

Report of the

THIRTEENTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR LATIN AMERICA

Panama City, Panama, 12-23 August 1974



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

FAO Member Nations in the Latin American Region (at 23 August 1974)

Argentina	Ecuador	Netherlands
Barbados	El Salvador	Nicaragua
Bolivia	France	Panama
Brazil	Guatemala	Paraguay
Chile	Guyana	Peru
Colombia	Haiti	Trinidad and Tobago
Costa Rica	Honduras	United States of America
Cuba	Jamaica	Uruguay
Dominican Republic	Mexico	Venezuela

Date and place of FAO Regional Conferences for Latin America.

First	— Quito, Ecuador, 18-25 September 1949
Second	— Montevideo, Uruguay, 1-12 December 1950
Third	— Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1-10 September 1954
Fourth	— Santiago, Chile, 19-30 November 1956
Fifth	— San José, Costa Rica, 12-21 November 1958
Sixth	— Mexico City, Mexico, 9-20 August 1960
Seventh	— Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 17-27 November 1962
Eighth	— Viña del Mar, Chile, 13-29 March 1965
Ninth	— Punta del Este, Uruguay, 5-16 December 1966
Tenth	— Kingston, Jamaica, 2-13 December 1968
Eleventh	— Caracas, Venezuela, 12-20 October 1970
Twelfth	— Cali, Colombia, 21 August - 2 September 1972
Thirteenth	— Panama City, Panama, 12-23 August 1974

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Rome, 1975

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>
List of Resolutions	
<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	1
Inaugural ceremony	2-9
Opening of the Conference	10
Election of officers	11
Adoption of the Agenda	12
Introductory statements	13
Speeches by observers	14
<u>SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS</u>	
General debate (Res. 1/74)	15-55
Regional programmes (Res. 2/74 and Res. 3/74)	56-57
- Integrated rural development (Res. 4/74)	58-72
- Internal constraints on exports (Res. 5/74)	73-94
- Environment and development (Res. 6/74 and Res. 7/74)	95-111
Orientation of FAO's activities (Res. 8/74, Res. 9/74, Res. 10/74 and Res. 11/74)	112-135
World Food Programme (Res. 12/74)	136-144
<u>CONCLUDING ITEMS</u>	
Approval of the Report	145
Place of the Fourteenth FAO Regional Conference	146-147
Closing of the Conference	148-153
<u>APPENDICES</u>	
A. Agenda	
B. List of Participants	
C. List of Documents	
D. Report approved by the Technical Stage of the Conference	

LIST OF RESOLUTIONS

- 1/74 Initiative to establish a system for the rotation of the Latin American countries on the FAO Council
- 2/74 Approving the Report of the Technical Stage of the Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference
- 3/74 Supporting and making a suggestion for the work of the interdisciplinary groups of the Regional Office
- 4/74 Integrated rural development: Recommending that a regional project on this subject be set up in the Regional Office
- 5/74 Internal constraints on exports: Recommending that FAO perform studies on the constraints facing Latin American exports in a context expanded to include external obstacles
- 6/74 Environment and development: Preservation of hydrobiological resources
- 7/74 Environment and development: Recommending the establishment of an interdisciplinary regional project on environmental conservation in the Regional Office
- 8/74 Field programmes: Recommending a review of the procedure for processing requests for technical cooperation and the prompter presentation of recommendations and final reports on projects
- 9/74 Agricultural research: Coordination of international centres with those existing in each country; representation of the Region in the Advisory Group on International Agricultural Research
- 10/74 Transnational corporations and the New International Economic Order: The specific case of the banana trade
- 11/74 New International Economic Order: Recommendations for the FAO working group on this subject
- 12/74 World Food Programme: Suggestions on priorities

INTRODUCTION

1. At the generous invitation of the Government of Panama, the Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America was held in Panama City from 12 to 23 August 1974. From 12 to 18 August it was conducted on the technical, and from 19 to 23 August on the policy level.

Inaugural ceremony

2. The Conference was solemnly inaugurated on 19 August 1974 in the Palacio Justo Arosemena in the presence of His Excellency the Vice-President of the Republic, Mr. Arturo Sucre P.

3. Mr. A.H. Boerma, Director-General of FAO, addressed the gathering and spoke of the advantages of holding this Regional Conference in Panama City. We were here, he said, to work together for a better future for the people of this Region and of the whole world. He had always emphasized the importance of the human element in any form of economic development, and Panama, this crossroads of world civilizations, provided an example of people from different parts of the world joining together and working for an independent and better future.

4. His Excellency Mr. Arturo Sucre, Vice-President of the Republic, then took the floor to convey the fraternal welcome of His Excellency Mr. Demetrio B. Lakas, President of the Republic, and of Brigadier General Omar Torrijos Herrera, Head of the Government. He emphasized, firstly, the enormous importance of this Conference at a time when Latin American agriculture lay at the mercy of world crises of food supply, energy, inflation, etc.

5. As significant features of the current situation he cited the constant struggle against hunger and the challenge to raise the level of living of rural populations, the race between food production and a steadily growing population, the obstacles to exports interposed by discriminatory treatment of the products of the Region, rising shipping costs, and deteriorating terms of trade.

6. He supported the interdisciplinary approach taken in the Regional Office's programme of work to the subjects of integrated rural development, internal constraints on exports, and environment and development.

7. In Panama, he said, rural development and agrarian reform were components of the same problem situation - without them there could be no general development. Along with internal barriers to exports, he mentioned the need to give attention to external barriers hindering access to markets. The developed countries had to open their doors, he said. The environmental degradation begun in the developed countries was now spreading to the developing countries. The latter should take care to avoid the mistakes already made in other regions.

8. He mentioned that the ECLA/FAO panel on food in Latin America in the world context provided a significant preliminary to the World Food Conference, an event to which Panama attached overriding importance. The world community had to be made aware of the problems afflicting the world and this Region. Hunger knew no frontiers.

9. He closed with a reference to the hospitality and warmth with which Panama had welcomed the delegations and wished them complete success in this regional gathering.

Opening of the Conference

10. Mr. A.H. Boerma, the Director-General of FAO, opened the meetings of the Policy Stage of the Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America.

Election of Officers

11. The Conference elected as its Chairman Mr. Gerardo González Vernaza, Minister of Agricultural Development of Panama. As Vice-Chairmen the Conference unanimously elected Mr. Horacio Giberti, Minister of Agriculture of Argentina; Mr. Hernán Garrón, Minister of Agriculture of Costa Rica; Mr. Mohamed Kasim, Minister of State for Agriculture of Guyana; Mr. Raúl Edgardo Escoto, Minister of Natural Resources of Honduras; Mr. Noel Somarriba Barreto, Minister of Agriculture of Nicaragua; Mr. Hernando Bertoni, Minister of Agriculture of Paraguay; and Mr. Guillermo Figallo, President of the Agrarian Court of Peru. Mr. Lorenzo Martínez, Under-Secretary of Agriculture of Mexico, was appointed Rapporteur. A Drafting Committee was constituted consisting of members of the delegations of Chile, Cuba, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Adoption of the Agenda

12. The Conference approved the Provisional Agenda and Provisional Timetable, the first of which is presented as Appendix A to this report.

Introductory statements 1/

13. The meeting was addressed by the following persons:

- Mr. A.H. Boerma, Director-General of FAO
- Mr. Sayed Marei, Secretary-General of the World Food Conference
- Mr. Gonzalo Bula Hoyos, Independent Chairman of the FAO Council
- Mr. Francisco Aquino, Executive Director of the World Food Programme
- Mr. Enrique V. Iglesias, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America 2/
- Miss Margaret J. Anstee, Deputy Regional Director of the Regional Office for Latin America of the United Nations Development Programme
- Mr. José Emilio Araujo, Director-General of the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences
- Mr. Armando Samper, Assistant Director-General, FAO Regional Representative for Latin America

Speeches by Observers

14. The Conference heard statements by the following Observers:

- Mr. José Ramón Rangel P., Secretary-General of the Federación Campesina Latinoamericana
- Mr. Efraín Kaisari, Head of Israeli Technical Missions for the Caribbean Region

1/ Owing to lack of space, these statements are not summarized here. They were distributed unabridged to the delegations as Conference documents (see Appendix C).

2/ His statement was read in his name by Mr. Luis López Cordovez, Director of the Joint ECLA/FAO Agriculture Division.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

General debate

15. All the delegations opened their general statements with high praise for the hospitality that the people and Government of Panama had shown to the delegations participating in the Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America. They also voiced satisfaction with the facilities provided by the host country for the successful conduct of this event.

16. There was consensus that the selection of items on the Agendas for both the Technical and the Policy Stages was appropriate, interesting and well-balanced. It was also remarked that the documents presented were to the point and contained useful information for the countries and for the debates of the Conference.

17. Several delegations commented favourably on the resumption of relations between Panama and Cuba and congratulated the delegates of both countries.

18. This Regional Conference was regarded as particularly important for the opportunity it gave the governments in the Region to acquire information on the food situation in the world and the Region, to learn what their sister governments were doing, and to express their views on the proposals for overcoming the crisis that were emerging particularly in the Preparatory Committee for the World Food Conference, and on the course that FAO should take in the future.

19. Several delegations referred to the approaching World Food Conference; they asked a number of questions about it and said that it would be an historic event at a critical juncture. It was pointed out that the international community should act in coordination and take direct measures that would be promptly effective. Statements were made to the effect that the developed countries should awaken to the need that the world attain harmonious, well-balanced development. So far however, the world had witnessed the failure of many initiatives launched in different international forums.

20. The point was made that there was hunger in the midst of plenty. Despite the scientific advances of the world today, attempts to modernize agriculture so that it might feed all mankind properly had yielded unsatisfactory results. Great efforts in the field of technology had been made in less important activities or in utterly negative directions, as in the production and improvement of armaments. The world had to seek equilibrium without levelling downward or encouraging superfluous consumption.

21. The commitments emerging from the World Food Conference would have to be undertaken in a spirit of humanity. Genuine world solidarity in the fullest sense would be required. Only then would the proclamation of a New International Economic Order have any meaning. The current world crisis suggested that the world was in a new phase of development in which agriculture was the dominant motivating force.

22. The floor welcomed the appeal made by the Director-General in his introductory statement that the governments undertake to develop programmes that would help overcome the world food crisis through more effective action, including increased investments in projects to raise production and productivity.

23. One delegation felt that the occasion was a fitting one on which to pay tribute to the memory of Dr. Josué de Castro for his farsighted proposals to revolutionize the structure of income distribution through agrarian reform as a basic strategy in the war on hunger.

24. Several delegations commented on document LARC/74/4 on International Agricultural Adjustment. They said that in its treatment of the subject it unerringly identified the key problems of the international situation. They did, however, make the following observations:

(a) The adjustment principles and guidelines it propounded were too general. It should have laid a more solid foundation. It was true that each country was free to chart its own course. But international agricultural adjustments should not be overly flexible. The country strategy guidelines supplied in the document ignored such essential aspects as, for example, the need to restructure the economic and social order.

(b) As regards international agricultural adjustment, the document made no reference to the fact that developed importing countries did not abide by international agreements when prices were on the rise but pressed for their observance when prices were falling (the International Wheat Agreement was cited as an example).

(c) The case studies it presented referred exclusively to developing countries. Why were the developed countries left out when it was in them that many of the problems arose that affected agriculture in the developing countries?

25. It was pointed out that the principles of world solidarity recently enunciated in the Sixth Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly showed that adjustment involved the efforts of all countries. Yet it was in the developed countries where adjustment was proceeding slowly, which made for rigidity in international adjustment. An example of this was subsidized production, whose impact on the international trade in agricultural products was repeatedly emphasized in the Technical Stage of the Conference.

26. The developed countries could not dodge their responsibility. As noted in the Annotated Agenda (LARC/74/1(a)), Latin America was playing a passive and dependent role even though it possessed the objective conditions for contributing to a greater security of world supply and for obtaining legitimate profits that could win a better place for Latin American agriculture internationally. Until this state of dependence was cast off, adjustment would remain unattainable.

27. There was emphasis on the need to arrive at realistic and effective programming and international agreements to maximize production in agriculture and fisheries without the constraints imposed by the weak purchasing power of the developing countries. Accordingly, the goods and resources of the world should be put first at the service of man and be used for the satisfaction of his primary and basic needs. All the problems of international agricultural adjustment would be radically altered if real demand were taken as a basis instead of effective demand. There was no sense in organizing production structures in terms that implied restrictions on production when half of mankind was going hungry.

28. The problem of international agricultural adjustment was, without any doubt, a critical problem that would call upon the efforts of all countries producing and importing primary products. Because of its very nature, FAO could make a definite and objective contribution to its attainment.

29. There was consensus on the need to step up regional cooperation. In this connexion, endorsement was given to the point made in document LARC/74/4 that action on the regional and subregional levels would be an important component of overall adjustment. There were real possibilities of expanding trade within the Region. But there were also prospects of effectively complementing the agricultures of the Region by rationalizing their production, by adopting coordinated price policies and, in general, by harmonizing the positions of the countries on economic integration.

30. The inclusion of trade agreements on major items of production and consumption in the Region would require active participation by governmental and paragonovernmental marketing bodies. These agreements could take various forms and have different purposes. One such purpose could be to fill shortfalls in national production and replace extraregional imports. Also, trade agreements could be concluded for the supply and offsetting of seasonal and temporary surpluses and shortages.

31. Emphasis was placed on the necessity to reaffirm the idea, which had arisen at the Seventeenth Session of the FAO Conference, that the strategy of international agricultural adjustment should be implemented at the regional level.
32. It was stressed that FAO should substantially increase its aid to existing integration schemes. While there was acknowledgement of the support so far furnished to the Secretariats of LAFTA, SIECA and the Board of the Cartagena Agreement, it was still felt that this support should be strengthened.
33. Various suggestions were made by delegations concerning the dilemma of whether production should be increased by bringing more land under cultivation or by raising the productivity of land already in production. There was consensus that most good land was already in productive use. There were large areas, however, that could be utilized to increase regional production significantly. Substantial investments would be required, however, and great care would have to be taken to ensure that the basic resource was not seriously deteriorated.
34. Some delegations stressed that rational exploitation of hydrobiological resources should be viewed as an important avenue to improvement of the level of living and quality of life of the countries in the Region, and that the development of those resources should be approached in the context of the process of structural change in each country and with due regard for the sovereignty of littoral states over their own territorial waters.
35. Some specific references were made to the Secretariat document on the Situation and Evolution of Agriculture in Latin America (LARC/74/3), and it was agreed that a distorting modernizing tendency was inducing the introduction of unsuitable labour-displacing technologies. It was useful to distinguish between technology and modernization. The former involved the rational use of existing resources - that is, it took account of their relative abundance and scarcity unlike the mindless modernization that introduced new techniques without regard for their suitability to the environment. To make this distinction was not to brake or negate progress but to channel it toward social ends.
36. With regard to the organization of ministries of agriculture, it was said to be advisable to distinguish clearly between executive decentralization and decision-making centralization. In the former, powers had to be delegated among those who had to execute actions and locate services, and all this without detriment to a necessary centralization at the directorial and policy-making level.
37. One delegation considered that paragraph 63 of document LARC/74/3 was incorrect because it seemed to indicate that agrarian reform had yielded no positive results in Latin America. The paragraph did not take into account that agrarian reform per se could not solve the problem of population pressure on the land.
38. There was consensus that Latin America was facing a serious situation in regard to the supply and cost of technical equipment and inputs. Several references were made on this point, particularly to the problem of fertilizers and pesticides, and it was said that, at current prices, the use of imported inputs in many cases reduced the profitability of crops to marginal levels.
39. It was stressed that there was need of definite commitments on input prices and supplies. There was favourable comment on the initiative of the FAO Council in launching an International Fertilizer Supply Scheme and in establishing a Fertilizer Pool to be managed by FAO itself.
40. Several delegations mentioned that little attention had been given to the role of young people in development plans and to the types of programmes that should be drawn up to involve them at either the national or regional level. Steps should be taken to make agricultural employment attractive to youth so as to increase the supply of manpower and stem the swelling flow of migrants to urban areas.
41. The Conference agreed that not enough importance had been given to the role of women in agriculture. Though their contribution was of central importance in the sector, they were the most neglected segment of the rural population.

42. Various delegations commented favourably on the view expressed by the Independent Chairman of the FAO Council that the Organization should decentralize its functions and grant greater autonomy and delegate more powers to its Regional Office for Latin America, which from its inception had worked efficiently and effectively, and enjoyed high prestige in Latin American countries.

43. Various suggestions were made about agrarian reform and rural development to complement what had been said on the subject during the Technical Stage discussions on integrated rural development. Most delegations reasserted the definition of agrarian reform and its relationship to rural development as established in Resolution 12/70 of the Eleventh Regional Conference in Caracas, where the conceptual framework of agrarian reform had been drawn up.

44. Several delegations shared the view that the agrarian reform process, taken as an integral whole, was the cornerstone of rural development in developing countries, where defective land-tenure structures deprived rural workers of full participation in the economic, political, social and cultural life of their countries. In this sense, agrarian reform was to be designed jointly and be inextricably interwoven with processes of structural change in the other spheres of society in order to ensure the attainment of real social justice.

45. One delegation said that agrarian reform was not necessarily an essential prerequisite of integrated rural development. It pointed to the existence in the rural sector of areas where the chief activities related to mining, fishing, crafts and other pursuits which were not agricultural and hence did not come within the purview of agrarian reform. Thus, to attribute such importance to this process was to restrict artificially the conceptual scope of rural development.

46. There was consensus on the need to strengthen peasant and rural organizations as an effective step toward the realization of integrated rural development. It was similarly agreed that agrarian reform processes should give special attention to small owners, rural workers and minifundio operators, who in many cases were neglected in the land awarding process.

47. One delegation stated its position that no economic action taken should infringe the right to personal freedom of action and to private ownership of means of production. This meant that the state must take measures to prevent abuses by individuals and that an effective planning system was needed as a complement to private enterprise. It added that land should be awarded to peasants as their private property, and preferably in family-size holdings.

48. Another delegation voiced its concern over the existence of injustices and colonialism in the Latin American countries and said that the Region could have no moral right to criticize the developed countries until it had solved these internal problems.

49. One delegation referred to the statement by the UNDP Representative. While greatly appreciating the financial support that the UNDP gave to many of FAO's activities in Latin America, it was concerned to note in the operations planned by the UNDP in the Region an apparent and possible duplication of the Organization's activities, particularly in agricultural research and in the identification of the immediate needs of the Latin American countries for increasing their agricultural production and productivity.

50. The UNDP Resident Representative in Panama replied that his agency as a technical assistance financing institution, did not duplicate the efforts of the Specialized Agencies, as all the projects in which the UNDP participated were carried out through them - in this case FAO - as the executing agencies.

51. A delegation referred to the rotation of Latin American representation in the FAO Council and suggested that there should be better geographical coverage of the different regions of Latin America and of the different levels of relative development of the countries. In this connexion the Conference adopted the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 1/74

The Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America,

Considering:

1. That all the countries in the hemisphere should be fully represented on the FAO Council so that the interests of all can be protected when the policy of the Organization is being determined;
2. That the characteristics of the Latin American countries differ from one region to another and that there are therefore differences in their interests;
3. That it is important that the system of representation on the Council be made more democratic and that incumbency in the seats thereon be rotated to afford real and effective participation of all the Latin American countries in the taking of decisions by that body;
4. That during the Seventeenth Session of the FAO Conference in Rome in November 1973 the countries of Latin America decided to consider, at the Thirteenth Regional Conference in Panama, the principle of the rotation of FAO Council seats among themselves;
5. That certain international agencies such as IICA, the OAS and the IDB have already adopted a system of rotation within their various bodies;
6. That it is the consensus of the delegations that seat rotation on the FAO Council is, in principle, fair and advisable;

Resolves:

To recommend to the Member Nations that they issue to their delegations to the approaching World Food Conference appropriate instructions so that during that meeting they may arrive at a formal agreement on the subject.

52. In closing the general debate the Director-General of FAO gave expression to a few reflections about the items discussed. Since the Regional Conference of 1970 in Caracas, he said, Latin America had taken the lead in the agrarian reform field, and should keep it. Hence it was fitting, he thought, that the human aspects of rural development should have been emphasized in the general debate.

53. Efforts should be intensified, he said, to bring the small farmer into the production process to enable him to improve his level of living. On the subject of food and nutrition, he emphasized that the chief cause of hunger and malnutrition was not any lack of production but massive poverty.

54. In regard to what some delegations had said about the problems confronting their commodity exports, he understood the positions they had taken and suggested that the countries would do well to give special attention to the Declaration and Programme of Action for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in its Sixth Special Session. This, he added, would be a major item of discussion in the coming World Food Conference, and would also be dealt with in the next Programme of Work and Budget of FAO.

55. In connexion with certain specific problems that had been raised, he mentioned that the Organization maintained subgroups on meat and bananas functioning under the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP). These bodies, he said, were good vehicles for direct consultation among the countries to enable the exporting countries to develop common positions. This, he said in conclusion, was part of international agricultural adjustment.

Regional programmes

56. The Conference unanimously approved the following resolution that the Report of the Technical Stage, as amended in the discussions on the policy level, be incorporated into the Final Report of the Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America.

RESOLUTION 2/74

The Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America,

Considering:

1. That the Twelfth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America recommended the establishment of interdisciplinary groups in the Regional Office for the purpose of considering the study of topics relating to integrated rural development, internal constraints on agricultural exports, and environment and development;
2. That the Technical Stage of this Conference studied and discussed the documents prepared by those groups and submitted for its consideration by the Secretariat and, on the basis of them, approved Report LARC/74/REP/3, which contains the summary of the deliberations and proposed resolutions concerning future action by the countries and FAO itself in the fields of integrated rural development, internal constraints on agricultural exports, and environment and development;
3. That after analysis in the Policy Stage the Report obtained the general approval of this Conference;

Resolves:

1. To approve the Report of the Technical Stage of the Conference, LARC/74/REP/3, the text of which is incorporated into the report of the Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America, and to endorse the included recommendations with the amendments thereto.
2. To recommend to Member Nations and to the Director-General of FAO that they give high priority to these recommendations.

57. The Conference also adopted the following resolution, which supports and makes a suggestion for the work of the three interdisciplinary groups established in the FAO Regional Office for Latin America.

RESOLUTION 3/74

The Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America,

Considering:

1. That the delegations of Member Nations to this Regional Conference have noted with satisfaction the work done by the three interdisciplinary groups set up in the FAO Regional Office for Latin America to establish guidelines for a more effective contribution to the development of their peoples;
2. That experience shows that the effectiveness of such interdisciplinary groups is in direct relationship to the depth of their perception of actual conditions in the different countries and regions and therewith to the validity of their assessment of the specific problems presented by each historical-geographical situation;
3. That the differences among those situations can cause the general problems of development, which such interdisciplinary groups are formed to study, to differ in their relative priority from one country or region to another;

4. That, in consequence, it is essential that the interdisciplinary groups collaborate closely with government groups and institutions on methodological aspects to enable the countries of the Region to frame their policies better.

Resolves:

To recommend to the Director-General of FAO:

1. That the cooperation offered by the interdisciplinary groups set up in the FAO Regional Office for Latin America take primarily the form of advice to national institutions working on similar tasks in the countries of the Region.

Integrated rural development

58. In its introduction of this item the Secretariat explained that an interdisciplinary group had been set up in the Regional Office to study and define concepts, policies and strategies on integrated rural development with a view to improving the technical cooperation that FAO was called upon to give to the countries of the Region in this field. Document LARC/74/5 described the results of the work done by the group since its inception in early 1973. The principal objectives of integrated rural development took account of the ultimate purpose of that development, which was a qualitative improvement of life. Among these objectives were increased tangible and intangible personal rewards, broadest social justice in the distribution and enjoyment of the fruits of economic growth, and better management of renewable and nonrenewable natural resources.

59. The Secretariat referred to the need to integrate rural development actions into specific programmes and to give rural man an active part to play in the planning and execution of those programmes. As characteristics of this process, the Secretariat also said that the strategy of integrated rural development was to be preferred in areas where activities associated with agriculture predominated, which did not mean that agricultural production should be the only activity; also, that the rural community was an integral part of the national community, and its development, therefore, was part of the country's overall development.

60. There was emphasis on the problems that arose from the interdependence between rural areas and urban centres, from technological improvement and from the need to restructure existing land-use patterns. Finally, the Secretariat mentioned that the Regional Office had already begun the study of cases of integrated rural development on exploratory visits to a number of projects in Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Mexico and Panama.

61. In the discussion that arose on this item general consensus was reached among the delegations on two central points made in the document presented by the Secretariat (LARC/74/5), to wit:

(a) that integrated rural development was a component of general national development;

(b) that the system for the planning of rural development on the area level was a theoretical model that could find practical application in a context of regional and national development.

62. In relation to point (a) in the foregoing paragraph it was pointed out that development in Latin America was to be approached as a process of structural change involving not only the increasing of production but also changes in institutions, very importantly, the creative participation of the entire population. In this connexion integrated rural development was seen as the outcome of planned, coordinated and concerted actions carried out in an integrated manner and on different levels by public and nonpublic agencies and the people themselves. These actions were aimed at the progressive and sustained betterment of the countryside, which meant improving the quality of life of rural man in terms of his real and felt needs and of his legitimate aspirations.

63. Several delegations suggested that the concept of complementarity between integrated rural development and agrarian reform, set forth in document LARC/74/5, should be spelled out to make clear that the latter was an essential basis for the former. A delegation pointed out, however, that there was one rural sector whose principal activity was not agriculture but relied on other occupations relating to mining, fishing, arts and crafts, etc., which were not subject to agrarian reform processes. Thus, they added, development so defined was an integrated process and not limited to isolated actions aimed only at improving a few aspects of the problems of rural people.

64. Several delegations cited certain doubts about and discrepancies in the use of certain concepts in some paragraphs of document LARC/74/5. The doubts and discrepancies were as follows:

(a) The term "agricultural development" lent itself to confusion with "agricultural growth". The term "agricultural development" had a broader meaning than it was given in paragraph 2 in the reference to a sustained and well-distributed growth of agricultural production. Growth of agricultural production so specified did not in itself suffice to obtain agricultural development, and much less integrated rural development.

(b) The alleged "errors" said in paragraph 4 to characterize the approach taken to rural development so far were not errors. These characteristics had resulted from the condition of dependence in which the countries of the Region were submerged, which had made it impossible to reverse the process of rural deterioration described in paragraph 29 of the document. Moreover, plans and programmes for rural betterment had not clearly established active peasant participation as an indispensable requirement for the success of those programmes.

(c) The reference to well-being as "a bringing of development to man" (paragraph 7) appeared to be saying that development was something unrelated to the action of man himself, whereas in fact man was himself the dynamic factor that participated and made development possible.

(d) It was better to speak of objectives and not of goals of development (paragraph 9).

(e) To say that integrated rural development in Latin America implied planned development through the joint efforts of state and rural inhabitants (paragraph 25) was to exclude the nonpublic sector, which could and should have a part to play in development planning. It was suggested that the reference be to public and nonpublic institutions and the rural inhabitant.

(f) It was said that FAO would concentrate its technical assistance capability on the formulation of policies suited to each of the countries (paragraph 43), whereas such formulation was their function alone. The Secretariat explained that the role of FAO was to cooperate with the countries in that formulation work at their request.

65. There was agreement that the concept of technical assistance, as used in the document, did not adequately reflect the participatory role of the receiving country or the involvement of the agency providing the assistance, and that therefore the term technical cooperation was preferable.

66. In the view of one delegation, it was important to emphasize the need of a new land-use pattern that recognized the existence of a structure intermediate between the urban and completely rural ones and would serve as a basis for development planning. It stressed the advisability of investigating the limits and characteristics of the rural environment as against the urban in terms of the new land-use pattern.

67. There was consensus on the need that the interdisciplinary group in the Regional Office perform its function by advising groups engaged in similar work in the different countries, and supply them with and exchange experiences and information, and promote their establishment where they did not already exist. The delegations did not agree with the proposal

made to the second meeting of the Committee on Agriculture of the FAO Council that it would be advisable to set up technical committees for integrated rural development and agrarian reform in the Region and that the Regional Office's interdisciplinary group serve as its secretariat.

68. The Conference was of the view that the approach to integrated rural development should give particular emphasis to specific measures for solving the grave problem of rural unemployment and underemployment.

69. The Conference felt that recognition was due to the important part played by women and youth in development.

70. Some delegations underscored the importance and the benefits accruing to the rural population from the establishment and operation of associative and community enterprises as part of the agrarian reform process.

71. It was suggested that it might be advisable to coordinate the operations of the international agencies for purposes of integrated rural development.

72. The Conference approved the following resolution in connexion with this item:

RESOLUTION 4/74

The Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America,

Considering:

1. That in rural areas alternatives for development may arise which emphasize such aspects as cultural changes, greater knowledge and application of technology, the organization of society around new objectives or the exploitation of new resources; that, nevertheless, the stumbling-block in most situations of change in Latin America is the difficulty experienced by the peasants in obtaining access to the resource of land; and that for many situations in Latin America these changes in the agrarian structure entail comprehensive agrarian reform as the essential basis of integrated rural development ^{1/};

2. That integrated rural development is part of the general development process. The area-level rural development strategy constitutes a theoretical model that can find practical application in a context of regional and national development, depending on the characteristics of each country;

3. That integrated rural development must be designed as a component of planned development so that it may structure the participation of the rural inhabitant through the operations of the public and nonpublic agencies. The objectives of development can only be attained if the rural inhabitant is an active participant in the taking of decisions, in the formulation of plans, and in their execution and evaluation.

4. That the fundamental objective of rural development is to achieve well-being for the rural inhabitant;

5. That the achievement of well-being is not just a question of solving economic problems; cultural, social, institutional and environmental problems are not only inseparable from the purely economic aspects but must sometimes be considered first;

6. That identification of the objectives of development and determination of their interdependence calls for an interdisciplinary approach which transcends the conventional boundaries between scientific disciplines;

^{1/} Comprehensive agrarian reform was defined at the Eleventh Regional Conference in Caracas.

7. That existing knowledge permits a description of the process of change in rural society but continuous and more far-reaching research is necessary to give more impetus to the process;
8. That the study of the process of change must take into consideration, among other matters, (a) the active participation of women and youth as members of rural society, and (b) the environment and the technical resources.

Resolves:

To recommend to Member Nations and to the Director-General of FAO:

1. That national projects be worked out and implemented which meet the requirements of integrated rural development, whose essential basis is agrarian reform, and that suitable machinery be set up to ensure the success of such efforts;
2. That steps be taken to ensure the full and active participation of the rural inhabitant in the formulation, execution and evaluation of integrated rural development plans, giving due importance to the part played in society by women and youth;
3. That machinery be set up to facilitate the interchange of experience and technical cooperation between countries and that a way be sought to establish a common terminology to facilitate such interchange;
4. That programmes of research and training in integrated rural development be implemented, and particularly in regard to physical, social, economic and environmental aspects;
5. That FAO, with the financial collaboration of the UNDP, set up in the Regional Office for Latin America an interdisciplinary regional project on integrated rural development which, among other activities, will perform the following functions:
 - (a) Cooperate with Member Nations, when they so request, on the implementation of their respective integrated rural development programmes.
 - (b) Participate, when requested by Member Nations, in technical cooperation programmes implemented among them.

In this connexion, FAO is urged to maintain the interdisciplinary group on integrated rural development of the Regional Office for Latin America.

Note: The delegation of Chile rejected preambular paragraph 1 and operative paragraph 1 of this resolution because, in its view, agrarian reform was not necessarily an essential precondition for integrated rural development. It pointed out that there were areas in the rural sector where the principal activities related to mining, fishing, crafts and other pursuits which were not agricultural and hence not within the purview of agrarian reform. For this reason, the delegation felt, the said preambular paragraph artificially restricted the conceptual scope of rural development.

Internal Constraints on Agricultural Exports

73. In its presentation of this item the Secretariat explained that it had been in compliance with decisions of previous regional conferences that the Regional Office had chosen internal constraints on exports as a principal subject for interdisciplinary study. The choice had been made in the awareness that the exogenous factors hindering greater expansion of the Region's exports were under study by the Committee on Commodity Problems of FAO and other international agencies such as UNCTAD, GATT and LAFTA, among others. The conceptual aspects of the problem were presented in document LARC/74/6.

74. An interdisciplinary group had been set up in the Regional Office to conduct this study and was endeavouring to investigate existing constraints inside the individual countries on the greater growth of national agricultural, forest and fishery exports. It was explained that these constraints began in the production unit and ended in the port of shipment. The working group was not to confine itself to the mere identification of obstacles, but was also to analyse and quantify them and to rank them in order of importance and so arrive at an adequate diagnosis on which to formulate practical recommendations to the governments concerned. The group had set to work in 1973 and had focused on five broad classes of products. At first the cases of beef and fish had been studied in three countries of the Region. This work had resulted in the detection of a series of constraints on exports of those commodities in the phases of production and marketing, and in the aspects of infrastructure and institutional support.

75. Lastly, the Secretariat indicated that, if studies of this type were supported by the Conference, the group would continue its work and extend it to other countries and products.

76. There was a consensus among the delegations that this subject, chosen by FAO's Regional Office as one of its programmes for interdisciplinary study, was important, and some suggestions were made about how it should be continued in the future and the approach it should adopt. They suggested that the study take as its frame of reference the analysis of all factors restricting the expansion of exports of the products of the Region, their cyclical variation and a whole range of ensuing problems of greater relevance than the internal constraints mentioned in the document to account for the lesser dynamism of Latin American exports, and whose impact could be usefully pinpointed and publicized.

77. It was also pointed out that Secretariat document LARC/74/6 was conceptually adequate, though some delegations felt that it was relatively unclear on the subject of political objectives. It was mentioned that in spelling out the concepts account should be taken, in regard to foreign trade, of the regional integration process and the lifting of restrictions imposed by the developed countries.

78. Several delegations mentioned that the Secretariat document had emphasized internal obstacles, whereas the worst constraints were to be found outside the exporting countries. On this point they referred to a number of paragraphs in the document and made some specific observations.

79. The delegations voiced concern over the relative contraction of the share of Latin American agricultural exports in world trade. This decline, as emphasized in document LARC/74/6, referred essentially to trade volumes, the value of trade having risen significantly in the last two years. Nevertheless, uncertainty persisted, and some delegates were fearful that the improvement in prices would prove transitory since attitudes persisted in individual developed countries or groups of them, that hindered the adequate placement of Latin American exports.

80. The following obstacles to agricultural exports from the Region were cited in addition to those mentioned in document LARC/74/6:

(a) The use of certain non-tariff barriers by developed importing countries, which heightened the protection with which those countries surrounded their domestic products to safeguard them from foreign competition.

(b) The fact that those importing countries were not altering their procedures to give the products of the Region easy access to their domestic markets.

(c) The competition of synthetic products, arising from and promoted in the developed countries, particularly by transnational companies, considerably affected the possibilities of placing the corresponding natural products exported by Latin America.

(d) The long persisting low levels and instability of prices on the international market rendered uncertain investments that would otherwise be feasible and result in the production of larger exportable surpluses.

81. There were also references to the negative effect on Latin American agricultural exports of the activities of transnational enterprises, notably the production and promotion of the use of certain inputs affecting the quality of export products, thus giving rise to sanitary restrictions on the markets of the countries in which those enterprises were based (a recent instance occurred in the banana trade).

82. Special concern was expressed over the strong rise in internal production costs in agriculture brought on by the rise in the prices of imported inputs, especially nitrogenated and phosphated fertilizers, and pesticides, a rise which greatly exceeded that of agricultural exports. Mention was also made of the increased cost of producing such inputs domestically because of the high cost of technology and capital.

83. It was stressed that the countries of the Region should endeavour to improve their bargaining position by taking joint and concerted action in regard not only to exports of agricultural products but to their imports of food, equipment and inputs as well. It was suggested that this be done through existing regional organizations.

84. It was mentioned that the Latin American countries could significantly increase their export earnings if they diversified their agricultural production more and augmented the value added in them, particularly by processing some of their export products. In view of the still incipient state of agroindustry in several countries of the Region, it was suggested that FAO assist them in seeking new lines of agroindustrial production.

85. Some delegations voiced interest in having FAO disseminate more widely the analyses of international market situations and trends done periodically by intergovernmental commodity groups, so that countries would be better informed when programming their agricultural production for export.

86. It was suggested that, in the analysis of internal constraints on the volume and quality of exports, special attention be given to aspects relating to the financing of the production sector.

87. Some delegations pointed out that internal constraints on exports could not be overcome without making changes in rural structures in relation not only to the mobilization and improved use of means of production, but also to marketing and processing procedures, so that the returns from increased exports could really reach the producers.

88. Other delegations referred to the serious situation created in several countries of the Region by the restrictive arrangements adopted by the European Economic Community and, in particular, to the unilateral suspension of purchases of meat from the Region, asserting that this had been done without consultation and in contravention of previous agreements. In reply, one delegation stated that this was due to a cyclical situation caused by an acute livestock crisis and that the Community countries had unanimously taken measures costing 300 million dollars to restore the balance of the Community market, which accorded with the interests of third countries as well as of the Community itself.

89. It was agreed that the Regional Office should continue its studies in this field of internal constraints, and the Conference took note of one delegation's offer to cooperate by providing technical assistance for the performance of those studies. It was also

suggested that the FAO interdisciplinary group should draw on its experience to design a case study methodology that might help the countries pursue their own studies more deeply. A number of delegations indicated that they would support the implementation of the second stage of the studies on beef and fresh and frozen fish, advising that the list of commodities be expanded in accordance with the results obtained in the first phases of the sequential process of analysis suggested by the interdisciplinary group in the last paragraph of document LARC/74/6. It was suggested that certain grains (wheat, maize and rice) and other kinds of meat be added to the list.

90. Some delegations referred to the need to improve the marketing infrastructure to facilitate the sale of production on foreign markets, and to intensify efforts to bring the quality of export products closer to the standards obtaining on international markets.

91. It was agreed that the view expressed in paragraph 29 of document LARC/74/6 about the profit margins of intermediaries was not correct as far as establishing a value judgment was concerned.

92. It was suggested that FAO might usefully advise requesting countries in the Region in the formulation of a policy on agricultural exports.

93. It was recommended to the Director-General of FAO that, if he considered it necessary, he obtain nonbudgetary funds for implementation of the programme of work suggested for the Regional Office's interdisciplinary group on Internal Constraints on Exports.

94. In connexion with this item the Conference approved the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 5/74

The Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America,

Considering:

1. That a relative decline is observed in exports of agricultural and food exports from Latin American countries, in most of which an increase in those exports is a necessary condition for economic and social development;
2. That this situation suggests that either the knowledge or the power has been lacking to take advantage of the relatively favourable situation recently observable on the international markets for several products of the Region owing to the existence of certain constraints on exports;
3. That although some of those limitations may spring from circumstances peculiar to each country, they also reflect conditions that have long prevailed on international markets;
4. That the activities of transnational enterprises exert a negative effect on Latin American agricultural exports. Notable among such activities are (a) the production and promotion of the use of certain inputs that affect the quality of export products and thus give rise to sanitary restrictions on the markets of the countries where those enterprises are based, (b) the expansion of the domains of transnational enterprises in the Region, and (c) the conflict between their quest for profits and the interests of the countries in which they operate, as in the recent instance in the banana trade;
5. That the governments of Latin American countries have repeatedly voiced their concern about the growing difficulties that their agricultural products are encountering in gaining access to the markets of developed market-economy countries, as well as about competition from subsidized exports from those countries;

6. That the depressed prices and instability that have been chronic features of the markets for exports from countries of the Region, and the steadily rising prices for their imports of equipment and inputs for agricultural production have undoubtedly had a discouraging effect on their exports;

Resolves:

To recommend to Member Nations and to the Director-General of FAO:

1. That the countries of the Region endeavour to improve their bargaining position by taking joint and concerted action in regard to their exports of agricultural products and to their imports of food, equipment and inputs, and that this be done preferably through existing regional organizations;
2. That the interdisciplinary study of internal constraints on exports being done in the FAO Regional Office continue and that its frame of reference also include the analysis of all exogenous factors that restrict the growth of exports of the Region's products, their cyclical variations and a whole series of ensuing problems of greater relevance than internal constraints to account for the lesser dynamism of Latin American exports, and whose specific impact should be identified and publicized;
3. That agricultural production in the Latin American countries needs to be diversified to a greater extent and the value added embodied in their export products needs to be increased, particularly by processing, and that, in view of the still incipient development of agro-industry, FAO be requested to provide technical assistance in the search for new lines of agroindustrial production;
4. That FAO disseminate more widely the international market and trend analyses made periodically by intergovernmental commodity groups, so that the countries may be better informed when they programme their agricultural production for export;
5. That FAO design a case study methodology that will help countries to perform more deeply their own studies of constraints on exports;
6. That the list of commodities to be studied by the interdisciplinary group in the FAO Regional Office include wheat, maize, rice and other kinds of meat;
7. That FAO advise the countries of the Region that so request in the formulation of a policy for exports of agricultural products;
8. That the Director-General of FAO, if he considers it necessary, obtain nonbudgetary resources with which to carry out the programme of work suggested for the Regional Office's interdisciplinary group on Constraints on Exports;
9. That for the Fourteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America a general study be prepared on the constraints facing Latin American exports of agricultural and food products. These constraints include the unfavourable terms of trade long suffered by the countries of the Region in their foreign trade, problems of access to markets, competition from the subsidized exports of developed countries, and tariff and nontariff restrictions;
10. That the study present conclusions that will illuminate the impact of external constraints on internal constraints on such exports.

Environment and Development

95. In presenting the item the Secretariat stated the following:

(a) The items on Environment and Development, Internal Constraints on Exports and Integrated Rural Development were intimately interrelated and together constituted a multidisciplinary approach to the problems encountered in the development process;

(b) While there certainly were problems of pollution in some areas of Latin America, the primordial cause of environmental degradation in the Region was its own underdevelopment and dependence;

(c) That, poverty being a factor that conspired against conservation of the environment, the situation was aggravated by the adverse economic relations of the developing countries in the Region with developed countries. Underdevelopment generated problems of nutrition, housing, health and education, while efforts to develop had often led, among other problems, to overcrowding in shantytowns, heavy unemployment, the destruction of forests, the degradation of soils and the contamination of foods with pesticides. The Secretariat pointed out, finally, that if the goal of the efforts of countries was taken to be the optimization of the material, intellectual and social conditions of man, then there was no contradiction between development and environment. Moreover, it was inconceivable to talk about planning without considering the environment.

96. It was recalled that the concept of development had been clearly set out in Resolution 12/70 adopted at the Eleventh FAO Regional Conference for Latin America. In this connexion it was observed that the concept of development in the Region could not be claimed to have evolved to nothing more than a formula of income distribution plus growth, as such a simplification limited the scope of the conceptual framework defined in that Resolution.

97. There was consensus that the concept of development should embrace the ecological dimension, understood not only in terms of environmental pollution but also - and chiefly as everything involved in the rational use of natural resources, with a view to improving the quality of life of the population. Criteria in this field which tended to equate the problems of developing with those of developed countries were therefore unacceptable. Some delegations stressed that action to preserve resources also had the effect of consolidating national sovereignty. Cooperation between countries that shared resources and were interested in exploiting them should be based on a system of information and prior consultation.

98. There was consensus that document LARC/74/7 adequately described the environmental problems of Latin America and the approach taken to the interrelationships between the environment and development.

99. There was also consensus that the item on environment and development concerned problems that were intimately connected with those dealt with by the other interdisciplinary groups in the Regional Office, namely, integrated rural development and internal constraints on exports, all three being facets of the development problem.

100. The Conference pointed out that the solution of Latin America's environmental problems called for a two-pronged effort. On the one hand, measures were required to overcome the Region's underdevelopment and dependence and, on the other hand, those measures had to be designed to ensure the conservation of natural resources. In this context, conservation did not mean keeping resources untouched, but exploiting them - and to the full - while taking precautions for their preservation.

101. Mention was made of the need for basic research to develop concrete methods for the rational management of natural resources without injury to the environment.

102. Some delegations pointed out that the responsibility of the developed countries for the degradation of the Latin American environment went beyond what it was said to be in the aforementioned document, and they drew attention to the problems deriving from the economic and political practices of those countries.

103. It was mentioned that international cooperation was needed for optimal environmental conservation as the problem often transcended national borders.

104. It was indicated that the developing countries should take care when adopting imported technologies not to saddle themselves with the pollution problems plaguing the developed countries.

105. It was recommended that, when financing development programmes, the international agencies lend to the developing countries, and on more lenient terms, the funds needed to enable the inclusion of environmental protection measures in those programmes.

106. It was mentioned that the developed countries, which bore the heaviest responsibility for pollution on the world level, should cooperate financially by providing soft loans for the planning and implementation of environmental conservation in the developing countries.

107. The Conference recommended to the countries of the Region that they overhaul their laws and regulations in order to gear their socioeconomic activities and their management of natural resources to the solution of environmental problems.

108. One delegation said that the concept of private property should be revised to prevent its use as a pretext for acts running counter to the conservation of natural resources.

109. It was recommended that the Regional Office maintain the Interdisciplinary Group on Environment and Development and that it strengthen action in this field by enlisting the cooperation and support of other international agencies, and the future work plan of this group as presented in document LARC/74/7 was approved except in regard to the form in which the tasks of collaboration with international financial agencies were stated. In this connexion, the Conference recommended that FAO furnish support to countries, when they so requested, in the period prior to the presentation of projects for financing.

110. It was likewise recommended that in any action carried out by the Regional Office in relation to the environment and development it should act in coordination with the other United Nations agencies concerned with different aspects of the environment in Latin America, and endeavour to draw up joint programmes with them.

111. The Conference approved the following resolution in connexion with this item:

RESOLUTION 6/74

The Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America,

Considering:

1. That hydrobiological products constitute important resources for improving the economic and social aspects of the life of the peoples in the Region and more particularly for contributing to the satisfaction of their food requirements;
2. That development of the fisheries of the countries in the Region is jeopardized by problems of environmental pollution both in their seas and in their inland waters;
3. That insufficient research has been done on the factors, both internal and external, that contribute to degradation of the hydrobiological resources of the countries in the Region;

Resolves:

To recommend to the Member Nations and the Director-General of FAO:

1. That technical cooperation be expanded so that studies may be carried out on both the internal and external factors of environmental pollution with a view to the preservation of the hydrobiological resources;
2. That the results of these studies be used by the several countries in the Region to develop the standards they may deem necessary for the preservation of the resources lying within their seas and inland waters;
3. To strengthen existing regional mechanisms to facilitate, through FAO, the exchange of information among the countries, and the concluding of agreements for reciprocal technical assistance in this field.

RESOLUTION 7/74

The Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America,

Considering:

1. That document LARC/74/7 describes to a considerable extent the present situation in the advancing crisis of natural resources and the environment in the Region and presents, with examples, an extensive picture of its gravity and future consequences;
2. That the misuse and mismanagement of natural resources by industry makes the environment unhealthy due to the generation of wastes in the processes of collection, processing, assimilation, utilization, degradation and elimination;
3. That it is of vital importance to formulate and coordinate development policies and strategies at the local, regional, national, continental and global levels that include a significant content relating to the rational use of natural resources and conservation of the environment;
4. That the environment is regarded as made up of the set of factors that determine the quality of life in its ecological, socioeconomic and cultural aspects, and that it is the mutual responsibility of men and governments to preserve it for the generations to come;
5. That priority must be given to the financing of projects designed to develop and protect the environment;
6. That the solution of the environmental problems of Latin America entails action to overcome underdevelopment through structural change;
7. That the inclusion of environmental considerations among the general postulates of development necessitates coordination of the activities of public and nonpublic institutions on the national level so as to guarantee the protection and conservation of the environment in the sphere of national sovereignty. In any case, development planning should not be undertaken without regard for the environment;
8. That the interest of society as a whole in achieving and maintaining a proper environment must take precedence over the interest of production units geared to profit maximization;
9. That the environmental problems of the developed and developing countries are essentially different and that environmental degradation in the latter is due primarily to the exploitation of their resources, without adequate protection of the environment, by enterprises domiciled in already industrialized countries;

10. That, where natural resources are shared by two or more countries, cooperation becomes so important that, as the United Nations General Assembly has resolved, it becomes necessary to ensure that a system of wide-ranging collaboration, information and prior consultation is provided for their conservation and exploitation;

Resolves:

To recommend to Member Nations and the Director-General of FAO:

1. That the studies to be carried out on the environment in all its implications take account of analyses and suggestions leading to the development, in the framework of structural changes, of initiatives conducive to greater environmental protection in the developing countries and to a real improvement in the quality of life;
2. That financial assistance of the countries and international agencies to the developing countries be provided on more favourable conditions so that they may serve as an incentive to development and tend to the preservation of the environment;
3. That machinery be designed and proposed for assisting in exchanges of experience and technical cooperation between countries, and that a common terminology be developed to facilitate communication;
4. That when environmental protection technology is introduced from other countries, great attention be paid to the characteristics of the country in which it is used;
5. That rules tending to the preservation of the environment be underscored, ranked in order of precedence, and coordinated as a constituent element of national development;
6. That in the development of rural areas beneficial cultural values be preserved and the indigenous population's knowledge and experience of its own environment be turned to account;
7. That, with financial cooperation from the United Nations Environment Programme, FAO establish in its Regional Office for Latin America an interdisciplinary regional project for environmental conservation to perform, among other activities, the following functions:
 - (a) Cooperate with Member Nations, at their request, in the implementation of their environmental conservation programmes,
 - (b) Participate, at the request of Member Nations, in the technical cooperation programmes they implement among themselves.

In this connexion FAO is urged to maintain the interdisciplinary group on environmental conservation in the Regional Office for Latin America;

8. That FAO, in coordination with other technical and financial assistance agencies, cooperate with the Member Nations in aspects relating to environmental preservation and development, such as:

- (a) The establishment of a methodology on the national, regional and sectoral levels to facilitate the integration of environmental protection into development planning;

Note: The delegation of Brazil requested that an express record be made of its reservation about preambular paragraph 10 concerning the need to provide a system of information and prior consultation for the conservation and exploitation of natural resources shared by two or more countries.

(b) The conservation of ecosystems by instituting a regional system of national parks and reservations as genetic pools and for environmental protection, scientific research, education, tourism and recreation; 1/

(c) The formulation of national water resource development plans to provide for the short and long-term water requirements of agriculture, human consumption, urban development, electric power generation and non-consumption uses so that the national and regional characteristics of the demand for this critical resource may be determined relative to its availability, and of measures to keep the water supply sufficient in quantity and quality for a population several times greater;

(d) The formulation and execution of international and multinational plans for the management and development of hydrographic basins and other resources that lie astride national borders;

(e) The preparation of plans and teaching materials at all levels of formal education for instruction in ecology and the protection of natural resources;

9. That the agencies of the United Nations system and the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme in particular, be requested to make appropriate recommendations for the better implementation of United Nations resolutions on the environment and especially on the exploitation of natural resources shared between two or more States.

Orientation of FAO's activities

112. The Secretariat made a general presentation on the subjects covered under Item IV of the Agenda, and referred to the corresponding supporting documents: FAO Action in Latin America (LARC/74/2, LARC/74/CONF/1), Review of Field Programmes (LARC/74/8), and also the Programme of Action of the New International Economic Order (LARC/74/10).

113. It noted, firstly, the importance that governments study these documents carefully to appreciate fully FAO's capabilities for technical cooperation. It referred next to the complementarity between FAO's Regular and Field Programmes, the latter involving three times the outlay of the former. However, it stressed that the Field Programme was diminishing in Latin America, and that this was happening because the governments, which set the priorities and allocated the resources in the country programming process, were not asking for funds in proportion to their stated needs.

114. Likewise, the evaluation studies on technical cooperation that had been started, and would be continued, had revealed a series of limitations, noteworthy among which were: (a) problems of expert recruitment; (b) management and administration problems of counterpart agencies in the countries concerned; (c) the failure of this technical cooperation to keep pace with the notorious rise in the technical capacity of those countries.

115. On the last point of the foregoing paragraph, the Secretariat said that the Regional Conferences were an important factor in the revision of standards for that cooperation and in the development of new ones. The countries had made such strides in the technical fields that the United Nations agencies had already agreed in principle that their experts should function as counterparts and the governments take over the management and execution of programmes.

116. In regard to the Declaration and Programme of Action on the New International Economic Order, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in its Sixth Special Session, the Secretariat said that it had become necessary to overhaul planning and operating procedures in order to make actions and assistance responsive to the real needs of the countries. It stated that, for FAO's part, there would be no difficulty in making the necessary adjustments in the Regular Programme, but that the corresponding adjustments in the Field Programme lay within the competence and were the responsibility of the governments themselves.

1/ Parks, reservations, forest reserves, wildlife sanctuaries, etc.

117. The Secretariat was cognizant of the difficulties involved in setting priorities in the country programming process, but FAO felt that the prime need was for the formulation and execution of programmes that would lift millions of human beings out of this poverty.

118. The Conference was in general agreement with the documents presented by the Secretariat. Several countries passed comments on specific aspects.

119. One delegation said that, in the presentation of its subject, document LARC/74/2 "FAO Action in Latin America" did not reflect the integration of the programmes of the Organization's divisions, which were the basis of the new Unified Programme for the inter-disciplinary groups of the Regional Office.

120. Some delegations felt that the document did not underscore the active role that devolved upon women in the development process, and it was suggested that FAO look into the possibility of designing a regional project for female training. In connexion with "FAO Action", it was said that the Organization should attach special importance to employment problems.

121. Most delegations were gratified and in full agreement with the view expressed in this background document that case studies on agrarian reform carried out by FAO in collaboration with IICA and national agencies in Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela showed "that associative production schemes offer advantages over the awarding of individual land grants".

122. One delegation was surprised at the conclusion reached in the document that the community association was the production arrangement that gave the best results in his country, for the delegate's own experience had demonstrated the failure of this form of land tenure, as brought out in an FAO/UNDP study in 1972. In regard to other forms of association, he said that he considered them viable provided they were freely entered into once the land had been distributed among individuals.

123. It was suggested that FAO ought to provide special technical assistance for the organization of associative production schemes in countries in which agrarian reform processes were afoot. One delegation said that, because of the insufficiency of land and the large numbers of peasants qualifying as beneficiaries under the reform, it was essential that the land to be redistributed be cultivated mainly on a collective basis. It was also pointed out that agrarian reform should not be approached as a programme but as a process which, launched as a matter of policy, should progress to irreversibility.

124. Another delegation said that the agrarian reform in its country had emancipated the peasants from the slavery in which they had been held by feudal structures, had increased yields per hectare, areas cultivated, aggregate production, and peasant incomes.

125. On the subject of technical cooperation, it was said that (a) procedures that held up the launching and implementation of programmes and projects should be streamlined, and (b) that documents and progress and final reports on projects should be presented more promptly.

126. On the subject of field programmes the emphasis was on the problem of selecting experts and the constraints thereon, and on the need that project management be transferred to national staffs. A delegation said that in some cases temporary consultants should be assigned instead of experts. It was recommended that experts reside in the neighbourhood of their projects to avoid their clustering in national capitals.

127. One delegation pointed out that the reduction in the scale of the Field Programme in the Region could be largely due to the growth of bilateral cooperation, which was said to be on the rise probably because it was more expeditious. The same delegation said that the supply of international technical cooperation should be adjusted to the demand for it, and that evaluations should be made of the capacity of countries to receive it and meet the

commitments it entailed. There was satisfaction with FAO's evaluations of technical cooperation, and it was suggested that, in countries where the Organization could not perform these evaluations, they be carried out by the countries themselves.

128. Some countries said there was need of greater and more effective coordination among the programmes of agencies operating in the Region. This coordination was not enough, however, and should be extended to bilateral cooperation as well. One delegation said that it would be of particular interest to the Region that the closest cooperation be achieved between FAO and IICA. Along with this, there was emphasis on the need of more cooperation among countries for the sharing of experiences that might help improve national programmes. Several delegations saw a close connexion between the need for integration and the serious food problems of the Region.

129. One delegation opined that FAO should integrate its action more with ECLA along the lines of the Declaration of Quito and, moreover, give its activities an orientation more concordant with ECLA's position on development. In connexion with the discussion of these items, the Secretariat said that in the programming of its technical cooperation FAO always endeavoured to avoid overlapping with aid rendered by other agencies and countries. This criterion was also applied in country programming. It was seen that there was an endless range of possibilities for reciprocal technical cooperation between countries or on the sub-regional level and, in this connexion, the UNDP would soon launch a study to develop machinery through which such cooperation could become effective.

130. Moreover, it reiterated, the agencies of the United Nations family had already agreed that project managers could in future be national officers. In regard to procedures for putting projects into operation, conditions were currently conducive to the approval in good time of projects already selected, as also for the delivery of needed reports and documents to countries.

131. The Secretariat explained that the Regional Office's relations with ECLA were growing closer all the time, as attested by the work of the Joint FAO/ECLA Agriculture Division and its contribution to the interdisciplinary groups in the Regional Office.

132. It noted that the format of the document on FAO Action in Latin America was based, for the last time, on the divisional structure of FAO, inasmuch as the unified programme had only been in operation in Headquarters for eight months. It called attention to the planning work being done by the Regional Office through the Joint Division and the new Policy, Planning and Programming Unit.

133. On the subject of field programmes the Conference approved the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 8/74

The Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America,

Considering:

1. That the countries of the Region are changing so rapidly that it has become necessary to streamline the entire process of project negotiation, from application to final approval by international agencies, including FAO;
2. That experience has demonstrated that the institutional machinery for sending final reports on individual projects to countries is extremely dilatory;
3. That, similarly, technical documents are not dispatched with the necessary promptness;

Resolves:

To recommend to the Director-General of FAO:

1. That he promote a review of the whole procedure for the processing of requests for technical cooperation so that FAO may quickly become an effective instrument of change that will contribute to the development of our countries;
2. That final reports on projects be sent within a reasonable time so that the recommendations they contain may retain their validity;
3. That technical documents be sent as quickly as possible so that the requisite analyses and recommendations may be made in good time.

134. On the subject of strengthening the scientific, technical and educational infrastructure of the Region, the Conference adopted the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 9/74

The Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America,

Considering:

1. That it has been recognized in this Conference that a policy on technology is of fundamental importance for the rural development of the countries in the Region;
2. That, as was also pointed out, technological innovation must be adapted to the particular characteristics of each country, and indeed of each region within it, with special regard for the actual distribution of natural resources and the ecological, structural and socio-economic context in each setting, as was also recognized by the Committee on Agriculture of the FAO Council in its Second Meeting;
3. That this policy on technology which includes the generation and transfer of knowledge and techniques, must take account of the effects of adopting it on different aspects, particularly on the distribution of its benefits both within the agricultural sector and among the regions of a country and among producers and consumers;
4. That it is therefore necessary to avoid the mere imitation of technologies developed for other situations or conditions, particularly the technology developed for advanced countries, which in many cases is characterized by the waste of unrenewable natural resources;
5. That the countries of the Region must participate actively in decisions relating to the allocation of resources for technological development by international financing agencies or private institutions in developed countries;
6. That it has also been emphasized in different forums, particularly in the meetings of the Committee on Agriculture of the FAO Council, that there must be continuing and growing international technical and financial assistance to the developing countries according to the priorities set by each;

Resolves:

To recommend to the Director-General of FAO:

1. That the Organization reinforce its support to the efforts of the countries to strengthen their own scientific, technical and educational infrastructures, and promote the sharing of experiences among countries in the Region;

2. That he convey to the international research centres in the Region the need that they make their operations complementary to those of the national centres in each country, and that their research priorities be responsive to the real needs of those countries;
3. That he apprise the Advisory Group on International Agricultural Research of the recommendations made by the countries of the Region, and particularly of those made by FAO's Regional Conferences, so that it may take them into account into its activities;
4. That the "Expert Consultation on Agricultural Research in Latin America" to be convened by FAO in 1975 consider the need to support the efforts of the observers from the Region in the Advisory Group on International Agricultural Research so that they may fully represent the countries of the Region and report on their priorities in order that those priorities may be taken into account in the allocation of public and private funds for international agricultural research.

135. In relation to the problems generated by the operations of transnational enterprises and the need to regulate them in accordance with the Declaration and Programme of Action for a New International Economic Order, the Conference approved the following resolutions:

RESOLUTION 10/74

The Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America,

Considering:

1. That exploitation of the natural resources of the Latin American countries by transnational companies for the sole aim of earning profits for those enterprises and safeguarding their hegemony on the markets of destination results in production and marketing policies that restrict the export possibilities of the producing countries;
2. That these enterprises usually hold captive and unexploited large tracts of land that are suitable for agricultural production, which prevents national producers in the Latin American countries from making use of that land and thereby from entering the market and competing properly with those enterprises;
3. That structural changes are needed in relations between Latin American countries and transnational enterprises engaging in the production and exportation of agricultural commodities, in order that the returns on those activities may really reach the countries whose natural resources and manpower generate them;

Resolves:

To recommend to the Member Nations:

1. That they support the governments of the countries in which those transnational companies operate, particularly the governments, members of the Union of Banana Exporting Countries, by acting to protect their right to establish production, transport, marketing and price policies consistent with their national interest;

2. That they support a vote of censure against the manoeuvres of transnational companies which, in disregard of the need to modernize their relations with the countries whose hospitality they enjoy and whose resources they are allowed to exploit, employ unacceptable devices to evade compliance with laws passed to defend and protect the interests of the producing countries.

Note: In supporting this resolution the delegation of Brazil wished it to be placed on the record that its support implied understanding for the legitimate concerns of the countries directly affected by the banana problem, and backing for their efforts to protect their economic resources. It pointed out, however, that in the judgement of its government, the conditions described in the resolution related to a single specific situation, whereas the problem of the transnational enterprises arose in other more varied and complex situations.

The delegation of Ecuador also asked that it be entered on the record that its support of this resolution did not imply that it was bound to join the Union of Banana Exporting Countries.

After recalling that its country had been one of the two on whose initiative the Sixth Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly was convened, the delegation of France declared that it would vote for Resolutions 10/74 and 11/74 of this Regional Conference mainly because of the spirit of Resolution 10/74, which accorded well with the principles of the New International Economic Order and with FAO's responsibilities as deriving from its purposes and functions.

RESOLUTION 11/74

The Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America,

Considering:

1. That the principal objectives of transnational corporations engaging in the exploitation of natural resources are to maximize their profits and safeguard their hegemony on the various markets in which they operate;
2. That these objectives therefore do not necessarily conform to the national objectives of the individual Latin American countries, and in many cases the operations of those companies seriously disturb the international trade in agricultural commodities to the detriment of a sensible conservation of the natural resources of the countries in which those companies conduct their production operations and to that of their inhabitants, by whose labour the wealth of those countries is generated;
3. That one of the principles of the New International Economic Order adopted by the Sixth Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly states that it must be based on the "regulation and supervision of the activities of transnational corporations by taking measures in the interest of the national economies of the countries where such transnational corporations operate on the basis of the full sovereignty of those countries";
4. That the Programme of Action on the Establishment of that New International Economic Order, approved in the same Special Session, recognizes the need to adopt and apply an international code of conduct for transnational corporations in order, among other things (a) to eliminate their restrictive business practices, (b) to conform their operations to the national plans and objectives of developing countries and (c) in this context to facilitate, as necessary, the review and revision of previously concluded arrangements that now hold back the development of those countries;

Resolves:

1. To recommend to the Member Nations:

That they support a vote of censure against the manoeuvres of transnational corporations in violation of the principles upheld by the international community in the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order approved by the United Nations General Assembly in its Sixth Special Session.

2. To recommend to the Director-General of FAO:

(a) That the working group set up to analyse the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order pay special heed to the activities of transnational corporations, which strike at the national interests of the countries of the Region, especially in connexion with the production, transport, marketing and setting of prices for agricultural products both internally and abroad;

(b) That the working group also consider the efforts of the countries in the Region to bring about the modernization and revision of arrangements concluded with transnational corporations on those matters, as laid down in the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order approved by the United Nations General Assembly in its Sixth Special Session;

(c) That it support initiatives by the governments of the countries respecting machinery created or to be created for the adoption of joint policies vis-à-vis third countries, international agencies and transnational corporations, particularly in the banana and meat fields.

Note: The delegation of France asked that its express clarification accompanying Resolution 10/74 be made extensive to this resolution as well.

World Food Programme

136. In its presentation of this item the Secretariat made the following points:

(a) In the eleven years that had elapsed since WFP began operating in Latin America, 86 projects widely varying in type and financial cost had been implemented. Their total cost to the WFP by the close of 1973 came to US\$ 196 million, or 14.4 percent of all the Programme's investments. To this should be added 25 emergency projects costing US\$ 10.5 million.

(b) Projects to provide food for the more vulnerable population groups, particularly for pregnant women and nursing mothers, and for children of pre-school and primary school age had been implemented, as well as projects for reforestation, agricultural development, housing and loans to small farmers.

(c) During recent years and because of the serious world food crisis special emphasis had been given to projects designed directly or indirectly to raise food production.

(d) The importance of nutrition and health in the living conditions of the population, and especially for child growth, made WFP programmes a real investment in the formation of human resources.

137. On document LARC/74/9 a delegation said that, in view of the current food crisis, it would be advisable to expand the programmes for the promotion of livestock raising and the wider use of protein concentrates based on fismeal and oilseed by-products.

138. With regard to supplementary feeding programmes, particularly for children, a properly balanced diet should be provided.

139. With regard to supplies of WFP resources, several delegations wanted to see the developed countries substantially augment their contribution to the Programme.

140. In the discussion of document LARC/74/9 and of the statement by the Secretariat, delegations expressed divergent views on whether WFP projects were best directed at solving production or infrastructure problems, or whether they should be mainly social in character.

141. There was consensus among the delegations to support the WFP's policy of giving precedence to aid requests arising out of emergencies and disasters.

142. Some questions were raised about the multiplier effect of food aid, about the ability of the WFP to avoid delays in food deliveries in the present crisis, and about the possibility of some projects becoming vehicles for charity.

143. In response to the comments of the delegations, the Secretariat stated the following:

(a) WFP had not been an instrument of charity since in all its projects the beneficiary countries were required to make a counterpart investment which, greater in some cases and smaller in others, averaged four dollars for every dollar received. In any case, there could be no doubt about the multiplier effect of WFP projects.

(b) Irregularities in deliveries were not a WFP responsibility, as the Programme was dependent on supplies from donor countries. Moreover, it had no warehouses of its own in which to maintain adequate inventories. It continued to urge donor countries to ship their commodities as early as possible.

(c) In response to a suggestion that the WFP extend its services to the livestock development programmes of the countries, it said that in the past only one donor country had contributed fodder grains, and that those grain deliveries were suspended for the time being.

(d) In the past it had been possible to provide more balanced diets, but never a complete ration. The limited resources available at present necessitated yet further restrictions and, in any case, the WFP could only supply the foods it received.

(e) Finally, on the use to be made of the scarce resources available, it stated that 75 percent of them were going to relatively less developed regions. In response to a query it added that US\$ 4.5 million had recently been set aside for aid to vulnerable groups in liberated zones of territories under colonial domination in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau.

144. In connexion with this item the Conference adopted the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 12/74

The Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America,

Considering:

1. That the world food crisis affects all the countries of Latin America and the world, and could seriously impair the effectiveness of the World Food Programme;
2. That the solution of food and nutrition problems is to be sought in the rational use of the foods of the World Food Programme to achieve rapid agricultural and socioeconomic development in those countries;

3. That, therefore, preference should be given to programmes designed to assist the beneficiary country in integrated rural development programmes;

Resolves:

To recommend to the Member Nations and to the Director-General of FAO:

1. That the World Food Programme be urged (a) to give highest priority to food programmes presented to it which are designed to increase agricultural production through integrated rural development, and (b) to simplify the form and procedure for the presentation and approval of these programmes in order to accelerate the launching of a world-wide "Food Supplies for Food Production" campaign.

2. That the donor countries to the World Food Programme make every possible effort to supply expeditiously all the commodities required for projects.

CONCLUDING ITEMS

Approval of the Report

145. The Chairman submitted the draft report to the Conference for consideration following its revision by the Drafting Committee. The Conference approved the Report en bloc and directed that the summary drawn up by the Secretariat of the ECLA/FAO Panel on Food in Latin America in the World Context be added to it as an appendix.

Place of the Fourteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America

146. The Chairman introduced the invitation that the Director-General of FAO had received from the Government of Peru that Lima be designated as the place of the Fourteenth Regional Conference. This initiative was supported by several delegations including that of Argentina, which said that, though it has been instructed by its Government to offer Buenos Aires as the venue for that gathering, it backed the proposal of Peru because no Regional Conference had yet been held in that country.

147. The Conference decided to recommend to the Director-General that Buenos Aires be designated as the alternative venue against the eventual impossibility of holding the Fourteenth Regional Conference in Lima once its date had been fixed.

Closing of the Conference

148. The closing session was solemnized by Brigadier General Omar Torrijos Herrera, the Chief of the Government, who said he attached profoundly humane significance to this Regional Conference, which had brought delegates and technicians together to discuss problems and consider solutions that would improve agriculture for the well-being of the peoples of the Region and the world. This, he emphasized, was important at a time when others were holding meetings to discuss the subject of their mutual destruction.

149. Panama, he went on to say, had benefited much from FAO, in other ways as well as in the provision of food supplies. We have had, he said, the cooperation of people who envisage proper solutions to problems. I am a firm believer, he added, in the benefits of this agency, whose purposes are untainted by any pettiness, for each generation must make some sacrifice so that those to come may move freely about the world.

150. At the close of General Torrijos's speech and at his invitation, a dialogue arose between him and the delegations, the highlights of which may be summarized as follows:

(a) The transnational banana corporation hitherto operating in the country had reacted to a sovereign act of national policy by Panama with real economic aggression. The way to meet this problem was for the banana exporting countries to unite. It was not admissible,

he said, that the fate of thousands of workers be decided abroad. Accordingly, Panama had imposed a tax on banana exports. The foreign corporation's suspension of those exports could not be countenanced, and Panama would expropriate the banana companies and demonstrate that the country could market the fruit itself. There was the resolve and the capacity to do this, and the people were unanimously in favour of this course.

(b) Panama was alive to the danger that foot-and-mouth disease might spread northward when the Darien motor route was opened to traffic, and all requisite efforts were being made and the most stringent safety precautions taken.

The Colombian delegate took up this point and outlined the measures afoot in his country to the same end.

(c) General Torrijos was gratified with the progress made by the agrarian reform in his country without being blind to the problems it was encountering. In the beginning, he said, we employed as heads of settlements peasant leaders who were sympathetic to agrarian change. It was inevitable that we should do this, but it was a mistake. Today we are using technically qualified people in these posts, and significant progress has been made.

151. Mr. Horacio Giberti, the Secretary of Agriculture of Argentina, then spoke on behalf of the delegations. He was appreciative of the warm hospitality with which the Panamanian Government and people had received them and of the excellent facilities provided, and went on to emphasize the urgent need to strengthen regional integration arrangements.

152. While the spectre of hunger ranged at large in the world, he added, the centres of most advanced technology announced highly sophisticated innovations developed for the sole purpose of satisfying superfluous wants. The result was to widen the differences within mankind so greatly as to make it almost seem to consist of more than one species.

153. He then referred to General Torrijos's valid point that this Conference had striven to build whereas other meetings in the past had been concerned at most with not destroying. It was incumbent upon us, he concluded, to bend all our energies toward the goal of a single genuine human species that was acquainted with all qualities of life and could freely choose the one that best suited it.

AGENDA

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1. Opening of the Conference
2. Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Introductory Statement by the Director-General
5. Statement by the Secretary-General of the World Food Conference

II. EVOLUTION OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

6. Statement by the Independent Chairman of the FAO Council
7. Statements by Representatives of International Agencies: WFP, ECLA, IICA and UNDP
8. Statement by the FAO Regional Representative for Latin America

III. REGIONAL PROGRAMMES

9. Consideration and Approval of the Draft Report and Draft Resolutions Adopted by the Conference at Technical Level on:
 - A. Integrated Rural Development
 - B. Internal Limitations on Exports
 - C. Environment and Development

IV. ORIENTATION OF FAO ACTIVITIES

10. FAO Activities in the Region and their Future Orientation
11. Examination of Field Programmes
12. World Food Programme

V. CONCLUDING ITEMS

13. Consideration and Approval of the Report
14. Date and Place of the Fourteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America
15. Closing of the Conference

TECHNICAL STAGE OF THE CONFERENCE

INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1. Opening of the Technical Stage
2. Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Statement by the FAO Deputy Regional Representative for Latin America

REGIONAL PROGRAMMES

5. Integrated Rural Development (Item III-9A of the Agenda)
6. Internal Limitations on Exports (Item III-9B of the Agenda)
7. Environment and Development (Item III-9C of the Agenda)
8. Consideration and Approval of the Draft Report and of Draft Resolutions on the Regional Programmes

ECLA/FAO PANEL ON THE FOOD SITUATION IN LATIN AMERICA WITHIN THE WORLD CONTEXT

9. Background and Scope of the World Food Conference
10. Food, Agriculture and Development
11. Food in Latin America within the Regional and World Economic Context

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Etapas de Políticas - Policy Stage - Discussions Politiques

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Vice-Chairmen:	(Argentina)
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	(Costa Rica)
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	Guillermo FIGALLO
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Rapporteur:	(México)
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Drafting Committee:	Uruguay, Venezuela y Perú
Comité de Redaction:	
Presidente Independiente del Consejo:	Gonzalo BULA HOYOS
Independent Chairman of the Council:	(Colombia)
Président Indépendant du Conseil:	
Invitado Especial:	Sayed MAREI
Special Guest:	Secretario General de la Conferencia
Invité Spécial:	Mundial de la Alimentación
	Secretary General of the World Food
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Vice-Presidents:	Salvador SOCAS
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Special Guests:	Ex-Presidente de Colombia
Invités Spéciales:	Ex-President of Colombia
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APPENDIX C

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

A. Background documents

Agenda item

LARC/74/1	Provisional Agenda	I-3
LARC/74/1(a)	Provisional Annotated Agenda	I-3
LARC/74/2	FAO Action in Latin America	IV-10
LARC/74/3	Situation and Evolution of Agriculture in Latin America	II
LARC/74/4	International Agricultural Adjustment	II
LARC/74/5	Integrated Rural Development (An Area-level Approach)	III-9A
LARC/74/6	Internal Limitations on Exports	III-9B
LARC/74/7	Environment and Development	III-9C
LARC/74/8	Review of Field Programmes	IV-11
LARC/74/9	World Food Programme and its Activities in Latin America	IV-12
LARC/74/10	Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order	IV

B. Conference documents

LARC/74/CONF/1	FAO Programme and Activities in Latin America	4
LARC/74/CONF/2	Opening Statement by Dr. A.H. Boerma, Director-General of FAO, to the Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America	I-4
LARC/74/CONF/3	Address to be delivered by H.E. Dr. Sayed Marei, Secretary General of the World Food Conference at the Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America	I-5
LARC/74/CONF/4	Statement by Mr. Gonzalo Bula Hoyos, Independent Chairman of the FAO Council	II-6
LARC/74/CONF/5	Statement by Mr. Enrique D. Iglesias, Executive Secretary of ECLA, at the inaugural meeting of the Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America	II-7
LARC/74/CONF/6	Statement by Mr. Francisco Aquino, Executive Director of the World Food Programme, to the Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America	II-7

Agenda item

LARC/74/CONF/7	Statement by Mr. Armando Samper, Assistant Director-General, FAO Regional Representative for Latin America	II-8
	Statement by Dr. José G. Emilio Araujo, Director of the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences (IICA) (Spanish only)	II-7
	Statement by Miss Margaret Joan Anstee, Deputy Regional Director of the Regional Office for Latin America of the United Nations Development Programme (Spanish only)	II-7
<u>C. FAO/ECLA Panel on the Food Situation in Latin America within the World Context</u>		
	Extract from document E/CONF.65/4 ‘‘The World Food Problem Proposals for National and International Action’’	9
	Food, Agriculture and Development - Carlos Lleras Restrepo (Spanish only)	10
	Food in Latin America in the World Context - Joint ECLA/FAO Agriculture Division (Spanish only)	11
<u>D. General Information</u>		
LARC/74/INF/1	Information Note	
LARC/74/INF/2	Provisional Timetable	
LARC/74/INF/3	List of Documents	
LARC/74/INF/4	Extract from the Report of the Sixty-Third Session of the Council	
LARC/74/INF/5	Provisional List of Participants	

REPORT APPROVED BY THE TECHNICAL STAGE OF THE CONFERENCE

Opening of the Technical Stage

1. Mr. Armando Samper, Assistant Director-General of FAO and Regional Representative for Latin America, opened the meetings of the Technical Stage of the Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America, on behalf of the Director-General.

Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur

2. The Conference elected Mr. Gustavo González J., Vice-Minister of Agricultural Development of Panama, as Chairman of its Technical Stage. Mr. Adolfo Cossio Recio, Vice-Minister of the National Institute of Agrarian Reform of Cuba, and Dr. Salvador Socas, Head of the delegation of Argentina, were elected Vice-Chairmen. Mr. Alfredo Saco, a member of the delegation of Peru, was appointed Rapporteur, and representatives of Colombia, Honduras, Mexico, and Trinidad and Tobago were elected to the Drafting Committee.

3. The Chairman of the Technical Stage expressed appreciation for his appointment to that office, which he understood as conveying the recognition and support of the countries in the Region for the efforts in which Panama was engaged to reassert her sovereignty.

Adoption of the Agenda

4. The Conference approved the Provisional Agenda and Timetable submitted for its consideration.

Statement by Mr. Pedro Moral López, FAO Deputy Regional Representative for Latin America

5. He referred firstly to the system for programming FAO operations, in which the Regional Conference was an important source of guidance, as the Organization took from it guidelines for its regional operations in the context of a unified programme; secondly, he outlined the salient features of FAO's activities in Latin America during the past biennium, and, finally, he stated the items on the Agenda of the Technical Stage of this Regional Conference and the reasons why they had been chosen.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Regional Programmes

6. In Resolution 2/74 the Regional Conference agreed that the section of the Report approved by the Technical Stage on Regional Programmes: Integrated Rural Development, Internal Constraints on Exports, and the Environment and Development, with the changes introduced by the Conference in its Policy Stage, be incorporated into the Final Report of the Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America.

ECLA/FAO Panel on the Food Situation in Latin America within the World Context
(summary prepared by the Secretariat)

7. On 16 and 17 August 1974, on the occasion of the Technical Stage of the Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America, a Panel under the joint sponsorship of ECLA and FAO was held to enable the countries of the Region to obtain information on the food situation in Latin America in the light of present world conditions and with an eye to the forthcoming World Food Conference to be held in Rome in November 1974.

8. The following persons were invited to speak before the Panel: Mr. Sartaj Aziz, Deputy Secretary-General of the World Food Conference, on the Background and Scope of the World Food Conference; Dr. Carlos Lleras Restrepo, former President of Colombia, on Food, Agriculture and Development; and Mr. Enrique V. Iglesias, Executive Secretary of ECLA, on Food in Latin America within the Regional and World Economic Context.

9. The statements by guest speakers were accompanied by supporting documents, which were circulated to Panel participants. Hence no comprehensive account of them is given in the present summary, which confines itself to outlining the policy aspects to which they referred.

10. The meeting was opened by Mr. Armando Samper, Assistant Director-General of FAO and Regional Representative for Latin America, who stressed the importance attached to the Panel by FAO and ECLA in the present world economic, agricultural and food situation. After referring to the personal qualities of the speakers, he invited delegations to express their views so that the meeting might furnish the countries with a clearer picture of the causes and effects of the world crisis, of the Region's present and future role, of the factors that would affect the Region, and of the position that should be taken by the Latin American countries at the forthcoming World Conference.

11. The first statement was delivered by Mr. Aziz, who gave a detailed account of the content of the documents prepared for the World Food Conference. Among the proposals in the documents he stressed the one that, in the international strategy for solving the world food problem, top priority should be given to increasing food production in the developing countries. Also of importance in the strategy, however, were international trade, price stabilization and international agricultural adjustment.

12. As specific fields of action, Mr. Aziz cited the supply and prices of inputs, research, integrated area development, and investment. The situation in these fields of world agriculture, and particularly of agriculture in the developing countries, was relatively well-known. However, quantifying the additional financial needs was a novel and revealing exercise: an additional US\$ 2 000-2 500 million a year would have to be channelled into agriculture in the developing countries compared with a present total of US\$ 1 500 million from external sources.

13. The most important instruments of world food policy being proposed referred to (1) the improvement and expansion of the reporting and early-warning system, (2) the establishment of a national stock-piling system under the international commitment to world food security, (3) better arrangements for meeting emergency food requirements, and (4) the reorganization of food aid.

14. The structure and organization of the operational machinery would have to be discussed and agreed by the governments concerned, he added, but might consist of (a) a permanent intergovernmental council elected equally by the United Nations General Assembly and the FAO Conference, (b) an agricultural development fund to grant soft and commercial loans for increasing food production in the developing countries, and (c) a food aid committee.

15. The World Food Conference, he concluded, would have to adopt a position on the proposed elements of the strategy, the manner of its execution and how to mobilize the needed resources.

16. The next statement was delivered by Mr. Lleras Restrepo, who made, among others, the following point: one of the key elements in improving the nutrition of the masses was income redistribution, for even when food was abundant, broad segments of the population were unable to buy it. It was therefore essential to raise the real income of the poorest classes. Moreover, a policy on food reserves should be adopted, which would call for international cooperation.

17. Much of the underfed population lived in rural areas, he added, and solving the Latin American food problems depended largely on a far-reaching transformation of agrarian structures, particularly in land tenure and, in general, on operations today falling under the heading of integrated rural development.

18. The possibility of bringing new lands into production and raising the technical level of farming operations would determine the extent to which food production could be increased. The former required that more searching inventories be made of natural resources, and the

latter that the social aspects be made compatible with the socioeconomic ones. The introduction of improvements could not be tied to the indefinite maintenance of hired labour and the prevailing system. But it also had to be borne in mind that not all techniques were labour-displacing; some, such as sound irrigation management, pest control and the use of fertilizers, entailed the employment of more labour.

19. A price support policy should, in his judgement, favour the producer and not, as usually happens, the middleman. A proper intervention scheme should provide for the establishment of regulatory agencies and be based on efficient machinery for credit, and for the preservation and storage of foods, particularly grains and meat, which were in considerable shortage in most countries of the Region. Another important aspect was the promotion of tropical livestock raising, which in regional terms could be conducive to a better production structure by shifting suitable land to cereal crops instead of leaving them permanently under pastures.

20. He pointed out, finally, that it would be a very serious matter if the urgent need to produce led to abandonment of the idea that imperfect land-tenure structures need to be changed through agrarian reform. Far from being incompatible, the two aspects were convergent in the medium and long term.

21. The last introductory statement was made by Mr. Iglesias, who advanced the following propositions as central to the position that, in the present world situation, Latin America should take at the World Food Conference: The current food problem was basically a problem of underdevelopment, a problem of poverty. The proper approach to a solution was to ask these questions: whom is the progress for, and who benefits from the creation of goods in contemporary society? The only way to deal with this and other problems was to view society as a whole and to thoroughly overhaul the very concept of economic development.

22. International cooperation in the food field should not only spring from a sense of ethical or charitable responsibility, but be grounded in the major long-term enterprise of constructing economically and socially balanced systems in the underdeveloped world. Latin America had a real potential for significantly expanding its food production, and was thus in a position to raise the nutritional level of its countries and to help alleviate the world situation as well. However, Latin American agriculture did not depend on its internal structures and internal price relations alone, but was primarily dependent on international economic relations and the behaviour of market prices.

23. How then could Latin American agriculture respond to the challenge? The first thing to do was to give strong encouragement to national policies that allowed an expansion of the primary sector in directions responsive to the needs of the most severely deprived segments of the population. The objective, which each country should define and toward which it should provide its own projects, had to be to launch a massive attack on so-called "critical poverty", where nutritional deficiency had its seat. Secondly, there was international cooperation in the explicit and concrete sense. While Latin America was interested in progress toward world food security, in the problems of inputs and transport, and in the transfer of international resources to developing countries, its fundamental interest lay in aspects relating to trade.

24. Part of the specific purpose of the forthcoming World Conference would be to seek an understanding for strengthening action in the fields of international trade and cooperation, both of which remained of fundamental importance for a region with the actual and potential exporting capacity of Latin America, and because agriculture was still the cornerstone for the development of many of the countries in the Region.

25. The other activity to be stimulated was regional cooperation, and particularly in agriculture there was a wide field to be explored. Efforts to harmonize policies or advance integration schemes, and the negotiation of sales and purchases, were all possible areas of cooperation. If all these elements could be mobilized in the World Conference around common problems, food production capacity could be materially increased. In this more than in any other sense regional cooperation was a desirable objective for the Region and for the world.

26. Finally, the World Conference should promote specific nutrition policies aimed at enriching the diets of the more deprived sectors and specifically at improving the conditions of children and nursing mothers in particular.

27. The Conference warmly welcomed the statements of the three speakers. There was consensus that they contained new, recent and detailed information and that the policy lines that emerged from them were highly useful guidelines for the countries in the Region. Similarly, FAO and ECLA were congratulated for the initiative of holding this Panel before the World Food Conference.

28. The delegation of Peru said that 1974 could be regarded as a crucial year, in which humanity had taken a more decisive approach to the problem of hunger. Whether mankind would free itself from this scourge could depend on what was done and approved in the World Conference. So far, no measures had been taken or positions adopted for its elimination. In the view of the delegation, it was essential that countries work out and subscribe to commitments on the problems to be tackled and solved.

29. The delegation then considered the various difficulties standing in the way of food production increases in the developing countries. It particularly emphasized that the agrarian structures of most developing countries were incapable of generating increases in agricultural production. Another current problem was the scarcity and high cost of technological inputs. The delegation noted the importance that efforts to increase production be such as to conserve natural resources in the process.

30. The delegation dwelt with particular emphasis on marine resources and the extension of territorial waters, and said that Peru, along with the other countries in the Region, had endeavoured to generate in the world an awareness of the rights of littoral States and of the need to conserve marine resources. It mentioned the strong support of the Government to the fishmeal industry, and pointed out that with this product Peru could help improve the world food situation.

31. The delegation then referred to the importance of trade and distribution and said that food should not be allowed to be used as a lever for exerting political pressure on nations. Also, distribution systems had to be set up that would guarantee equitable access to food to all the inhabitants of a country. It was needful that the developed countries not resort to tariff and nontariff barriers to hinder the entry of exports from developing countries. International agricultural adjustment was an urgent necessity and the countries in the Region should use the existing integration schemes to implement it. The international community would have to take on all these commitments in the World Food Conference, which would have to generate truly effective action to dispel the "spectre of hunger".

32. The delegation of Chile then took the floor and made a wide-ranging and searching analysis of the complexities of the food and nutrition problem. It underscored one central idea: so long as economic underdevelopment had not been overcome, whatever measures were taken - and however useful and necessary they might seem - the food problem would remain; poor nutrition was part of the poverty context and hence inseparable from it. Poor nutrition was to be blamed for the acute deficiencies and constitutional defects of people who were poorly fed in their infancy.

33. Ambitious and costly plans for food aid to vulnerable groups had failed because they had been poorly conceived and neglected such essential aspects as food consumption patterns and product presentation, or were incomplete and overlooked the presence of concomitant infections and digestive disorders that prevented the organism from making nutritionally effective use of ingested food. With the knowledge we now possessed we could feed a population much larger than that of the world today.

34. The delegation compared the high yields obtained in some countries such as the Netherlands and Japan with the poor results obtained in developing countries. Scientific and technological backwardness was the most serious limitation on the effective increase of food production in Latin America.

35. The delegation of Panama commented favourably on the points made by the delegate of Chile and particularly underscored the need to intensify research toward making fuller use of foods by enriching them. In relation to the nutritional problems described, it referred to the advisability of studying the real food needs of the population and the repercussions of undernutrition on the different population strata. He concluded by pointing out that internal and regional harmony had to be achieved to maximize the benefits obtained from the available resources.

36. The delegation of the United States commented on the conservation of natural resources and the urgency of adopting measures that would actually result in a greater flow of food into town and country and avoid the severe food losses now incurred in storage and shipment, from spoilage, etc. These losses involved enormous quantities of food. A real improvement in marketing and distribution systems could relieve the critical situation of vast population sectors.

37. Cuba recalled the manner and circumstances in which the World Food Conference had been convoked, particularly by the action of the unaligned countries at their meeting in Algiers. The declaration convoking this meeting conveyed the opinion and express will of the developing countries in relation to the establishment of a New International Economic Order. The delegation also referred to agreements adopted during the Second Meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the World Food Conference, in which the Latin American group issued the express declaration contained in the Report of that Committee, in which the specific suggestions were made on the kinds of measures that the World Conference would have to adopt, particularly in international trade.

38. Mr. Aziz was then consulted on the participation of UNCTAD in the World Conference and on whether its purpose was to enable countries to formulate policies on trade and ways to increase production. Mr. Aziz replied that UNCTAD had been actively collaborating on the documents for that Conference and, when they became available, they would confirm the importance attached to the subject of trade. He added that the World Conference would indeed provide an adequate forum in which the countries could propound policies on the subjects mooted by the Cuban delegation.

39. The delegation of Venezuela said that Latin America needed to identify itself as a region and act accordingly through the existing integration schemes to maximize its benefits from the comparative advantages it enjoyed. Venezuela intended to cooperate actively toward the discovery of formulas that would help solve the food problem. The Region, it added, was a net importer of expensive products and raw materials. The delegation's statement closed with a reference to the need to put an end to the exploitation of man by man.

40. Uruguay commented on the establishment of the agricultural aid fund proposed in the documents for the World Food Conference and which it regarded as a device of great importance for the developing countries given the impossibility for many of them of meeting urgent food needs. In its view, the most appropriate response in such cases was multi-lateral assistance.

41. The delegations of Honduras and Nicaragua emphasized the need to tackle without delay the world-wide problems of food scarcity and the deficient multinational situation of extensive masses of people. This was a social and human problem and surmounting it was to be viewed as a human right. It was also an economic problem. A multinational and multi-sectoral approach would be required, isolated efforts having failed so far. It was emphasized that natural and political frontiers should not be allowed to stand in the way of solving these problems. Otherwise, the only beneficiaries would be the more developed countries.

42. The delegation of Costa Rica asked for clarification of three points in the opening statements:

(a) Because of the urgency and gravity of the food problem, there was a danger that only economic measures would be taken and that social action would be deferred or dropped. How could the countries undertake that the measures adopted would be socially equitable? The question was answered by Mr. Lleras, who said that any agreement on commitments would depend essentially on the domestic measures taken in each country and on those adopted by the international agencies. Domestic measures would have to be complemented by international cooperation because of the influence of export items on rural incomes. Unfortunately, however, it was found that initiatives to make prices stable and equitable were confounded by invincible resistance (as in the trade in coffee, bananas, etc.). Hence the need to replace unilateral impositions with international compacts. Consumers and exporters of agricultural products had to be gotten to cooperate so that the prices of Latin American exports would be sustained at fair levels.

(b) In view of its dependence on the external market for its supply of inputs, what were the Region's prospects for producing the inputs it needed itself? Mr. Luis López Cordovez, Director of the FAO/ECLA Joint Agriculture Division, replied that the prospects in pesticides were modest because of their wide variety and the high cost and sophisticated technology required for their production. The outlook of nitrogenous fertilizers was for self-sufficiency by the end of the decade, while self-sufficiency in raw materials for phosphatic fertilizers would depend on the feasibility of working the rock phosphorus deposit in the Sechura desert in Peru, with more remote prospects in the case of potassic fertilizers.

(c) When would the resources of the Fertilizer Pool proposed in the documents for the World Conference become available to the countries? Mr. Aziz replied that the Conference would first have to rule on the need to increase the flow of resources into agriculture. Governments would have to decide when it would be feasible to draw on the pool. In response to a similar query by Ecuador, Mr. Aziz added that it was still too early to tell what kind of pool would be set up or how. The Secretariat of the Conference had suggested that it be given fairly broad functions for the financing of fertilizer and pesticide purchases.

43. The delegation of Haiti put forward considerations on the food crisis and the kinds of measures to be taken. In its judgement, the proposals outlined by Mr. Aziz for the World Food Conference were quite adequate and would in the end be approved.

44. The delegation of the United States of America said that the purposes for which the Rome Conference had been convoked were the same as those advocated on numerous occasions by its country, which was one of those that had suggested that the meeting be held. It cited the efforts its country was making to produce fertilizers and pesticides to meet the world demand for them. Finally, the delegation questioned the advisability of setting up a new international agency such as the Financing Fund that had been referred to because, in its view, the functions of such a fund could perhaps be performed by existing agencies such as the IBRD, the IDB and others, which might have unused operating capacity.

45. Mr. Aziz explained that there was actually no intention of setting up another international agency, but rather a mechanism to channel funds into agriculture, to be managed by representatives of existing agencies. However, the ultimate form of such a mechanism would be up to the governments to decide.

46. The delegates from the ILO and PASB reported on the activities of their organizations to improve the food situation, nutrition, health and employment opportunities for rural labour.

47. The representative of the IDB remarked that his institution frequently received applications for loans to finance activities for which a higher priority was claimed than for agriculture. He mentioned that external cooperation would in any case have to depend on domestic efforts, and he felt that this cooperation had not always been channelled in the most effective manner possible by the recipient countries.

48. The series of statements closed with an explanation by Mr. Bertossi, of the FAO Regional Office for Latin America, on the ECLA-FAO-PASB/WHO-Unesco-UNICEF Inter-Agency Project for the Promotion of Food and Nutrition Policies.

