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**REPORT OF THE
SIXTH REGIONAL CONFERENCE
FOR EUROPE**

St. Julian's, Malta, 28-31 October 1968



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Reports of previous regional conferences for Europe are as follows:

1. Pre-Conference Regional Meeting, Rome, 10-15 October 1949
2. Conference for Europe, Rome, 10-15 October 1960
3. Third Regional Conference for Europe, Rome, 8-13 October 1962
4. Fourth Regional Conference for Europe, Salzburg, Austria, 26-31 October 1964
5. Fifth Regional Conference for Europe, Seville, Spain, 5-11 October 1966

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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Rome, 1968

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INTRODUCTION

ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE

1. The Sixth FAO Regional Conference for Europe was held in St. Julian's, Malta, from 28-31 October 1968, at the kind invitation of the Government of Malta. The purpose of the Conference was to discuss, on the one hand, new developments which had taken place during the past two years and which would have their impact on future agricultural policies and, on the other, to examine the activities of the main European regional bodies, other European activities, as well as the joint activities with other UN and associated agencies. The discussion which took place will provide guidance to the Director-General in the formulation of his Programme of Work and Budget for the biennium 1970/71.

2. The Conference was attended by delegations from the following 24 Member Nations of the European Region:

Austria	Malta
Belgium	Netherlands
Bulgaria	Norway
Denmark	Poland
Finland	Portugal
France	Romania
Germany, Fed. Rep. of	Spain
Greece	Sweden
Hungary	Switzerland
Ireland	Turkey
Israel	United Kingdom
Italy	Yugoslavia.

3. The Permanent Observer of the Holy See was also present at the Conference.

4. In addition, the following Member Nations of the Organization from other regions sent observers to the Conference:

Algeria
Central African Republic
Congo, Democratic Republic of the
United States of America.

5. Representatives of the following Organizations and Agencies belonging to the United Nations system were present at the Conference:

United Nations
United Nations Development Programme
World Health Organization
World Meteorological Organization
World Food Programme.

6. The European Commission on Agriculture, one of the regional bodies of FAO, was represented by its Chairman. The European Forestry Commission, the European Inland Fisheries Advisory Commission and the General Fisheries Council of the Mediterranean were represented by their Secretaries.

7. Observers from the following international governmental organizations attended the Conference:

Council of Europe
Commission of the European Economic Community (EEC)

International Commission of Agricultural and Food Industries (ICAI)
Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

8. Observers from the following non-governmental organizations attended the Conference:

European Confederation of Agriculture (CEA)
International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP).

9. The list of participants, including delegates, representatives, observers, as well as FAO staff in attendance and of the officers of the Conference, is attached to the report as Annex I.

OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

10. The Deputy Director-General, in opening the Conference on behalf of the Director-General, Mr. A.H. Boerma, greeted His Excellency the Governor-General of Malta, Sir Maurice Dorman, His Excellency the Prime Minister, Dr. Giorgio Borg Olivier, His Grace the Archbishop of Malta, Monsignor Michael Gonzi, His Excellency the Minister of Trade, Industry and Agriculture, Dr. Joseph Spiteri, the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Government of Malta, as well as the numerous dignitaries of the Maltese Government assembled for the opening ceremony. The Deputy Director-General also extended his sincere thanks to the Government of Malta for the kind invitation and for the generous hospitality offered.

11. The Prime Minister, Dr. Borg Olivier, welcomed the participants to the Sixth FAO Regional Conference for Europe in the Island of Malta and thanked FAO for the aid it had given to Maltese agriculture where land was scarce, water supplies short and soil fertility low.

12. The Minister of Trade, Industry and Agriculture, Dr. Spiteri, reminded the delegates of the long tradition of Maltese agriculture and informed the Conference about the recent achievements not only in the field of agriculture but also in the industrialization of the Island and the development of tourism. He felt that experience gained in other countries would help to find a solution to the problems of the Island of Malta but also the achievements could throw some light on how problems were faced by a developing European country.

13. The Minister of Trade, Industry and Agriculture of Malta, Dr. J. Spiteri, was elected Chairman of the Conference. Professor D. Davidescu, Head of the Delegation of Romania, and Mr. J. Kleppe, Head of the Delegation of Norway, were elected Vice-Chairmen.

14. The Conference adopted the following agenda:

- 1) European Agricultural Outlook:
 - a) The Place of Agriculture in a Developed Continent - an Evaluation of Trends and Prospects;
 - b) Indicative World Plan.
- 2) Activities of FAO's European Regional Bodies:
 - a) European Commission on Agriculture;
 - b) European Forestry Commission;
 - c) European Inland Fisheries Advisory Commission and the General Fisheries Council of the Mediterranean;

- d) European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease.
- 3) Other European activities of FAO:
 - a) Field Programmes in Europe;
 - b) FAO/Industry Cooperative Programme;
 - c) Freedom from Hunger Campaign's European work;
 - d) Co-operation with the bilateral programmes of European countries;
 - e) FAO's Documentation Centre - its work with the different European bodies.
- 4) Joint European activities with other UN and associated agencies:
 - a) World Food Programme;
 - b) ECE Committee on Agricultural Problems;
 - c) FAO/ECE/Conference of European Statisticians Study Group on Food and Agriculture Statistics in Europe;
 - d) ECE Timber Committee;
 - e) Joint FAO/IAEA Division of Atomic Energy in Agriculture;
 - f) FAO/IBRD Cooperative Programme.
- 5) Future of the European Regional Conference.
- 6) Adoption of the report.
- 7) Closing of the Conference.

CLOSING OF THE CONFERENCE

15. At the closing session the Conference adopted the text of the report in its present form.

16. Dr. J. Spiteri, Minister of Trade, Industry and Agriculture of Malta, Chairman of the Conference, expressed his thanks to the delegates and observers for their collaboration which had made it possible that in a relatively short period of 3½ days the well-filled agenda of the Conference could be terminated. He thanked also the Deputy Director-General for the most stimulating statement with which he had opened the Conference, the interest in which had been manifested by the recurrence of its different points throughout the discussions. In addition, he thanked the two Vice-Chairmen for assisting him in conducting the business of the Conference.

17. In the opinion of the Chairman, the Conference had attained its purpose as government delegates had been able to exchange their ideas about policy matters regarding European agriculture and received at the same time a good insight into the different activities of FAO in the European Region. He felt that the Conference should be grateful to the Director-General for having convened it at the request of a number of interested Member Nations and that such conferences should continue to be organized in the future.

18. On behalf of the participants, Mr. H.J. Kristensen, Delegate of Denmark, supported by several other delegates, expressed thanks to the Chairman for the able manner in which he had conducted the Conference and guided the debates. He also thanked the Government of Malta for the hospitality given to the Conference, for the excellent arrangements made and asked Dr. Spiteri to convey the appreciation of the participants to all Members of the Organizing Committee, the Secretariat and the interpreters.

19. Mr. P. Lamartine Yates, on behalf of the Director-General, expressed the gratitude of FAO to the Government of Malta for all the help FAO had received in organizing the Conference and he thanked the Delegates for the most useful contributions they had made to the different points of the Agenda which would be of valuable guidance to the future work of the Organization.

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

20. The Deputy Director-General, having conveyed the Director-General's greetings to the Conference, quoted briefly from the Director-General's recent analysis of the world food situation. The 1967 harvests had been generally good. Food production in the world as a whole was about three per cent greater than the year before. Still more important, this increase occurred mainly in the developing countries where the rise was no less than six per cent. It made good much of the loss in food production per head in the two disastrous harvests of 1965 and 1966. Not since 1956, more than a decade ago, had there been a comparable year-to-year advance. According to the limited information so far available, food production was continuing to climb in 1968 in spite of some setbacks due to weather. Reasons for hopefulness were that many governments were now putting greater emphasis on agriculture in their planning and investment. The cumulative effect of long years of development efforts seemed at last to be bearing fruit. However, it should be emphasized that these recent gains were precarious: they would not continue automatically. If Member Nations relaxed their efforts, if they failed to deploy their resources in the most effective ways, then they would soon find themselves back in the old situation.

21. The Deputy Director-General then turned to FAO's activities in Europe where he said the problem was one of deploying limited resources in the most effective possible way. FAO could not give as much to Europe as she would like; everyone agreed that the claims of the much poorer countries of the world had a certain priority. The Director-General had no intention of neglecting Europe or of diminishing the volume of resources devoted to servicing European governments and peoples.

22. Arrangements for the Director-General's policy representation in Europe had been fully taken care of in the Re-organization Plan. The Regional Representative stood in the centre of these arrangements. The role of the Regional Representative was to assist in developing FAO's European policy in accordance with the needs of the changing situation, to keep the Director-General advised of the desires and requests of governments and to work out recommendations for meeting those requests in the most efficient manner within the limits of available resources. Under the Re-organization Plan an Area Service had been created for Europe which would not only embrace all the activities hitherto carried out by the Regional Representative's Deputy but, in addition, would also be the focal point for all European field operations, UNDP and other, and for relations between FAO and the bilateral agricultural aid programmes of European countries.

23. A primary objective of FAO's European policy, Mr. Wells said, was to bring the agricultural scientists, technicians and administrative officers of Member Governments together, for their mutual advantage, establishing contacts and exchanges of experience. The increase in FAO's European membership in recent years had augmented this demand for scientific and technical information. However, the assembly and transfer of information satisfied only part of the needs felt by the less agriculturally advanced countries of Europe. Hence the desire for meetings. Scientists working in a certain discipline benefited greatly from meeting scientists working in the same discipline in another country; and not only scientists in universities and institutes but equally the technical officers working in government ministries. In many cases what was discussed and tried out in Europe, especially in the less industrialized countries of the European Region, could be used with appropriate modifications by developing countries elsewhere. In this sense Europe was a scientific, social and institutional laboratory conducting research and acquiring experiences for the rest of the world.

24. FAO's Regular Programme activities in Europe were carried out largely through the permanent technical Commissions in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and foot-and-mouth disease control, each with their subsidiary bodies, as well as through the joint

FAO/ECE Secretariat servicing the ECE Agriculture and Timber Committees. These bodies should always bear in mind the views expressed at the FAO Conference and in this Regional Conference. For example, the Fourteenth Session of the Conference strongly recommended a reduction in the number of meetings and the last Regional Conference for Europe recommended that working parties should be abolished when their programmes and usefulness came to an end. In conformity with these recommendations the European Commission on Agriculture and the European Forestry Commission had terminated a number of their subsidiary bodies; also to prevent duplication and reduce further the number of meetings, several ad hoc conferences had been organized jointly between the European Commission on Agriculture and ECE's Committee on Agricultural Problems.

25. In respect to the field assistance which FAO gave in Europe under UNDP, UNICEF and other trust funds, fifteen Special Fund projects were being carried out in the Region at the present time and during 1968 Europe would also receive the equivalent of ten man-years of experts and about 27 man-years of fellowships under UNDP/EPTA. If European countries were anxious to have more help from FAO and if the UNDP programmes of assistance to Europe expanded only rather slowly, then other means would have to be found to meet the need. A number of possibilities existed. For instance, the regular work of the Commissions would have to be deliberately oriented than in the past to meeting the needs of the less industrialized countries of the Region. An increased exchange of technical and scientific information did not necessarily involve an increase in the number of meetings organized but could also be achieved by arranging direct contacts. Also for those countries which possessed competent national services in agriculture it was entirely feasible to develop new programmes and projects with only limited external assistance as, for example, occasional visits by FAO staff experts. FAO was going to try out this approach in respect to one or more programmes relating to the expansion of beef production.

26. While the foregoing constituted the broad outline of the Director-General's European policy, however, a regional policy could not be considered in isolation, it had to be related to an overall strategy for agricultural development and to the five priority areas of activity which the Director-General had elaborated in his recent statement to the Council,

- (a) In the European Region a number of successes had already been achieved with high-yielding varieties of cereals, for example with Russian wheat in Bulgaria and with Mexipack wheat in Turkey. On the other hand, it could be doubted whether much progress had been made in southern Europe with fodder crops and pasture grasses;
- (b) In respect to protein, although there might not be starvation in Europe there was a growing shortage of meat in most of the southern and eastern countries of the region. This called for a combined operation, including attention to fodder crops and pasture, to animal improvement, to slaughter-houses and to modern marketing methods;
- (c) Waste was not as great a problem in Europe as it was in some other parts of the world, nevertheless there were still several countries where the lack of modern marketing equipment, particularly refrigeration, greatly reduced the outlets for such products as milk, fish, fruit and vegetables;
- (d) When it came to investment in human development, there were already some activities in the European programme, for example, the Working Party on Home Economics and the Working Party on Rural Sociological Problems;
- (e) The fifth of the Director-General's policy objectives, namely, the saving of foreign exchange, could be achieved by an expansion of meat production in a number of southern and eastern European countries. Nearly every European country had ambitions to expand agricultural exports and some were making substantial investments in irrigation and fertilizer production with this end in view.

27. The Deputy Director-General recognized that he had not covered the whole of FAO's European programme or perhaps more precisely, Europe's interest in the whole of FAO's programme. Very little had been said about the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease or the European Forestry Commission (which worked in close co-operation with ECE's Timber Committee), both of which seemed to be working quite satisfactorily. FAO's European Members did have a direct interest in the Indicative World Plan. This was, of course, equally true of the Codex Alimentarius activities and the work of the Committees on Commodity Problems and on Fisheries, including active participation in the various working groups and commissions arising from these two Committees.

28. Lastly, he drew attention to the Director-General's desire to find ways of FAO and the bilateral programmes working more closely together. Excellent working relations had been developed over the last two or three years with several of the European bilateral assistance programmes. It was hoped that these activities, which had a reciprocal value to both FAO and the bilateral programme, could be further expanded.

29. At the request of the Conference, the full text of the statement of the Deputy Director-General is to be found as Annex II of this report.

30. The Permanent Observer of the Holy See to FAO extended the greetings from His Holiness Pope Paul VI to the Conference and stressed the importance of the five areas of concentration of the FAO Action Programme for the well-being of the peoples of the world. The Observer of the Holy See felt that all people of good will need to have an understanding of others. Older institutions must become conscious of change, of new viewpoints, of new approaches, of new modes of action. For instance, ideas of land ownership, which have changed many times over the centuries, are changing again today; in some parts of the world land reform, the dividing up of large estates into small units is considered necessary, in other parts the integration of small farms into large units co-operatively owned and managed. Another example is the increase in land values resulting from urbanization and industrialization; how far should the increment go to the owner of the land and how far to society? There needs to be mutual understanding and tolerance of different solutions to these problems in different places.

31. The Representative of the United Nations conveyed to the Conference the greetings of the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe who wished to record his satisfaction at the continuing fruitful collaboration between the Commission and FAO in regard to agriculture and forest products. The activities of the two joint Divisions and the jointly convened special ad hoc conferences, as for instance recently on Meat and Livestock Marketing, provided a practical example of integration of the agencies' work programmes.

EUROPEAN AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK

(a) The Place of Agriculture in a Developed Continent

32. The Conference had before it a discussion paper entitled "Problems Ahead: A Brief Review of Trends and Tendencies in European Agriculture" (ERC : 68/4), prepared by Mr. H. Jacoby, formerly Director of the FAO/ECE Agriculture Division (Geneva), which provoked wide-ranging discussion.

33. Taking up the principal points in the paper many delegates defined the central problem as being how to integrate agriculture into today's economy. For the foreseeable future the family farm would continue to be the basic production unit in most countries of western Europe, but farms would get larger and the labour force would continue to decline. Even if 10 to 15 years hence the average farm were twice as big as today it would still be far below the optimum required by modern technology. Up

till now co-operation has stopped at the farm gate, as one delegation put it, but farmers could help themselves by co-operative production in groups and where appropriate through contract farming and horizontal and vertical integration, although the difficulty was stressed of the large amount of capital needed to equip a modern farm. Greater specialization would also bring some of the economies of scale. Up-to-date management techniques could and must be applied to farming and therefore training courses in farm management should be much more widespread.

34. Many delegations referred to the complex of problems centred upon price and income support and the emergent surpluses. When farmers were recommended to improve their incomes by reducing their production costs they often increased their output, even more so because with rising inputs a larger gross product was necessary to improve the level of income. According to some delegations farmers were being squeezed between the input industries on one side and the increasingly exacting demands of the processing industries on the other. Independence was becoming inter-dependence and decision-making was partly transferred elsewhere. Many farmers had difficulties in adapting to the new situation and were in danger of becoming what one delegation called "outcasts of the affluent society" unless they fully adopted modern technology. It was accepted, however, that in a time of unstable prices and overloaded markets, efficiency alone would not provide the answers to farmers' problems. Because living standards were sometimes bad many people regarded farming as an outdated occupation, the village disintegrated as a social unit but the advent of new employment opportunities in rural areas created new hope for those leaving the land. Much more must be done to train the surplus farm people for work in industry and trades. Despite all the difficulties, more than one delegation declared that the family farm well equipped and well organized would remain competitive.

35. Almost all delegations noted that food production in Europe was increasing faster than consumption, although in southern and eastern Europe the consumption of several products was still increasing and elsewhere certain quality products would always find a market. This disequilibrium, as experience showed, could not be resolved solely by the operation of price mechanism but a variety of measures must be introduced, for example, a combination of price policies and quantitative limitation or taking land out of production or providing inducements to farmers to give up their farms, or donating larger quantities to food aid. Some delegations reported that their governments had ceased to give support to inefficient farming and instead were helping to create larger economically viable farms.

36. The opportunities for finding export markets were increasingly restricted. Although, as one delegation mentioned, the world might be suffering from a protein gap many countries producing dairy products, livestock and meat for export had been unable to find markets. The production plans of a number of European exporting countries suggested that these difficulties would increase during the next few years for a wide range of products.

37. The discussion paper's analysis of the problems of the co-operative form of agriculture was considered by several delegations and particularly from countries with centrally planned economies, to be only partially valid. While it was true that there was at present an excess of labour on co-operative farms, this was a temporary situation pending an increase in the labour requirements of industry. Large farms had proved their worth because they facilitated a much more rapid application of modern technology. In the socialist countries the share of national investment allotted to agriculture had in recent years been notably increased; furthermore, food processing industries were being established in relation to co-operative farms to utilize local labour. With better processing facilities and improved distribution the consumption of the more higher biological value food stuffs would continue to increase.

38. The discussion of the paper could be summarized by referring to the great diversity of agricultural situation in the different parts of Europe both in respect to natural environment and to social and economic institutions. Different solutions

were appropriate in different circumstances but countries could learn from another and exchanges of views on these basic questions were a valuable feature of the European Regional Conference.

39. During the discussion comments were also made on the statement of the Deputy Director-General and in particular on the role of FAO in assisting European governments with their agricultural problems. The Conference noted the contrasting circumstances of the countries of the region, with agriculture at many different levels of technical advancement, with differing social and economic systems and with different forms of farm organization. For these reasons it felt that FAO's European policy must be a flexible one but it agreed that chief among the regional policy objectives must be the transfer and exchange of technical information and endorsed the Deputy Director-General's view that FAO could intensify its activities in this field in several ways. The Conference felt that both in regional programme activities and in field operations FAO should always keep in mind the specific needs of the less industrialized countries of the region.

40. FAO's programme for the European region must provide opportunities for technicians from the various countries to have more frequent contacts with one another so that by widening their experience they could improve the quality of their national services. To this end many kinds of activity were considered valuable: field programmes, technical meetings, staff missions, studies by rapporteurs, contacts between institutes and so on. While repeating the wishes of the Fourteenth Session of the Conference that the number of meetings be limited and if possible reduced, delegations felt that FAO's European programme taken as a whole must not be diminished.

41. However, recognizing that FAO's resources are limited and that it cannot undertake to meet all requests, the Conference emphasized that the European programme should henceforth be oriented more specifically to the needs of the less industrialized countries of the region. This was the more desirable inasmuch as programmes designed for and in these countries would also benefit, directly or indirectly, developing countries in other continents. As the Deputy Director-General said, "in this sense Europe is a scientific, social and institutional laboratory conducting research and acquiring experience for the rest of the world".

(b) Indicative World Plan for Agricultural Development

42. The Conference received a progress report on the preparation of the Indicative World Plan. The provisional regional studies on the Near East, Asia and the Far East, Africa South of the Sahara and South America had been completed. The main policy issues and conclusions of each regional study were being discussed at the appropriate regional conferences this year. Meanwhile work was under way on a world trade framework, which would bring into a common form the relationship between the problems and policies of all regions, including Europe.

43. Several delegations expressed appreciation of the potential value of the IWP, which was of fundamental importance to the work of FAO and should be of value to both developing and developed countries.

44. The question was raised as to how Europe would be covered in the IWP world document and some regret was expressed that Europe had not been the subject of a regional study. A question was also raised as to whether the IWP dealt with agriculture as part of the wider economy.

45. In reply to the discussion, the Deputy Director-General assured the Conference that from the beginning the work on the IWP had been placed within a wider economic frame and referred to the arrangements which had been worked out between FAO and the UN for using the IWP as the agricultural contribution to the plans for the Second Development Decade. The world trade framework would take account of European problems and policies, as well as those of the developed regions as an integral part of the Indicative World Plan.

46. The collaboration of the OECD secretariat with FAO in preparing an extensive amount of material for the IWP was highly appreciated.

ACTIVITIES OF FAO'S EUROPEAN REGIONAL BODIES

(a) European Commission on Agriculture

47. The Conference considered the report on the activities of the Commission since the Seville Conference, including the Report on the Fifteenth Session of the Commission held in May 1967 in Rome, Italy, and the Chairman of the Commission informed the Conference about the main issues discussed at the Sixteenth Session of the Commission held in Rome, Italy, 23-26 October 1968.

48. The Chairman of the Commission reported that the majority of members were in favour of maintaining the Commission and its activities. Therefore the Executive Committee had been requested to draw up a programme of (a) long-term projects, limited however to a four- or five-years period, to be dealt with in working parties with restricted terms of reference or by rapporteurs or consultants or even by studies to be carried out by governments; (b) programmes of a pragmatic character to be dealt with by ad hoc conferences and consultations, small groups of experts, or short-term missions. Meetings should be properly prepared and adequate provisions made in FAO's biennial budget.

49. The Conference noted that the Commission had recommended to the Director-General (a) to maintain the Working Parties on Agrarian Structure, Home Economics, Rural Sociological Problems, and Water Resources and Irrigation; (b) to consider the Working Party on Soil Classification and Survey as a project which should terminate its work with the finalization of the Soil Map of Europe at a scale of 1:1 000 000 and then be dissolved; (c) to abolish the Working Party on Land Use but continue certain parts of its work through the secretariat and by means of an ad hoc Conference on the Planning of Rural Areas to be held in August 1969 in Switzerland.

50. The Deputy Director-General reminded the Conference of the instructions given by the Fourteenth FAO Conference and by the Council to review critically the activities of all the statutory bodies of the Organization with a view to reducing their number, as well as to reducing the number of meetings. Certainly the special situation of Europe where the work is mainly done through meetings should be duly taken into consideration.

51. Several delegations mentioned the great importance their governments attach to FAO's work in the European Region, its role to study technical matters and to give advice on request. The Commission, jointly with the ECE Committee on Agricultural Problems, should serve as a catalyser of technical activities in agriculture in Europe and should establish an integrated programme which would facilitate co-operation with other European bodies active in the same field in order to avoid duplication and over-lapping. It was felt that collaboration with OECD was satisfactory and duplication is largely avoided. The important co-ordinating role of the Regional Representative was stressed.

52. Some delegations felt that the activities of the Commission, as of the Regional Conference, should be concentrated more and more on the less-industrialized countries of the region and focus on the five points of concentration of the Director-General's Action Programme adopted at the recent session of the Council. There was general agreement that the periodicity of the Commission should be biennial and that evaluation of recent work should be regularly undertaken. The Regional Conference noted the Commission's recommendation to hold its future sessions in non-FAO Conference years. However, some delegations felt that the timing of ECA sessions must be decided in conjunction with decisions about the future of the European Regional Conference itself. (See Paragraph 92).

(b) European Forestry Commission (EFC) and ECE Timber Committee

53. The attention of the Conference was drawn to the conclusions reached at the joint session of the European Forestry Commission and the ECE Timber Committee (Geneva, Switzerland, 7-11 October 1968) and of the seminar held on the same occasion on the subject of "Forestry - Industry Relations". The Conference appreciated the work done, and the methodology used by the FAO/ECE Secretariat in connection with the Interim Review of the "European Timber Trends and Prospects; A New Appraisal, 1960-1975", the main findings of which were the following: Trends in consumption of industrial forest products and in domestic roundwood production in Europe had, in the period 1960-1968, followed very closely those forecast in the study but with regard to trends up to 1975 some revision of earlier estimates was judged necessary, about a 1.5% increase for the consumption but on the other hand some 10% increase in domestic supplies of roundwood. Consequently, the shortfall between Europe's consumption of industrial forest products and domestic supply was expected to worsen more slowly than foreseen. These conclusions were considered to provide valuable information on which forestry, industry and trade policy decisions could be formulated. It was felt, however, that in terms of forestry production cycle, 15 years under conditions in Europe was relatively short, so that an attempt should be made to extend the projections as far as the year 2000.

54. With regard to the conclusions of the seminar on Forestry-Industry Relations, the Conference noted that radical revisions were being made by forest authorities, both state and private, in their approaches to silviculture and management, seeking to apply advances in technology and managerial science. These changes were also considered to affect the programmes of forestry education at all levels, which therefore needed to be adapted to the changing conditions and requirements. It was also recognized that a prerequisite to effective and co-ordinated planning of all phases of the forestry and forest industry sector was a continuous dialogue at the national level between forestry and forest industry, and noted with satisfaction that both the European Forestry Commission and the ECE Timber Committee were determined to devise further opportunities for international exchange of national experiences and co-operation in this area.

55. Satisfaction was expressed on the methods of preparation and implementation of international forestry programmes in Europe, which were considered to correspond to the expressed needs of the region. Some delegations suggested that these methods could well serve as a useful example for other FAO activities in Europe.

56. Some delegations mentioned the role of forestry in the use of marginal lands and in rural industrialization, and one delegation pointed out that industrialization was recognized as a factor causing a change in the attitude of private forest owners towards forestry and consequently in forest policy. The Conference noted with satisfaction that these problems, as well as those linked with recreation, tourism and other amenities which forest areas and woodlands can provide to the community, would be discussed at the joint ECA/EFC ad hoc Conference on the Planning of Rural Areas, in August 1969 in Switzerland.

(c) European Inland Fisheries Advisory Commission (EIFAC) and General Fisheries Council of the Mediterranean (GFCM)

57. The Conference noted that EIFAC is a highly representative body of inland fisheries activities in Europe with its membership of 21 countries. It has three sub-commissions dealing with economic aspects of commercial and sport fisheries, fish food technology, water quality criteria and nature of pollution problems in Europe. The main activities of GFCM are fishery statistics standardization, fish production in brackish waters, pelagic and demersal resources exploitation and utilization and marketing of fishery products. Emphasis in their work is placed on the assistance of less industrialized and developing member countries of the area.

58. One delegation showed concern as to whether sufficient funds would allow EIFAC to carry on its programme of work to schedule. The Deputy Director-General informed the Conference that cuts of approximately five per cent had had to be made in 1968, but that allocations would be slightly increased in 1969, thus permitting normal activity of the Commission.

(d) European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease

59. The activities of the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease in its campaigns against exotic viruses in eastern, south-eastern Europe and Anatolia, were commended by the delegate of Turkey. Attention was called to the continuing necessity of maintaining buffer zones and the need for financial support for this purpose. In this connection it was stressed that a recommendation to this effect was adopted at the Fifth FAO Regional Conference for Europe held in Seville in 1966. The present Conference reaffirmed its continuing interest in the promotion of livestock industries in the developing countries of the region and in the related marketing problems. The need for maintaining vigilance against the spread of exotic viruses was fully supported. The opinion was expressed that these were technical matters which could hardly be discussed at the present Conference. Attention was drawn to the fact that FAO was continuing to provide technical assistance to the Turkish Government and that in specific emergency cases financial assistance could be requested from FAO. Some doubt was expressed as to whether a certain amount of overlapping did not exist between the activities of FAO and OIE. The representative of the World Meteorological Organization informed the Conference of the recent investigations carried out in the United Kingdom on the influence of meteorological factors in the spread of disease. The results of these investigations were to be published shortly.

60. The Conference requested that in future reviews of the activities of the regional bodies information should be given about the financial implications of the work of these Commissions, Working Parties, etc.

OTHER EUROPEAN ACTIVITIES OF FAO

(a) FAO Field Programmes in Europe

61. The Conference took note of the document submitted by the Secretariat giving the details of FAO's field activities in Europe. In the ensuing discussion the Conference pointed to the need for increased activities in the field of olive production in Europe taking account of the fact that this crop was faced by a number of serious technical and economic problems. The Conference also considered that attention should be paid to the possibility of increasing FAO's activities in the field of animal production in southern and eastern Europe.

62. The Conference discussed some of the administrative problems of FAO's aid programmes in Europe and pointed particularly to the need to exercise the greatest care in the choice of experts to be assigned to aid receiving countries, to the importance of the fullest possible integration of aid projects into local administrations, to the need for close and continuous contacts between foreign experts, their counterparts and the national authorities responsible for the project, and to the advisability of making expert reports as explicit as possible to ensure their maximum usefulness to the national authorities. It was also suggested that experts should stay a minimum of three to four years in a country as shorter periods were considered less effective. It was further suggested that the authority of project managers in respect of the purchase of equipment should be increased so as to ensure the timely arrival of the materials needed.

63. The Conference was assured that FAO kept these problems permanently under review and that it was studying several measures for their solution, including also making use of the Documentation Centre in relation to technical reports. The Conference agreed that all these questions required the combined efforts of the national authorities, the field experts and FAO Headquarters. With regard to the length of the periods experts should stay in a country, the Conference recalled that, in accordance with UNDP procedures, countries could formulate their requests in the manner they considered most appropriate in relation to their assistance requirements.

(b) FAO/Industry Cooperative Programme

64. The Conference noted the progress of the FAO/Industry Cooperative Programme's work and supported this attempt to create a stronger link between FAO's operational activities and agro-allied industrial development. This Programme acts as a catalyst for bringing together managerial, technical and financial elements for the development of such industries. The Programme should aim increasingly at forming "package" programmes, in which the government of the host country plays the central role, often adding bilateral and multilateral assistance, and making the cooperation of foreign industry feasible.

65. As to the co-operation with UNIDO, a delegation suggested the creation of a joint FAO/UNIDO division, as is the case with the International Atomic Energy Agency. The Conference noted that the Director-General of FAO and the Executive Director of UNIDO were negotiating a framework of arrangements for complementary action. UNIDO had expressed its interest in working relations on a specific project basis with the FAO/Industry Cooperative Programme, in order to establish appropriate measures to accelerate the pace of the overall industrial development. Some delegations expressed their apprehension with regard to industrialization measures which might be undertaken prematurely in areas where agriculture is still at the subsistence level.

66. The flow of economic and technical information between FAO and industry was being supplemented by a newsletter, the Agro Industry Memo, which aimed at attracting active participation of industry with a view to singling out specific projects. It was suggested that a few copies of this newsletter should be supplied, on request, to Member Governments.

67. The Conference learned that the membership of this Programme was formed by 18 companies at the time the Thirteenth Session of the FAO Conference (1965) approved its establishment. It now numbers 63 multi-national firms. Half of these member companies have their headquarters in European countries. The Programme referred throughout to "industry", and the most important qualification for joining the Programme was a firm's active participation in the development of FAO-related industry in developing countries, including investment participation there.

(c) Freedom from Hunger Campaign

68. The Conference was informed that the FAO Council, during its Fifty-First Session, had accepted the Director-General's proposals for extending FFHC during the Second Development Decade and maintaining the name "FFHC" with local adaptation if and when appropriate. According to the Council's desire, FFHC field action projects would be prepared and supervised by the Development Department, and would be closely related to the five priority areas agreed as the basis for FAO strategy. Special emphasis would be placed upon youth involvement projects, as part of the mobilization of human resources for rural development. The continuity most probably now secured to the FFHC, for the next ten years, would permit the reinforcement of co-operation between the non-governmental organizations, the governments and FAO. Adequate reporting on the on-going FFHC field projects would permit the information and education of public opinion, so that it could in turn support the governmental policy aiming at increasing the assistance provided to the developing world.

69. One delegation pointed out that not only rural youth, but all youth, rural, urban, from school and from university, should be involved in the Campaign. The successful launching of the "Operation International Record" at Mexico City, on 25 October 1968, under the aegis of the French FFHC Committee, was one of the concrete actions for interesting all youth in the FFHC.

(d) Co-operation with the bilateral programmes of European countries

70. The Conference took note of the document submitted by the Secretariat reporting on the arrangements which had been made by FAO for co-operation with bilateral programmes of European countries. In debating the matter, particular attention was paid to the FAO Associate Expert Scheme and the FAO Volunteer Programme, and the Conference expressed its satisfaction with the manner in which these two programmes were progressing.

71. With regard to the first of them, the Conference felt that the Associate Expert Scheme provides an excellent practical background for future employment in FAO's field programmes or with the country bilateral programmes. The Conference welcomed the announcement on the part of Austria that it was studying the Associate Expert Scheme with a view to joining it.

72. As far as volunteers were concerned, the Conference welcomed the offer of the United Kingdom to increase its co-operation with FAO on this programme, particularly as regards the establishment of national volunteer programmes in developing countries and the co-operation between national and international volunteers on FAO's projects.

73. The Conference gave its support to the training and fellowship programmes of FAO. It considered that these were among the important development activities and requested that FAO should investigate all possibilities to increase them further and to provide adequate funds for their functioning. The Conference also felt that it was necessary to study further the question of the level of training which associate experts should be required to have. It was reiterated that there was need for a better definition of the term "university degree" as well as for a comparative study of the degrees granted in different countries. The level of training of associate experts and of volunteers as well as their employment after they had completed their assignment was raised and it was felt that more former volunteers should be employed in FAO's field programmes. The Conference realized FAO's limitations with regard to the employment of middle-level technicians in development work but, considering the importance of this gap, felt that the matter required further study.

74. The Conference touched upon the question of the relative distribution of development assistance between bilateral and multilateral aid programmes. It felt that there was considerable scope for increasing the proportion devoted to multilateral assistance and welcomed the initiative of a number of European countries which were studying this problem with a view to channelling an increased part of their aid to multilateral programmes. The Conference took note with satisfaction of the intention of the Federal Republic of Germany to initiate discussions with FAO on the possibility of harmonizing its foreign technical aid with that of the FAO. The Conference suggested that the practical problems of technical aid required full periodical discussion both among donor as well as between these and recipient countries. It requested that this issue should be included in the agenda of relevant meetings or conferences which are to be held in the future.

(e) Documentation Centre

75. The Conference expressed satisfaction with the work of FAO's Documentation Centre and with the progress achieved. Several delegations complimented the Centre on the expeditious way in which the Special Indexes had been prepared and distributed. One delegation referred to the need for increased quantities of the Documentation Centre's publications being made available to Member Governments for free distribution among

universities and specialized institutes concerned with agriculture, forestry and fishery.

76. The Conference noted that the Question/Answer Service provided by the Documentation Centre dealt at present with about 100 questions a week and that this number was steadily rising.

77. The Conference was informed of the Documentation Centre's active co-operation with other national and international bodies in identifying and solving the problems of co-ordination in regard to matters that fall in the category of "systems compatibility".

78. The Conference noted FAO's action in assisting Member Governments in establishing national and regional documentation centres on agriculture, including forestry and fisheries, and its attention was also called to the need for better co-ordination and exchange of information regarding agricultural research activities in Europe. Several delegations gave general support to the idea that FAO's Documentation Centre might serve as the nucleus of a clearing house for agricultural research programmes undertaken by European institutes, universities, and perhaps industrial organizations. If the experiment succeeded, the Centre might later on be developed into an international centre for information on agricultural research also. For this purpose the Conference recognized that it would be necessary to study the problems of co-ordination of activities among existing documentation centres and central libraries that had programmes in the agricultural research field. This idea would, of course, have financial implications.

79. The Conference suggested that the activities of the Documentation Centre should be made more widely known, and that for the purpose a promotional brochure should be produced and distributed among all those likely to be interested in the various types of service rendered by the Centre. The Conference was informed that such a brochure was in preparation.

JOINT EUROPEAN ACTIVITIES WITH OTHER UN AND ASSOCIATED AGENCIES

(a) World Food Programme

80. The Representative of the Executive Director of the World Food Programme reported that since June the additional pledges for the 1966-68 period and for the 1969-70 period had amounted to only a few hundred thousand dollars. However, some signatories of the Food Aid Convention, namely, Finland, Norway and Denmark, had indicated that they would channel all or part of the FAO grain through the World Food Programme. For the current wheat marketing year the WFP would handle about 144 000 metric tons of FAC grain.

81. He stated further that of the four projects in the region reported as under consideration in June, one was now in operation, another had been approved, and the remaining two were being submitted for the approval of the IGC at its Fourteenth Session in November. In addition, eleven more projects had come in for consideration, of which two had been approved, three were being recommended to the IGC for approval, and the remaining six were still under consideration. He added that Europe was a very important source of project officers (WFP advisers to UNDP Resident Representative) with such officers coming from a dozen European countries.

82. Some delegations expressed appreciation of the WFP projects in their countries. One delegation hoped that WFP resources would be expanded, that the IGC would agree to the addition of agricultural inputs to WFP's terms of reference, and that WFP would sponsor more projects in the field of the development of human resources, like education and training. Another delegation suggested that it would be premature for the Conference to adopt a position until the IGC of the WFP had carried out its intended examination of the problem.

(b) ECE Committee on Agricultural Problems and FAO/ECE/Conference of European Statisticians Study Group on Food and Agriculture Statistics in Europe

83. It was reported that the work of the Committee continued to be oriented towards the economic problems of European agriculture although the exchange of technical information also absorbed a considerable part of the Committee's activities. In order to avoid duplication of work, co-operation with other international bodies engaged in the area of agriculture was being systematically promoted. The Conference felt that particular attention should be given to the co-operation with the European Commission on Agriculture. In the future, all those projects which have to be dealt with through ad hoc conferences or seminars might become joint undertakings of the two bodies. The fact that the Committee, just like the Commission, had been requested to establish a long-term programme of work might facilitate steps in the direction of the formulation of an integrated programme.

84. In the discussion, several delegations expressed their satisfaction with the work of the Committee. Work on the standardization of perishable foodstuffs was pointed to as a valuable contribution to the efforts aimed at promoting agricultural trade. The activities of the Expert Group on Farm Rationalization and of the Working Party on Mechanization were also favourably assessed. The recent initiative of the Working Party to start with studies on foreseeable long-term trends in mechanization and their possible impact on production and social conditions in agriculture was highly praised by one delegation.

85. Most delegations that took part in the discussion advanced the view that there was further scope for strengthening ties between the Committee and the European Commission on Agriculture and noted with approval the continuing useful work in improving European agricultural statistics.

(c) Joint FAO/IAEA Division of Atomic Energy in Agriculture and Food

86. The Conference took note of a statement by the Director of the Plant Production and Protection Division on the role of the Joint FAO/IAEA Division in applying nuclear technology to agriculture indicating its responsibilities for the overall planning, programming and co-ordination of activities in the technical areas in which it is involved. Emphasis was also placed on the efficiency of its co-ordinated research programmes achieved through the collaboration among developed and developing countries, as well as the very important contribution provided by institutions and researchers of the European countries. The importance of the results obtained by many researchers was also indicated.

(d) FAO/IBRD Cooperative Programme

87. The Conference received a statement relating to the status of co-operative agreements in force or being initiated between FAO and development banks. In this respect, the Conference noted that agriculture will be a priority sector for investment by the IBRD and the International Development Association. This will mean a larger effort on project identification and preparation for the FAO/IBRD Cooperative Programme. Within the framework of this Programme six missions were being carried out in 1968 to four countries of the European region. Four missions were related to project identification and preparation and two missions to participation in World Bank economic reviews for coverage of the agricultural sector and definition of priorities for investment.

FUTURE OF THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

88. Twenty two delegations participated in a thorough discussion of the future of the European Regional Conference and its relationship with other European regional bodies.

89. A large majority of the delegations favoured the continuation of the European Regional Conference as a separate entity, although a few doubted its usefulness. Some delegations suggested that the sessions of the European Regional Conference might be combined with those of the European Commission on Agriculture, or that the sessions of this Commission and the other FAO European Commissions be convened as preparatory technical committees immediately prior to the European Regional Conference.

90. It was pointed out that the European Commissions are statutory bodies under Article VI-1 of the FAO Constitution, whereas the Regional Conferences come under the more general authority of Article VI-5. Some delegations, recalling that the question of all the statutory bodies of the Organization was under Council review, felt that more specific provisions for the regional conferences should be set forth.

91. The periodicity of the European Regional Conference was discussed, many delegations favouring two years, a few others a three or four year frequency. The general view was that a certain flexibility might be observed. That is, the Regional Conference should as a rule be regularly convened every two years, but that in exceptional circumstances it might be deferred - taking also into account the periodicity of the other regional conferences of FAO and in general the timetable of the Organization.

92. It was generally agreed that the Conferences hitherto had not fully achieved their intended purposes. They had been designed, among other things, to advise the Director-General on matters of agricultural policy in Europe in general and FAO's role in it, they had had the intention of attracting ministers, they had attempted in some manner to supervise the activities of the European Commissions. Many delegations stated that the agenda of the European Regional Conference should be recast and should for each session concentrate on one or two weighty topics of European agricultural policy, thus attracting ministers and senior officials. There was great value in discussing one another's problems as local circumstances might be very different. There should be opportunity for general statements followed by real discussion of the one or two main agenda items. Besides dealing with Europe's own problems one such item might on occasion deal with the role of Europe in helping the agriculture of developing countries elsewhere. Provision should be made for a review of the technical activities of FAO in Europe concentrating on the highlights of recent events and pointing out issues where the Director-General requires high level guidance. A draft agenda for the next Regional Conference should be prepared by the Secretariat and submitted to an ad hoc consultation of heads of European delegations at the Fifteenth Session of the FAO Conference in 1969 when the date of the Seventh European Regional Conference could also be discussed.

93. It was stressed that no decisions concerning the Regional Conference should be taken which might be interpreted as weakening FAO's activity in the Region. As one delegation put: Europe needs FAO and FAO needs Europe.

94. One delegation recommended adoption of the practice of organizing a study tour in connection with the Regional Conference; another indicated that the autumn was a bad period for ministers because of their parliamentary sessions.

95. The Delegate of Turkey extended a provisional invitation on behalf of his Government to hold the next European Regional Conference in Istanbul.

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FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ALIMENTATION ET L'AGRICULTURE
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OFFICERS OF THE CONFERENCE

Dr. J. Spiteri, Minister of Trade, Industry and Agriculture of Malta, was elected Chairman of the Conference. In presiding over the sessions, he alternated with the Vice-Chairmen, Professor D. Davidescu, Head of the Delegation of Romania, and Mr. J. Kleppe, Head of the Delegation of Norway.

Mr. G. Bildesheim, Chief, Europe, North America and S.W. Pacific Service, acted as Secretary-General of the Conference. He was assisted in his task by Dr. K. Kállay, Deputy Chief, Europe, North America and S.W. Pacific Service, Mr. T. Peebles, Chief, Conference Programming Section, and Mr. H. Chazine and Mr. D. Craig, of the Press Branch.

STATEMENT BY THE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF FAO

Mr. Oris V. Wells

Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,

The Director-General has asked me to convey to you his cordial greetings and to express his regret that he is unable to be here on this occasion. Meanwhile Mr. Chairman, I have already said how glad I am to be once again in Malta - a country which it seems to me illustrates in many ways not only the problems which many developing countries must face but equally, and indeed even more important, the spirit in which such problems must be attacked.

Now by way of introduction let me say that my paper this morning deals chiefly with certain problems relating to FAO's European activities. Yet I think it would be a mistake for me to discuss this subject without first saying a few words about the World Food Situation.

In this connection, let me quote briefly from the Director General's analysis to the just concluded Fifty-First Session of the FAO Council. I quote:

"I am happy to be able to (begin my statement) on a note of cautious optimism. As you will know, 1967 harvests were generally good. Food production in the world as a whole was about three percent greater than the year before. Still more important, this increase occurred mainly in the developing countries where the rise was no less than six percent. It made good much of the loss in food production per head in the two disastrous harvests of 1965 and 1966. Not since 1956, more than a decade ago, has there been a comparable year-to-year advance. According to the limited information so far available, food production is continuing to climb in 1968 in spite of some setbacks due to weather.

"We must not read too much into this development. Agricultural production is fickle, as fickle as the weather itself. Some part of the sharp rise in 1967 undoubtedly represented a recovery from the two bad years which went before. We cannot expect a comparable increase every year.

"At the same time there is good justification for thinking that weather was only part of the story; that the long lag in food production which characterized the last decade may be coming to an end.

"One reason for hopefulness is that many governments are now putting greater emphasis on agriculture in their planning and investment. This applies equally to the World Bank, and I welcome Mr. McNamara's plans, announced last week, to quadruple the volume of the Bank's agricultural loans over the next five years, with the continuing assistance of FAO. It is also more widely realised that food shortages can set off an inflation which can nullify progress in all sectors. Some governments have no doubt been influenced by the fact that grain stocks in North America, although again in an upward trend, can no longer be seen as an almost automatic insurance against disaster.

"A second factor is the cumulative effect of long years of development effort which at last seems to be bearing fruit. This applies to the slow building up of research and extension services. It applies to long term investment in irrigation, land settlement, and other forms of agricultural infrastructure. Equally important are the institutional improvements, in land tenure, in co-operatives, farm credit, marketing, which now give farmers in developing countries greater hope of benefiting from increased production. Farmers are therefore taking more readily to the use of fertilizers and to other improved practices. Governments recognize the importance of providing adequate supplies of essential inputs. And last but not least, I must mention perhaps the most interesting element of all, the high-yielding varieties of wheat and rice developed in Mexico and the Philippines respectively. Where adequate water, fertilizers and pesticides are available these give several times the normal yield. It is an achievement which for once justifies the much abused word, breakthrough."

I could go on, Gentlemen.

But simply summarized, the facts are that the basis now exists for a steady improvement, weather permitting, in the world food situation. However, we must emphasize these recent gains are precarious: they will not continue automatically. If our Member Nations relax their efforts, if they fail to deploy their resources in the most effective ways, then we can soon find ourselves back in the old situation. Revised trade policies are also essential. Finally population in many of the developing countries continues to increase at too fast a rate, and this must also be understood along with the urgent need for moving ahead on the agricultural production and trade fronts.

Now Mr. Chairman, let me turn to my main theme, FAO's activities in Europe. Here too the problem is one of deploying limited resources in the most effective possible way. FAO cannot give as much to Europe as she would like; everyone agrees that the claims of the much poorer countries of the world must have a certain priority. None the less, the Director-General has no intention of neglecting Europe or of diminishing the volume of resources devoted to servicing European governments and peoples. And here I would like to extend a special welcome to the delegates from Bulgaria and Hungary, two new Member Countries, who are for the first time attending a European Regional Conference.

Arrangements for the Director-General's policy representation in Europe have been fully taken care of in the Reorganization Plan which, as most of you know, has been formulated in agreement between the Director-General and the Special Ad Hoc Committee on reorganization during the past months and which has just been agreed to by the Council. While this is not the place to describe the Reorganization in all its aspects, I assume you are expecting me to say something about those parts of it which concern the European Region.

The Regional Representative stands in the centre of these arrangements. The role of the Regional Representative is to assist in developing FAO's European policy in accordance with the needs of the changing situation, to keep the Director-General advised of the desires and requests of governments and to work out recommendations for meeting those requests in the most efficient manner within the limits of available resources. The best location for the Regional Office is Geneva, partly because the Regional Representative has to maintain continuous contact with the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe in administering the joint FAO/ECE programmes in agriculture and forest products. It also is necessary to have a senior officer in Geneva for liaison with the many UN and other agencies which have their headquarters there or, as in the case of ECOSOC, regularly hold sessions there.

But since we have had no outposted technical officers in Geneva, apart from the staff of the two joint FAO/ECE Divisions, the technical servicing of European meetings and other activities has been done from Rome and hitherto the Regional Representative

has had a deputy at headquarters to work with the Divisions concerned. Under the Reorganization Plan an Area Service has been created for each region including one covering Europe, North America and the South West Pacific. This should strengthen the assistance given to the Regional Representatives from Rome. The Area Service will not only embrace all the activities hitherto carried out by the Regional Representative's Deputy but, in addition, it will also be the focal point for all European field operations, UNDP and other, and for relations between FAO and the bilateral agricultural aid programmes of European countries. In this way the Regular Programme activities and the multilateral and bilateral aid activities will be more effectively integrated than before.

Coming back now from organizational questions to policy matters, a primary objective of our European policy is to bring the agricultural scientists, technicians and administrative officers of Member Governments together, for their mutual advantage, establishing contacts and exchanges of experience. There are many areas where the technical officers in the national governments and institutes want to have opportunities of corresponding with and meeting their colleagues in other countries because through the discussion of one another's experiences they are able to improve the quality and effectiveness of the services for which they are responsible. Because Europe of all the continents has the most highly developed technical services, she also most acutely feels the need for these contacts.

FAO is constantly receiving requests on all kinds of topics, for example to assemble the current legislative material concerning agricultural inheritance or pension schemes for farmers; requests for technical information regarding some new process or implement in response to which the secretariat assembles material and makes it available to interested countries. The increase in FAO's European membership in recent years has augmented this demand for scientific and technical information.

However, the assembly and transfer of information satisfies only part of the needs felt by the less agriculturally advanced countries of Europe. The written word is no complete substitute for personal contact and the report of an experiment is less satisfactory than a round table discussion of it. Hence the desire for meetings. Scientists working in a certain discipline benefit greatly from meeting scientists working in the same discipline in another country; and not only scientists in universities and institutes but equally the technical officers working in government ministries.

We must frankly recognize, however, that the interests of the different countries are not identical in this matter of meetings. The countries which most frequently ask for FAO meetings are those in which scientists for various reasons find it difficult to attend congresses and visit institutes through private channels. Other countries, chiefly the most technically advanced countries, find such FAO meetings less profitable. Of course, on some topics meetings can be arranged exclusively for the less industrialized countries but such arrangements would defeat part of the purpose, namely the opportunity for the technicians of the less advanced countries to have direct contact with those from the more advanced countries. In short, attendance of the technical representatives from the more advanced countries may often represent technical assistance in a very practical form.

You will also in many cases recognize that what is discussed and tried out in Europe, especially in the less industrialized countries of the European Region, can be used with appropriate modifications by developing countries elsewhere. Many of the problems, for instance in plant breeding, in animal diseases, in marketing, in agricultural education and extension, are remarkably similar, so that practices and procedures developed successfully in European countries may have much wider application. In this sense Europe is a scientific, social and institutional laboratory conducting research and acquiring experiences for the rest of the world.

Distinguished delegates are aware that FAO's Regular Programme activities in Europe are carried out largely through the permanent technical Commissions in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and animal disease control, each with their subsidiary bodies, as well as through the joint FAO/ECE Secretariat servicing the ECE Agriculture and Timber Committees. Reports of all these various Commissions and Committees are before you for discussion.

These are bodies in which all of you have membership and in carrying out their work and in making recommendations to the Director-General they should always have in mind the views expressed in the FAO Conference and in this Regional Conference. For example, the Fourteenth Session of the Conference strongly recommended a reduction in the number of meetings and the last Regional Conference for Europe recommended that working parties should be abolished when their programmes and usefulness have come to an end. In conformity with these recommendations you will note that the Forestry and Agriculture Commissions have terminated a number of their subsidiary bodies; also that to prevent duplication and reduce further the number of meetings, several symposia have been organized jointly between the European Commission on Agriculture and ECE's Committee on Agricultural Problems. I also hope that during the ECA session last week in Rome some further recommendations along this line were adopted. All this shows that the Commissions have adopted a flexible approach to their work.

So far I have said nothing about the field assistance which FAO gives in Europe under UNDP, UNICEF and other trust funds. At the present time FAO is operating fifteen Special Fund projects in the Region and during 1968 Europe is also receiving the equivalent of ten man-years of experts and about twenty seven man-years of fellowships under UNDP/EPTA. This constitutes a modest programme compared with those in other regions and there may be some disappointment that certain priority requests cannot immediately be implemented but it has to be recognized that looking at the world as a whole, which is what UNDP has to do, many countries are poorer and less able to help themselves than the less industrialized countries of Europe.

It follows that if these European countries are anxious to have more help from FAO and if the UNDP programmes of assistance to Europe can expand only rather slowly, then other means must be found to meet the need. I believe a number of possibilities exist and it may be useful if I repeat here some of the suggestions recently made to the European Commission on Agriculture because these have wider application to the other Commissions and Committees.

I suggested that the regular work of the Commissions should be more deliberately oriented than in the past to meeting the needs of the less industrialized countries of the Region, one current example being the study of the economic and social conditions of the rural populations of the mountain areas of southern Europe. I further indicated that an increase in the exchange of technical and scientific information does not necessarily involve an increase in the number of meetings organized but can also be achieved by arranging direct contacts. Also for those countries which possess competent national services in agriculture it is entirely feasible to develop new programmes and projects with only limited external assistance as, for example, of occasional visits by FAO staff experts or in the case of multidisciplinary projects by a team of staff experts. We are going to try out this approach in respect to one or more programmes relating to the expansion of beef production. We believe FAO should be able to do more to help Europe without diverting resources from other FAO programmes, without waiting for UNDP's further assistance and without placing an additional burden on governments in the shape of more questionnaires and more meetings.

This, then, constitutes the broad outline of the Director-General's policy as it relates to technical assistance or technical services for Europe which he is placing before this Conference. However, a regional policy cannot be considered in isolation, least of all one for Europe which has such close trade and aid links with the rest of the world. It has to be related to an overall strategy for agricultural development. Therefore, it may be useful to consider briefly the relationship between FAO's European policy and programmes and the five priority areas of activity which the Director-General has elaborated in his recent statement to the Council.

It will be remembered that the objectives of these five points, lines, or areas of concentration, are firstly to secure the introduction and adoption of the new high yielding varieties of cereals; secondly, to develop programmes to eliminate the shortage of protein in the human diet; thirdly, to wage a war on waste in all its forms; fourthly, the mobilization of human resources for rural development, and fifthly, to introduce production and trade programmes designed to save or earn foreign exchange in the developing countries of the world.

In the European Region a number of successes have already been achieved with high yielding varieties of cereals, for example with Russian wheat in Bulgaria and with Mexipack wheat in Turkey as well as with hybrid maize in several countries. On the other hand, one may doubt whether much progress has been made with fodder crops and pasture grasses although clearly this is a direction in which diversification should be taking place.

In respect to protein, although there may not be starvation in Europe there is a growing shortage of meat in most of the southern and eastern countries of the region. I have already mentioned this problem last week to the European Commission on Agriculture and the need to step up production to match the rapid increase in demand. This calls for a combined operation, including attention to fodder crops and pasture, to animal improvement, to slaughterhouses and to modern marketing methods. In Turkey we are just beginning a project of this kind, in co-operation with the International Bank, but I suspect there are other countries in the Region where a similar effort would be advantageous.

Waste is not as great a problem in Europe as it is in some other parts of the world, nevertheless there are still several countries where the lack of modern marketing equipment, particularly refrigeration, greatly reduces the outlets for such products as milk, fish, fruit and vegetables. Furthermore, even for cereals there are some countries which lack sufficient storage space, countries where, when there is a bumper crop of wheat, the surplus has to be exported because there is nowhere to store it and, as a result, if the next year's crop is a poor one, the government has to arrange for wheat imports. Such a deficiency may cost governments considerable sums of money and, in the long run, it might be cheaper to finance additional storage space. Also, Europe does, of course, have a substantial number of problems having to do with pollution, soil conservation and animal health.

When it comes to investment in human development, there are already some activities in the European programme, for example the Working Party on Home Economics and the Working Party on Rural Sociological Problems. Their activities include such important studies as that on part-time farming and the development of home economics' extension services including consumer education. Surely there is scope for doing even more; for instance, concerning the response of workers to different organizational patterns in farming and the effect of monetary incentives in the poorer and remote agricultural areas.

The fifth of the Director-General's policy objectives, namely the saving of foreign exchange, is a subject very much present in the minds of European governments. I have already referred to the import saving which could be achieved by an expansion of meat production in a number of southern and eastern European countries. Nearly every European country has ambitions to expand agricultural exports and some are making substantial investments in irrigation and fertilizer production with this end in view. Assuming that these national programmes will be successful, there is probably already a need to begin some surveys of the export implications that may result.

Looking further ahead, we may expect the increased involvement of Europe as a whole in Indicative World Plan activities during the next biennium. Incidentally, it was in Europe, at FAO's Geneva office where some of our concepts of demand and production projections were first pioneered. The development and application of the indicative planning technique within the European framework should assist Member Governments to pursue policies of "rolling adjustment" to the constantly changing international situation.

Mr. Chairman, to sum up my discussion to this point, I would say that it is FAO's policy in Europe to intensify the transfer of technical information between Member Countries, especially for the benefit of the less industrialized countries of the Region. To this end we will make use of all available methods including correspondence, meetings, surveys and field operations. We will continue to work through the technical Commissions whose operational methods should become more flexible. We are prepared on request to send our staff experts for short visits to help in the development of particular programmes. We are ready and anxious to delegate much more work than hitherto to the various specialized agricultural organizations in Europe, as we have done, for instance, to the European Association for Animal Production and it should be one of the tasks of that very valuable meeting of these organizations which FAO convenes annually in Paris to suggest to the Director-General practical proposals for such transfers of activity. If we fully exploit all these opportunities then it is my belief that we have formulated a programme that will efficiently meet the needs of Europe in these particular technical fields, the most of which fall within the purview of the European Commission on Agriculture which met only last week in Rome and whose report is before you at this Conference.

Further, I do suggest that once FAO's broad policy for Europe has been agreed the Commissions and other operating bodies, as well as the secretariat, should be given time to carry out the policy in its practical applications and for this a certain degree of continuity is required so that initiatives taken can be carried through to their conclusion. Policies can and should be adjusted as we move through time, but we do not think major policy lines should be substantially changed every year or every two years: too frequent reorientation may result in a waste of effort.

And now, Gentlemen, I have so far been talking chiefly about the ways in which FAO may assist you generally in the exchange of technical information as well as supplying a more or less limited amount of technical assistance or services to the less developed countries of the Region. The final point which I want to make is that I well know that this does not cover the whole of FAO's European Programme or perhaps more precisely, Europe's interest in the whole of FAO's Programme.

Actually, I have said very little about the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease or the European Forestry Commission (which works in close co-operation with the ECE's Timber Committee), both of which seem to be working quite satisfactorily.

Also, as already indicated, our European Members do have a direct interest in the Indicative World Plan. This is, of course, equally true of our Codex Alimentarius activities and the work of our Committees on Commodity Problems and on Fisheries, including active participation in the various work groups and commissions arising from these two Committees. I am also certain that all of you are much interested in the Director-General's strategy for assisting the developing countries generally which has now been presented to and accepted by the Council. A copy of his statement on this strategy is being circulated to you and it is my hope, as the occasion arises, that we may have your comments on it.

In this connection, I should as a last item, call your attention to the Director-General's desire to find ways of FAO and the bilateral programmes working more closely together. We have developed over the last two or three years excellent working relations with several of the European bilateral assistance programmes which involve a full discussion of our activities in and information relating to the developing countries in which the particular programme is interested. We hope that these activities, which have a reciprocal value to both FAO and the bilateral programme, can be further expanded.

In conclusion, let me once again take the opportunity of conveying through you, Mr. Minister, to the Government of Malta our warm thanks for their invitation to hold this Conference in your delightful country and I wish the delegates every success in their discussions this week.

It now gives me great pleasure to call upon His Excellency The Honourable Joseph Spiteri, Minister of Agriculture for our host country Malta, to address this Conference.

