



منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

Food  
and  
Agriculture  
Organization  
of  
the  
United  
Nations

Organisation  
des  
Nations  
Unies  
pour  
l'alimentation  
et  
l'agriculture

Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación

# COUNCIL

Hundred and Twelfth Session

Rome, 2 - 7 June 1997

REPORT OF THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON COMMODITY PROBLEMS

Rome, 25 - 28 February 1997

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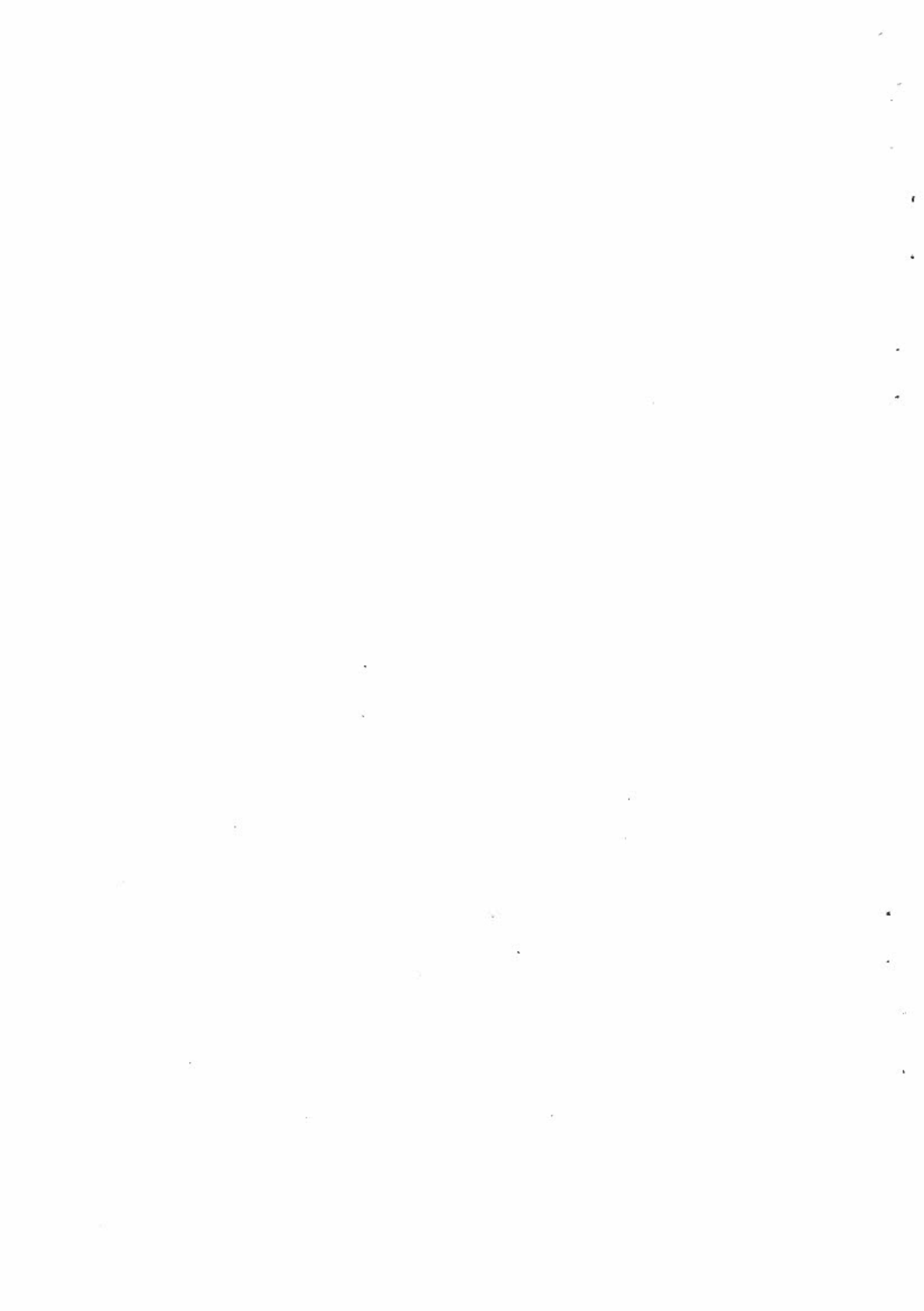
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### MATTERS REQUIRING THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL

The Committee wishes to draw the attention of the Council to the following matters in particular:

1. Its review of the main issues in the world commodity situation and outlook, including follow-up to Conference Resolution 2/79.  
(paragraphs 7 to 11)
2. Its review of the activities of the Intergovernmental Commodity Groups.  
(paragraphs 12 and 13)
3. Its discussion and decisions on the role and functioning of the intergovernmental groups.  
(paragraphs 14-18 and 23)
4. Its decisions on tropical fruit and bananas  
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5. Its review of the activities of the Consultative Sub-Committee on Surplus Disposal  
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6. Its discussion on follow-up activities on the impact of Uruguay Round on agriculture.  
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7. Its review of the links between trade, environment and sustainable agricultural development.  
(paragraphs 32 to 36)
8. Its discussion on the impact of biotechnology developments on trade of agricultural commodities  
(paragraphs 37 to 38)
9. Its review of action relating to agricultural commodities in other organizations  
(paragraphs 40 to 47)



## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee on Commodity Problems held its 61st Session from 25 to 28 February 1997 at FAO Headquarters, Rome. Of the 98 member countries of the Committee for the biennium 1996-97, 79 were represented at the session. Nine member Nations of the Organization, two United Nations Member States, the Holy See and seven international organizations participated as observers. The list of participants, including observers, is given in Appendix A.
2. The Committee paid its respects to the memory of Ambassador J. Laureau, Permanent Representative of France, who had been a highly respected and admired delegate at FAO meetings, including this Committee. The delegate of France was asked to convey the Committee's condolences to his family and colleagues.
3. The statement of the Director-General, Mr. Jacques Diouf, was delivered on his behalf by the Deputy Director-General, Mr. H. W. Hjort. The statement of the Director-General is reproduced in Appendix B.
4. The Committee elected Mr. Bruce Huff (Canada) as Chairman, Mr. Fernando José Marroni de Abreu (Brazil) as First Vice-Chairman, and Mr. Hagen R. Streichert (Germany) as Second Vice-Chairman.
5. The Committee was assisted during the session by a Rapporteur, Mr. J. Thomas (South Africa).
6. The Committee adopted the agenda reproduced in Appendix C.

## II. REVIEW OF WORLD COMMODITY SITUATION AND OUTLOOK, INCLUDING FOLLOW-UP TO CONFERENCE RESOLUTION 2/79

7. The Committee reviewed the world commodity market situation and outlook and recent developments concerning follow-up to Conference Resolution 2/79 on *Commodity Trade, Protectionism and Agricultural Adjustment*, on the basis of document CCP 97/12, supplemented with more recent information provided by the Secretariat. Issues related to the impact of the Uruguay Round and the Common Fund for Commodities were dealt with under agenda items 4 and 7. The Committee agreed with the assessment presented in the document and delegations provided further information on recent market and policy developments.
8. Based on additional information provided by the Secretariat, the Committee noted the decline in commodity prices and the significant lowering of growth in agricultural export earnings in 1996. Agricultural export earnings were estimated to have risen by just over 1 percent in 1996 for developing countries as a whole, and those for developed countries by 4 percent, following a 17 percent increase in 1995 for both groups of countries. The Committee also noted that while agricultural export prices were unlikely to strengthen in 1997, for most commodities, they would remain above the level of the early 1990s, but well below the levels of the early 1980s.
9. With regard to follow-up to Conference Resolution 2/79, the Committee observed that levels of protectionism, while declining, remained high in a number of industrialized countries. The trend towards de-coupled support, in accordance with the Uruguay Round Agreement on Agriculture, was welcomed by some Committee members. While there was limited information available regarding protection levels in developing countries, actions towards trade liberalization taken by many countries under structural adjustment programmes, along with similar reforms within the framework of regional trading arrangements and accession to the WTO, suggested declining levels of protection. The Committee agreed that, as a result of these developments, the transmission of changes in world market prices to domestic producers should be higher than in the past.

10. In light of the above considerations, the Committee reconfirmed that this Agenda item was an important part of the Committee's terms of reference and made recommendations for the future work of the Secretariat on this subject. The Committee encouraged the inclusion of up-to-date information in the analysis. This is of particular importance to many developing countries which lack the capacity for independent market intelligence. To the extent that resources permit, the Secretariat was requested to expand its reporting on agricultural commodity markets and trade developments. While noting this recommendation, the Secretariat informed about other publications and means of dissemination of commodity information and outlook, including through the Internet. The Secretariat was also requested to provide more forward looking analyses on commodity markets. Such information would be of particular value to developing countries when formulating their marketing and general agricultural policies.

11. The Committee underlined the importance of export earnings of developing countries to improve their food security, noting that trade and food security was one of the themes addressed by the World Food Summit. The Committee also stressed the importance of continuing to monitor Conference Resolution 2/79.

### III. ACTIVITIES OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES

#### i) Review of activities of the Intergovernmental Commodity Bodies

12. The Committee noted the contribution of Intergovernmental Groups in improving market transparency through information exchange, both during and between sessions. Informal symposia have permitted more in-depth examination of commodity issues of topical interest with the participation of experts from the private sector. The Committee also noted that many of the intergovernmental groups are active in commodity development and technical improvement. This includes project work related to the Common Fund for Commodities in those IGGs which have been designated as International Commodity Bodies (ICBs) by the Fund.

13. The Committee endorsed the reports and recommendations of the nine Intergovernmental Groups which met since the 60th session, noting that issues relating to matters covered under agenda item 4.b, "The Role and Functioning of the Intergovernmental Commodity Groups", would be addressed under that agenda item. The reports covered:

<i>Tea</i>	Eleventh Session, April 1995 (CCP 96/2)
<i>Hard Fibres</i>	Twenty-eighth Session, April 1995 (CCP 96/3)
	Twenty-ninth Session, September 1996 (CCP 97/10)
<i>Oilseeds, Oils and Fats</i>	Twenty-seventh Session, May 1995 (CCP 96/4)
<i>Grains</i>	Twenty-sixth Session, May/June 1995 (CCP 96/5)
	Twenty-seventh Session, February 1997 (CCP 97/19)
<i>Jute, Kenaf and Allied Fibres</i>	Thirtieth Session, November 1995 (CCP 96/6)
<i>Citrus Fruits</i>	Eleventh Session, April 1996 (CCP 97/7)
<i>Meat</i>	Sixteenth Session, May 1996 (CCP 97/8)
<i>Sub-Group on Hides and Skins</i>	Fifth Session, May 1996 (CCP 97/8 Supp. 1)
<i>Rice</i>	Thirty-eighth Session, May 1996 (CCP 97/9)

#### ii) Role and functioning of Intergovernmental Commodity Groups and international cooperation on Tropical Fruits

14. The Committee decided to consider agenda item 4(b) on the role and functioning of its intergovernmental commodity groups together with item 4(d) on possible approaches to international cooperation on tropical fruits, with the assistance of documents CCP 97/13 and CCP 97/18.

15. Within the context of the broader issues arising from the reform process underway in FAO, and in the light of the review of statutory bodies to be carried out by the Council at its 112th Session in June 1997, the Committee reviewed the progress which had been made since its last session in improving the effectiveness and containing the costs of intergovernmental commodity bodies.
16. The Committee endorsed the cost-cutting measures so far taken which had been achieved whilst maintaining a high standard of work in the Groups. The Committee urged the Secretariat to consolidate these improvements and to seek to implement further cost savings measures which would not compromise the quality of the output of the IGGs. The Committee made a number of suggestions for an improved balance of costs and benefits. Particular mention was made of the possible savings which might result from the innovative use of information technology and in networking among those interested in specific commodity issues.
17. Pending a complete review of the structure of its intergovernmental group mechanism as referred to in paragraph 23 below, the Committee requested the Secretariat to seek to organize joint sessions of related IGGs on a selective basis with a view to achieving further savings whilst providing an opportunity for improved understanding of the underlying economic factors affecting these commodities.
18. The Committee agreed that in pursuance of this objective and, more importantly, in order to facilitate the participation of developing countries in IGG sessions, these should be held as much as possible at FAO Headquarters, but that this should be in line with the need to reduce costs. However, the Committee recognized that under exceptional circumstances IGG sessions could be held away from Rome.
19. In considering possible approaches to intergovernmental cooperation on tropical fruits, the Committee recognized the importance of these products for the improvement of nutrition, export earnings and food security in developing countries. It therefore decided to call on the Intergovernmental Group on Bananas to establish an interim Sub-Group on Tropical Fruits. The Committee further agreed that the Sub-Group on Tropical Fruits should subsequently be merged with the Intergovernmental Group on Bananas into one Group with separate sub-groups dealing with bananas and tropical fruits.
20. The Committee stressed that the additional costs of work on tropical fruits should be offset, as indicated in paragraph 22(f) of document CCP 97/18, by savings including reduced frequency of sessions of the Intergovernmental Group on Wine and Vine Products, and other measures such as the convening of joint sessions of other intergovernmental groups (see paragraph 17). The Committee also decided to abolish the Intergovernmental Group on Cocoa which became inactive two years after the establishment of the International Cocoa Organization in 1973.
21. With the aim of becoming the regional centre for the trading and development of tropical fruits, the delegate of Thailand expressed the offer of his government to host a meeting of the Sub-Group on Tropical Fruits in Bangkok probably in April 1998. The Committee expressed appreciation for the willingness of Thailand to host this meeting.
22. The Committee agreed that the forthcoming session of the Intergovernmental Group on Bananas would operate according to its present mandate and would take place as scheduled during the first part of 1997.
23. The Committee decided that there was a need to carry out an in-depth review of the mandate and structure of its intergovernmental commodity group system, with a view to rationalizing and strengthening the functions and scope of the IGGs to achieve maximum benefits from their operations. Such a review might entail the restructuring of the IGG system. This would also

include the above decision on the merging of the Intergovernmental Group on Bananas with the Sub-Group on Tropical Fruit. The Committee therefore recommended that the role and functioning of the IGGs be again considered at its 62nd Session, taking into full account the conclusions and guidance of the Council and the Conference with regard to the ongoing review of all statutory bodies. The Committee requested the Secretariat to provide it with all relevant documentation for such a review.

### iii) Review of the Consultative Subcommittee on Surplus Disposal (CSSD)

24. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the comprehensive report by the CSSD on its review of the Principles of Surplus Disposal, mandated by the CCP at its 60th session.

25. While some members were in a position to approve the recommendations in the report, others indicated that a number of the recommendations presented them with serious difficulties. The latter were of the view that further study should be undertaken by the Subcommittee on the following specific points:

- (a) Donations through multilateral organizations such as the WFP should be subject to the reporting procedures of the CSSD. These reporting procedures should include prior consultations for bilateral donations channelled through the WFP and *ex post facto* reporting of donations through multilateral programmes of the WFP and other international organizations (Recommendation 1).
- (b) Prior consultations for commodities purchased from developing countries should be retained in Recommendation 3.
- (c) Retention of type 3 in the Catalogue of Transactions and further consideration on the implications of the removal from the Catalogue of the other types covered in Recommendation 4.
- (d) Operations of a commercial or quasi commercial nature, in particular categories 16, 17 (b) and 18 (b) should remain exempt from the notification procedures, and that the inclusion of category 10 (c) should remain exempt from the reporting procedures, pending the conclusions of the OECD Working Party on Export Credits (Recommendation 5).
- (e) Other reservations expressed by members as identified in the CSSD report (Recommendation 6).

26. In light of the above and other recommendations still to be endorsed by the CCP, the Committee recommended that the CSSD further consider its report which should be presented to the Bureau for review and subsequently relayed by the Bureau to the FAO Council at its 113th session in November 1997 for decision.

27. The Committee also requested the Secretariat to prepare a report reviewing the question of the CSSD location, its operational procedures, ways to improve participation by developing countries and to report to its 62nd session.

## IV. SELECTED COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES

### i) Impact of the Uruguay Round on Agriculture: Follow-up Activities

28. The Committee reviewed this agenda item on the basis of document CCP 97/16 which provided a progress report on further studies on the effects of the Uruguay Round and on the related technical assistance provided by FAO. It noted the impact of the Uruguay Round on non-



traditional commodities and on changes in tariff escalation, both of which pointed towards potential export opportunities for high value agricultural products.

29. The Committee welcomed the emphasis placed by FAO on technical assistance to the developing countries on Uruguay Round-related issues, including Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS), Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and agricultural and food policy. It noted and welcomed collaboration with other international organizations in the delivery of such assistance. The Committee noted the growing need for technical assistance and urged FAO to continue helping countries in the implementation of the Uruguay Round provisions and in building the capacity of developing countries to analyze trade policy options and monitor developments in the world trading system, consistent with the recommendations of the World Food Summit.

30. Regarding the *Decision on Measures Concerning the Possible Negative Effects of the Reform Programme on Least-Developed and Net Food-Importing Developing Countries*, the Committee recognized that the implementation of this Decision rested with WTO Member states. It recalled the recommendation of the World Food Summit for the full implementation of the *Decision*, and the related recommendations endorsed at the WTO Ministerial Conference in Singapore.

31. In reviewing the proposals for future work of the Secretariat, the Committee made the following recommendations:

- (i) as regards the scope of future studies, these should include: assessment of the impact of Uruguay Round provisions as they are being implemented in practice, and commodity projections with a time horizon beyond 2000 which would, inter alia, be of value to countries in preparing their negotiating positions for the next round of negotiations on agriculture. It emphasized that such studies should, inter alia, include an assessment of the food security implications for developing countries. Several delegates also emphasized the need to identify opportunities for increased south-south trade. It urged FAO to continue assisting developing countries in building their capacity to carry out such assessments on commodities of concern to them;
- (ii) as regards technical assistance, it urged FAO to continue its programme of work in this area, in particular on policy issues and SPS matters related to the implementation of Uruguay Round commitments, and to develop a programme of policy assistance with the aim of ensuring that developing countries are well informed and equal partners in the reform process leading to the next round of multilateral trade negotiations;
- (iii) as regards the *Ministerial Decision*, it underlined the continued supportive role of FAO, within its mandate, in providing technical assistance to countries in the full implementation of this *Decision*.

However, the Committee stressed that priority should be given to the provision of technical assistance and work to support the *Decision* and recommended that further commodity specific studies receive a lower priority.

#### ii) Trade, environment and sustainable agricultural development

32. The Committee examined the links between trade, environment and sustainable agricultural development on the basis of document CCP 97/15, as recommended by the Committee at its 60th Session.

33. The Committee emphasized the importance of the subject and appreciated the review contained in the document on the activities of the IGGs on specific trade and environment problems,

and the analysis of domestic and international policy responses to address the environmental impact associated with the production of agricultural commodities. On-going work by the Secretariat should be closely coordinated with other organizations, particularly the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment, in order to achieve maximum synergy.

34. The Committee noted that environmental effects associated with agriculture and the policies adopted to address those effects, varied across commodities and countries depending on the specific eco-system, intensity of production and the level of economic and administrative resources available. In this regard some delegates stressed that analysis of environmental effects related to agricultural commodities should include the full range of activities including production, distribution, transportation, consumption and disposal. Several delegates stressed that agriculture often provided substantial positive environmental benefits which should also be taken into account when evaluating the environmental impact of agriculture or designing policies to address environmental issues.

35. The Committee recognised that there could be complementarity between trade, development and the environment. Some countries stressed the need for a coordinated approach to ensure that trade and environmental policies are mutually supportive. The need to avoid unilateral actions to deal with extra-jurisdictional application of domestic environmental policies was also noted. In addition the Committee noted that many developing countries would require technical and financial assistance in order to develop human resources and infrastructure to implement appropriate domestic environmental policies and/or comply with environmental standards of importing countries for their export commodities.

36. The Committee, in line with the mandate given at its 60th session, agreed with the following programme of work of the Secretariat for the next biennium, namely:

- undertake further work on commodity environmental impact assessments and on the methodology of measuring trade effects of environmental regulations; and
- continue the monitoring of developments in trade related environmental policies with special attention to the potential effects on market access opportunities for developing countries.

### iii) Impact of Biotechnology Developments on Trade of Agricultural Commodities

37. The Committee reviewed this item on the basis of Secretariat Document CCP 97/17. It welcomed the balanced approach taken in summarising the present state of developments of the new technologies and their potential impact on commodity markets and trade. While recognising that few technologies had been fully commercialised as yet, the Committee acknowledged the potential that biotechnology held for agricultural commodity markets and food security. Several delegates expressed concern about the possible impact on trade, unless a scientifically-based international regulation system was put in place. Some delegates cautioned against the possibility of biotechnology leading to a widening technology gap between developed and developing countries.

38. There was widespread agreement in the Committee with the recommendations contained in paragraph 26 of the Document CCP:97/17. In undertaking further work on biotechnology and trade, the Secretariat was requested to make full use of all related information available elsewhere and to avoid duplication of work done in other fora. Also, future work should be extended to cover livestock and livestock products which are under the jurisdiction of the CCP and should take into account environmental implications. In addition, this work should be coordinated with similar work being undertaken in fisheries and forestry by FAO. In undertaking work on a commodity-by-commodity basis, a judicious step-by-step selection should be made to best utilize limited resources and establish the usefulness of such analysis to member countries. In any case, work should be analytical, not interpretative. Finally, the Secretariat was requested to provide assistance to

developing countries in the form of information and advice on the legal implications of biotechnological issues as well as in the formulation of national regulatory frameworks.

#### V. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 62ND SESSION

39. The Committee requested the Director-General to set the date of the next session in consultation with the Chairman. In doing so a balance should be kept between scheduling the CCP after a sufficient number of Intergovernmental Groups had met, yet also taking into consideration the schedule for other FAO meetings.

#### VI. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

40. The Committee reviewed, with the help of Secretariat document CCP 97/11, progress in FAO's links with the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC). The representative from the CFC provided updated information and clarifications as needed for the Committee's conclusions.

41. The Committee welcomed progress made in the relationship between FAO and CFC reflected in the agreement on a Memorandum of Understanding laying the ground-rules for a more harmonious collaboration in future. It urged the Secretariat to tighten its links with the Fund on the clear understanding that services rendered should be fully reimbursed.

42. The Committee endorsed the recommendations contained in paragraph 18 of document CCP 97/11 with the qualification that the limited amount of resources for First Account projects should be borne in mind, and that the extension of the terms-of-reference of the IGG on Grains to cover roots, tubers and pulses should be exclusively confined to matters pertaining to the Common Fund. The issue of the designation of the interim Sub-Group on Tropical Fruits (see paragraph 19) as an ICB by the Common Fund was raised. It was agreed that the first meeting of the Sub-Group should consider this matter. In the meantime, the Secretariat was urged to take preliminary steps to enable the Sub-Group to rapidly assume its responsibilities should it become an ICB.

43. The Observer of the **Common Fund for Commodities** informed the Committee on recent CFC developments. In particular, he indicated the CFC was embarking on a Five Year Action Plan which would extend the scope of operations of the Fund by providing concessional loans, particularly to least developed and other low income countries for their commodity development projects.

44. The Observer of the **OECD** informed the Committee that the next meeting of its Committee on Agriculture at Ministerial level was scheduled for March 1998. Work on the outlook for agricultural commodities to 2001 would be released in March 1997. The observer informed the Committee of the close collaboration which exists between OECD and FAO on this subject, and that the annual monitoring report on agricultural policies was expected to be published in May 1997.

45. The Observer from **UNCTAD** briefly outlined the four programmes agreed to at UNCTAD IX in May 1996. When discussing present activities of the Organization she informed the Committee of the work underway on vertical diversification in the food processing industry leading to an expert meeting scheduled for late 1997. Work on commodity diversification through networking between Africa and South-East Asia was continuing. She indicated that UNCTAD appreciated the close collaboration which existed with FAO which was expected to continue in future.

46. The Observer from IAEA drew attention to the work of the Agency on irradiation as an effective quarantine treatment of tropical fruits. He considered this would be of interest to the interim Sub-Group on Tropical Fruits. The observer also informed the Committee of the training activities for developing countries relating to the SPS and TBT agreements of the Uruguay Round that IAEA was undertaking jointly with FAO.

47. The Observer of the ITC provided the Committee with information on work on generic promotion of black tea, on jute and hard fibres and other commodities. He outlined the activities of the Market News Service which ITC operates and plans for expanding this service to the extent resources permit.

48. The Committee paid tribute to the outstanding service rendered by Mr. R.J. Perkins, former Director of the Commodities and Trade Division, who retired in 1996 from FAO after 25 years with the Organization.

## APPENDIX A

## LIST OF DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS

## MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

<b>ALGERIA - ALGERIE - ARGELIA</b> Délégué N. RIMOUCHE Conseiller Représentant permanent adjoint auprès de la FAO	Rome	<b>BOTSWANA</b> A. A. MOKGARE Acting Director Agricultural Planning and Statistics Ministry of Agriculture	Gaborone
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<b>ARGENTINA - ARGENTINE</b> Delegado Sr. R. VILLAMBROSA Representante Permanente ante la FAO	Roma	<b>BURKINA FASO</b> Délégué C. KIEMTORE Représentant permanent adjoint auprès de la FAO	Rome
Sra. M.C. FERRARI Consejero Representante Permanente Alterna ante la FAO	Roma	<b>CANADA</b> Delegate B. HUFF Director of Industry Information Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	Ottawa
<b>AUSTRALIA-AUSTRALIE</b> Delegate A. PEARSON Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO	Rome	Alternate R. ROSE Deputy Permanent Representative to FAO	Rome
<b>AUSTRIA - AUTRICHE</b> Delegate E. ZIMMERL Permanent Representative to FAO	Rome	<b>CHAD - TCHAD</b> Délégué M. BAMANGA ABBAS Chargé d'affaires a.i. Représentant permanent suppléant auprès de la FAO	Rome
<b>BANGLADESH</b> Delegate K.HAMID Ambassador Permanent Representative to FAO, WFP and IFAD	Rome	<b>CHINA - CHINE</b> Delegate ZHENGPING TANG Permanent Representative to FAO	Rome
Alternates M. MEJBAHUDDIN Counsellor (Economic) Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO	Rome	Alternates LU XIAOPING Deputy Division Director International Cooperation Programme Ministry of Agriculture	Beijing
K. RAB Director Bangladesh Jute Mills Corp		<b>YUAN HAIYING</b> First Secretary Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO	Rome
<b>BELGIUM - BELGIQUE - BELGICA</b> Délégué G. YSEBAERT Ingénieur principal Service relations internationales Ministère de l'agriculture	Bruxelles	<b>CONGO</b> Délégué J. S. KAYA-KOMBO Représentant permanent adjoint auprès de la FAO	Rome
<b>BOLIVIA - BOLIVIE</b> Delegado A. GONZALES QUINT Representante Permanente Alternante ante la FAO	Roma		

<b>COSTA RICA</b> Delegado D. EDWARDS BORBON Ministro Consejero Representante Permanente Alterno ante la FAO	Roma	<b>EGYPT - EGYPTE - EGIPTO</b> Delegate A. ABOUL-NAGA Agricultural Counsellor Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO	Rome
Sra. Y. GAGO Representante Permanente Alterno ante la FAO	Roma	<b>EL SALVADOR</b> Delegado Sra. M. E. JIMENEZ Consejero Representante Permanente Adjunto ante la FAO	Roma
<b>CROATIA - CROATIE - CROACIA</b> Delegate B. CECUK First Secretary Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO	Rome	E. VIDES Permanent Representation to FAO	Rome
<b>CUBA</b> Delegado J. NUIRY SANCHEZ Embajador ante la FAO Representante Permanente ante la FAO	Roma	<b>ESTONIA - ESTONIE</b> Delegate Ms.E. ASKERSTAM Ambassador Plenipotentiary Permanent Representative to FAO	Rome
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Alternate Ms. M. PLUHAROVA Secretary of National FAO Committee Ministry of Agriculture	Prague	Ms. S. GUALANDI Représentation permanente auprès de la FAO	Rome
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<b>GHANA</b> Delegate Ms. T. STRIGGER SCOTT Ambassador Permanent Representative to FAO	Rome	<b>ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN</b> <b>REPUBLIQUE ISLAMIQUE D'IRAN</b> <b>REPUBLICA ISLAMICA DEL IRAN</b> Delegate M. S. NOORI-NAEENI Ambassador to FAO Permanent Representative to FAO Alternates	Rome
Alternate M. I. SEIDU Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO	Rome	M. EBRAHIMI Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO	Rome
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<b>HAITI</b> Délégué Ms. S. PERCY Représentant permanent adjoint auprès de la FAO	Rome	<b>IRELAND - IRLANDE - IRLANDA</b> Delegate D. BEEHAN Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO	Rome
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AB. GHAFAR A. TAMBII Assistant Agricultural Attaché Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO	Rome		



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économiques extérieures			
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		<b>ESTADOS UNIDOS DE AMERICA</b>	
<b>THAILAND - THAILANDE - TAILANDIA</b>		Delegate	
Delegate		R.B. HELM	
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Assistant Permanent Secretary		Foreign Agricultural Service	
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Department of Agricultural Extension		International Relations Adviser	
Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives	Bangkok	International Cooperation & Development	
		Foreign Agricultural Service	
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Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives	Bangkok	Representante Permanente Adjunto	
		ante la FAO	Roma
A. OORAIKUL		Alternata	
Director Agricultural Economic Research Institute		Srta. V. PÉREZ PÉREZ	
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C. CHANASENI		Representante Permanente Alternata	
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R. THANOMSAKYUTH		Délégué	
Chief, International Relations		A. SAMBA MOONI TE	
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<b>TUNISIA - TUNISIE - TUNEZ</b>		<b>ZIMBABWE</b>	
Délégué		Delegate	
S. HAMDI		Ms. S. NYAMUDEZA	
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Suppléant		Embassy of Zimbabwe	Rome
A. KHALDI			
Directeur			
Ministère de l'agriculture	Tunis		
<b>UGANDA - OUGANDA</b>			
Delegate			
W. SAKIRA			
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G. TEDESCO Expert	Vatican City

**UNITED NATIONS AND SPECIALIZED AGENCIES**

<b>COMMON FUND FOR COMMODITIES</b> <b>FONDS COMMUN POUR LES PRODUITS DE BASE</b> <b>FONDO COMUN PARA LOS PRODUCTOS BASICOS</b> G. GEBRE-MEDHIN Senior Project Manager	Amsterdam
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CNUCED/WTO - CENTRO DE COMERCIO INTERNACIONAL UNCTAD/WTO**

**B. BYSKOV**

Chief, Market Development Section  
Commodities and Agro-based Products

Geneva

**UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (UNCTAD)  
CENTRE DES NATIONS UNIES SUR LE COMMERCE ET LE DEVELOPPEMENT (CNUCED)  
CONFERENCIA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS SOBRE COMERCIO Y DESARROLLO (UNCTAD)**

**Ms. S. TANG**

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AGENCE INTERNATIONALE DE L'ENERGIE ATOMIQUE  
ORGANISMO INTERNACIONAL DE ENERGIA ATOMICA**

**P. LOAHARANU**

Head, Food Preservation Section  
Joint FAO/IAEA Division

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**OBSERVERS FROM NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS  
OBSERVATEURS DES ORGANISATIONS NON-GOUVERNEMENTALES  
OBSERVADORES DE LAS ORGANIZACIONES NO GUBERNAMENTALES**

**WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS  
FEDERATION SYNDICALE MONDIALE  
FEDERACION SINDICAL MUNDIAL**

**Mme. A. L. CASADEI**

Représentant permanent auprès de la FAO

Rome

**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMISTS  
ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DES ECONOMISTES AGRICOLES  
FEDERACION INTERNACIONAL DE ECONOMISTAS AGRICOLAS**

**Ms. M. LOSEBY**

University of Tuscia

Viterbo

**INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS  
FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES PRODUCTEURS AGRICOLES  
FEDERACION INTERNACIONAL DE PRODUCTORES AGRICOLAS**

**Mrs. G. PELA'**

Permanent Representative to FAO

Rome

## APPENDIX B

**DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S STATEMENT TO THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION  
OF THE COMMITTEE ON COMMODITY PROBLEMS<sup>1</sup>**

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

I wish to begin by joining you on behalf of the Director-General and the Organization in expressing sympathy to the family and the government of Ambassador Laureau. We indeed have fond memories of the time he devoted to FAO.

I have the pleasure on behalf of the Director-General of the FAO, Mr. Jacques Diouf, to welcome you to this session of the Committee on Commodity Problems.

You meet after two years which have seen some dramatic changes in world agricultural commodity markets. When you met last, we were at the beginning of a rise in agricultural commodity prices, brought on by an earlier cycle of lower investment in some tropical products and triggered off by slow growth, or weather induced declines, in production and, consequently, lower stocks. Financial funds were entering commodity markets in a substantial way. But one by one the supplies of the various commodities, relative to demand, became easier and by mid-1996 most prices were on the decline.

As always on these occasions, these developments led to the search for a deeper understanding of the underlying factors affecting international market prices, the impacts on importing and exporting countries and the implications for the future. Many wondered whether the world agricultural markets were not in for a period of heightened instability. A group of experts met to consider this question, and concluded that the changes in policies affecting international trade in agricultural commodities could lead to greater price instability in international markets.

The Intergovernmental Group on Grains has requested the Secretariat to monitor more closely and report trends in world prices and stocks, and has recommended that FAO undertake further studies on price transmission to producers and consumers in importing and exporting countries, and to include an analysis of the underlying factors, such as market fundamentals and policy measures. We believe that this request and recommendation are fully consistent with the World Food Summit Plan of Action. The Secretariat therefore stands ready to do so, not only for grains, should the Committee so desire.

The agricultural terms of trade appear to have changed rather sharply against the developing countries last year, as the export prices of their main agricultural commodities fell by 15 percent, while the prices for the foods they import remained higher. It is well to recall that the declining terms of trade for the agricultural commodities of the developing countries is a long term phenomenon.

These issues will figure prominently in your agenda this week. You will be reviewing the current commodity situation, including the work in response to Conference Resolution 2/79 "Commodity Trade, Protectionism and Agricultural Adjustment".

You have an important series of decisions to be taken on the work of your subsidiary bodies. The Council, assisted by the Programme and Finance Committees, will be reviewing the work of all the statutory bodies, including the subsidiary bodies of the Main Committees, in June, with a view towards further streamlining of procedures and a reduction in the number of such bodies, through abolition or merger.

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<sup>1</sup> Delivered on his behalf by Mr. H.W. Hjort, Deputy Director-General.

The paper before you on this subject reviews our experience with the modified system as approved by the Committee or the Groups. The Committee may wish to consider further actions that could be taken to improve the effectiveness of the Groups, and to enhance efficiencies even more. Once again you are being asked to consider the addition of another Group, and at the same time the overall thrust is to abolish, merge, hold joint sessions and so forth. In addressing this important issue I encourage you to carefully consider how the Groups can perform their important functions more efficiently, making full use of modern means of communication.

Another item of relevance to commodity development is the sponsorship of projects for financing by the Common Fund for Commodities and other sources of funds. You will be reviewing the work of the Groups in their role as International Commodity Bodies for the Common Fund.

Turning now to the Uruguay Round, it has ushered in many changes to policies and to agricultural commodity markets. This week you will be examining several aspects related to the Round. The Consultative Sub-Committee on Surplus Disposal has adjusted the FAO's Catalogue of Transactions to be compatible with the new Uruguay Round disciplines on export subsidies. The new Register of Transactions has been prepared and we hope that you can decide on it this week.

Our paper on the consequences of the Uruguay Round puts a heavy focus on new market opportunities that could arise. There are some interesting findings indicating a reduced tariff escalation and good market prospects for some of the fastest growing agricultural commodities. Our future work in this area reflects the decisions taken at the World Food Summit including to assist developing countries in adjusting to the new trade rules, taking advantage of the opportunities, and preparing for multilateral trade negotiations including in agriculture.

Mr. Chairman, your agenda also includes two rather more technical issues which are becoming of increasing importance to world agricultural trade - links between trade and the environment and on the potential impact on agricultural markets of bio-technology. On trade and environment, you will have the opportunity of reviewing some general conclusions emerging from recent commodity studies and deciding on the future work in this area which reflects both earlier decisions of the Committee and the emphasis in Commitment 4 of the Summit on the need to make every effort to ensure that environmental measures do not unfairly affect market access for developing countries' and agricultural exports. The issue of biotechnology is of course of great interest to many FAO bodies and the paper for this Committee focuses exclusively on the possible market impact of biotechnology. Your guidance on this new area of work is sought.

Mr. Chairman, the Committee has a full and varied agenda before it. I look forward to following your discussions.

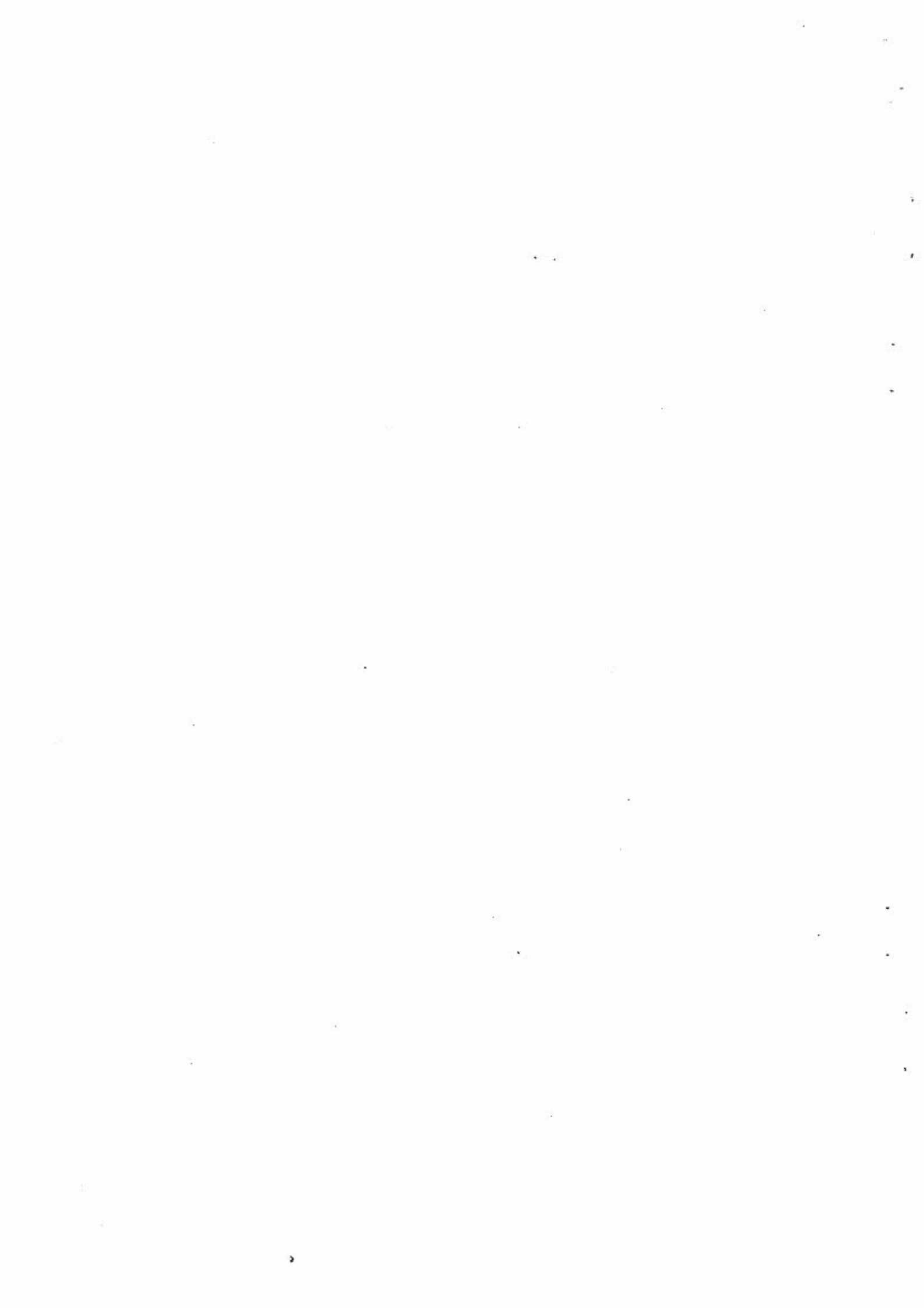
On behalf of the Director-General and myself I wish you a successful meeting.

Thank you.

## APPENDIX C

## AGENDA

1. Organizational matters:
  - (a) Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairmen
  - (b) Adoption of Agenda and Timetable
2. Statement by the Director-General
3. Review of the World Commodity Situation and Outlook, including follow-up to Conference Resolution 2/79 on Commodity Trade, Protectionism and Agricultural Adjustment
4. Activities of Subsidiary Bodies
  - (a) Review of Activities of the Intergovernmental Commodity Groups:
    - (i) Tea
    - (ii) Hard Fibres
    - (iii) Oilseeds, Oils and Fats
    - (iv) Grains
    - (v) Jute, Kenaf and Allied Fibres
    - (vi) Citrus Fruit
    - (vii) Meat
    - (viii) Sub-group on Hides and Skins
    - (ix) Rice
    - (x) Bananas
  - (b) Role and Functioning of the Intergovernmental Commodity Groups
  - (c) Review of the Work of the Consultative Subcommittee on Surplus Disposal (CSSD)
  - (d) International Consultation on Tropical Fruit
5. Selected Commodity and Trade Issues:
  - (a) Impact of the Uruguay Round
  - (b) Trade, Environment and Sustainable Agricultural development
  - (c) The Impact of Biotechnology Developments on Trade of Agricultural Commodities
6. Arrangements for the Sixty-second Session
7. Any Other Business, including developments in other Organizations
8. Adoption of Report





## APPENDIX D

LIST OF DOCUMENTS ISSUED FOR THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON COMMODITY PROBLEMS

Document Number		Provisional Agenda Number
CCP 97/1	Provisional agenda and agenda notes	1
CCP 97/2	Report of the 11th Session of the Intergovernmental Group on Tea, Rome, 10-12 April 1995	4(a)
CCP 96/3	Report of the 28th Session of the Intergovernmental Group on Hard Fibres, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 25-28 April 1995	4(a)
CCP 96/4	Report of the 27th Session of the Intergovernmental Group on Oilseeds, Oils and Fat, Rome, 9-11 May 1995	4(a)
CCP 96/5	Report of the 26th Session of the Intergovernmental Group on Grains, Rome, 30 May - 1 June 1995	4(a)
CCP 96/6	Report of the 30th Session of the Intergovernmental Group on Jute, Kenaf and Allied Fibres, Rome, 6-8 November 1995	4(a)
CCP 97/7	Report of the 11th Session of the Intergovernmental Group on Citrus Fruit, Rome, 10-12 April 1996	4(a)
CCP 97/8	Report of the 16th Session of the Intergovernmental Group on Meat, Bologna, Italy, 8 - 10 May 1996	4(a)
CCP 97/8 Supp. 1	Report of the 5th Session of the Sub-Group on Hides and Skins, Rome, Bologna, Italy, 6 - 8 May 1996	4(a)
CCP 97/9	Report of the 38th Session of the Intergovernmental Group on Rice, Seville, Spain, 14 - 17 May 1996	4(a)
CCP 97/10	Report of the 29th Session of the Intergovernmental Group on Hard Fibres, Manila, Philippines, 24-27 September 1996	4(a)
CCP 97/11	Progress in FAO's links with the Common Fund for Commodities	7
CCP 97/12	World Commodity Situation and Outlook and Trends in Protectionism in Agriculture	3
CCP 97/13	Role and Functioning of the Intergovernmental Commodity Groups	4(b)
CCP 97/14	Consultative Subcommittee on Surplus Disposal: 36th Report to the Committee on Commodity Problems	4(c)

Document Number		Provisional Agenda Number
CCP 97/15	Trade, Environment and Sustainable Agricultural Development (SARD): Follow-up Activities	5(b)
CCP 97/16	Impact of the Uruguay Round on Agriculture: Follow-up activities	5(a)
CCP 97/17	Impact of Biotechnology Developments on Trade of Agricultural Commodities	5(c)
CCP 97/18	Possible Approaches to Intergovernmental Cooperation on Tropical Fruits	4(d)
CCP 97/19	Report of the 27th Session of the Intergovernmental Group on Grains, Rome, 5 - 7 February 1997	4(a)
CCP 97/Inf.1	Provisional Timetable	1(b)
CCP 97/Inf.2	List of documents	1(b)
CCP 97/Inf.3	Membership of the Committee on Commodity Problems	1(b)
CCP 97/Inf.4	Statement of competence and voting rights submitted by the European Community (EC) and its member states	1(b)
CCP 97/Inf.5	Opening statement by Mr.H.W. Hjort, Deputy Director-General to the Sixty-first session of the Committee on Commodity Problems	2
CCP 97/Inf.6	List of Delegates and Observers	
CCP 97/CRS.1	Report of the International Consultation on Tropical Fruits, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 15-19 July 1996	4(d)

## APPENDIX E

**MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE ON COMMODITY PROBLEMS**  
**(BIENNIUM 1996-97)**  
**(as at 25 February 1997)**

Albania	Ethiopia	Myanmar
Algeria	European Community	Netherlands
Angola	(Member Organization)	New Zealand
Argentina	Finland	Nicaragua
Australia	France	Niger
Austria	Gabon	Nigeria
Belgium	Germany	Norway
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ghana	Pakistan
Brazil	Greece	Panama
Burkina Faso	Haiti	Peru
Burundi	Hungary	Philippines
Canada	India	Portugal
Cape Verde	Indonesia	Romania
Central African Republic	Iran, Islamic Republic of	Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of
Chad	Iraq	Senegal
Chile	Ireland	Slovakia
China	Israel	Slovenia
Colombia	Italy	South Africa
Congo	Japan	Spain
Costa Rica	Kenya	Sri Lanka
Côte d'Ivoire	Korea, Republic of	Sudan
Croatia	Kuwait	Sweden
Cuba	Lebanon	Switzerland
Cyprus	Lesotho	Tanzania
Czech Republic	Libya	Thailand
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	Lithuania	Tunisia
Denmark	Luxembourg	Uganda
Dominica	Madagascar	United Kingdom
Dominican Republic	Malaysia	United States of America
Egypt	Malta	Uruguay
El Salvador	Mauritius	Venezuela
Estonia	Mexico	Zaire
	Morocco	Zambia
		Zimbabwe

