Gangadharan, of India, who chaired the Drafting Committee, to introduce the Draft Report.

Mrs Neela GANGADHARAN (Chairperson, Drafting Committee)

Chairman, Members of the Council and Observers, I am very happy today to present the Draft Report of the 116th Session of the Council. As is the case with all Drafting Committees, as a team, we worked very hard, and our discussions were characterized by recent and intelligent interventions which enabled consensus to emerge. The Representatives of all the Regional Groups actively participated and it is my sincere hope that the aspirations of all the Members have been truly reflected in the Report.

I just want to remind the Members what one of our friends said earlier in the session, that perfection is the enemy of the good. We have really tried to be as perfect as we can in reflecting your opinions, and I do hope that you think the Report is a good one. As an example of our imperfection, there are certain small typographical errors which I would request the Secretary of the Drafting Committee to read out. I seek your indulgence for carrying out the corrections in your drafts.

Ms Miriam M. SAIF (Secretary, Drafting Committee)

In REP/1, in the French language version. Please go to paragraph 7 on page 3, and there is an omission: "... du statut d'observateur aux Nations Unies...". "Unies" is missing from the French text.

In REP/2, paragraph 3, five lines down "... Strategies to Address Members' Needs" should not be underlined. This is the sentence that begins "While differing opinions were expressed on the order of presentation, the Council generally accepted the present sequence of the Strategies to Address Members' Needs". That was a typographical error.

In REP/5, paragraph 4, on the *Report of the Twenty-third Session of the Committee on Fisheries*, the first two sentences of paragraph 4 should be deleted. This was a typographical problem. Please delete in paragraph 4 the first two sentences. I will read them out for the benefit of the Council. "The Council expressed its appreciation for the work carried out by the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) at its Twenty-third Session and for the excellent report submitted by the Committee. It reviewed the recommendations and conclusions reached by the Committee on the substantive items". Please delete those two sentences, as they are repeated in the subsequent sentence.

In REP/8, please go to paragraph 2(c) -- this only affects the English language version. There is a footnote at the end of that page which should be deleted. This was a note that I had sent to the translators, so that they would get the exact wording for the proposal that was approved by the Drafting Committee last night. Please delete the reference to the footnote. It is not necessary.

In REP/11, paragraph 3, in the very last sentence, which begins with "In addition to maintaining adequate qualitative standards ...", please delete "and". That is the word that follows that first

phrase. The sentence should read "In addition to maintaining adequate qualitative standards, quantitative improvements to equitable translation and publication of documents was also an important factor to bear in mind".

Mrs Neela GANGADHARAN (Chairperson, Drafting Committee)

Thank you very much, Secretary of the Drafting Committee. That is all we have, Mr Chairman.

CHAIRMAN

Thank you very much Mrs Gangadharan. the Committee has made an interesting effort and an intense to present this Report to the Council, and has examined all issues in great detail. I wish to thank you for your assistance, and wish to acknowledge the hard work of the Members of the Drafting Committee.

I would like to ask the Council whether, in view of the excellent work of the Drafting Committee, we could adopt the Report *en bloc*?

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México)

Reconocemos el excelente trabajo de la distinguida colega de la India; refleja de manera adecuada todo el debate que tuvo lugar en esta reunión. Hay un tema que nos preocupa en particular y creo que también a otras delegaciones. Es en relación con el Informe del Comité de Pesca que está en el documento CL 116/5, que quisiéramos matizar. Añadiríamos una frase que esperamos no cause ninguna controversia: el párrafo 10 comienza de este modo: "El Consejo reconoció que el eco-etiquetado era un tema discutido y que la FAO podría continuar realizando su trabajo en este sector." Como usted recordará este ha sido un tema muy controvertido en varias reuniones. Con el fin de lograr un consenso, pero sin causar ningún problema a las demás delegaciones, quisiéramos añadir lo siguiente después de la frase anterior: "... en las modalidades y los ritmos que los Estados Miembros decidan." Si se acepta esta enmienda, mi delegación se une al consenso para aprobarlo en bloque.

Mame BALLY SY (Sénégal)

A l'instar de mon collègue du Mexique, il est particulièrement agréable à la délégation du Sénégal de reconnaître le travail remarquable effectué par le Comité de rédaction sous la présidence de notre brillante collègue de l'Inde dont nous avons de tout temps su apprécier les qualités et les compétences. En principe, nous sommes tout à fait favorable à un processus rapide de décision. Toutefois, nous voulons simplement, sans vouloir créer de difficultés, faire quelques propositions, très mineures, mais que nous espérons susceptibles d'apporter de l'amélioration aux rapports REP 1, REP 2 et REP 12.

Pour le REP 1, au paragraphe 3, nous pensons qu'il faudrait peut-être dire que "Le Conseil, après un riche et fructueux débat sur l'opportunité de cette demande d'inscription, a voté..." pour rien. Le reste sans changement: donc "Le Conseil, après un riche et fructueux débat sur l'opportunité de cette demande d'inscription, a voté". C'est une première proposition.

La deuxième proposition concerne le REP/2. Nous pensons qu'à la page 4, le paragraphe 6 a partiellement donné le résumé du débat, mais nous croyons qu'il faudrait ajouter à la fin que "d'autres délégations se sont félicitées de la collaboration qui existe déjà entre les trois organisations et les encouragent à la poursuivre et à la renforcer".

Enfin, pour le REP/12, le paragraphe 3, nous pensons, pour la vérité historique, que le Représentant du Guatemala a également fait une déclaration qui a été hautement appréciée. Je pense qu'il est juste et indiqué de l'ajouter et là, la formulation peut être rapidement trouvée puisque nous étions là, nous l'avons entendu et nous l'avons apprécié.

A part ces observations que je pense être de nature à améliorer le rapport, nous sommes prêts à l'adopter en bloc.

Juan NUIRY SÁNCHEZ (Cuba)

Nuestra delegación entiende que este 116° período de sesiones del Consejo de la FAO cumplió con todas las expectativas que de él se esperaban. Creo que no disminuyó el interés en ninguna de las sesiones durante todo este período que comenzó el lunes 14 y que hoy, sábado 19, estamos finalizando. Creo que hubo un debate profundo, elecciones, análisis exhaustivo, asignaturas pendientes como el problema de los idiomas, aprobación de comités importantes de la FAO, su estado financiero, el Marco Estratégico, la preparación de la próxima Conferencia en general, y en particular, el aspecto electivo a la dirección general de la FAO. No repetiré lo que todos los colegas ya saben, pues todos han participado con mucho interés.

Quisiéramos decir en voz alta lo que ayer expresamos en el Comité de Redacción y que ahora se acaba de manifestar pero que de todos modos quisiera precisar: el Comité de Redacción fue un reflejo de todo lo que pasó durante el debate. Eso fue posible gracias a la Presidenta del mismo a quien quiero rendir homenaje. La señora Neela Gangadharan, de quien ya conocíamos sus cualidades, supo conducir el Comité de Redacción de una manera tan profesional, tan equilibrada, con tanta transparencia, que en el último instante de la reunión ayer a la noche hubo un reconocimiento de todos los que participamos en dicho Comité. Queremos rendirle homenaje a esta digna representante de la India que, con la sabiduría de su país, supo reflejar lo que es la política multilateral, respetando todos los criterios y conduciendo con una profesionalidad que quisiera destacar.

Lo que se ha planteado es lógico, respaldamos totalmente lo que propuso el Embajador italiano Sr. Fontana-Giusti. Creemos que lo que ha planteado México y Senegal no son cuestiones de fondo, sino de olvido o de redacción. En reconocimiento al trabajo realizado, en primer lugar, por la Presidenta del Grupo de Redacción y por la profesionalidad de la Secretaría, pedimos que esta importante documentación sea aprobada en bloque. En definitiva, las cuestiones planteadas por México y Senegal se podrían incluir sin ningún tipo de análisis, pues nadie está en desacuerdo.

P.W. MISIKA (Namibia)

First and foremost, we appreciate and congratulate the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee and the Secretariat for this excellent report that is before us for consideration.

Namibia wants to affirm and support what has been said by Senegal and, in addition, would like to propose just a minor change in REP/3, paragraph 6 on page 2 of the English version. This is the sentence starting "In regard to commodity development programmes, financed by the Common Fund for Commodities and under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Community Groups, concern was expressed ..."

It is our understanding that the Report that dealt with this issue already indicated the concern and that what Council did was to stress or emphasize that concern. We are seeking for consistency here. If we use the word "expressed", it is as if it were the first time that it is being done, but we recognize that it was done before, and that Council only emphasized or reaffirmed what was already expressed there.

Having said that, we wish to declare our wholehearted support that this Report be adopted *en bloc*.

Bandar AL-SHALHOOB (Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of) (Original language Arabic)

We, too, would like to praise the work done by the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, the distinguished representative of India. She has done an excellent job.

We, too, have a couple of minor suggestions for modifications of the text that we would like to make. We also obviously hope that they will not pose any problem at all to the adoption *en block* of our Report.

In REP/11, paragraph 3, it says "The Council emphasized that.. ". We would prefer "The Council approved" or "agreed upon the need to allocate sufficient resources ... ", not "appropriate". I repeat: "The Council approved the need to allocate sufficient resources ..."

Coming to the end of that paragraph, after " ... an important factor to bear in mind.", we would like to add "The Council also reaffirmed its intention to complete monitoring of this item" or "of this matter at future sessions with a view to knowing how far the decisions in question had been implemented by the Secretariat".

Perhaps we could move on to paragraph 5 of this same REP/11, in the first sentence, we would drop "... singled out for improvement ... ". We would add "Among the areas for implementation of the principle of equality between languages ... ". Then in order to implement this we would state, in respect of the principle of the equality of languages, that this was stressed.

We also want to add "the Commission on Plant Genetic Resources". Then, we would add "in particular, the Desert Locust Control Commission".

There is one more amendment I would like to make to the end of paragraph 6, where I would add " ... in particular, at the recruitment stage".

Lastly, I would say that, as representative of the Near East Group, we are quite prepared to adopt the Report *en bloc*.

Ronald ROSE (Canada)

I certainly welcome the expression of my colleague from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in his desire to adopt the Report *en bloc*.

We were certainly willing to give full consideration to that proposal following your introduction, Mr Chairman, but I am afraid there has been a large number of changes proposed, changes which go beyond those of clarification, changes that I have not even fully copied down yet, nor do I fully comprehend.

I am afraid we are going to have to look at some of these changes in more detail.

My purpose in taking the floor was simply to ask two questions of clarification, at this point, particularly in CL 116/REP/2, paragraph 7. In the first sentence, we are informed that " ... the process ... " -- and here we are referring to the Strategic Framework -- " ... the process under way should be led by Members demonstrating a high-level of political commitment." Is there supposed to be an apostrophe on that word? I think it is a cliché of drafting committees, and sometimes of this Body, that occasionally we spend a great deal of time arguing about an apostrophe. Here I think it is quite important, because all Members demonstrate a high level of political commitment to this, so I believe there should be an apostrophe there. I would just ask if the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, who has worked extremely long, extremely hard and, as my colleague from Cuba said, extremely professionally, could clarify that.

The second clarification we would have is in CL 116/REP/3, in paragraph 8. We have the word "henceforth". We are talking about the quota distribution system. We say " ... with the introduction henceforth of the following arrangements:". I am assuming that that means immediately or as soon as possible, but could I just have clarification from the Drafting Committee on that.

Those are the two clarifications I wished to have. However, if we do get into a discussion of some of these amendments that have been proposed, we would make a request to be permitted to come back to address some of the specific proposals.

Chao Tiantong (Thailand)

The Asia Group has been very proud of its representative, Mrs Gangadharan, who skilfully chaired the Drafting Committee. We also greatly appreciate the hard work of the Drafting Committee Members, and the draft Report fully reflects what has been discussed in Plenary.

We agree to accept the proposal to adopt the Report *en bloc*.

Mohamad Walid TAWILL (Syria) (Original language Arabic)

We, too, would like to thank the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee and in fact all the Drafting Committee Members for the hard work that they put into preparing this Report.

We would like to endorse all the points raised by the representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with respect to the Language Policy of the Organization.

We, too, are quite prepared to adopt the Report *en bloc*, once the comments or requests for modifications made by various delegates have been accepted.

We have a proposal to make with respect to the *International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources*. Many of the delegates who have spoken stressed the need to preserve and defend Farmers' Rights and the sovereignty of countries over their genetic resources, and the need for technological transfers within this context of plant genetic resources. We have a proposal to add a reference to this, because we would like these statements that were made in Plenary to be reflected so that they appear in the Report.

T. BESTER (South Africa)

I must just start off as well by expressing our gratitude for the excellent leadership of the Chair in the Drafting Committee.

I would like to limit my comments to the document currently under our attention, which is the language policy. For the benefit of Members of Council and Observers, this document, when first tabled, was very briefly discussed by the Drafting Committee as not being an accurate reflection in its current form. We then requested the Secretariat to review that document with inputs from three Members of the Drafting Committee. I think they were France, Cuba and Qatar.

Later that evening, we were given a second draft of that document, and I think there may have been an error in the revision we have in front of us this morning because one of the concerns is related to the amendment expressed by one of our colleagues this morning, and that is in relation to the budget. At the end of paragraph 3, if I am correct, the Drafting Committee agreed to add the words " ... within the budgetary limits of the Organization." So, that last sentence would then read: "In addition to maintaining adequate qualitative standards, improvements to equitable translation and publication of documents was also an important factor to bear in mind, within the budgetary limits of the Organization.". This sentence was a matter of some debate and it is the result of the compromise reached within the Drafting Committee.

On the next paragraph, there was some debate on which specific activities should be mentioned and it was felt that the sentence continuing " ... and activities of self-evident geographic interest ... "would include" ... aspects of the Desert Locust ... " because parts of that Programme are funded from extra-budgetary resources. However, we could not introduce that concept into this Report because it did not form part of the debate of Council. Therefore, we concurred that this phrase would adequately cover aspects that are self-evident to geographical areas.

I hope that this serves to bring some clarity to the points raised, and I must again express our gratitude for the excellent leadership shown by the Chairman in marrying these differences.

Il-ho CHO (Korea, Republic of)

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Drafting Committee for this great effort to prepare the excellent draft Report of this Council.

However, I would like to remind you that, concerning world food security, especially that of net importing countries, the next WTO round may be the single largest exogenous factor to influence food security and the number of undernourished people in the developing world.

In this light, many countries, including our delegation, have stressed through various committee meetings, including this session, that FAO should play a vigorous support role for world food security issues, both in the next WTO negotiations and in the preparations for those negotiations, as described in paragraph 36 of CL 116/6.

Therefore, I would like to ask that this supporting role of FAO in the next WTO negotiations should be reflected in the Report of the 116th Session of Council.

I would like to suggest one new paragraph, saying "Council restressed that FAO should also play its vigorous support role for food security issues in the next WTO negotiations". This should be added in this Report at the end of paragraph 2 g) of page 3 of REP/8.

Dietrich LINCKE (Germany)

Speaking on behalf of the European Community and its Member States, I want to confirm once more that the proposal made by the Chair to accept the text *en bloc* seems to us to be the most appropriate method.

I also want to add that the common sense of the statement of the Cuban Ambassador was really something to be taken into account in this debate.

Furthermore, I want to thank the Chairperson for the excellent work she has done and all the Members of the Drafting Committee.

We are now getting into a stage of the debate where it looks as if we have an ambition to become the Drafting Committee itself. We should really consider whether these additional suggestions are not actually clarifications on behalf of some countries in order to express their view, without necessarily having to alter the text of the Report.

I must say that, within the European Community, we had quite a few proposals for changes which we swallowed down because we had hoped that this excellent work by the Drafting Committee would be considered as the best possible compromise for all. I very seriously urge all the Members of the Council not to enter into, sometimes very tiny, details which will delay the work. Finally there will be confusion because of lack of time and what will come out will be worse, much worse, than the text we have in front of us.

I make an appeal to all to consider their statements as clarifications, but still make an effort to accept the text *en bloc*.

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

I shall be very brief. I have a couple of comments to make.

First of all, we would like to support the comments and proposals made by the representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with respect to the language policy in REP/11.

In REP/12, with respect to the venue of the Twelfth World Forestry Congress, in the Arabic text in paragraph 3, in the second-to-last line, it says "Canada expressed appreciation to the Organization for having been chosen ...". This affects only the Arabic text.

Fakhr Eddine ES-SAAIDI (Maroc) (Langue originale arabe)

Nous voulons saluer les efforts du Comité de rédaction pour nous soumettre et nous préparer ce projet de rapport. Nous voudrions également appuyer la proposition d'approbation en bloc de ce projet de rapport, mais le REP/13, paragraphe 5, pourrait introduire un malentendu entre les fonctions du Conseil et celles du Directeur général, parce que nous parlons d'"approbation" en langue arabe, alors que nous voulons dire ici "consultation", qui devrait être menée par le Directeur général de l'Organisation avec les pays candidats. En français, c'est bien "consultation". Le terme "confirmation" dans le texte français n'a pas du tout la même signification. Nous remercions donc le Comité de rédaction pour tout ce qu'il a fait.

Mohammad Saeed NOURI-NAEENI (Iran, Islamic Republic of)

Firstly, I would like to join others who commended the high leadership and preparational ability of Madame Chair of the Drafting Committee. As a Member of the Drafting Committee, we witnessed a highly agreeable leadership. We thank the Government of India and Mrs Gangadharan in person.

Secondly, I would like to remind all our colleagues that if we open the Report for discussion, we may find that it will not be to our favour at the end because some proposals may be faced with counter-proposals.

Finally, we might end up with something that none of us are as happy with as we are with the present text.

In addition, I fully associate myself with the statement of the Ambassador of Cuba in that although some improvement indeed may be found in the new proposal, we fully support the adoption of the Report *en bloc*.

Lyall W. SMALL (Barbados)

I entirely endorse the very wise comments that have been made by Cuba and by the distinguished Representative of Germany in that the Council should adopt the very excellent work that has been carried out by the Drafting Committee, and accept the Report *en bloc*.

I consider that if we continue in the way that we have been doing so far, would take an extremely long time to get any sort of consensus. We are now acting as a Drafting Committee. I think that the Report itself adequately reflects the debate in the Council over the past few days. We should accept it *en bloc*.

Suharyo HUSEN (Indonesia)

First of all, on behalf of my delegation, I would like to join other Members of this Council in thanking and appreciating the Secretariat for assisting the Drafting Committee in its work.

Furthermore, my delegation would also like to thank and congratulate the Drafting Committee for its excellent work, and for producing a satisfactory report.

The Indonesian delegation would like to support the statements made by the distinguished delegates of Thailand, Germany and other speakers, to adopt the Report *en bloc*.

Mrs Mariann KÓVACS (Hungary)

I would just like to support the delegations of Canada, Cuba, Thailand and especially Germany on behalf of the European Community and its Member States, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Indonesia. The European Region is ready to accept and adopt the Report *en bloc*.

Luigi M. FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy)

I would also like to congratulate the Drafting Committee and the Chair, and I sincerely mean this. I would therefore support Germany, the Islamic Republic of Iran and all the other speakers starting from the Cuban Ambassador in that the text is very good. Due to my old age and much drafting experience over my long professional life, I can confirm that once you open the box, it is difficult to come up with a better result. Therefore, I'd like to reiterate the comment I made last year, that everybody's points of view will be reflected in the verbatim.

I will also have something to say after the approval of the text. Please accept the text as it is on behalf of all of us in order to avoid starting off again on hours of discussions and repeating what has already been said at the Drafting Committee.

Bandar AL-SHALHOOB (Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of) (Original language Arabic)

We, as the Near East Group, said that we were quite prepared to adopt this Report *en bloc* as you yourself desired. However, since this document has been presented to the Council for the first time this morning, and as pointed out by the Representative of South Africa, it was not debated thoroughly enough. The Drafting Committee comments are not really of major importance. I can remember the Director-General presenting a conclusion and summary of the debate on the matter. I would have liked him to have been here during the course of the debate.

I just wanted the Council to study the matter again. We insist on the principle of equality for all languages and I am quite prepared, on behalf of the Regional Group I represent, to accept the

proposal made by South Africa making a reference to “within the budgetary limits”, that is, within any budgetary limits adopted by the Organization.

T. BESTER (South Africa)

Maybe something was lost in the translation; my point was not that this issue had not been debated. It was very extensively debated, and as a country that knows the impacts of multi-lingualism -- South Africa, in fact, has 11 official languages and we are very much committed to multi-lingualism -- we realize that there are budgetary constraints. In the debate that we had at the Drafting Committee, a compromise was reached in which we used specific terms in order to cover the needs of Members in specific regions. Had we been more specific, we would have run the risk of not reflecting accurately the debate on the floor.

I thank the Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for supporting this. We would appeal to Council to accept this Report as it is *en bloc*, knowing that the various Representatives of countries and their Regions put a lot of work into coming to an acceptable compromise that would reflect the concerns of the various groups.

Yohannes TENSUE (Eritrea)

I would like to congratulate the Drafting Committee under the leadership of the distinguished delegate of India.

The Report is well-balanced and carefully worded. In her wise wording, instead of saying ignorance is the enemy of the good, in order to please she gave it a balance and said that perfection is the enemy of the good. This shows how carefully the wording and interests of others are wisely looked at in the Report.

I support the proposal made by those groups which have supported adopting the Report *en bloc*.

Mrs Neela GANGADHARAN (Chairperson, Drafting Committee)

I thank all the Members who spoke and all those Members who did not -- and I hope they have silently approved the Report -- for the exceedingly kind words and sentiments towards the Drafting Committee Members and myself, and the Secretariat who spared no efforts, as I said in my introduction, to reflect as much as we could the aspirations of all the Members. We have tried very hard and, as I said, we did it in an atmosphere of very reasoned and pleasant interventions from the Members of the Drafting Committee. I am happy that some of the people have mentioned that there is a balance in the Report.

I would like to say something about the language policy report. All of us here may remember that this was an item on which there was near unanimity and that was that there should be active and very specific efforts towards maintaining the language equality in FAO. As South Africa very correctly pointed out, in fact we made special efforts towards making the Report truly reflect Council's debate. In fact, we had the Representatives of the Regional Groups sit down with the Secretariat, redraft the entire Draft Report and, once it was ready, we then approved it with all the amendments.

I fully agree with the point raised by South Africa, in terms of the completion of the sentence of paragraph 3, that there is something missing which was agreed upon. I would appeal to the Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that, if he is agreeable to its inclusion, then we could adopt that Report as it is because we had taken care of all the inputs from his Region and other Regions. His Region was very active and they gave, in fact, a lot of inputs to the paper which were included. The list of items in paragraph 5 is only an illustrative list on some kind of priority, but there again we thought that “self evident geographical interest” would cover a lot of areas.

I would appeal to your goodness to agree to the amendment, or correction, made by South Africa and accept the proposal.

With regard to other minor issues raised by some countries, in terms of drafting errors in the French language text, we will definitely carry out the corrections.

Canada raised an issue about the word "henceforth" in the document REP/3. I am told by Mr Zenny that henceforth means immediately.

CHAIRMAN

I would now suggest that we adopt the Draft Report *en bloc*, on the understanding that all the clarifications made by Members will appear in the Verbatim Records.

Do I have your agreement on this?

Draft Reports, Parts I – XV, approved

Les projets de rapport – Parties I – XV, sont approuvés

Los proyectos de informe, Parte I - XV, son aprobados

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Luigi M. FONTANA -GIUSTI (Italy)

As I said before, I just have a brief comment addressed mainly to the Secretariat.

I am referring to REP/2, paragraph 6. Apart from the drafting, on which I could have some minor reservations, I recommended to the Secretariat to better reflect, in Version 4.0 of the Strategic Framework, the idea of the Alliance for Agricultural Development. I repeat that because, as a matter of fact, it would be strange as I am going to pursue the text of the Resolution as I have announced in my intervention of Monday. If the General Conference approves -- and I will endeavour to realize it with friendly and like-minded countries -- the Resolution on the Alliance, and there would be no reference to it on the Strategic Framework. I refer to paragraph 101, or any other, in that the concept should be developed with reference to the Alliance because if, in the next Conference, we are unable to draft the Resolution, we will pursue it in the next General Conference. I think, therefore, that it will be a strange situation in which you have a Resolution for the General Conference, and you have no reference in the Strategic Framework that covers the next 15 years.

I hope the Secretariat will take note of that.

CHAIRMAN

Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I should now like to invite the Director-General to address the Council.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

I would just like to express my appreciation for the excellent work that has been done here, in guiding us on the different activities that the Organization is to undertake. In particular, the guidance for the preparation of the Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium, the different comments made on various aspects of the activities based on the current world food situation and the future prospects, the different sectorial issues taken up in forestry, fisheries, agriculture, genetic resources, the different requirements identified for Small Island Developing States and, in particular, the priorities that are of concern to the membership will be taken into consideration in preparing proposals for your consideration at the Conference.

I must, however, underline that we still face difficult times, because we are being asked to do more and more with less, and the opportunities of savings that we had during the first two biennia have been exhausted. Therefore, we are really coming to the moment of truth, where we have to make difficult decisions.

The Secretariat as usual will give its opinion, will advise, but in the end the Secretariat will, in all loyalty, implement whatever decision you adopt. We are facing great challenges of a new

millennium, great challenges of a century ending. Unfortunately, the current world situation is not the one envisaged by the founding fathers of the Organization, who created it to ensure that people would not go home hungry. Yet, every night we have 800 million people around the world who go to bed without having the necessary resources and the necessary food to meet their needs.

I am sure you will keep this in mind when times of decision will come.

Again, thank you very much for your cooperation, for your support, for your guidance. I wish you a safe journey back home, with the hope that we will all meet together at the Council and the Conference in November.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRMAN

Thank you Director-General. It has been indeed a very intense Session of the Council where complex and difficult issues have had to be addressed. I should like to thank all delegates for the collaboration and assistance they have provided to this Chair, and all the members of the Secretariat for their unfailing support.

The Council is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 11:15 hours

La séance est levée à 11.15 h

Se levanta la sesión a las 11.15 horas