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Organization of the
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Organisation des Nations
Unies pour l'alimentation
et l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الغذية والزراعة
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COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Sixty-Fifth Session
Cent soixante-cinquième session
165.º período de sesiones**

**Virtual Meeting, 30 November - 4 December 2020
VERBATIM RECORDS OF PLENARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL**

**Réunion Virtuelle, 30 novembre - 4 décembre 2020
PROCÈS-VERBAUX DES SÉANCES PLÉNIÈRES DU CONSEIL**

**Reunión Virtual, 30 de noviembre - 4 de diciembre de 2020
ACTAS TAQUIGRÁFICAS DE LAS SESIONES PLENARIAS DEL
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Table of Contents – Table des matières – Índice

FIRST PLENARY SESSION PREMIÈRE SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE PRIMERA SESIÓN PLENARIA (30 November 2020)

	Page
Item 1. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable	
Point 1. Adoption de l'ordre du jour et du calendrier	
Tema 1. Aprobación del programa y el calendario.....23 (CL 165/1; CL 165/INF/1; CL 165/INF/3; CL 165/INF/5)	
Item 2. Election of three Vice-Chairpersons, and Designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee	
Point 2. Élection des trois vice-présidents et nomination du Président et des membres du Comité de rédaction	
Tema 2. Elección de los tres Vicepresidentes y designación del Presidente y los miembros del Comité de Redacción.....24	
Item 3. Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and Outline of Medium Term Plan 2022-25	
Point 3. Grandes lignes du Cadre stratégique 2022-2031 et ébauche du Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025	
Tema 3. Esquema del Marco estratégico para 2022-2031 y esquema del Plan a plazo medio para 2022-25.....26 (CL 165/3)	

SECOND PLENARY MEETING DEUXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEGUNDA SESIÓN PLENARIA (30 November 2020)

	Page
Item 3. Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and Outline of Medium Term Plan 2022-25 (continued)	
Point 3. Grandes lignes du Cadre stratégique 2022-2031 et ébauche du Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025 (suite)	
Tema 3. Esquema del Marco estratégico para 2022-2031 y esquema del Plan a plazo medio para 2022-25 (continuación).....33 (CL 165/3)	

THIRD PLENARY MEETING TROISIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE TERCERA SESIÓN PLENARIA (1 December 2020)

	Page
Item 3. Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and Outline of Medium Term Plan 2022-25 (continued)	
Point 3. Grandes lignes du Cadre stratégique 2022-2031 et ébauche du Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025 (suite)	
Tema 3. Esquema del Marco estratégico para 2022-2031 y esquema del Plan a plazo medio para 2022-25 (continuación).....75 (CL 165/3)	

Item 4.	FAO's new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement	
Point 4.	Nouvelle stratégie de la FAO relative à la participation du secteur privé	
Tema 4.	Nueva estrategia de la FAO para la colaboración con el sector privado.....	91
<i>(CL 165/4)</i>		

**FOURTH PLENARY MEETING
QUATRIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
CUARTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
(1 December 2020)**

		Page
Item 4.	FAO's new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement (<i>continued</i>)	
Point 4.	Nouvelle stratégie de la FAO relative à la participation du secteur privé (<i>suite</i>)	
Tema 4.	Nueva estrategia de la FAO para la colaboración con el sector privado (<i>continuación</i>).....	107
<i>(CL 165/4)</i>		
Item 5.	FAO's response to the Covid-19 pandemic: Building to transform	
Point 5.	Action menée par la FAO pour faire face à la covid-19: construire pour transformer	
Tema 5.	Respuesta de la FAO a la pandemia de la enfermedad por coronavirus (COVID-19): construir para transformar.....	128
<i>(CL 165/5)</i>		
Item 6.	The Hand-in-Hand Initiative	
Point 6.	Initiative Main dans la main	
Tema 6.	La Iniciativa Mano de la mano.....	153
<i>(CL 165/6)</i>		

**FIFTH PLENARY MEETING
CINQUIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
QUINTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
(2 December 2020)**

		Page
Item 8.	Technical Committees	
Point 8.	Comités techniques	
Tema 8.	Comités técnicos.....	177
<i>Item 8.1 Report of the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (28 September-2 October 2020)</i>		
<i>Point 8.1 Rapport de la vingt-septième session du Comité de l'agriculture (28 septembre-2 octobre 2020)</i>		
<i>Tema 8.1 Informe del 27.º período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura (28 de septiembre – 2 de octubre de 2020).....</i>		
<i>(C 2021/21)</i>		
Item 2.	Election of three Vice-Chairpersons, and Designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee (<i>continued</i>)	
Point 2.	Élection des trois vice-présidents et nomination du Président et des membres du Comité de rédaction (<i>suite</i>)	
Tema 2.	Elección de los tres Vicepresidentes y designación del Presidente y los miembros del Comité de Redacción (<i>continuación</i>).....	213

**SIXTH PLENARY SESSION
SIXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
SEXTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
(2 December 2020)**

	Page
Item 21. Any Other Matters	
Point 21. Questions diverses	
Tema 21. Asuntos varios.....	
<i>Item 21.1 Statement by a Representative of the FAO Staff Bodies</i>	
<i>Point 21.1 Déclaration d'un représentant des associations du personnel de la FAO</i>	
<i>Tema 21.1 Declaración de un representante de los órganos de representación del personal de la FAO.....</i>	
	215
Item 8. Technical Committees	
Point 8. Comités techniques	
Tema 8. Comités técnicos.....	
<i>Item 8.2 Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry (5-9 October 2020)</i>	
<i>Point 8.2 Rapport de la vingt-cinquième session du Comité des forêts (5-9 octobre 2020)</i>	
<i>Tema 8.2 Informe del 25.º período de sesiones del Comité Forestal (5-9 de octubre de 2020).....</i>	
	216
<i>(C 2021/24)</i>	
Item 9. Report of the Joint Meeting of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee and 183rd Session of the Finance Committee (November 2020)	
Point 9. Rapport de la Réunion conjointe du Comité du Programme (cent vingt-neuvième session) et du Comité financier (cent quatre-vingt-troisième session) (novembre 2020)	
Tema 9. Informe de la reunión conjunta del Comité del Programa en su 129.º período de sesiones y el Comité de Finanzas en su 183.º período de sesiones (noviembre de 2020).....	234
<i>(CL 165/9; CL 165/18; CL 165/INF/6)</i>	
Item 10. Report of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee (9-13 November 2020)	
Point 10. Rapport de la cent vingt-neuvième session du Comité du Programme (9-13 novembre 2020)	
Tema 10. Informe del 129.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa (9-13 de noviembre de 2020).....	256
<i>(CL 165/10)</i>	
Item 11. Reports of the 182nd (29-30 October 2020) and 183rd (9-13 November 2020) Sessions of the Finance Committee	
Point 11. Rapports des cent quatre-vingt-deuxième et cent quatre-vingt-troisième sessions du Comité financier (29-30 octobre et 9-13 novembre 2020, respectivement)	
Tema 11. Informes de los períodos de sesiones 182.º (29 y 30 de octubre de 2020) y 183.º (9-13 de noviembre de 2020) del Comité de Finanzas.....	277
<i>(CL 165/11; CL 165/19)</i>	
<i>Item 11.1 Audited Accounts – FAO 2019</i>	
<i>Point 11.1 Comptes vérifiés – FAO 2019</i>	
<i>Tema 11.1 Cuentas comprobadas de la FAO correspondientes a 2019.....</i>	
	277
<i>(C 2021/6 A; C 2021/6 B)</i>	

<i>Item 11.2 Status of Current Assessments and Arrears</i>	
<i>Point 11.2 Situation des contributions courantes et des arriérés</i>	
<i>Tema 11.2 Estado de las cuotas corrientes y los atrasos.....</i>	<i>277</i>
<i>(CL 165/LIM/2)</i>	
Item 12.	Report of the 111th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (26-28 October 2020)
Point 12.	Rapport de la cent onzième session du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques (26-28 octobre 2020)
Tema 12.	Informe del 111.º período de sesiones del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos (26-28 de octubre de 2020).....
	286
<i>(CL 165/12)</i>	
Item 17.	World Food Programme
Point 17.	Programme alimentaire mondial
Tema 17.	Programa Mundial de Alimentos.....
	297
<i>Item 17.1 Election of Six Members of the WFP Executive Board</i>	
<i>Point 17.1 Élection de six membres du Conseil d'administration du PAM</i>	
<i>Tema 17.1 Elección de seis miembros de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA.....</i>	<i>297</i>
<i>(CL 165/17.1; CL 165/LIM/3)</i>	
Item 21.	Any Other Matters
Point 21.	Questions diverses
Tema 21.	Asuntos varios.....
	298
Item 17.	World Food Programme
Point 17.	Programme alimentaire mondial
Tema 17.	Programa Mundial de Alimentos.....
<i>Item 17.2 Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board on its activities in 2019</i>	
<i>Point 17.2 Rapport annuel du Conseil d'administration du PAM sur ses activités en 2019</i>	
<i>Tema 17.2 Informe anual de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA sobre sus actividades en 2019.....</i>	<i>302</i>
<i>(CL 165/17.2)</i>	
Item 7.	Regional Conferences
Point 7.	Conférences régionales
Tema 7.	Conferencias regionales.....
	305
<i>Item 7.1 Report of the 31st Session of the Regional Conference for Africa (26-28 October 2020)</i>	
<i>Point 7.1 Rapport de la trente et unième session de la Conférence régionale pour l'Afrique (26-28 octobre 2020)</i>	
<i>Tema 7.1 Informe del 31.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para África (26-28 de octubre de 2020).....</i>	<i>305</i>
<i>(C 2021/14)</i>	
<i>Item 7.2 Report of the 35th Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (1-4 September 2020)</i>	
<i>Point 7.2 Rapport de la trente-cinquième session de la Conférence régionale pour l'Asie et le Pacifique (1-4 septembre 2020)</i>	
<i>Tema 7.2 Informe del 35.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para Asia y el Pacífico (1-4 de septiembre de 2020).....</i>	<i>305</i>
<i>(C 2021/15)</i>	

<i>Item 7.3</i>	<i>Report of the 32nd Session of the Regional Conference for Europe (2-4 November 2020)</i>	
<i>Point 7.3</i>	<i>Rapport de la trente-deuxième session de la Conférence régionale pour l'Europe (2-4 novembre 2020)</i>	
<i>Tema 7.3</i>	<i>Informe del 32.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para Europa (2-4 de noviembre de 2020).....</i>	<i>305</i>
	<i>(C 2021/16)</i>	
<i>Item 7.4</i>	<i>Report of the 36th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean (19-21 October 2020)</i>	
<i>Point 7.4</i>	<i>Rapport de la trente-sixième session de la Conférence régionale pour l'Amérique latine et les Caraïbes (19-21 octobre 2020)</i>	
<i>Tema 7.4</i>	<i>Informe del 36.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para América Latina y el Caribe (19-21 de octubre de 2020).....</i>	<i>305</i>
	<i>(C 2021/17)</i>	
<i>Item 7.5</i>	<i>Report of the 35th Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East (21-22 September 2020)</i>	
<i>Point 7.5</i>	<i>Rapport de la trente-cinquième session de la Conférence régionale pour le Proche-Orient (21-22 septembre 2020)</i>	
<i>Tema 7.5</i>	<i>Informe del 35.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para el Cercano Oriente (21 y 22 de septiembre de 2020).....</i>	<i>305</i>
	<i>(C 2021/18)</i>	
<i>Item 7.6</i>	<i>Report of the Sixth Informal Regional Conference for North America (22-23 October 2020)</i>	
<i>Point 7.6</i>	<i>Rapport de la sixième Conférence régionale informelle pour l'Amérique du Nord (22-23 octobre 2020)</i>	
<i>Tema 7.6</i>	<i>Informe de la Sexta Conferencia Regional Oficiosa para América del Norte (22 y 23 de octubre de 2020).....</i>	<i>305</i>
	<i>(C 2021/LIM/1)</i>	
<i>Item 13.</i>	<i>Progress Report on Rome-based Agencies collaboration</i>	
<i>Point 13.</i>	<i>Rapport intérimaire sur la collaboration entre les organismes des Nations Unies ayant leur siège à Rome</i>	
<i>Tema 13.</i>	<i>Informe sobre la marcha de las actividades de colaboración de los organismos con sede en Roma.....</i>	<i>315</i>
	<i>(CL 165/13)</i>	
<i>Item 14.</i>	<i>Arrangements for the 42nd Session of the Conference</i>	
<i>Point 14.</i>	<i>Préparatifs en vue de la quarante-deuxième session de la Conférence</i>	
<i>Tema 14.</i>	<i>Disposiciones para el 42.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia.....</i>	<i>319</i>
	<i>(CL 165/14)</i>	
<i>Item 15.</i>	<i>Council Multi-year Programme of Work 2021-2024</i>	
<i>Point 15.</i>	<i>Programme de travail pluriannuel du Conseil pour 2021-2024</i>	
<i>Tema 15.</i>	<i>Programa de trabajo plurianual del Consejo para 2021-24.....</i>	<i>322</i>
	<i>(CL 165/15)</i>	
<i>Item 16.</i>	<i>Status of Implementation of Decisions taken at the 164th Session of the Council (6-10 July 2020)</i>	
<i>Point 16.</i>	<i>Suite donnée aux décisions adoptées par le Conseil à sa cent soixante-quatrième session (6-10 juillet 2020)</i>	
<i>Tema 16.</i>	<i>Estado de aplicación de las decisiones adoptadas por el Consejo en su 164.º período de sesiones (6-10 de julio de 2020).....</i>	<i>322</i>
	<i>(CL 165/LIM/4)</i>	

Item 18.	Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2020-22	
Point 18.	Calendrier 2020-2022 des sessions des organes directeurs de la FAO et des autres reunions principales	
Tema 18.	Calendario de los períodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores de la FAO y otras reuniones importantes en 2020-22.....	323
<i>(CL 165/LIM/1)</i>		

**SEVENTH PLENARY SESSION
SEPTIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
SEPTIMA SESIÓN PLENARIA
(3 December 2020)**

	Page
Item 16.	Suite donnée aux décisions adoptées par le Conseil à sa cent soixante-quatrième session (6-10 juillet 2020) (<i>continued</i>)
Point 16.	Suite donnée aux décisions adoptées par le Conseil à sa cent soixante-quatrième session (6-10 juillet 2020) (<i>suite</i>)
Tema 16.	Estado de aplicación de las decisiones adoptadas por el Consejo en su 164.º período de sesiones (6-10 de julio de 2020) (<i>continuación</i>).....
	327
<i>(CL 165/LIM/4)</i>	
Item 18.	Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2020-22 (<i>continued</i>)
Point 18.	Calendrier 2020-2022 des sessions des organes directeurs de la FAO et des autres reunions principals (<i>suite</i>)
Tema 18.	Calendario de los períodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores de la FAO y otras reuniones importantes en 2020-22 (<i>continuación</i>).....
	327
<i>(CL 165/LIM/1)</i>	
Item 19.	Developments in <i>Fora</i> of Importance for the Mandate of FAO
Point 19.	Évolution des débats au sein d'autres instances intéressant la FAO
Tema 19.	Novedades en foros de importancia para el mandato de la FAO.....
	328
<i>(CL 165/INF/4)</i>	
Item 20.	Tentative Agenda for the 166th Session of the Council (April 2021)
Point 20.	Ordre du jour provisoire de la cent soixante-sixième session du Conseil (avril 2021)
Tema 20.	Programa provisional del 166.º período de sesiones del Consejo (abril de 2021).....
	329
<i>(CL 165/INF/2)</i>	

**EIGHTH PLENARY SESSION
HUITIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
OCTAVA SESIÓN PLENARIA
(4 December 2020)**

	Page
ADOPTION OF REPORT	
ADOPTION DU RAPPORT	
APROBACIÓN DEL INFORME	335

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-Fifth Session Cent soixante-cinquième session 165.º período de sesiones
Virtual Meeting, 30 November - 4 December 2020 Réunion Virtuelle, 30 novembre - 4 décembre 2020 Reunión Virtual, 30 de noviembre - 4 de diciembre de 2020
FIRST PLENARY SESSION PREMIÈRE SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE PRIMERA SESIÓN PLENARIA
30 November 2020

The First Plenary Meeting was opened at 9:31 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La première séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 31
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la primera sesión plenaria a las 9.31
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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CHAIRPERSON

I call the first meeting of the 165th Session of the FAO Council to order.

I wish to welcome Council Members and Observers to this Session. Before we begin, I would like to recall some points for good conduct of the meeting in virtual setting.

First, please ensure that your Zoom name appears on the screen in the appropriate fashion. For Members of the Council, that means only the name of your Member Nation, or Member Organization, and not the names of individual delegates.

For other Members of FAO, your screen name should start with the word “Observer,” followed by the name of your Member Nation or Associate Member. For all other Observers, please ensure that your Zoom screen name appears with the word “Observer,” followed by the name of your organisation.

Second, I would like to request all participants to follow the meeting in Mute mode, and to click the “Unmute” button only when you are given the floor.

Third, to request the floor, please use the “Raise Hand” function under the “Participants” button at the bottom of the screen. I will pass the floor to Members based on the order that appears on my screen.

I wish to bring to the attention of the Council that the European Union is participating in this meeting in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of Article II of the FAO Constitution. Furthermore, the European Union will be participating in the Drafting Committee in accordance with the aforementioned paragraphs of Article II of the FAO Constitution and, on matters within its competence, will be exercising, on an alternative basis, the membership rights of the European Union member states elected to the Drafting Committee. The declaration made by the European Union and its Member States is contained in information document *CL 165/INF/3*.

At this stage, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the Director-General, Dr Qu Dongyu.

There can be no doubt that FAO has benefited from his leadership through this challenging year marked by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic: safeguarding the health of employees worldwide, and at the same ensuring the continued delivery of FAO under its mandate.

In line with his commitment to transparency and accountability, the Director-General has geared up communication this year, both internally and with Members, which has been welcome by all of us in these difficult times.

Further to his drive for efficiency and innovation, the Director-General has ensured the integrity of governance at FAO in 2020, by the successful rescheduling and conduct of Governing Bodies in virtual modality, as well as his own participation and engagement in meetings.

Therefore, at the end of an extraordinary year, it is my honour to invite him to address the Council this morning.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Mr Khalid Mehboob, my Brother, Independent Chairperson of the Council of FAO, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my pleasure to address you today at the opening of this Council Session.

Since I have already delivered the full text to all of you earlier ahead of this Council, I do not want to read it through because you will lose your patience. It takes about two hours. Therefore, I think I will jump through the highlights, and you will just follow your full text if you downloaded it.

I am happy to see that you are all safe and well and smiling at the beginning of a new week. We are going to celebrate with a long weekend after the Council.

The world has continued to change rapidly and much has happened inside FAO since we met last time. The adjustments we have introduced have helped us to react better to the new normal and strengthened our capacity to better serve our Members.

Today, I will update the Council on FAO’s most important activities, share the status of implementation of the decisions of the last Council session, and present new approaches and

initiatives. With the structural reform achieved and the collective leadership, FAO's major activities are running smoothly.

Throughout my intervention, you will recognize a clear message centred around three elements: promises kept, results delivered, and a clear vision of our next steps.

Since the last Council, we have continued to strengthen collaboration with Members and partners and to increase FAO's international engagement, visibility and reputation. We did this in the framework of our initiatives, through bilateral and multilateral engagements and other forms of active outreach.

Our flagship Hand-in-Hand Initiative is advancing very well. One year after its launch, the Hand-in-Hand Initiative is supporting the efforts of 30 countries to end poverty (SDG1) and hunger and all forms of malnutrition (SDG2) in a country-owned and country-led manner. Based on the wide interest and overwhelming positive reactions received so far, I am confident that this number will increase significantly in the coming months. In July, we launched the Hand-in-Hand Geospatial Data Platform.

In September, together with Google, we launched Earth Map, an innovative, free and open-source Big Data tool, developed by FAO. We have been moving very quickly to build technical and analytical capacity for evidence-based decision-making through the Hand-In-Hand Geospatial Platform.

In addition, as you can see, we are walking the talk when it comes to integrating innovative approaches and digital technologies in our core business. The International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture is another important element in this approach. We have developed draft Terms of Reference, as requested by the Council, and we have initiated their review by the Technical Committees.

Distinguished Delegates, from the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, FAO used its technical expertise and international standing to raise awareness, disseminate knowledge and rally concrete action.

I asked the Secretary-General to talk to the leaders of the most vulnerable countries to run their crop calendars, their agriculture calendars, and not to use export restrictions because they will increase prices and exacerbate food price volatility.

We raised international awareness by publishing joint statements, such as the one with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) on mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on food trade and markets and the joint statement issued just before the G20 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting together with the World Bank, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

As a historic first, and in collaboration with the African Union (AU), we held a virtual meeting with 45 of Africa's Agriculture Ministers in April, and the meeting produced a ministerial declaration and established an African Union-FAO Task Force on the impacts of COVID-19 on Food Security and Nutrition. A Tripartite Ministerial Meeting (Agriculture, Trade and Finance) the first meeting of its kind in response to the COVID-19 emergency and beyond, was convened in July by the African Union Commission with technical support from FAO. In addition, just last week, we held a Ministerial Meeting of the African Union-FAO Task Force attended by 20 Ministers and a total of 120 participants to ensure concrete joint action. I mention that because we wanted to change the business model, and Africa, you need support from trade and financial Ministers, not only from the Ministers of Agriculture.

FAO assisted the Agriculture Ministers of 25 Latin American and Caribbean countries in signing an agreement to join forces to protect the food supply for more than 620 million people in that region.

In July 2020, we launched the FAO comprehensive COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme, for immediate and medium to longer-term actions to prevent the health crisis from becoming a food crisis. This holistic program is designed not only to help countries for recovery but also to build back better and stronger towards transforming agri-food systems.

We have called for USD 1.3 billion around seven priority areas of work. These priorities are identified through a bottom-up approach in consultation with national governments and institutions, and this initial investment will be necessary to support the most vulnerable countries and people in need.

Up to now, we have mobilized more than USD 193 million through voluntary contribution and Technical Cooperation Programmes, and the projects are under implementation, hoping to reduce the funding gap and increase our support to the countries.

Another important initiative that was launched on 5 November 2020 is the Food Coalition. This initiative is proposed by the Government of Italy and led by FAO with the participation of our key and strategic partners. The Food Coalition will support the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme by raising awareness, mobilising financial resources, technical expertise, and innovation. FAO will serve as a neutral leader and convener of the Food Coalition. With our expansive network of Country Offices all around, we will ensure that the views and needs of countries and national partners are fully prioritised. We look forward to your active participation and engagement in the Coalition.

Just two weeks ago, we launched the One Health Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) issues, in collaboration with WHO and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

In July, we unveiled the Technical Platform on the Measurement and Reduction of Food Loss and Waste. The platform is a gateway to all related FAO resources, including the largest online collection of data on which food is lost and wasted and where.

Ladies and Gentlemen, FAO continues to play a vital role in supporting resilience and emergency preparedness.

Desert Locust response and Fall Armyworm are of the highest priority for FAO. For Desert Locust, resource partners stepped up fast and generously. To date, over USD 203 million have been raised. In the Greater Horn of Africa and Yemen, almost 1.3 million hectares have been treated since January 2020. Furthermore, with the efforts made in the region, it is estimated that over 2.5 million tons of cereal have been protected, valued at USD 765 million. This is enough to feed more than 17 million people for one year and protect over 1.2 million pastoral households. The Global Action for Fall Armyworm Control activities are going well and have been strengthened during past year. Eight demonstration countries and 53 pilot countries have been identified for a radical intervention at national and farmer level through a new business model that reaches over 50 percent of maize acreage in the three target regions; Africa, Asia and the Near East. Two main oversight bodies have been established: the Steering Committee that I chair, and the Technical Committee chaired by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Chief Scientist, Mr Robert Bertram, comprising more than 50 technical leaders globally. A Secretariat for Fall Armyworm Control to ensure the day-to-day implementation work is hosted at FAO.

Earlier this year, we introduced an innovative talking smartphone app known as NURU, available in 29 languages.

Distinguished Delegates, besides our full engagement with Members and partners in facing the impacts of the pandemic on agri-food systems, we continue maintaining our focus on the safety and health of FAO's employees and their families worldwide.

As I am the Designated UN Official for Italy, FAO also coordinates the interaction of all 25 UN Agencies with our host country Italy. These Security Management Team Meetings are now widely recognized as a model of effective UN collaboration. Here, I especially appreciate my team, coordinated by Mr Laurent Thomas.

At headquarters, physical presence has been kept to a minimum; teleworking, rotation and flexible working arrangements were adopted to be able to adapt to a fluid, evolving context. Earlier this year, I signed an agreement with the Italian Red Cross, on behalf of all UN Agencies operating in Italy. Our collaboration with the Italian Government and the Italian Red Cross is excellent, and I thank them in the name of all UN Agencies operating in Italy during this pandemic.

As of 26 November 2020, a total of 182 COVID-19 cases were registered among FAO employees worldwide, of which 141 have fully recovered, 36 are symptomatic at home or under treatment and unfortunately, 5 passed away before July of this year. That is out of a total of 14, 217 employees worldwide. For the first time, I got to know the exact number of employees in FAO Systems.

We launched a massive winter flu vaccination campaign at headquarters. We ensured that easy-to-access COVID-19 test capacity was made available to FAO employees, their families and FAO retirees.

We established rapid antigen swab testing for COVID-19 at headquarters in a drive-through modality, with the help of Italian authorities. I am happy to inform that this service will be extended to accommodate all colleagues from the Rome-based Agencies and their immediate families, as well as Permanent Representation diplomats and their dependents as of coming Thursday 3 December, because FAO only operated this for the first time two weeks ago to get the experience.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Organization has shown an extraordinary capacity to move to the new working modalities during difficult times, speeding up the transformation into a digital FAO. Today, we are proud to say that FAO's Virtual and Digital Workplace is a reality. We started with the improvement and revamp of the entire FAO website's functionality, content, look and feel.

Distinguished Delegates, this new digital FAO delivers Digital Public Goods for you, distinguished Members.

We have created an impressive FAO Digital Portfolio: a global catalogue of FAO's over 250 digital products that support our work in the field and empower FAO's digital technologies. We established the Digital Service Portfolio, a cloud-based platform that offers information and advisory messages to the farmers in the field and connects governments directly to farmers. In numbers this means 37 333 farmers registered for Short Message Service (SMS) Broadcasting.

Another impressive number is our E-Agriculture Community of Practice which has now about 18 000 members. This is the information-sharing economy that I had promised you. And this is just the beginning!

Ladies and Gentlemen, in 2020, we had five very good Regional Conferences and one informal Regional Conference.

One of my first priorities as Director-General was to transform the Regional Conferences from formal, stand-alone events, into dynamic and efficient platforms for policy setting, capturing feedback from all involved. I am happy to say that we achieved this in 2020, as the Regional Conferences were a success.

By changing the business model, we brought the Conferences closer to our Members, making them truly Member-centred. The virtual modality allowed for more interaction and elevated levels of discussion.

We opened the door to the private sector to engage within the Regional Conferences alongside all other non-State actors. Regional Conferences reached unprecedented levels of participation. I do not want to repeat here all the numbers but look, the Asia and the Pacific, the Near East, the Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, as a pioneer of Regional Conferences, they set the successful tone. Then in November, Europe. I was informed by my colleagues that, for the first time, so many countries' Ministers and Vice-Ministers participated in FAO Regional Conferences. All these regions and even the Informal North America Regional Conference (INARC) had very intense discussions about FAO's mandate and their priorities.

I am fully involved and engaged in all important activities, and I followed all the programmes to listen and learn from you to get to know the global scenario more in details. I also invited the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) to organize a side event at all the Regional Conferences this year, as a signal of our firm commitment to the Committee and to encourage Members to take advantage of the Committee and its products.

The Regional Conferences in 2020 marked a historical turning point and strengthen global solidarity among FAO Members through modern modalities, transparency and inclusiveness and by offering content, context and suggestions.

Distinguished Delegates, the new FAO continues to strengthen its role within the UN System, as a dynamic member, trusted partner and professional knowledge organization of the UN big family. This was what I had promised the UN Secretary-General at our meeting only a few weeks after assuming

the leadership of FAO, and we are keeping our promise. The Secretary-General is very happy with that change.

In September, I was invited again to the United Nations Security Council, where I provided an update on the food security situation in several countries around the world experiencing food insecurity, together with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and WFP.

During the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), as part of the Global Network Against Food Crises (GNAFC) high-level event, we presented a review of the most recent global data available on how the knock-on effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are driving up acute hunger in vulnerable countries.

As a historical first for an FAO Director-General, I spoke at the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Humanitarian Affairs Segment 2020.

My speech at the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Summit 2019 on behalf of UN sister Agencies offered our perspective on food system transformation and ensured that the matter was prominently placed on the international agenda.

As another historic first, I participated at the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Principals Meeting in Geneva together with UN counterparts whose Agencies, like FAO, work on the humanitarian front. Therefore, this afternoon I will engage another time.

At the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) Sessions, I expressed FAO's commitment to transforming food and agricultural systems and shared our dynamic approach towards reforming and digitalising the Organization.

Within the UN Summit on Biodiversity of the UNGA 2020, I participated on behalf of several UN Agencies, representing the United Nations System in the 'Leaders Dialogue on how to mainstream biodiversity issues into the broader drive for sustainable development'. The panel was co-chaired by Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany and Prime Minister Imran Khan of Pakistan. I conveyed a clear message: Biodiversity loss undermines global efforts to tackle poverty and hunger - no biodiversity, no food diversity.

I actively participated in many other high-level meetings and events organized by the UN Secretary-General, the President of the UN General Assembly, ECOSOC and others, raising awareness and encouraging Members to work in concert to overcome the challenges we face.

As a strong advocate of the UN Development System reform, we realize the importance of brokering effective partnerships with UN Agencies.

To achieve the 'four betters' and the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, FAO is concentrating major efforts on leveraging UN partnerships and achieving tangible results on the ground.

FAO has contributed to all 26 UN Cooperation Frameworks that were signed since the UN Development System (UNDS) repositioning.

Overall, FAO is present in 112 UN Cooperation Frameworks/ United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAFs) countries, and in 94 percent of cases, FAO is directly contributing to joint country planning and programming.

We have so much close cooperation with UN System Agencies, such as the UN Environment Program (UNEP), UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN-Habitat. For the first time in history, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) because a lot of people underestimate the UNWTO function, especially for rural development. Furthermore, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), of course. This year is under the Chairpersonship by the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC), so we had very good interactions and meetings.

Distinguished Delegates, we continue our global efforts of outreach to build partnerships, raise awareness and provide technical expertise in international *fora*.

With our host Italy, we have established a privileged relationship. Only four days after taking office, I was invited by the Prime Minister to a very fruitful exchange. We had the pleasure of welcoming the Prime Minister at FAO Headquarters for World Food Day 2019. I also had the pleasure of being invited by Italy's President of the Republic, to his residence, where we discussed future cooperation and he expressed his support to the Hand-in-Hand Initiative. In several discussions with the Italian Government, we have agreed to FAO supporting Italy's Presidency of the G20 in 2021, which is an excellent opportunity to promote initiatives stemming from FAO's mandate.

Before the pandemic, I visited numerous countries and attended important events, interacting with Heads of State, decision-makers, Ministers, the private sector, civil society and farmers. I saw so many cities and countries our message was clear; the new FAO has a lot to offer and is ready to serve you better.

My travel plans to Africa and Latin America had to be put on hold due to the pandemic and I look forward to these visits as soon as the circumstances allow me to do so.

In September, I presented at the Virtual Ministerial Conference on the Great Green Wall with many key areas.

In October, I was invited by the Committees of Foreign Affairs and of Agriculture in the Italian Chamber of Deputies to give a keynote address on the impacts of COVID-19 on global food security and on the proposed Food Coalition.

In the past months, I held bilateral meetings with the Executive Vice-President of the European Commission, Frans Timmermans and the European commissioners for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, for Health and Food Safety, and for Agriculture, all six of them servicing the European Commission.

On my 100th day in office, I was deeply honoured by an invitation from His Holiness Pope Francis to the Vatican, where we had a very private inspiring conversation, looking eye to eye on so many issues that touch humanity as a whole. I had the pleasure of being invited again to a private audience by His Holiness Pope Francis on 20 November 2020. The deep human connection with the Pope and his unwavering support to the noble mission of FAO deeply touched me.

In May, I took part in the US Congressional briefing on Preventing a Hunger Catastrophe. That was the first time an FAO Director-General attended.

In a keynote speech at the Global Bioeconomy Summit 2020 on 20 November, I shared FAO's vision on bioeconomy, biotechnology and bio-innovation.

At the Sustainable Innovation Forum on Digital Agriculture by Singapore, I provided a keynote address on Accelerating the Fourth Agricultural Revolution.

A first in history, the FAO Director-General was invited to speak at the G20 Leaders' Summit hosted virtually this year by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 22 November. I called on G20 members to address inclusive, resilient and sustainable development by the impacts of COVID-19 on agri-food systems by boosting farmers' productivity, scaling up social protection mechanisms and investing in digital innovation, among other measures.

I also underscored the need for the G20 to keep working on preventing this health crisis from becoming a global food crisis. This is a message I had already stressed in my speech at the G20 Extraordinary Virtual Leaders' Summit Meeting on COVID-19 in March. At the G20's Agriculture and Water Ministers' Meeting in September, I presented several priority areas in which FAO can support G20 countries and the international community. Another very substantive collaboration we have built in the past 15 months is with the World Economic Forum (WEF).

Together we are designing a significant number of flagship initiatives at country level in agri-food systems transformation while building strong and political support for a broader action agenda across different sectors.

I co-lead, with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of PepsiCo (Mr Ramon Laguarta), the World Economic Forum (WEF) Board of Stewards for Food Systems, which includes Ministers, UN

Agencies, CEOs, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), farmer's organizations, etc. Through this leadership the board has committed to 100 concrete examples of transforming food systems running by the time of the Summit, especially to start the agri-food system transformation needed so urgently today. The Board has also committed to launching action plans to support 100 million smallholder farmers on soil carbon sequestration to combat climate change. This strong cooperation is yet another demonstration of worldwide recognition at the highest international level that the new FAO has achieved.

We continue our advocacy for agri-food systems transformation to achieve healthy diets for all. Just last week, for example, we organized a Special Seminar on Food and Nutrition. It is a great honour for me, within a short time we got so many special guests: Queen Máxima of the Netherlands, Queen of Belgium, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand, the First Ladies of Chile and Colombia and Ms Josefa Sacko, the African Union Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture. Together with other high-panellists we wanted to warn you about agri-food systems transformation, related food loss, nutrition, food waste, all these innovations and all those issues.

We also continue working for results-oriented collaboration and have added prestigious entities to our partners from academia, the private sector, civil society and others.

In a historic first, I welcomed Bill Gates to FAO's Liaison Office in New York, where we agreed to deliver on concrete targeted work that benefits people in the world's most vulnerable regions.

FAO is preparing projects for next year to use a donation of CNY 100 million received from the Ningxia Yanbao Charity Foundation.

In May, we received a USD 10 million contribution from MasterCard aimed at the Desert Locust response to mitigate impacts on food security and livelihoods.

We have also established a strong bond with the scientific community. Eminent Professors like Mr Joachim von Braun, Mr Jeffrey Sachs, Mr Klaus Schwab, Mr Luis Fresco, Mr Masa Iwanaga, Mr Tang Huajun and many others are accompanying our transformative efforts with their excellent advice and knowledge. We are very grateful to them.

With IBM, Microsoft and the Pontifical Academy of Life, FAO was engaged and among the first signatories in February of this year of an ethical resolution on Artificial Intelligence (AI) endorsed by His Holiness Pope Francis, stressing the importance of minimising this new technology's risks while exploiting its potential benefits.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the successful positioning of FAO as a trusted partner and source of technical expertise is also reflected in the extra-budgetary funding we receive, and for which we are very much grateful.

Since I became Director-General, all the assessed contributions were paid on time and in full of your Membership fee. In addition, we got many extra voluntary contributions. Just to mention some, in August 2019 the United States of America; in November the Netherlands and the European Commission; in December Germany and the European Commission again; in February this year the European Commission and in the same month the United States of America; in April Germany and the United States of America; in July the World Bank, Sweden, the European Commission, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) – one of our biggest partners now. In September Chinese President Xi Jinping pledged an additional USD 50 million; in November Italy started the Food Coalition together with others. Just two weeks ago, the Green Climate Fund endorsed three extensive projects. Therefore, now in FAO, we are one of the top implementing agencies, not only for GCF but also for the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Now, we are recognised by the comprehensive competitiveness, not only by one small silo or division.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we continue to build on our mandate and vision for new activities and actions.

We launched the FAO Green Cities Initiative and its Action Program on the margins of the 75th Session of the UN General Assembly.

I wanted to remind all Members that the Green Cities Initiative aims to improve people's wellbeing. The Initiative will do so through increased availability of and access to green products and services

provided by green spaces, green industries, green economy and a green lifestyle, including the integration of urban and peri-urban forestry, fisheries, horticulture and agriculture - and through sustainable agri-food systems. I had a complete understanding with His Holiness Pope Francis, who immediately said that the Vatican is a green city. I said you are not only green in gardening but also in life and industry because that depends on the non-pollution industry, tourism and culture.

It is holistic in its vision, bringing together the goals of the urban food agenda with the socioeconomic-environmental-spiritual nexus.

In the first three years, the programme will include 100 cities in 15 countries, of course big, small or medium size. In addition, we are working with UN-Habitat. Together we will also establish indicators to define and monitor 'Green Cities as future cities'.

The 1 000 Digital Villages Initiative aims to enable farmers to use digital technologies, information and communication tools, including social media, to promote local sustainable development. Digital technologies can raise economic benefits and contribute to food security by increasing the productivity of agricultural sectors, enhancing market opportunities through e-commerce and access to market information, facilitating the inclusion of farmers in value chains. Therefore, we have to work together with UNWTO and UN-Habitat together. The Initiative will also have social and cultural benefits. Through the 1 000 Digital Villages Initiative, I say 1 000 as a symbolic number; it does not mean to restrict to 1 000, maybe 10 000 or 20 000, it depends on the development, a tailor-made menu for help in digital innovation can be made according to the requests and situations of the sites.

We will implement this effort in collaboration with Microsoft, IBM, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and other partners.

Our Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific is now starting to propose the first round of pilot villages. I also just got a new Concept Note working plan from the Latin America and Caribbean region. I encourage all regions to start this new initiative because of the pandemic, agro-tourism and rural development are much left behind.

Ladies and Gentlemen, from the onset of my mandate, I emphasized my core belief that staff is the most important asset of FAO.

As you know I started my first days as FAO Director-General by walking to every office in the FAO building, talking with colleagues and shaking the hand of each employee. Only a few weeks after taking office, I held a first-of-its-kind interactive session with over 60 senior-level colleagues in Rome, with colleagues in 35 Regional and Country Offices attending virtually. With that, I set a new tone at FAO: town hall meetings, open exchanges and frank dialogue.

In April we organized a virtual meeting that for the first time in FAO's history gathered all the Organization's Country Representatives (FAORs) around the world. This was followed by a virtual town hall meeting with more than 2 000 FAO employees based at headquarters. Because we did not know what the technical capacity was, we tried first. In June we held a virtual town hall meeting with a record-breaking 4 300 FAO employees that work around the world. I believe that on Zoom, in terms of technical support, they can reach 10 000. Now, we are a fully operative FAO globally with Zoom.

FAO is putting a strong emphasis on the catalytic role of women and youth in FAO and around the world. I established the FAO Women's Committee and the FAO Youth Committee last year as engines for solidarity and inclusiveness. The role both Committees have played in the past months in strengthening solidarity and team spirit among the employees is exemplary. The youth face immense challenges, that is the reason why it is imperative to scale up youth-focused initiatives and harness their potential. This was also my message at the World Youth Forum in Egypt in December 2019.

In another first in FAO's history, we brought together young employees to learn from our retirees. Over 400 current employees attended.

In 2021, one key area of work for the Youth Committee will prepare the FAO Youth World Food Forum (WFF). This event will coincide with the United Nations Food Systems Summit and will serve as a platform to harness the passion of youth, sparking a global movement to transform our food systems through the Four Betters. As a global event dedicated to the future of our food systems, the

WFF aims to bring together major youth groups, top influencers, companies, start-ups, academic institutions, civil society organizations, governments, media, the general public and others to drive awareness, engagement, advocacy and resources around food systems issues.

Ladies and Gentlemen, FAO's 75th anniversary was not an ordinary World Food Day. We used the power of modern communication, stepped out of the castle and made it a historic day for all people.

Governments, private sector partners, Civil Society Organizations and others showed their support to FAO through over 450 activities in 150 countries.

The year 2020 marked the first-ever virtual World Food Day celebration in Rome. The virtual ceremony included messages from His Holiness Pope Francis; Italy's President; Lesotho's King and Spain's Queen, FAO Special Goodwill Ambassadors for Nutrition; UN Secretary-General; and the heads of FAO, IFAD and WFP.

For the innovative video mapping and light projection shows on the FAO headquarters building and iconic Colosseum we were joined by Italy's Minister for Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies, the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, the Mayor of Rome and our honourable Independent Chairperson of the Council, Chairpersons of Programme Committee, Finance Committee and Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters. By opening the ceremony to the outside, we had 76 000 participants who joined via Zoom, webcast, or live streaming on social media. Over 860 000 users viewed World Food Day content on FAO web pages and the FAO messages reached over 1.5 billion accounts on social media.

Beyond the numbers and impressive results, the commemoration of FAO's Anniversary this year was a strong demonstration of the Organization's new spirit and approach: we open our doors, share our knowledge and we step outside our offices and meeting halls and include the citizens, farmers, consumers and the youth across the globe.

Distinguished Delegates, let me now share with you progress made on implementing the decisions of the last Council Session.

As you know, this progress builds on the structural adjustments we already implemented in late 2019 and throughout 2020 so far and it incorporates the vision that I presented to you during my campaign. The goal is to build a dynamic FAO for a better world while remaining committed to its original aspirations, mandate and mission.

We introduced the new organizational structure at headquarters with Offices, Centres and Divisions.

We removed the layer of Departments and have Assistant Director-Generals (ADGs) at headquarters now focus on specific assignments.

We established the Core Leadership Group with the recent joining of the Chief Scientist. The Core Leadership Group is now complete and already fully engaged.

We implemented the reporting lines A and B to the Core Leadership for each Office, Centre, and Division. That makes first transparency at the highest level of Management, but also the Strategic Programme teams were disbanded with smooth repositioning staff - I called it 'soft-landing'. I got to know that every related staff is happy with the new positioning.

The Ombudsman Office was added as a stand-alone office. The Office of Sustainable Development Goals is now being established. We strengthened the FAO Investment Centre.

The Joint FAO/WHO Centre is under preparation and we will strengthen it soon. You know that WHO is more focused on the pandemic, so we are awaiting its contribution.

The Joint FAO/International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Centre (Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture) is fully operative and strengthened. In the team, we got the champions of performance of all distinct divisions of IAEA. We are proud of this Joint Centre.

Given the importance of partnerships within the renewed FAO, we realigned the partnerships and outreach stream by creating a division that combines Partnerships and UN collaboration; moving private sector partnerships with resource mobilization; and creating a new Project Support Division.

For the Food Systems and Food Safety Division and the Logistics Services, we are strengthening operational management and professional structure.

The Multidisciplinary Fund was budgeted at USD 8.5 million for the real innovation and COVID-19 Response.

Distinguished Delegates, one of my key priorities continues to be making FAO more efficient, dynamic and inclusive. For this we need to empower our employees and aim at creating a happier and more positive workplace.

We have put special effort in implementing all the decisions of the last Council Session and can share the excellent progress made. After the Council's approval of the new organizational structure, we have worked hard to implement it swiftly. I said to my friends, I am going from the think-thank to the action-thank.

I am pleased to inform you that, through an intense consultative process, positions have been identified for all employees who were affected by the restructuring. The structural adjustment is an important milestone in bringing change to FAO's organizational culture, breaking silos and encouraging teamwork across organizational boundaries.

In its last two sessions, the Council emphasized the need to enhance the Organization's Human Resources functions. The new Human Resources Strategic Action Plan prioritises urgent actions and recommendations made by Members, internal and external audits, oversight mechanisms and stakeholders, including the Staff Representative Bodies.

The Council had also urged us to continue concentrating our work in combatting all forms of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, Sexual exploitation and Abuse of Authority. In that aspect, we had a good brief to the UN. They appreciated and praised our systematic actions. Therefore, we have established an internal Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PSH) and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) which is chaired by Mr Laurent Thomas, assisted by the Director of Human Resources, the Ethics Officer, the Ombudsman and the Inspector General as the custodians of the policies and processes. Here I would like to say that the new Inspector General is very professional and reliable. I keep him fully independent, running his own duties.

I am happy to confirm also that the Employee Satisfaction Survey Champion, by the Deputy Director-General Ms Beth Bechdol, is moving fast and in the right direction.

I am happy to confirm that relations continue to improve between Management and Staff Representatives. I know you have more demands; we have tried our best to offer more, based on mutual trust, understanding and common aspirations.

The Staff-Management Consultative Committee meets regularly in the spirit of cooperation and dialogue.

I also have set up a task force that is looking at cutting bureaucracy, streamlining administrative decisions and decentralising authority.

Let me now turn to the new Strategic Framework 2022–2031. Two fundamental points I wish to highlight here are the inclusive manner in which we are developing the framework and the solid basis it is built on.

The formal consultation process is progressing as planned. I think my colleagues will brief you later in details as during past months. We had so many informal consultations across regions, across the same subjects.

In addition, the Joint Meeting and the Programme Committee earlier this month welcomed the inclusive and transparent consultation process.

The new Strategic Framework builds on the momentum and transformations already taking place in the Organization. The new Strategic Framework puts at its centre the strategic narrative of 'leaving no one behind' through sustainable, inclusive and resilient food systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life. The Framework is anchored in the 2030 Agenda and guided by SDG1 No poverty, SDG2 No hunger, and SDG10, Reduced inequalities around the four

betters. The Framework also highlights the importance of all SDGs in achieving FAO's overall vision. That is why we got your support to improve and endorse the establishment of the new Office for SDGs. The SDGs Office will play a more coordinating role to push all the implementations and progress surrounding the SDGs.

The centrality of food systems transformation in the new Strategic Framework will enable FAO to provide substantive support to Members in their implementation efforts following the outcomes of the UN Food Systems Summit in 2021.

Over the coming months, we will discuss and develop further, in consultation with you, the Programme Priority Areas. I said we need a lot of engagement, consultation and contribution from you, building Member-ownership on the Strategic Framework and on the strategy itself. The Programme Priority Areas are inter-disciplinary, thematic delivery mechanisms, representing FAO's strategic contribution to driving the changes that will ultimately contribute to the achievement of the selected SDG targets.

Ladies and Gentlemen, let me turn now to the proposed FAO Strategy for Private Sector Engagement 2021-2025.

A closer and improved engagement with the Private Sector is one of my top priorities, and this Strategy is very important for the way forward – we have to. The global development situation completely changed and more depends on private sector investment and their contribution, not only investment but also innovation.

First and foremost, let me stress that, it is to improve and strengthen our support to our Members. Second, the key goal of the new Strategy is to enhance our strategic partnerships, scale up and steer all our efforts to jointly achieve the SDGs. Third, we need to stress the importance of risk management. As you already remind us, for sure, anything you are going to do, you always have risks, but we try to minimize the risks as much as possible. Fourth, we need to stress the importance of engagement. A failure to engage, even if sometimes to disagree, with key actors in our sectors would be a failure of our mandate as a neutral convener.

This is the reason the Strategy is called intentionally the Strategy for Engagement and not 'for partnership', because actually, the private sector can engage at different levels, from the town to the province, to the national, regional, and global level. They can also engage with different modalities or methods with farmers, with farmers' organizations, with the private sector itself, or with government – you name it. Therefore, I think the Strategy for Engagement is properly described.

Lastly, with the new Strategy, I am committed to strengthening FAO's engagement with the private sector and all partners in a fully transparent manner. I said repeatedly many times, not only transparent with you, but with all the society. I said three dimensions of transparency – you have to get to know the real meaning of three dimensions of transparency.

As you know, an efficient, transparent and inclusive FAO is my highest priority, and this also applies to the way we approach the private sector as well as any other non-governmental institutions that we work with. I also said with all voluntary contributions from governments, we have to be very efficient, transparent and also very inclusive to the Members and the vulnerable countries or people.

I am confident that with this new Strategy we will see even more solid results of our partnerships at the country, regional and global levels in the future – especially for the people on the ground and farmers.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are coming to the end of 2020, that I had declared FAO's Year of Efficiency. Before that time, I did not know of this unprecedented pandemic, but in this way, I really appreciated all my colleagues, staff, employees and Members. We transformed FAO to be an efficient and agile Organization during this pandemic. We must take this unprecedented opportunity to change FAO to be quicker, higher and better.

We can proudly look back at an unprecedented transformative process internally and a widely recognised leading role externally. Last year, you could not imagine we would have received so much engagement internationally with my sister Agencies. Now we are leading organizations to work with

other UN Systems Agencies and other international organisations, with members of also regional organisations.

Many of you asked us to change during past years and we have achieved so much together with the strong support from you and my colleagues. I am alone in Rome. As one person alone, I could do something only under your positive support and my colleagues' support. One person alone could do nothing. That is a real big team, a big family spirit. I appreciated it very much.

Let me express my gratitude for your powerful support to me personally and to the Organization over the last 15 months.

Our achievements would not have been possible without your engagement going along with you. Then, we can go far and better.

Distinguished Delegates, at the end of my speech, I want to circle back to the words I stressed in the beginning; promises kept, results delivered, and a clear vision for the future and action. More action, efficient action, will wait for us to do better.

Looking back, we are grateful, but also feel a sense of profound responsibility. Looking ahead, we are aware of the unresolved and urgent challenges that await us, but we have confidence and care, partners and people, soul and solidarity.

With a renewed, dynamic and inclusive FAO. With a committed and motivated team of employees among FAO Systems. With an agile approach and reporting lines that fulfil the specific goals fit the purpose. All the organisational, management and operational mechanism should be fit to the purpose. With globally respected technical expertise. With leadership recognised at the highest levels of international policy setting.

You see, just a week ago we signed an MoU with the President of Argentina. It is a strong political gesture to support FAO. A country President signed an MoU with FAO Director-General. I appreciated it very much because it is helpful for the Minister of Agriculture or relative Ministers in Argentina to push their agenda. That is FAO value, and therefore that is the FAO Director-General value. It is not a matter of my personal recognition.

With increased trust from our Members and partners, full of determination and dedication, we will continue working hand in hand for the day when hunger is only a footnote in the history books!

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Director-General, for your comprehensive annual Report to the Council which covered a wide and broad range of issues dealing with the mandate of FAO.

In addition to the organizational changes, continued delivery and governance in the COVID-19 context, I note the increase in visibility and partnerships in 2020, including your addressing of the G20 Summit, a first for FAO Director-General. In this regard, I may mention that the Council this week will consider a major strategy for engagement, that is, with the private sector, as you have also mentioned in your statement.

Thank you once again, Director-General.

I have no doubt that many Members would like the opportunity to offer comments or questions in response to the Director-General's intervention. However, many of the topics touched upon in the statement will be also addressed under individual Agenda items of this Session. In the interest of optimal time management, I urge delegates to take the floor at this stage only on issues that are not covered by this Session's Agenda; or if they wish to make more general interventions. The floor is now open for delegates.

Sr. Mario ARVELO (República Dominicana)

Agradeciendo al Director General por sus explicaciones detalladas que son enormemente útiles para el trabajo que vamos a desarrollar durante este período de sesiones, he deseado tomar la palabra, para llamar la atención de todos los miembros al hecho de que el Director General se refirió a su

comparecencia el 21 de abril de este año en una sesión especial del Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas; sesión en la que también participó el director ejecutivo del Programa Mundial de Alimentos (PMA), el señor David Beasley y quería subrayar que esa convocatoria fue hecha por la delegación de la República Dominicana en su calidad de presidente pro tempore del Consejo de Seguridad en abril de este año.

Fue la primera vez en la historia de las Naciones Unidas que una reunión del Consejo de Seguridad tocó el tema de la relación entre la seguridad alimentaria y la paz y, este así, Presidente, porque el hambre es la guerra.

Mr Kip TOM (United States of America)

Director-General, I recall your words well from the last meeting of the Joint Meeting of the Finance and Programme Committee where you said, the private sector is one of the most powerful engines of innovation and investments for food systems. Like you, Director-General, the United States of America, along with most of the FAO Members, believe that the leveraging of the private sector's creativity and expertise and pairing it with FAO's knowledge, we can accelerate progress towards ending hunger by 2030.

The time is running out. We cannot wait any longer to engage the private sector in order to save lives and improve livelihoods. Further, as stated in the recent World Bank Study in 2019 Harvesting Prosperity, agriculture growth is by far the most effective means of reducing extreme poverty and food insecurity in developing regions. Modernization, innovation and sustainability play a critical role in this regard. These are not conflicting terms, in fact they can be mutually beneficial, contributing to reducing hunger.

We would also like to emphasise the role affecting Governments, policies, and environments to facilitate private sector engagement. We look forward to the adoption of FAO's new Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector at this Council Session.

Regarding the Strategic Framework, we are also pleased with the emphasis FAO is putting on scientific and evidence-based normative work, and the recognition of this crucial role in reducing hunger.

The Strategic Framework presents an opportunity to signal a clear and inclusive approach and comments to modernising agriculture using all available tools, such as biotechnology, digital and precision agriculture.

At the recent 6th Informal North American Regional Conference, the United States of America and Canada identified five key Strategic Priorities for FAO's 2022 to 2031 Strategic Framework. Inclusive innovation focus on the Organization's core mandate. Resilience, including through trade and genuine responsive approach in leveraging partnerships.

We look forward to continuing our robust partnership with FAO including by working together in addressing these priorities, in terms of the Zero Nominal Growth budget.

Finally, like many Members, the United States of America is concerned that economic impact of COVID-19 threatens to create an expanding food and nutrition crisis over the next year. That situation is severely affecting national government's financial resources.

With this in mind, it will be key for FAO to continue its excellent work on finding efficiency gains, while also focusing on re-mobilizing resources. This will help alleviate additional pressure on national budgets.

I look forward to sharing a productive and successful FAO Council and FAO Leadership, fellow ambassadors and delegates, as we embrace new initiatives to improve lives and livelihoods.

Ms Alexandra BUGAILISKIS (Canada)

It has been a real privilege to come after my regional partner Ambassador Kip Tom.

I want to thank the Director-General for his remarks today, for the leadership that he and his staff at the Food and Agriculture Organization have shown through these very challenging times. There is

nothing like a crisis to reveal the importance of an Organization like FAO. In the early days in this pandemic, we needed to understand the international impact and FAO did what only it can do with its expertise and with its partners, it provided the world with early projections on the impact that COVID-19 would have on food security.

Through FAO's Food Pricing and Monitoring and Analysis (FPMA), its Food Policy warnings, Big Data tools, and the work of Agricultural Market information System (AMIS), we better understood how the pandemic was impacting markets and impacting people.

I want to commend FAO with the robust way in which it has responded to COVID-19, and we believe very strongly that the most important contribution which FAO has is to pursue an inclusive innovation agenda that promotes scientific, digital and technological innovations that contribute to fostering environmental, social and economic sustainability.

FAO has also been clear on how damaging food trade restrictions of all types can be for food security, particularly for the most vulnerable. We know from past crisis that export restrictions and trade restrictions can exacerbate problems and impact negatively on our ability to respond.

I just want to mention about going digital. This is so incredibly important as we have seen through the challenges of COVID-19. FAO has shown itself to be very nimble and adaptable in its working methods, even through this very difficult period. Our appreciation is extended to all the senior leaders and staff that have made themselves available through webinars and briefings throughout this period.

The vision of a digital FAO is being realized quicker than we could have ever imagined, and the digital Council meeting is evidence of that.

Finally, I just want to say it was a great year with the 75th Anniversary of FAO. We were happy to invite the Director-General virtually to Canada as we celebrated the founding of FAO in Quebec City. It was a great birthday party here and across the world. As we celebrated how much had been achieved, the millions of lives that had been saved and improved, we also looked to the challenges before us.

We are at a critical juncture and FAO's strategic direction, not only given the global context but also internally, is so important. As FAO is preparing its Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector, its Gender Action Plan, we believe it should position and allow to deliver on its core mandate by focusing on the added value and leveraging its strength by broadening and strengthening its engagement. The Director-General is very true in saying, the importance of engagement with the private sector, civil society and Rome-based Agencies (RBAs).

Ms Yael RUBINSTEIN (Israel)

Dear colleagues, we are especially happy and honoured to be here today since for the first time in the history of the state of Israel we are part of the 165th Session of the FAO Council. The timing of our appointment to the Council fills us with great responsibility. The challenges the world is facing today are so vast and so urgent, that only platforms of international collaboration are able to meet. The COVID-19 pandemic and its health and economic consequences only add to the existing level of challenges.

We believe the professional work of FAO Members and the Council are an important part of the solutions. Israel has had to deal with every climate condition through many years having to find solutions for water management, irrigation, cultivation, storage and many other challenges. Furthermore, we live in a geopolitical neighbourhood that presents some challenges.

A famous saying goes, necessity is the mother of invention. Innovation became an integral part of the Israeli DNA. Israel is desalinating most of its drinking water, treating sea water and wastewater to create fresh water of the highest quality. We are using and teaching the use of drip irrigation using artificial intelligence for smart farming and lead in biotechnology.

We plan on bringing this innovative spirit and the technology-based solution building into tracking problems at the global level. To do that we will promote concrete action to fulfil and execute the ideas we are speaking of.

Since we believe in the engagement of youth and their awareness to nutrition, food and healthy diets, we initiated last year the Integrated Sustainable Development Goals Model (ISDG) project of Israeli youth competing for the best solution promoting Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Whereas half a million students have already presented their initiative in their schools.

It is a belief that the empowerment of women and global commitment for gender equality, and we are looking for a way to bring these topics to the forefront. We have initiated the women in Rome Based Agencies (RBAs), a strong and well-connected network of women from the RBAs which could facilitate collaboration of all sorts. We will meet for the first time as soon as COVID-19 regulations allow.

To conclude, we hope and believe that the COVID-19 pandemic creates opportunities for our global village to work together and put a spotlight on the need to involve many stakeholders, among which is the private sector. We are committed to use all of our Israeli knowledge and expertise to find and promote the right solutions and are proud to do it from within the Council of FAO.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

It is with pleasure that Italy re-enter the Council for the first time since you took your office as FAO Director-General.

You know how much my country values its role of host country of FAO. We are honored to host the Organization in Italy; we support its activities and are engaged in making FAO stronger and more meaningful in the international arena.

In these very special times, with the pandemic risking to exacerbate the already dramatic data of hunger and malnutrition worldwide, Italy wants to be at the forefront within FAO Membership, to collaborate with you.

Your vision and innovative approach are most welcome. FAO needs to become more reactive, more flexible, closer to other UN Agencies and more open to the knowledge coming from the outside, from Members, private sector, academia, civil society and all engaged stakeholders in our common struggle against hunger.

We believe that you are going in this direction: the new Strategic Framework, the new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement, the comprehensive COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme are all together pieces of this renewed FAO.

In this endeavor, we are grateful to FAO, and to you personally, Director-General, for the prompt response to the proposal of the Italian Government to create the Food Coalition, a global alliance among countries united by the will to prevent the health crisis from turning into a food crisis.

Italy is engaged at all levels to advocate for its success. The initiative has gained a wide support from many countries and will be on the agenda of the Italian Presidency of G20.

In our view the long-term response we will be able to give to the COVID-19's impact on agriculture and food security will be key in the perspective of the agri-food systems transformation.

We are committed to this objective, for which a central appointment will be represented by the Food Systems Summit, and the Pre-Summit. You can count on Italy's support to make the results of this cornerstone gatherings meaningful and concrete.

Ms Alexandra VALKENBURG (European Union)

Thank you, Director-General, for your comprehensive introduction at the start of this Council. This is very much appreciated. Let me make a few remarks in reaction.

First of all, on FAO within the United Nations (UN). Congratulations to your personal engagement at UN level with other Bodies. This is a recognition of FAO's central role for the theme under its mandate: agriculture and nutrition; forestry and fisheries. Your strong leadership on this point is important.

This also needs to be reflected in FAO's everyday work as part of the UN system as a whole. First, in Headquarter workstreams and secondly, in the implementation on the ground with the central role of the UN Resident Coordinator.

Let me just mention specifically also the joint work of FAO, World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), as an important example. This needs to be maintained and reinforced in the wake of current developments to avoid future zoonotic diseases and pandemics and to better tackle new ones.

Secondly, on priorities going forward, we need to build a future together where food systems are sustainable, resilient and inclusive. Where they deliver healthy diets for all without impacting the environment and climate and where they offer a decent living for farmers and workers along the entire food supply chain.

In our joint efforts to achieve Agenda 2030, FAO has a core mandate and custodianship role on a wide range of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, SDG 5, SDG 6, SDG12, SDG14 and SDG15, and the supporting role on SDG1. Other organizations lead on SDG 10 according to the UN Custodian Framework.

The UN Secretary-General Food Systems Summit in 2021 will be a major global milestone. We are fully committed to achieving an ambitious outcome from that Summit. We count on your strong involvement in this.

Lastly, let me underline our commitment. The European Union (EU) has a long-standing and fruitful partnership with FAO. This is underlined by the EU contributions to FAO mentioned by the Director-General. It was EUR 300 million in 2019. We will remain strong supporters of FAO's mandate and are determined to continue working closely with you, FAO colleagues, the Membership and all those organizations committed to transforming food systems and bringing forward FAO's work.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Quisiera muy brevemente tener alguna reacción a las afirmaciones del Señor Director General, porque luego haré las intervenciones correspondientes en cada uno de los puntos de la agenda.

No puedo dejar de agradecer muy especialmente las palabras del Director General en referencia al reciente acuerdo celebrado por mi país, Argentina. Mi presidente, Excmo. Sr. Alberto Fernández, mantuvo una primera reunión con el Director General en enero de este año en Roma, en donde expresó que comer no podía ser un privilegio y que una alianza con la FAO era imprescindible para avanzar en los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) 1, 2 y 10.

El Director General asumió el compromiso de avanzar con hechos no solo con palabras. Y el Director General está cumpliendo con su palabra. Para nosotros que miramos no solo los intereses de la Argentina sino fundamentalmente de todos los países en desarrollo, que sabemos que tenemos la responsabilidad de construir puentes, de buscar diálogo para poder ayudar al Director General a cumplir con la agenda innovadora y ambiciosa que todos hemos apoyado para que el hambre, la inseguridad alimentaria y la inequidad social sean finalmente erradicados. Este es nuestro compromiso, esa es nuestra agenda.

Me gustaron mucho las afirmaciones hechas por Canadá, Israel y Estados Unidos de América respecto de la importancia de la innovación como instrumento acelerador para avanzar en clave desarrollo, para reducir las asimetrías que representan un escándalo para el género humano. Les deseo a todos y a todas un fructífero debate esta semana. Que privilegien los intereses de la pobreza rural y los desafíos para el logro de la Agenda 2030.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

Thank you very much for the very comprehensive report of the Director-General.

This is my first Council. I am very much honoured, and I very much look forward to working with all of my colleagues and FAO family.

I just want to make very short remarks to join the other colleagues and previous speakers in pointing out the important role that FAO should play especially in the context to address the challenge that we face due to the COVID-19 situation.

We welcome that FAO is going to make a new Strategy and there is going to be more engagement with the private sector and the determination to be fully involved with FAO to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 1 and 2. However, I am not going into detail because I am looking forward to having the discussions on these issues along the agenda items.

I just wanted to join our colleague to show our determination to work very closely with FAO for the different aims and the hard work to be done in a very appropriate way to address the challenge that we face at this moment.

I would like to also say that FAO is an important international organization, and an international organization are very much required to be very accountable for their activities, and efficiency should be required. The global organizational system that was well known to all the Member needs to be adequately engaged in an open discussion that would supervise the activities of FAO.

I am very much looking forward to working with our colleagues and FAO Secretariat to achieve those goals.

Sr. Juan PRIETO (España)

Señor Director General, Doctor Qu, distinguidos colegas de FAO, queridos embajadores, representantes permanentes y delegados nacionales de los Estados Miembros. Es un honor para España regresar a formar parte del Consejo de FAO por primera vez desde el inicio de su mandato, Doctor Qu.

Iniciamos hoy una importante sesión del Consejo de FAO que cierra un año en el que todos nosotros hemos tenidos que abordar retos de un alcance inimaginable hace tan solo un año cuando nos reunimos en el 163.º período de sesiones en el mes de diciembre de 2019.

Se trata de una ocasión excelente para reflexionar sobre el trabajo realizado hasta ahora en tan difíciles circunstancias y las cuestiones a las que habremos de enfrentarnos en los próximos tiempos, de forma que podamos asegurar la consecución de nuestros objetivos como organización enmarcados en los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) de la Agenda 2030 y que resultan del todo cruciales para la población mundial en todas sus latitudes.

En este contexto, nos hemos de felicitar por el hecho de que, gracias a la labor coordinada de FAO, el Sistema de Naciones Unidas y de sus miembros, de sus sociedades civiles y sus tejidos empresariales, la pandemia por COVID-19 no se ha transformado en una tragedia alimentaria todavía peor, lo que por desgracia ya ha supuesto para miles de personas en todo el mundo.

En este esfuerzo que redundancia sencillamente en el cumplimiento de los objetivos de FAO, España considera que el impulso a la innovación y digitalización en la producción alimentaria, el respeto escrupuloso a la triple vertiente económica, social y medioambiental de la sostenibilidad de nuestros sistemas alimentarios, como veremos en la Cumbre de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Sistemas Alimentarios de 2021, la incorporación en este proceso de la sociedad civil y del tejido productivo del sector privado y la especial atención a las mujeres y a los jóvenes como base de las sociedades de nuestro medio rural, constituyen herramientas clave en las que apoyar nuestra actuación.

Con estas premisas, España desea a FAO y a todos sus Miembros una muy fructífero 165.º período de sesiones del Consejo basado en la leal y comprometida colaboración entre todos nosotros.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. That exhausts the lists of Members. Now, I go to the Observers.

Ms Jackline YONGA (Kenya) (Observer)

I want to start by thanking the Director-General for a very detailed introductory remark. The Director-General's collaboration with other United Nations (UN) entities is very well appreciated, and it is our way of profiling FAO with other UN Agencies.

We appreciate the goal for FAO to strive towards the four betters, better production, better nutrition, better environment and a better life, which evolves around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and especially the emphasis on SDG10, 5, 1 and 2.

We also want to acknowledge the efforts put in place to deliver the Strategic Framework on these 'four betters'. We call upon FAO to enhance and intensify field operations through resource allocation and capacity building in collaboration with the Host Governments to then see the fulfilment of this strategy.

Kenya believes in green and sustainable agriculture and we want to appreciate the emphasis the Director-General has put on that. There is also a need to have a clear linkage between Headquarters and the field offices. We as Kenya will continue to work closely to ensure that the Director-General Strategic Framework is fulfilled.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. I have a request from a Member, so I will give the floor to the Member country before going back to the Observers.

Mr Youssef JUHAIL (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

Although I was a little late in asking for the floor, I would like to thank the Director-General for giving us a very detailed report. He told exhaustively of what he has done during the first year of his mandate as the Head of this Organization.

It was quite interesting to listen to him and it is during times of crisis that you can see what mettle people are made of and the Director-General has done pretty well as Director-General of this Organization. Despite the current situation he has managed to draw lessons from this pandemic and these lessons are extremely important to us as Members of this Organization and as beneficiaries as well.

We have learned a lot because of COVID-19. We have learned how to deal and work with the Organization in a different way. We have learnt to become more flexible and this is quite positive. It was also very positive to see the reaction of FAO staff members who were able to react very quickly and continue working despite the current situation. They were able to respond to the various requests made, and this is all to the credit and benefit of FAO and its Director-General, because instructions, after all, have to come from the top of the pyramid.

Therefore, during this very harsh period, you have done a lot. You have done a lot of work with countries producing food items and countries receiving them and this has done very much in order to decrease the impact of COVID-19. Now the problem is also to continue and to prevent more damage, to strike our world.

We look forward to more collaboration with FAO. We look forward to further collaboration, not only with Headquarters but also with Regional and Country Offices. It is very important to continue following up on the issues that are considered important by our regions and our countries. In this particular period, I believe all of us are satisfied by the work of FAO.

During the past 15 months, Director-General you have been at the head of this Organization and we can see you have done quite a lot. We look forward continuing working with you in the future.

Mr Dun NIU (China) (Original language Chinese)

Firstly, we would like to thank the Director-General for his opening address, which was very full and informative.

Since the last Session of the Council, FAO has done a great deal of work with many interventions to respond to the impact of COVID-19 on food security, to fight locusts, desert locusts and to prepare the United Nations Food Systems Summit.

Much work has been done, and FAO has played a significant role, making great progress. At the same time FAO has also held numerous formal and informal meetings, and it has discussed the Strategic

Framework and the Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector with FAO Members, openly, transparently, comprehensively and inclusively.

Headway has been made, and we support FAO's new vision of creating a dynamic innovative FAO in an interconnected world facing multiple challenges. The outline of this Strategic Framework draws on lessons learnt and factors in new situations and new challenges. The achievement of the Strategic Development Goals (SDGs) is at the heart of this, particularly SDG1, SDG2 and SDG10, and we endorse that approach.

We also agree with the Strategic Framework, which stresses the importance of dynamizing South-South Cooperation (SSC) and Triangular Cooperation (TrC). China is a fervent defender and participant and contributor to South-South and Triangular Cooperation, and we are very willing to share our experience and practices with you and to work with FAO and its Members so that developing countries can eliminate hunger and poverty. China will be putting in USD 50 million to the third phase of the Trust Fund of FAO and South-South Cooperation. We hope this project will play an increasingly important role and have even greater positive effects.

We support the holding of the United Nations Food Systems Summit as well as the important role that FAO has to play in preparing that Summit, as well as monitoring its activities to foster transformation of food systems. We encourage FAO to fine tune its instruments and its response to COVID-19 and to help developing countries to strengthen their resilience of their food systems.

We welcome FAO's use of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and the Food Alliance as well as other initiatives to mobilize resources for its activities.

Colleagues, we have seen China defends natural order and contributes to challenges. The President of China has stressed that in a post-epidemic period we must step up international systems with the United Nations at the heart of this.

We support the United Nations in seeking consensus to mobilize resources worldwide for action to strive towards peace in the world. Given the devastating effects of COVID-19 on livelihoods and food security, China will continue to uphold the process of consensus, synergies and partnerships and respecting multilateralism, inclusiveness, mutually beneficial cooperation and development over time.

This year China will eradicate absolute poverty in China as predicted, and we will achieve SDG1 ahead of time. We are willing to share our experience on agriculture and rural development in reducing poverty, and continue to support FAO's work to address hunger, inequality and poverty to achieve the SDGs.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. I now go back to the Observers.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Netherlands) (Observer)

The Netherlands fully aligns itself by the European delegation on behalf of the European Union. The Netherlands would like to thank the Director-General for his leadership and foremost for its active role.

COVID-19 has influenced the world into the biggest crisis of recent history. The challenges we are facing are enormous, and the situation is really urgent. We have to act, and we have to act now. That is why the Netherlands very much appreciates the Director-General's focus on action.

When the Food and Agriculture Organization United Nations (FAO) was founded 75 years ago, it was with the aim of eradicating hunger for every person in the world, and we still are not there yet. It is time with the United Nations for us as countries to unite with this now.

More than ever, we need to join forces and act. We have to set aside our differences, at global level, but also more importantly at the national level, which is where quick implementation should take place. That is why my Finance Minister, three weeks ago, very much supported the Italian Initiative, the launch of FAO COVID-19 Food Coalition.

This is a coalition with all. We have to engage with all, but especially with the private sector. That is why the private sector setting is so important. You should have all forms of cooperation, also the South-South Cooperation (SSC) and Triangular Cooperation (TrC), that was said by the Chinese Ambassador.

His Holiness Pope Francis clearly stated at the World Food Day, that we must invest and promote sustainable and diversified agriculture, supporting smallholder farmer communities and corporations especially in rural areas in the poorest countries.

Last week the Netherlands' Queen Máxima, clearly supported and promoted the financial inclusion in the role of special advocates for financial inclusion. She stated that cross access to financial services is crucial to ensure the supply and demand for food systems across the globe. She stated that it is very important for all farmers, especially for smallholder farmers to have access to financial services, because it allows farmers to smooth consumption, manage shops and invest in their businesses.

Access to financial services also plays an important role in achieving healthy diets for rural populations. It is crucial for innovation, because it makes sure that farmers also have access to innovations they need.

Last but not least, to conclude I would like to support and congratulate the Director-General with organizing the Worldwide Youth Event next year in preparation of the Food Systems Summit. We have to focus on youth as well.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France) (Observateur)

Merci Monsieur le Président. Merci Monsieur le Directeur général. La France s'aligne avec les mots prononcés par la délégation de l'Union Européenne. Depuis 1945, Monsieur le Directeur général, la FAO est le trésor commun de ses Membres, et je souhaiterais à cet égard, féliciter la FAO, vous personnellement, mais aussi le Gouvernement italien pour le succès des célébrations du 75ème anniversaire de la FAO.

Depuis 75 ans, face aux enjeux agricoles, alimentaires, forestiers, maritimes et sanitaires, la FAO a su se mobiliser. Elle a su nous mobiliser, je pense, par exemple cette année, à la crise de la COVID-19 mais aussi aux invasions de criquets pèlerins. Les défis que nous devons relever collectivement sont nombreux et majeurs, malgré des progrès tangibles. La faim dans le monde persiste, de nombreuses régions connaissent un risque de famine, la malnutrition et l'obésité progressent partout. Nous devons, aujourd'hui, garantir l'accès à une alimentation sûre, saine, diversifiée et équilibrée à tous les citoyens, en ne laissant personne au bord du chemin, tout en relevant le défi du changement climatique et de l'érosion de la biodiversité.

Nous devons nous assurer que les agriculteurs puissent vivre décemment de leur travail. Il nous faut dans le même temps engager la transition vers des systèmes alimentaires plus résilients et durables, et le Sommet des Nations Unies sur les systèmes alimentaires l'an prochain sera une étape importante à cet égard. L'agriculture porte en elle une partie de la solution aux défis environnementaux, climatiques, de la sécurité alimentaire et de la malnutrition.

Nous avons besoin de la FAO pour tracer un chemin, et pour se montrer innovante, en incluant toutes les formes durables d'innovations et en ne se limitant pas seulement aux technologies et à la digitalisation. À ce titre, je me félicite de l'intégration des approches agroécologiques dans les travaux de l'Organisation. L'épidémie de la COVID-19, qui nous frappe tous, a montré le caractère stratégique des secteurs qui relèvent du mandat de la FAO.

Nous connaissons les risques que cette crise fait peser sur les populations les plus vulnérables dans le monde, face à une crise mondiale, l'action des organisations internationales est déterminante. Nous saluons le rôle de la FAO pour répondre à la crise, nous encourageons une collaboration étroite et concrète entre les agences romaines, ainsi qu'avec le Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale (CSA). La FAO a su démontrer sa capacité à évoluer, et à répondre aux nouveaux défis au cours de ces 75 ans d'existence.

Plus que jamais, pour éliminer la faim et la malnutrition, pour atteindre les objectifs de développement durable, nous avons besoin d'un système multilatéral, efficace, et agile. Vous pouvez compter sur la mobilisation de la France pour relever ces défis, avec la FAO. Je vous remercie.

Mr Hee-seog KWON (Republic of Korea)

The Republic of Korea appreciates Director-General's comprehensive Opening Remarks. It gives us better understanding on various works which FAO is performing and the direction where FAO is heading. We are also grateful to all the staff who work at decentralized offices as well as the Headquarters for their tireless endeavor towards our common goal, ending hunger and poverty. FAO's efforts are invaluable indeed, particularly in this challenging situation.

My delegation cannot help reiterating the current difficulties which we face together such as cascading effects from the pandemic, natural disasters which have been exacerbated by climate change, and damages caused by transboundary plant pests and animal diseases. We believe we all are at the historical moment which calls for everyone and every organization to do its own part with innovative mind. The ground hardens after the rain. We sincerely hope FAO will work with all Member States more intensively in order to overcome the current hardships. When this period finishes, we sincerely hope to share the lessons learned with FAO and all member states. Moreover, we are ready to share our experiences as well during this period because we regard this as a true partnership.

My delegation considers this Council significant, particularly with the agendas including the Strategic Framework and the Strategy for Private Sector Engagement. FAO definitely needs necessary tools like voyagers having the map and compass, in order to manage its journey to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

We regard to the Strategic Framework as a blueprint which can help FAO to navigate its right direction as well as to support not to lose its sight based on its genuine mandate. Furthermore, we emphasize the importance of partnerships with the private sector since it becomes pivotal in our journey.

While my government is ready to continue its solid partnership with FAO, we urge FAO's work to be prioritized in an effective and efficient manner based on its comparative advantages such as capacity-building and policy guidance formulation.

To conclude we look forward to having concrete and meaningful discussions with other Members during this session of the Council.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Thailand)

I would like to congratulate the Director-General. My delegation would like to express our appreciation to the Director-General, FAO Management, FAO staff at Headquarters, and the decentralized offices.

Since the Director-General came to office, now is more than one year already, we have seen a lot of achievement. We have seen a lot of progress that he made together with support of the FAO Members, as he mentioned in his statement, in terms of the work that FAO made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I think these efforts really support the countries to make sure that we can deal with the situation of the COVID-19 that has an impact on food securities and nutrition. His Hand-in-Hand Initiative also provides support and contribution to the developing Members, in particular those prioritized countries in different regions to make sure that FAO, together with the Members, can support those prioritized countries to bring back better for all.

We also appreciate FAO's new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement, which has been mentioned by all of our colleagues. Other FAO Members already mentioned the role of private sectors in terms of innovations, technologies and also partnerships that private sector can play an important role to support the work of the Organizations.

Since the Director-General came to office, we have seen that he really boosts the energies of FAO staff at Headquarters, and at the country office, since FAO has more than 150 FAO country offices, which actually those colleagues work closely with the government at the country level.

We also would like to ensure that the work from Headquarters will bring to make a real action and impact at the country level, because we want to see a better outcome for all. If we can make impact at the country level, finally we will also have a global impact as a whole.

My delegation would like to thank again for his effort, and we wish the Director-General together with FAO Management and all FAO staff will bring back better and also ready to transform for better futures of the Organization, to make a better contribution to people at the country level.

Mr Victor VASILIEV (Russian Federation) (Observer)

I also want to extend my gratitude to the Director-General for his remarks and for his exhaustive report. We will definitely want to work closely on the implementation of those ideas that have been outlined and presented by the Director-General.

I would also like to congratulate FAO together with my fellow Ambassadors and colleagues on the 75th Anniversary of the Organization, and especially of the background of the growing number of people in need, those who are suffering from hunger. We need to unite our efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We already, as the Director-General said, 'walk the talk', and the next important step in this road of course is the Food Systems Summit next year. We will be ready to engage closely with all delegations in preparing for this Summit, including the presummit event that will be held here in Rome next year.

In the Russian Federation, we have already started the preparation for this event with our national dialogue and of course, we will be ready to share our feedback with delegations and with FAO.

One of the important issues that we will be discussed during the Council meeting is the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector in the activities of FAO. We as the Russian Federation, try to emphasise and engage the Russian private sector in working closely with FAO and we are conducting several programmes and projects with FAO including our Global Soil Partnership as well as on other important programmes.

Speaking of the partnership strategy as it was also outlined by the intervention from some delegations and of course by the Director-General himself, that we need to align our activities here at FAO with the other activities since FAO is part of the bigger UN family. In doing so we need to align with the UN Global Compact Principles when we were talking about the principle of work here in FAO, including of the private sector engagement.

Ms Eudora Quartey KORANTENG (Ghana)(Observer)

I wish, for the sake of brevity and time, simply to align Ghana with the sentiments expressed by previous Ambassadors and Observers, particularly to congratulate the Director-General and his staff for the initiatives they put in place towards achieving the mission and mandate of FAO.

We look forward to FAO taking us through to 2021 and the Food Systems Summit 2021 as scheduled and we are sure that as we go through that, it will be more obvious that the Director-General continues to lead FAO in the direction that he plans to take us.

For the sake of brevity and time, I will simply thank and congratulate the Director-General once again and his staff, and wish FAO, the Director-General and all his support staff very best wishes for the future, particularly the year 2021 as we move towards the end of the year and then turning to the new year.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. That brings to an end of the list of speakers. I now pass the floor back to the Director-General.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Thank you, Mr Khalid Mehboob.

I will be very short.

First, I appreciate all your nice words. It recharged and energized our staff to work harder and better for you and for the people.

Second, I heard some soft requests, but I am already thinking deeper and in advance. In the end, we are coming to help the farmers in the field, not only in the country offices or the decentralized offices. If the farmers do not benefit from FAO, why do we need FAO? Therefore, please be a little bit patient. We are working on crops and animals; we need a lifespan to change. In any business, we need a lifespan to change, like we started preparing all the documents, reform, the Strategic Framework, and now the Strategy for Private Sector Engagement. In all things you need a lifespan or life cycle. My purpose is to push the process to get more consensus, more constructive engagement from you and from my colleagues. Then, we can make things happen as quickly as possible, as less obscure as possible, as efficiently as possible.

Please count on me, as I count on you. Let us build on the same page and think separately to do the same action in the same orientation. Let the people benefit from our joint action, joint strategy, joint documents. That is what I want to say to you.

I wish you all the best. We are coming to the end of the year. It is too early to say, but after 2020 we will have a bright future in 2021. I think it could never be worse than 2020, I am very optimistic.

Let us prepare ourselves, prepare our Organization, better and more agile for the new scenario, new mandate, and new challenges. I say the mission is not yet accomplished. Let us work together and build upon our own energies and dynamics.

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Director-General. We can now move on.

Firstly, I would like to bring to the attention of the Council that the mobile application for the Council's 165th Session has been launched. The instructions for downloading the app can be found on the website of the Council's 165th Session and is available in all six languages of the Organization.

We can now move on to the Agenda.

Item 1. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable**Point 1. Adoption de l'ordre du jour et du calendrier****Tema 1. Aprobación del programa y el calendario**

(CL 165/1; CL 165/INF/1; CL 165/INF/3; CL 165/INF/5)

CHAIRPERSON

The first Item on the Agenda is the *Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable*.

As indicated in my pre-session letter of 20 November 2020, the special arrangements and procedures proposed for this virtual 165th Session of the Council, as outlined in document CL 165/INF/5, under Section II, are submitted for the Council's endorsement under this Agenda Item 1.

The special procedures follow consultations at my informal meetings with the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups and build on the successful virtual experiences of Governing Body Sessions held earlier this year.

In this regard, the Council is invited to confirm its endorsement for the suspension of any rules incompatible with this virtual setting, specifically Rule II.3 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council which stipulates that each Session of the Council shall be held at the seat of the Organization.

Other relevant information for the Agenda and Timetable of the Session is set out in documents CL 165/1, CL 165/INF/1 and CL 165/INF/3.

With regard to the Provisional Timetable, I would like to draw the Council's attention to my pre-Session letter of 20 November, outlining that the following topics be deliberated in a consolidated manner under the dedicated Agenda Items, and not under the reports of the Council Committees which also considered them: *Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and Outline of Medium Term Plan 2022-25* under Item 3; *FAO's new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement* – under Item 4; *FAO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic* under Item 5; *the Hand-in-Hand Initiative* under Item 6; *Progress Report on RBAs Collaboration* under Item 13; and *Arrangements for the 42nd Session of the Conference* under Item 14. For ease of reference, the relevant paragraphs in the Reports of the Committees are included in the Provisional Timetable under the respective items.

Furthermore, nine Agenda Items are being addressed through the written correspondence procedure, namely: Item 7 - *Regional Conferences*, including its 6 sub-Items; Item 13 – *Progress Report on Rome-based Agencies Collaboration*; Item 14 – *Arrangements for the 42nd Session of the Conference*; Item 15 – *Council Multi-year Programme of Work 2021-24*; Item 16 – *Status of Implementation of Decisions taken at the 164th Session of the Council*; Item 17.2 – *Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board on its activities in 2019*; Item 18 – *Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2020-22*; Item 19 – *Developments in Fora of Importance for the Mandate of FAO*, and; Item 20 – *Tentative Agenda for the 166th Session of the Council*.

The written correspondence procedure follows the procedure used at the 164th Session of the Council. Inputs from Members, and the corresponding Secretariat responses may be found on the dedicated webpage on the Council's 165th Session website. The draft conclusions for these will be addressed in virtual plenary on Wednesday, as outlined in the Timetable.

In addition, a further time management measure for this session is outlined in document *CL 165/INF/5*, as well as my pre-Session letter of 20 November. Interventions from Members will be limited to three minutes while multi-Member statements will be limited to five minutes and I will enforce such time management as much as possible. To this end, I am supported by a time-keeping device which will help me monitor the duration of individual interventions.

Finally, I should like to propose the addition of one sub-item on to the agenda for this Session, namely, a Statement by a Representative of the FAO Staff Bodies.

If the Council is in agreement, this sub-Item may be addressed on Wednesday morning under Item 21, *Any Other Matters*.

May I take it that the Council approves the Agenda and Timetable for the Session, with these adjustments, as well as the special procedures for this virtual session, including the suspension of any rules incompatible with the virtual setting, specifically, Rule II.3 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council as outlined in document *CL 165/INF/5*?

Thank you, the Agenda and Timetable are approved, as well as the special procedures for the virtual modality, to be used on an exceptional basis for this 165th Session of the Council.

Approved

Approuvé

Aprobado

Item 2. Election of three Vice-Chairpersons, and Designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee

Point 2. Élection des trois vice-présidents et nomination du Président et des membres du Comité de rédaction

Tema 2. Elección de los tres Vicepresidentes y designación del Presidente y los miembros del Comité de Redacción

CHAIRPERSON

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

I wish to inform the Council that one nomination for the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, requested from a Member of the Council who is not from the G77 & China Group, has not been received. I propose therefore to elect the nominations which we have received – the three Vice-Chairpersons of the Council and the Members of the Drafting Committee – and then adjourn this Item until we receive a nomination for Chairperson of the Drafting Committee.

I therefore urge a Member of the Council who is not from the G77 & China Group to come forward to fill this outstanding position as soon as possible, in order to ensure the efficient conduct of the meeting.

We will now turn to the nominations for the Vice-Chairpersons of the Council.

Following consultations among the Regional Groups, the following proposals for the three posts of Vice-Chairperson have been received:

1. Ms Maria de Fatima Jardim of Angola
2. Mr Yael Rubinstein of Israel and
3. Mr Yousef Juhail of Kuwait.

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

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

I have a request from Angola for the floor.

Mme Maria de Fátima JARDIM (Angola)

Merci Monsieur le Président. En premier lieu je voudrais exprimer mes remerciements aux membres du Conseil, et en particulier à vous, Monsieur le Président, pour la confiance que vous nous accordez. Je voudrais souligner l'important travail effectué pour le Conseil de la FAO en tant qu'outil pour atteindre les objectifs de transformer de plus en plus la nutrition et le système alimentaire, compte tenu de son importance pour le développement, et pour améliorer le développement humain et les droits fondamentaux.

La sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle doit être garantie car elle est essentielle à la prospérité des générations futures. Au nom de mon gouvernement nous devons ici, assurer que nous ferons tout notre possible pour collaborer avec les objectifs de cet important poste aux fonctions du Conseil de la FAO, aussi remercier votre confiance, et remercier tous, pour vous assurer notre engagement personnel pour tous les objectifs que le Conseil va adopter. Merci Monsieur le Président.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. Now we go back to the Drafting Committee. The regional groups have proposed the following countries as members: Australia, Canada, China, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Germany, Kuwait, Tunisia, Spain.

Are there any objections? I see none. Thank you. It is so decided.

Decided

We will now open Item 2, once we receive notification of a nomination for the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee. I urge the Members of the non-G77 China Group to come forth with a name.

Before we move to Item 3 on the Agenda, I wish to remind Members to submit a copy of their statements in advance, if possible, to assist interpreters and verbatim reporters. Statements should be submitted to fao-interpretation@fao.org.

I would also remind Members that in light of the amended modalities for the Session, the introductions to Agenda items have been published in advance on the website of the 165th Session of the Council. I also wish to remind Members that following the discussions on each of the Agenda items, I will draw up conclusions to facilitate the drafting of the report of the session.

In line with our established practice, the draft conclusions will be projected on the screen through the use of the share screen function on the Zoom platform. This will enable Council Members to see the draft text while it is being read out and react with comments more easily. Non-English speakers of the Council will be able to follow and provide comments through interpretation.

In this regard I wish to emphasize that my conclusions will be concise and focussed on decisions by the Council with some flexibility afforded to the Drafting Committee in finalizing the draft report while not reopening substantive discussions which remains the prerogative of the Plenary Meeting.

Item 3. Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and Outline of Medium Term Plan 2022-25

Point 3. Grandes lignes du Cadre stratégique 2022-2031 et ébauche du Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025

Tema 3. Esquema del Marco estratégico para 2022-2031 y esquema del Plan a plazo medio para 2022-25

(CL 165/3)

CHAIRPERSON

With this we can go on to Item 3.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we begin our substantive work this morning with Item 3, *Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and Outline of the Medium Term plan 2022-25*.

The document before the Council is CL165/3. The introduction of this Item by Ms Beth Crawford, Director of the Office of Strategy Planning and Resources Management, has been circulated to you.

This Item was discussed by the Programme Committee at its 129th Session and the Joint Meeting of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee and the 183rd Session of the Finance Committee.

I will now open the floor for Members to make comments.

Ms Jeehan ALESTAD (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

It is a great honour for Kuwait to speak on behalf of the Middle East Region. Our Group wishes to commend the document which sets out the Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and we also endorse the Outline of the Medium Term Plan 2022-25.

We recognize the challenges which have been referred to, at regional level, through the Outline of the Strategic Framework and we commend this valuable document which focuses on the Sustainable Development and Agenda 2030, in particular regarding Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2, 10 and 12 and the approach to food systems consistent with the areas of expertise regarding forestry, agriculture, fisheries and sustainable forestry in order to achieve an exemplary investment and funding in order to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

Our Group wishes to endorse this approach to the Strategic Framework with the following: technology, innovation and the additional tools, including institutions and governments.

The Group also recognizes the need to ensure the sustainability of food systems and the need to take into consideration the national priorities and the required tools in order to strengthen capacity at regional level and in particular at the country offices, regional offices and all offices on the ground in order for the Organization to be effective and efficient.

The Middle East Group endorses all the areas of action of the Organization as part of the new Strategic Framework and the Medium Term Plan, in particular standard-setting, partnerships and the strategic role in the event of emergencies, innovation and technology in development and the establishment of sustainable food systems.

Furthermore, we wish this Strategic Framework to be flexible in order to rise to current challenges and future challenges, including challenges arising from climate change, natural disasters, conflict, economic and social crises.

To conclude, our Group commends the progress achieved through the Strategic Framework and the Medium Term Plan.

Mr Agung HENDRIADI (Indonesia)

If you allow me, Indonesia would like to pass the floor to my colleague, Her Excellency Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia who will deliver the joint statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and then followed by the Indonesia country statement.

Ms Esti ANDAYANI (Indonesia)

Indonesia has the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. We welcome the outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and of the Medium Term Plan 2022-25 prepared by the Secretariat and we appreciate the inclusive consultation process that is being held with Members for the elaboration of these documents.

We recognize that, along with global trends and challenges, needs and priorities identified at the regional level should be taken into consideration to ensure a ‘bottom-up approach’ in reviewing the Strategic Framework as foreseen in FAO’s Basic Texts.

We note with appreciation that the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are at the center of the new Strategic Framework. We stress the centrality of SDGs 1 and 2, as well as the pivotal role of SDG10, in FAO’s work in supporting Members to eradicate poverty, hunger and malnutrition and to achieve economic, social and environmental sustainability.

To that end, we also value the overreaching aspirations of the four betters – better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life which acknowledges the importance and interconnectedness of all SDGs in FAO’s work, including SDG8 and SDG14.

The Group of G77 and China recognize the need for sustainable food systems and highlights that, in some contexts and according to national priorities, transformations may be needed to achieve that goal. Such transformations, when appropriate, demand adequate transitional mechanisms, including financial resources, technology transfers and capacity building. In this regard, we recall that the principles of common, but differentiated responsibilities, solidarity and cooperation should guide the implementation efforts.

We also acknowledge the existence of a variety of proven approaches, systems and tools to achieve sustainable food systems. We call for the new Strategic Framework to guarantee that all of them are addressed by FAO in a neutral and balanced manner, so that they can be made available to Members, accordingly, taking into account their different contexts, priorities and capacities.

We welcome the application of four cross-cutting accelerators in program interventions –technology, innovation, data and complements (governance, human capital and institutions) – to maximize efforts in meeting the SDGs.

We stress the need for further efforts to make technologies and innovations available to all countries and stakeholders, hence, reducing existing gaps and inequalities among and within countries. We also caution against calling ‘governance, human capital and institutions - ‘complements’, given that it understates the pivotal role those elements play in the pursuit of sustainable development.

We fully support FAO’s scientific and evidence-based normative work. We would also like to reaffirm the complementary role of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), to FAO’s normative work and we support FAO to transform the TCP into a more strategic, facilitative instrument that provides Members with technical assistance based on the country’s specific needs to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

We welcome FAO’s intention to increase the visibility of the normative work and the TCP. We also value FAO’s elaboration of global public knowledge goods, such as flagship publications and data and statistics, and encourage the Organization to keep this work based on science and multilaterally agreed concepts.

We appreciate and encourage FAO’s efforts on transformative partnerships to contribute to inclusive and sustainable growth and strengthen contributions to the SDGs.

The new Framework could, however, be reviewed to take into account major outcomes of multilateral intergovernmental processes, if deemed appropriate by Members. It should also be agile enough to enable FAO to respond to challenges that food systems face and may face in the future, and to address disruptions caused by climate change, natural disasters, conflict and socioeconomic crises.

With these comments, the Group of G77 and China commends the Secretariat for the progress in the outline of the Strategic Framework and the Medium Term Plan and looks forward to its further elaboration. I give back to you to give to Indonesia's national delegation.

Mr Agung HENDRIADI (Indonesia)

Indonesia aligns itself with the Group of 77 and China and would like to add some comments as follows.

One, Indonesia expresses its appreciation to FAO for the comprehensive work on developing the Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and of the Medium Term Plan 2022-25. We appreciate the efforts on aligning the Strategic Framework to the Agenda 2030 and [XX] SDG targets.

We propose that the outline does reflect current trends and [XX] We believe this is related to the COVID-19 pandemic and we expect more evidence-based and more up-to-date data to also be reflected in the Strategic Framework.

In terms of the area of special consideration, we would like to emphasize that transformative partnership and [XX] in order to accelerate the race towards SDGs. Therefore, we encourage FAO [XX] of stakeholders and private sphere of cooperation [XX]

We support FAO's economic cooperation, seen from the traditional [XX] to maximize and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of work of FAO.

Lastly, we stress the importance to improve a broader range of relevant stakeholders in developing the Strategic Framework. Thus, we are looking forward to continuing a transparent process of substantive and comprehensive consultation with Members and all parties in formulating the upcoming Strategic Framework.

Mr Sang-man LEE (Republic of Korea)

The Republic of Korea has the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Asia Regional Group. We, the Asia Regional Group, support FAO's effort to achieve the 2030 Agenda and three Global Goals of Members.

We welcome the Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and the Outline of the Medium Term Plan 2022-25. It aims at meeting the aspirations of Leaving No One Behind through sustainable, inclusive and resilient food systems for 'four betters'.

We deeply thank FAO and the Members for undertaking the inclusive and transparent consultation process in developing the new Strategic Framework. We welcome the adjustments based on the Members.

We note with concern the uncertain economic outlook and the increasing number of extreme poor and hunger caused by COVID-19. We support FAO's commitment to reaffirming its leadership to defeat hunger and achieve global food security while preserving the planet's resource and reducing the environmental impact. We will intensify our efforts to take on more ambitious actions to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

We recognize that a new Strategic Framework is critical to enable FAO to reach its vision. The Asia Group welcomes that the new Strategic Framework places the SDGs at the centre with a particular focus on SDG1 and SDG2 and a renewed commitment to SDG10. The Framework also emphasizes the interconnectedness of all SDGs in FAO's work, including SDG12 and SDG14.

We recognize that the Strategic Framework builds on recent structural changes at Headquarters, various initiatives, including the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, Food Coalition and Programmatic Approach. We recognize the vision of FAO, three Global Goals of Members and the 'four betters'.

We welcome the application of four cross-cutting and cross-sectional accelerators. It aims to maximize

efforts in meeting the SDGs by facilitating the management of trade-offs and stressing the importance of continued work between the Organization and governments. We believe the above aspirations can only be achieved through widely engaged partnership and with the cooperation with Members.

The partnership should also be extended and deepened with other United Nations (UN) agencies, financial institutions and the private sector. The instruments of South-South and Triangular Cooperation should be invigorated.

We underscore the importance of smallholders and family farmers. They are critical stakeholders for the future of food and agriculture. We encourage FAO to support Members to strengthen national capacities and agricultural development. We recognize the Technical Cooperation Programme is an effective and practical way. We welcome the incorporation of the conclusion of the Regional Conferences and Technical Committees into the Strategic Framework.

We recall the guidance provided by the 35th Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific. The guidance recommends mainstreaming of a food systems approach into national planning programmes to reinforce the role of agriculture in ending hunger.

We look forward to further developing the programme priority in consultation with Members. We welcome the overall Outline for the development of the Strategic Framework and look forward to further consultation with Members.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Germany is honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States.

The EU and its Member States thank FAO for the detailed information provided in the background document on both the content of the new Strategic Framework and the procedure that will be followed. We appreciate the inclusive and transparent way in which FAO is developing the Framework through formal and informal consultations with all relevant stakeholders. We are pleased to see that Members' concerns and recommendations are well reflected in each update of the draft and we encourage Management to continue working closely with Members to ensure ownership, transparency and inclusivity.

We are pleased that FAO is truly placing the 2030 Agenda at the centre of the new Strategic Framework by using key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their indicators to promote focus and track progress. We recall FAO's broad mandate and custodian role for SDGs 2 (Zero Hunger), 5 (Gender), 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 12 (Responsible Production and Consumption), 14 (Life under Water) and 15 (Life on Land). We expect FAO's Strategic Framework to reflect this broad mandate. We also support strengthening the integration of the UN Reform into the FAO Strategic Framework.

The EU and its Member States strongly support FAO's vision of a world free from hunger and malnutrition in all its forms, where food and agriculture contribute to improving the living standards of all, especially the poorest and with particular attention to gender equality, in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner. The food systems approach presented in the document is crucial to realising this vision and achieving all SDGs by 2030 by transforming food systems to make them become more sustainable and resilient. We suggest to include a reference to a science and evidence based assessment of the current food systems, with due attention to the environmental footprint and, in particular, the hidden costs of food as highlighted also in the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2020 Report.

Moreover, we would like the Strategic Framework to put more emphasis on sustainability in all its three dimensions, including on matters of climate change, biodiversity loss and soil degradation. The expert knowledge of FAO on sustainability will be crucial to transforming our food systems and, more generally, finding solutions to the challenges we face in reaching the 2030 Agenda, in all areas in the responsibility of the Organization. FAO should always emphasize sustainable approaches to agriculture, fisheries and forestry, including agroecology and other innovative approaches.

We appreciate FAO's commitment to the UN Food Systems Summit and to using the outcomes and follow-up actions of the Summit to guide FAO's work under the new Strategic Framework. We would

welcome more concrete information on how this will be done. In the same vein, we would appreciate more information on the innovative financing mechanisms mentioned in the document.

The EU and its Member States furthermore underline the importance of ensuring that the Strategic Framework keeps a clear focus on maintaining FAO's normative role at the highest level, so that the Organization can continue to play its role as a centre of excellence within the UN system. In addition, due to the important work of FAO in the area of providing policy advice to Members, governance cannot only be seen as a component of the complement accelerator but deserves a more prominent place within the Framework. We also consider that, within the Strategic Framework, equal weight should be given to all forms of sustainable innovation, that means not only technological innovations but also social and other innovations.

Furthermore, we request FAO to give more space to the management and protection of data collection, and intellectual property rights, and stress the need to develop a cross-cutting data policy in the Framework.

Another critically important issue for us is the One Health approach. Keeping in mind that FAO has been requested by its Technical Committees as well as by the Regional Conferences to put more emphasis on its work on the One Health approach, we should see 'One Health' as a crosscutting theme for the Strategic Framework. Only through the One Health approach will we be able to tackle efficiently the challenges we are facing with the current pandemic - and will we be able to prevent and better prepare for future pandemics. The One Health approach is also critical to combating the increasing global threat posed by Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). The combined and coordinated efforts of the tripartite cooperation between FAO, OIE and WHO should support countries, using the best available knowledge to build and combine robust and sustainable agriculture and health systems. We would therefore request that the One Health Approach, including the fight against AMR, and the related cooperation with other relevant organizations, be identified as one of FAO's Areas of Special Consideration under the new Strategic Framework.

CHAIRPERSON

I have an urgent request from the Minister from Cameroon. If he could be allowed to make a statement on behalf of the Africa Group this morning as he has urgent commitments in the afternoon. If there are no objections, I could give the floor to Cameroon.

M. Gabriel MBAIROBE (Cameroon)

Je voudrais, avant de libérer mon propos, présenter les condoléances. Condoléances au peuple argentin, pour la disparition du footballeur Diego Armando Maradona. Toutes mes condoléances. Le Cameroun prend la parole sur ce point de l'ordre du jour au nom du groupe régional africain, nous endossons par ailleurs la déclaration du groupe des 77 et de la Chine. Nous accueillons favorablement la production de ce document qui brosse les grandes lignes du cadre stratégique 2022-2030, et du plan à moyen terme 2022-2025.

Nous apprécions le processus consultatif ainsi que l'exercice de prospective stratégique en (inaudible) à la préparation de ce document de planification stratégique. Nous sommes conscients du fait que la préparation de ce cadre stratégique se fait dans un contexte particulièrement difficile où l'humanité est face à la pandémie du COVID-19, verra une forte contraction de l'économie mondiale dans les premières années de mise en œuvre du cadre stratégique et du plan à moyen terme.

Les commentaires de la réunion conjointe du Comité du programme et du Comité financier des 9 et 13 novembre 2020 sont fortement appréciés par notre groupe régional qui s'en est inspiré pour donner des orientations précises sur le contenu et la forme du document. Nous endossons les faites recommandations de la réunion conjointe. Par ailleurs, la 31e Conférence régionale de la FAO pour l'Afrique dans le cadre de son examen des priorités de notre région a fait des recommandations spécifiques qui devront être prises en compte dans les futures versions du document.

Monsieur le Président, le groupe africain prend note de ce que le cadre stratégique, tout en prenant ancrage sur le programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030 et les objectifs de développement durables ODD, s'inscrit également dans l'évolution du monde à travers les tendances et

les grands défis globaux.

Dans ce contexte, nous prenons notes des grandes orientations du cadre stratégique qui vise l'amélioration des quatre plans, à savoir, la production, la nutrition, l'environnement et les conditions de vie, dans la perspective de la réalisation des ODD1, ODD2 dans l'engagement renouvelé vis-à-vis de l'ODD2 et de la (inaudible) l'importance et l'interdépendance de tous les ODD dans les travaux de la FAO, y compris les ODD12 et 14.

Nous serons le narratif autour des quatre accélérateurs intersectoriels que sont la technologie, l'innovation, (inaudible), les outils complémentaires la gouvernance du capital humain et constitution. Nous sommes disposés à poursuivre dans le détail (inaudible) et les objectifs globaux des membres, ainsi que de la modélisation programmatique, y compris le cadre des résultats de tous les aspects liés aux orientations, liés à l'opération de signalisation du cadre stratégique du plan à moyen terme.

Pour l'Afrique, les priorités, telles qu'énoncées dans le rapport de la 31e Conférence régionale, restent intimement connectées au programme de travail de l'Union Africaine, notamment à l'élimination de la faim à l'horizon 2025, l'intensification durable de la production et du développement des chaînes de valeurs, et le renforcement de la résilience dans les zones arides. Par ailleurs, d'autres thématiques sont à considérer, y compris, notamment, l'emploi des jeunes en agriculture, la question d'urbanisation et de migration, le développement équitable, le changement climatique, et la résilience au choc, les invasions des acridiens, et autres fléaux des cultures, les crises sanitaires qui permettront de mieux cibler les actions de la FAO sur les priorités dans notre région.

La Conférence régionale africaine a également demandé que le cadre stratégique dans son contenu puisse prendre en considération la révision des priorités dans notre région dans le nouveau contexte de la transformation inclusive des systèmes alimentaires, de l'initiative main dans la main de la digitalisation et de l'innovation, de la COVID-19, du commerce global, y compris les chaînes de valeurs globales prenant notamment compte la mise en œuvre de la zone de libre échange continental Africain.

Monsieur le Président, le groupe régional africain soutient toute vision stratégique de la FAO, qui contribue aux transformations et aux changements culturels à l'échelle mondiale, régionale et nationale.

Dans ce contexte, nous encourageons la révision de la théorie de changement, et les méthodes de travail de la FAO, notant la contribution possible du sommet des Nations Unies, sur le système alimentaire de 2021, dans la concrétisation du programme 2030 et de ses ODD, en particulier l'ODD2, nous restons ouverts à toutes discussions que les membres pourraient engager afin de prendre en compte le résultat de ce sommet, dans la planification stratégique de la FAO.

Nous soutenons l'application des approches transversales sur les systèmes alimentaires comprenant notamment l'agriculture, les forêts, la pêche, la gestion durable des écosystèmes, la réduction de la pauvreté, et l'amélioration de l'accès au financement de la formation des systèmes alimentaires, afin d'obtenir plus rapidement des résultats en vue de la réalisation du programme 2030.

Pour ce faire, nous restons convaincus que l'interconnexion des thématiques devrait bénéficier de l'élaboration de mécanisme d'exécution interdisciplinaire. Enfin, nous considérons que le document est encore au premier stade de son développement. L'engagement de l'ensemble des membres est requis pour faire avancer les travaux.

Notre groupe attend la proposition d'un calendrier de réunion ouverte à tous les Membres devant nous conduire à l'approche, à l'approbation du cadre stratégique et du plan à moyen terme de la conférence en juin 2021. Je vous remercie de votre aimable attention.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

We welcome the importance given to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, SDG1 and SDG10, as the central pillars of FAO's Vision and Global Goals.

With regard to a 'better nutrition', we see very positively that the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition and the elimination of poverty are positioned as global goals for our organization. Tackling these challenges require the establishment of instruments capable of

guaranteeing the availability and access to adequate and healthy food, in a permanent and sustainable way, as defined, in Brazil, in the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy.

With regard to ‘better production’, we believe it should deal with the challenge of increasing agricultural productivity. This theme should be included among the priority areas, and so should the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources.

We would like to ask for clarification on the inclusion of a priority area on innovation under ‘better production’, while innovation is already addressed as a cross-cutting accelerator in the Framework and is not mentioned as a priority area under the other three ‘four betters.’ We further welcome the inclusion of technology, data and innovation as accelerators. However, we believe that calling ‘governance, human capital and institutions complements’ understates the pivotal role those elements play in the pursue of sustainable development. In this context, we commend and highlight FAO’s work on the ground, close to the institutions and local reality, providing technical cooperation and effectively disseminating the valuable knowledge accumulated in the Organization, as an aspect that shall receive particular attention in the elaboration of the new Framework.

As for some aspects of the document that may give rise to misperceptions, we offer three comments. First, in Figure 3, ‘circular agriculture’ is proposed as priority area under ‘better production’. This term is not multilaterally agreed and, as far as we recall, FAO bodies have never substantially discussed it. In a constructive approach, we could accept instead a more encompassing term, such as ‘circular economy in food systems,’ but we understand further debate is needed in FAO on how the concept of circularity would apply to food systems, in the context of SDG12.

Second, taking into account that food trade, especially international food trade, reinforces the access to food and its availability, variability, constancy and stability of prices, Brazil believes that FAO should further emphasize the importance of an open, predictable, non-discriminatory trading system for its long-term Strategic Objectives.

Third, on consumption and nutrition patterns, it is noticeable a strong focus on consumer behavior. By doing so, we run the risk of disregarding the role of food environments in shaping food behaviors, as frequently is the case of larger cities, where consumers are often confronted with food deserts or food swamps. A food systems approach should be preferred in this point.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Brazil. I think we have reached the end of our morning Session, so I would like to adjourn the Meeting because it is just past 12:30 hours. We will reconvene at 14:30 hours sharp.

The meeting is adjourned, and we will get together again at 14.30 hours.

The meeting rose at 12:32 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 32

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.32

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-Fifth Session Cent soixante-cinquième session 165.º período de sesiones
Virtual Meeting, 30 November - 4 December 2020 Réunion Virtuelle, 30 novembre - 4 décembre 2020 Reunión Virtual, 30 de noviembre - 4 de diciembre de 2020
SECOND PLENARY SESSION DEUXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEGUNDA SESIÓN PLENARIA
30 November 2020

The Second Plenary Meeting was opened at 14:33 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council

La deuxième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 33
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la segunda sesión plenaria a las 14.33
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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Item 3. Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and Outline of Medium Term Plan 2022-25 (*continued*)

Point 3. Grandes lignes du Cadre stratégique 2022-2031 et ébauche du Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025 (*suite*)

Tema 3. Esquema del Marco estratégico para 2022-2031 y esquema del Plan a plazo medio para 2022-25 (*continuación*)

(CL 165/3)

CHAIRPERSON

Distinguished Members, we can commence our afternoon Session. I would just like to say that I had a list of speakers when we adjourned for lunch this afternoon, so I will follow that list because the list on the screen can be a bit misleading because as soon as Members switch off, the raised hand disappears.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

We believe that this Agenda Item is a very important one. Japan aligns itself with the Joint Statement delivered by the Republic of Korea on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. Having said that, I would like to make some remarks.

First, as the most important point I would like to make, international organizations are required to be highly accountable for their activities and it is essential to further strengthen the supervisory and the controls in order to ensure transparency and soundness of the Organization. Operations should be carried out and enjoy the appropriate involvement of Members and we look forward to further efforts by the Secretariat for that purpose.

On the financial side, it is necessary for the Regular Programme Budget to be approved that enables effective and efficient activities on the premise of the adhering to Zero Nominal Growth (ZNG).

With regard to the contents of activity, first, Japan welcomes the emphasis and importance of normative work and the standards set in the new Strategic Framework.

Second, we note FAO's contributions to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the guiding lens of SDG1 and SDG2 in the new Strategic Framework. However, in the context of FAO's main competitive advantages, SDG1 and SDG2 should be placed at the centre of the new Strategic Framework.

Third, because food production, distribution, consumption and lifestyle depend upon each country and region instead of them making a uniform standard common throughout the world, a well-balanced and nutritious diet should be considered according to the circumstances of each country and regions.

Fourthly, in the context of the crosscutting themes, we expect that implementation and the monitoring the method will be facilitated for the forcing of gender, governance, climate change and mutual issues.

In addition, under the continuous response to the COVID-19, it is extremely important to strengthen the food supply chain and in order to achieve SDG2, Zero Hunger, in developing countries. In this regard, majors such as local production for local consumption and the promotion of short supply chain should be reflected in the new Strategic Framework.

We expect the opportunity will be provided to reflect the result and the follow-up of the United Nations Food Security Summit, as well as subsequent Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit in the new Strategic Framework toward the achievement of SDG2 by 2030. The Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit is an example of Japan's commitment to this work.

Finally, I would like to request that the new Strategic Framework and the next Medium Term Plan be developed through a process of evaluation that is open to all Members and undergoes an appropriate discussion.

Mr Dun NIU (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China aligns itself with the intervention made on behalf of Asian Group and G77 and China. We appreciate efforts in conducting many inclusive consultations and positive progress made to implement the new Strategic Framework.

We acknowledge the central role given by the Strategic Framework to the 2030 Agenda and its focus on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1, SDG2 and SDG10. We highly appreciate proposals in the outline of reinvigorating North-South partnership and South-South and Triangular Cooperation and improving translation to ensure that all important and prioritized FAO products are translated into all six official languages, among other special focuses and key areas.

Continues in English

Now I would like to express suggestions and a requirement to the new outline of the Strategic Framework of FAO. First, we should say we should further enhance cooperation between FAO and Members to enhance or to carry out the new Strategic Objectives and also, we will focus on how can we work together to achieve that vision and put ideas in practice? How can we shift from the insight into reality?

We should also enhance the close relationship of our work with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 and SDG2 and fully play an important role of comparative advantage of agriculture, technology and knowhow expertise and practically to upgrade the comprehensive agriculture productivity in developing countries.

Second, we should focus on and pay close attention to diversified ideas and suggestions, especially from developing countries. We will pay great attention to the requirement and demand and developing countries, for example the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP). A very important rule to promote agriculture production in developing countries, especially in RDC countries. Therefore, in the future, we hope that the TCP Programme can become a key issue of a new Strategic Framework.

Finally, I will say in the future, when FAO carries out the new Strategic Framework, it must be a constructive and important role to eradicate poverty, food insecurity and poor nutrition in the world and make a new contribution to realise the SDG targets.

Ms Yael RUBINSTEIN (Israel)

We thank Ms Beth Crawford and her team for their hard work. The Strategic Framework is one of the most important components of any Organization. In an ever-changing marketplace, ever changing environment, shifting regulation and expected pandemic and a global economy, everything boils down to one framework that guides, optimizes and leads the Organization to higher results.

We would like to emphasize and highlight the following three points. First, the importance of creating a flexible, dynamic, innovative and adaptable framework. This Framework needs to be able to adapt to global changes, as well as flexibility to allow changes to be made as required by the current needs.

Innovation is fundamental to FAO's success, as it allows to stay with both hands on the wheel and to lead the Organization strategically, be the first to anticipate changes, be the first to understand existing needs and then lead others to use technology, creative thinking and innovation to address all of that.

Second, we would like to highlight the importance of a Strategic Framework, which is more action oriented and capable of demonstrating success through miserable results, such as corporate strategic foresight exercise mentioned in the document.

Moreover, it is essential that Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 10, reduce inequality within and among countries, will receive a bigger reference in FAO's Framework. In integrating a large number of women into high-ranking positions while providing equal opportunity for developing a supportive and productive and proactive community at FAO.

Third, a greater focus on youth within the strategy and clear interface points where youth can play a larger role in creating, influencing and improving their lives and the lives of future generations.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Estimado Presidente, hemos sido anoticiados que durante el discurso de la Presidenta del G77 y China, existió un problema técnico por el cual su último párrafo no pudo ser transmitido así que, en el nombre del G77, voy a leer ese párrafo final. Lo voy a hacer en inglés.

Continues in English

The group of G77 and China is committed to a strong FAO, run by its Membership. This is why we believe that it is FAO's Members who have the prerogative and the duty to define the Organization's priority programmatic areas for the next years. In this sense, while we look forward to and support a successful and result-oriented United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021, we consider that outcomes that are not negotiated by FAO Members should not determine conditions or limit the elaboration of the Organization's Strategic Framework.

The new Framework could, however, be reviewed to take into account major outcomes of multilateral inter-governmental processes, if deemed appropriate by members. It should also be agile enough to enable FAO to respond to challenges that food systems face and may face in the future and to address disruptions caused by climate change, natural disasters, conflict and socio-economic crisis.

Continúa en Español

Ahora, voy a hablar en nombre de mi país. Gracias, en principio, al Ministro de Camerún por su notable gesto respecto del fallecimiento de Diego Maradona y a todos mis queridas colegas y mis queridos colegas que enviaron sus mensajes de condolencias.

La Argentina se alinea con la declaración pronunciada por Indonesia en nombre del G77 más China. Valoramos los esquemas para el Marco estratégico de la FAO (2022-2031) y de su Plan a plazo medio para 2022-25 preparado por la Secretaría y apreciamos, especialmente, la conducción de un proceso inclusivo de consultas con los Miembros para la definición de áreas de trabajo prioritarias. Celebramos que la Agenda 2030 y sus Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) estén en el centro del nuevo marco estratégico. C y compartimos la aspiración de alcanzar los four betters que, entendemos, deberían guiar los esfuerzos de la Organización en su valiosa contribución a la erradicación de la pobreza, el hambre y la malnutrición.

La Argentina desea destacar el papel central que cumple la FAO en apoyar a sus Miembros para que alcancen sistemas alimentarios sostenibles. Es en virtud de ello que reiteramos la importancia de que la FAO promueva de manera neutral y equilibrada los diversos enfoques, sistemas y herramientas de producción sostenibles, tales como, la agroecología, la agricultura de conservación, la siembra directa, la biotecnología, entre otros.

El equilibrio es una cualidad que debe caracterizar a esta Organización. Una cualidad [inaudible] a la que debemos aspirar y que debemos celebrar porque solo así podremos jactarnos de que la FAO es de todos los Miembros. Solo así podremos afirmar que la FAO reconoce la diversidad de contextos y la complejidad de los desafíos que enfrentamos.

Y solo así podemos asegurarnos de que, a la hora de recibir el respaldo de la Organización, nuestros países podrán valerse de los instrumentos que resulten más apropiados a las diversas prioridades y capacidades nacionales.

Es por ello que en línea con lo ya manifestado por el G77 más China, y como fuera también remarcado por la reunión conjunta del Comité del Programa en su 129.º período de sesiones y el Comité de Finanzas en su 183.º período de sesiones (9 y 13 de noviembre de 2020), la Argentina solicita que en el próximo marco estratégico se reconozcan de manera equilibrada todos los enfoques y herramientas y no se priorice uno por sobre los otros. En ese sentido, solicito que se corrija el diagrama de la página 14 del documento en el que se resalta únicamente la agricultura circular.

En el esquema del marco estratégico se identifican también los desafíos y oportunidades para el logro de sistemas alimentarios sostenibles. Es muy importante identificar estos factores, ya que constituyen o influyen en las áreas sobre las que precisamente la FAO debería actuar. Notamos que entre los 18 elementos presentados en el cuadro 1: *Nuevos factores que inciden en los sistemas alimentarios y agrícolas*, de la página 8 del documento, no se reconocen las distorsiones vigentes en el mercado agrícola internacional.

Sin embargo, las políticas comerciales que subsidian ineficiencias e impiden el correcto funcionamiento de las cadenas agroalimentarias mundiales inciden significativamente en los precios de los productos agroalimentarios y afectan las oportunidades que los países en desarrollo liberen su potencial agrícola.

Para ir terminando, creemos que la FAO debe abordar las cuestiones del comercio internacional agroalimentario. El comercio internacional es una pieza fundamental de los sistemas alimentarios y si la FAO adopta en su trabajo un enfoque de sistemas alimentarios como es lo que aparece, no podemos incluir en este marco solo algunos aspectos y excluir otros.

Si hablamos de un enfoque de sistemas alimentarios, hablemos de la conducta de los consumidores, pero hablemos también del comercio internacional. De lo contrario, no hablemos de sistemas ni de enfoques holísticos ya que lo estaríamos haciendo de manera parcial.

Como último punto, Argentina desea destacar el trabajo normativo de la FAO. Un mandato central de la Organización que debemos continuar respaldando y dando mayor visibilidad. Sin embargo, no debe ser interpretado como una necesidad de examinar la definición de la labor normativa de la Organización.

Por el contrario, a fin de mantener la relevancia y la pertinencia de la reconocida labor normativa que la FAO viene realizando, es importante mantener la distinción entre estas y los productos de conocimiento y los datos y estadísticas. Estos bienes públicos mundiales pueden ser eventualmente considerados como insumos para la elaboración de normas y estándares.

Con estos comentarios, la Argentina alienta a la Secretaría a continuar elaborando en el Marco estratégico y el plan a plazo medio sobre la base del esquema presentado y teniendo en cuenta, además, de las recomendaciones del presente Consejo, los insumos aportados por las Conferencias Regionales y las conclusiones de los Comités técnicos. Gracias, Presidente, por su flexibilidad.

CHAIRPERSON

May I remind Members that we are behind schedule of our Agenda, therefore could you please adhere to the three minutes for individual statements and five minutes for group statements.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Canada applauds, like others, the FAO ongoing efforts towards a new Strategic Framework and we appreciate in particular inclusive and transparent consultations with Members.

We are pleased to see signals that FAO's normative work will feature prominently in the new Strategic Framework. Prioritization of resource allocations within the regular Programme of Work and Budget remain key to the success of this work. This includes the The Codex Alimentarius (CODEX), the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), plant health and food safety, as well as the One Health approach.

We welcome the identification of the four accelerators and urge FAO to embrace innovation in all its forms, including with a view to managing and minimizing trade-offs, as well as optimizing win-win solutions. As stated by FAO, it will be critical that innovation, technology and data be gender responsive.

Canada supports the use of a food systems approach in the implementation of the Strategic Framework, considering social, economic and environmental development considerations simultaneously and addressing the relevant trade-offs in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We also welcome the Programme Committee recommendations that FAO pay particular attention to the deliberations of Regional Conferences, like many other groups have said. With that in mind, the North America region identified key strategic recommendations.

FAO should pursue an inclusive innovation agenda that promotes innovations that contribute to fostering environmental, social and economic sustainability. FAO adds most value when delivering the critical functions of its core mandate, which is normative and standard setting work, scientific, evidence based and impartial analysis and serving as a knowledge aggregator.

FAO will be built resilience to persistent and emerging threats by focusing on timely science and evidence-based responses and highlighting the importance of global supply chains and international trade.

FAO will be most effective by systematically adopting gender responsive approaches, including those that tackle underlying social norms and attitudes and behaviours and increasing its focus on women, youth and indigenous peoples.

To meet the global challenges and emerging threats before it, FAO must optimize its comparative advantage by leveraging partnerships with the private sector, civil society, the Rome-Based Agencies and other international organizations.

We are very glad, in this sense, to hear that there will be a shift toward a less transactional approach to partnerships and we are also cognisant of the fact that the Gender Action Plan will be developed in parallel with the new Strategic Framework and we stress the importance of building on the 2019 Evaluation Recommendations, including targets in outputs and indicators in sufficient resources for gender.

We also must work together to ensure that indigenous peoples participate in our meetings and that we harness their knowledge and innovative solutions to achieve our common goals.

Ms Pernilla IVARSSON (Sweden)

I deliver this statement on behalf of the Nordic countries, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and my own country, Sweden. The European Union (EU) Member States, Finland, Denmark and Sweden, align themselves with the EU statement.

We recognize and welcome the inclusive and transparent process in the ongoing development of the new Strategic Framework. For FAO, it has been an efficient working method. We would therefore like to encourage FAO to continue in this manner. If we can develop the Framework together, we will obtain a mutual ownership of the document among the Membership and within FAO.

The challenges the world is facing, reinforced by the pandemic, underscores how important multilateral cooperation is as a means to find solutions. We need a strong FAO, well placed within the United Nations System and implementing the United Nations Development System Reform, in order to succeed in the fight against hunger and in transforming food systems to be far more sustainable worldwide.

We need to have a strong focus on mitigation and adaptation to climate change. Safeguarding natural resources and biodiversity is critical to people's health and to planetary wealth. Sustainable management of natural resources in agriculture, fisheries and forestry is the answer to reverse trends that lead to biodiversity loss.

The Nordics also want to underline the importance of the three dimensions of sustainability, social, economic and environmental.

We also need a strong FAO in the Tripartite Collaboration to implement the One Health Approach and handle threats such as Antimicrobial Resistance. The One Health Approach that recognizes the interface between human, animal and plant health, as well as environment, is key to better meet the challenges we face with the current pandemic and to prevent and be better prepared for future ones.

We welcome a continued focus on gender and women's empowerment as a driving force for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To achieve our common commitment to the 2030 Agenda, FAO needs to provide top expertise in the areas where its comparative advantage lies. We underline that the SDGs needs to be viewed in a holistic manner and that FAO's work is relevant to almost all of them. The custodian responsibility that FAO has for certain SDG indicators was referred to by Germany on behalf of the European Union and we echo that sentiment.

We want FAO to be the neutral, global knowledge hub of excellence that provides global goods based on scientific evidence for its entire Membership. FAO has a unique role globally in standard setting, developing norms, providing global statistics and other public goods. We are looking forward to learning more on how the new vision for the normative work will be developed.

We further expect the Organization to be placed at the front of knowledge base for agriculture, forestry, fishery and nutrition, capable and willing to try new approaches, testing new ideas and learn from mistakes. We in the Membership need to encourage the Organization to learn, improve and

develop.

For a knowledge Organization such as FAO, its staff is its most valuable asset. To attract the best competence, ensure that the staff is motivated and has the potential to grow and find new solutions, you need a modern Organization, professional leadership with a Human Resources policy that recognizes talent and creates a solution-oriented environment for continued learning. This driving force for a modern, results oriented Organization also need to be encompassed in the Strategic Framework.

The Nordic countries are looking forward to working together with you, Director-General, with FAO staff and with our colleagues in the Membership to continue to elaborate a new Strategic Framework.

Sr. Federico ZAMORA CORDERO (Costa Rica)

Al ser la primera ocasión en la que mi delegación hace uso de la palabra en el Consejo, aprovecho la oportunidad para agradecer [XX] ha dejado lecciones valiosas y a demostrado que la Organización está preparada para guiar los esfuerzos orientados a alcanzar la transformación de los sistemas alimentarios a nivel mundial, cuyo centro sea ser más accesible las dietas saludables para que nadie quede atrás.

Por el gran compromiso de la Organización durante estos meses de crisis, abro mi participación en esta plenaria agradeciendo al Director General y todo su equipo de trabajo y a todo el personal de la Organización, en general, por su gran compromiso e incansable labor durante estos momentos de incertidumbre y de grandes retos. Reciban nuestros augurios de buena salud a todos los funcionarios. Asimismo, tomo este espacio para desearle a todos los colegas una semana de trabajo exitosa.

Dicho esto, la delegación de Costa Rica aplaude la propuesta de colocar a la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible como eje central del Marco estratégico para 2022-2031 y celebra la decisión de la Organización de aplicar un enfoque más holístico para el concepto de sistemas alimentarios; lo cual, sin duda, enriquecerá el campo de acción de la Organización para facilitar los esfuerzos por consolidar esa tan esperada transformación de los sistemas alimentarios con el fin de acelerar los progresos hacia la consecución de la Agenda 2030.

Costa Rica da la bienvenida a la noticia de que la Organización se concentrará en fomentar el desarrollo de la agricultura más allá de los fines macroeconómicos y de producción con objeto de garantizar la seguridad alimentaria y medios de vida resilientes, el fomento de innovaciones y de una mejor catalización de las inversiones y asociaciones.

Es fundamental que la FAO continúe trabajando para mejorar la accesibilidad a los alimentos inocuos y saludables, como lo recordó nuestro Ministro de Agricultura y Ganadería, Excmo.

Sr. Renato Alvarado Rivera, en el primer día de sesiones del 36.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para América Latina y el Caribe (LARC 36). Esto contemplando siempre el rol fundamental de los agricultores familiares, de los pequeños productores rurales en la seguridad alimentaria de todas las comunidades.

La FAO ha reconocido en varias ocasiones que el principal problema que impide a la mayoría de las personas consolidar su seguridad alimentaria es el tema del acceso a los alimentos, por lo que es central que este elemento también sea traducido en la ejecución de esta nueva estrategia de organización para el próximo decenio, particularmente si queremos alcanzar las metas planteadas en la Agenda 2030.

Mi delegación celebra la prioridad otorgada a los temas de género, gobernanza, cambio climático y nutrición al colocarlos como temas transversales en el plan estratégico 2022-31. Costa Rica felicita a la FAO por comprometerse a fortalecer las asociaciones que vinculan la Organización con todos los distintos actores que trabajan acompañándola día a día para alcanzar los objetivos de este organismo. Respalamos, en particular, la intención de fortalecer la asociación con los Miembros para promover la resiliencia y el desarrollo.

Es importante recordar que muchos de los países catalogados como economías de ingreso medio y economías emergentes están sufriendo de manera desproporcionada los embates de la crisis provocada por el COVID-19. El caso particular de América Latina y el Caribe es alarmante.

Como bien saben, el Fondo Monetario Internacional (FMI) proyecta que el crecimiento económico de esta región se contraerá en un porcentaje nunca visto en la región reportando un crecimiento proyectado de -8.1% para 2021, siendo la mayor contracción reportada en la región en 120 años cuando se empezaba a recolectar datos para medir el crecimiento económico de los países.

La Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL) calcula que el desempleo producto de la crisis alcanzará el 13.5%. Se espera que la subregión de Centro América y México vea una caída del ingreso per cápita del 8.4%. Por lo que todos los esfuerzos que se realicen para amortiguar el impacto de este golpe son decisivos para el futuro de nuestra región. Costa Rica, en particular, agradece que el Marco estratégico planteado permite estrechar la comprensión entre la FAO y los países en vías de desarrollo e invita a la Organización a redoblar esfuerzos para que, de la mano con nuestros países, la región logre superar esta crisis.

Mi delegación agradece que la Organización promueva el Marco estratégico, una mayor transparencia y un mejor rendimiento de cuentas; además de la adaptación de los procesos de la Organización a las plataformas virtuales, siendo esta una de las más importantes lecciones que hemos aprendido este año. Las plataformas virtuales facilitan que los procesos de esta Organización...

CHAIRPERSON

May I interrupt and suggest that three minutes have gone, so could you kindly conclude your statement, please?

Mr Federico ZAMORA CORDERO (Costa Rica)

That will be okay. I will send a written communication.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

Australia welcomes the inclusive and consultative approach to developing the Strategic Framework and the Medium Term Plan. We recognize and thank Management for their efforts in formulating the outlines and we acknowledge the aim to further bring about a fit-for-purpose, responsive and agile FAO.

We agree that it is important for the FAO to adopt a Food Systems Approach in order to catalyse and build upon work being done elsewhere in the United Nations, not least the United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021. However, in doing so, we reaffirm the need for FAO to focus on areas where it has comparative advantage and expertise.

We have heard the Director-General express this notion on a number of occasions, for example when reflecting on the important role the FAO plays alongside the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) in the Tripartite and we trust that, as the Director-General has done, the Strategic Framework will also clearly convey this important message.

In this regard, Australia particularly welcomes the renewed focus on the FAO's normative and standard setting work, including the proposal to strengthen and increase its visibility and impact. We consider this work to be at the heart of FAO's ability to bring about the three Global Goals and achieve the four betters and, as we have previously raised, we strongly recommend that the document explicitly notes how this important work contributes and reinforces Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) attainment.

We highlight the need for commitment to important issues, like the One-Health Approach, innovation of all kinds and to international trade. Noting its importance to the South-West Pacific Region and to the attainment of the SDGs, we also caution the FAO against diluting efforts and technical expertise on fisheries issues.

Finally, Australia welcomes the forward engagement plan, and we encourage the continuation of open and consultative dialogue over the coming months. With this in mind and while recognizing the Strategic Framework is, by nature, a document intended to outline what the FAO's visions and aspirations are at a high level, we encourage an expansion of information to better inform readers of the proposed means of implementation.

This will ensure that Members have a full understanding of what these documents mean on a practical

level and, in turn, allow a smooth passage of endorsement over the coming six months.

Sr. Elias REYES BRAVO (México)

México desea reconocer la clara decisión de la FAO de llevar a cabo una reestructuración y redefinición [XX] en esferas clave con el fin de ser más eficaz y moderna para los próximos años. El contexto derivado de la pandemia por COVID-19 ha dejado evidencia a todos los niveles de las fallas estructurales en aspectos sociales, productivos, sanitarios y económicos que hacen impostergable replantear las estrategias y acciones implementadas hasta hoy en torno a la seguridad alimentaria, el hambre y la malnutrición.

Encontramos en este esquema una coincidencia con la visión de objetivos de México en materia agroalimentaria que colocan a la autosuficiencia alimentaria en su centro. Los principales cambios que plantea la presente administración se sintetizan en la construcción de un nuevo sistema productivo justo, saludable, incluyente y sustentable a partir de la articulación, armonización y visión sistémica e integral de las políticas públicas. Tenemos como premisa también el impulso a la agricultura de pequeña y mediana escala.

Asimismo, tenemos los siguientes comentarios. Sobre el párrafo 23 consideramos que es importante que dentro de los trabajos que está realizando el Grupo científico sobre definiciones y conceptos se aborde el tema de alimentos procesados, mínimamente procesados y ultraprocesado, en virtud del debate que existe sobre dichos términos, particularmente cuando se discute sobre alimentos nutritivos.

Por otra parte, a lo largo del documento parece utilizarse indistintamente los términos sistemas agroalimentarios y sistemas alimentarios. Si efectivamente es indistinto sugerimos una uniformidad en su uso. En México se utiliza agroalimentario al englobar desde la producción hasta el consumidor final.

Se considera muy valioso lo señalad en el párrafo 60 sobre fortalecer las asociaciones de la FAO. En especial deben identificarse, o intensificarse con las organizaciones de productores ya que, si no se les involucra en el diseño de programas, estos corren el riesgo de ser inaplicables a la realidad que se vive en los territorios.

Como muestra de la relevancia que cobra la planeación en estos días, estamos apoyando a la representación de la FAO en México en la elaboración del marco de programación país 2021-2025 con el que la FAO guiará sus actividades en México.

Para concluir, alentamos a la FAO a continuar trabajando de la mano de los Miembros en el diseño de un Marco estratégico adecuado que nutra la orientación de nuestros trabajos.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. I have a request to read out my list of speakers so Members would know. After this is Peru, then United States of America, then the Bahamas, Thailand, Nicaragua, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Spain, Belgium, Dominican Republic, Germany, Egypt and then there are four observers, Kenya, Hungary, France and Switzerland.

Sr. Julio Eduardo MARTINELLI (Perú)

Agradecemos a la Secretaría por la formulación del *Marco estratégico de la FAO (2022-2031) y de su Plan a plazo medio para 2022-25*. La delegación del Perú destaca y respalda la declaración formulada al efecto por Indonesia en nombre del G77 más China y desea realizar algunos comentarios adicionales en su capacidad nacional sobre este tema que consideramos de importancia crucial para la Organización y sus Miembros.

El Perú acoge con satisfacción que los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) centren los objetivos y prioridades de acción de la FAO, en particular, los ODS 1 y 2; y que se haya considerado también al ODS 10 en su formulación, toda vez que en el contexto de la crisis producida por la pandemia de COVID-19 se han intensificado las desigualdades preexistentes afectando en mayor medida a los más pobres y a los más vulnerables.

La desigualdad en el mundo en desarrollo es uno de los más graves problemas estructurales a superar. A pesar de estar conformada en su mayoría por países de renta media y renta media alta, América

Latina y el Caribe es una de las regiones con mayores niveles de desigualdad y es aquí donde la inequidad y la pobreza se han visto agravados por el efecto de la pandemia.

El papel estratégico de la FAO es determinante para apoyar a los Estados Miembros en la reducción de la desigualdad y para hacer frente a otros desafíos mundiales relacionados con la crisis provocada por el hombre y la naturaleza que amenazan los tres pilares del desarrollo sostenible.

La agricultura y la alimentación son los sectores que se han visto más seriamente afectados con los consiguientes efectos negativos sobre la seguridad alimentaria y los medios de vida. Por ello, saludamos el nuevo impulso otorgado por la FAO en el aspecto socioeconómico de la alimentación y de la agricultura que integra la visión del nuevo marco estratégico, aspirando a mejorar los medios de vida de las personas que es el objetivo central de los planes de recuperación de los países en la postpandemia.

Es imprescindible que la FAO coadyuve a evitar mayores retrocesos en la marcha hacia el desarrollo potenciando los esfuerzos a los Estados Miembros para cumplir con los ODS. En este sentido, consideramos el rol clave que cumple el enfoque de abajo hacia arriba, partiendo de las situaciones específicas de los países y respondiendo a sus prioridades nacionales. De igual forma, destacamos que los cuatro aceleradores transversales son necesarios para asegurar la transformación inclusive y resiliente hacia sistemas alimentarios más sostenibles.

Respal damos, por último, las reformas en curso adoptadas por la FAO y damos nuestra conformidad al esquema y al cronograma propuestos para llevar adelante su revisión a través de la celebración de consultas.

CHAIRPERSON

Now I give the floor to the United States of America. I see there is nobody from the United States of America. We will come back to the United States of America. My next speaker is the Bahamas.

Ms Koschina MARSHALL (Bahamas)

My comments will be brief; however, my detailed text will be provided for the record. We wish to state at the outset that the 2022-31 Strategic Framework and the Medium Term Plan 2022-25 supports the objectives of the Caribbean region.

Additionally, we also support the G77's statement on this topic. We wish to commend the FAO for undertaking a corporate strategic foresight exercise to guide the new way forward.

The pragmatic approach implemented through the four cross-cutting accelerators, technology, innovation, data complements, inclusive governance, human capital and institutions will support work towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the three Global Goals of Members.

Moreover, with a new Strategic Framework being led by key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their indicators, countries in the region will be able to focus effectively and track progress towards national attainment of the SDGs. This shift in strategic planning allows for FAO's global work to have a more significant impact at country level.

The Outline of the Strategic Framework, particularly targets SDG2, SDG1 and SDG10, are all important to the Caribbean region. This inclusion of focus of SDG10, reduce inequalities between rich and poor countries, urban and rural areas, men and women, is also important for Small Island Developing States, also known as SIDS.

FAO must position itself in the most possible strategic way to help SIDS Members.

FAO's distinctive food systems approach of linking different aspects of FAO's work, including agriculture, forestry, fisheries and land use sustainability, poverty reduction and improved access to investment and finance in supporting food systems transformation is welcomed.

For the countries of the Caribbean, it would be important to see this work integrated and coordinated at the United Nations Food Systems Summit. As the Change Management Strategy is inexplicably bound to the Strategic Framework and underpins FAO's internal vision, it is critical to ensure that this provides comprehensive support to smallholders, family farmers and fisherfolks, including women and

youth, as well as for data collection and statistics related to improve the quality and frequency of data collection for Caribbean SIDS.

The Change Management Strategy is proposed to modify corporate management governance based on lessons learned from newer, pragmatic initiatives, such as the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, FAO's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme and the Food Coalition.

However, the region requests that lessons learned from previous initiatives such as the Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition in SIDS, are addressed and agreed actions of this particular programme are supported for future implementation in the Medium Term Plan 2022-25.

With these comments, the Bahamas is pleased to join in supporting the Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and the Medium Term Plan 2022-25.

Mr Kip TOM (United States of America)

The United States would like to thank FAO for the work that went into drafting this document and the consultative process along the way. We continue to see major improvements in the draft Strategy, based on Member's feedback.

As we stated at the Joint Meeting in November, we are pleased with the emphasis FAO is putting on its crucial scientific- and evidence-based normative work. The United States of America would also like to echo the comments made by some Members at the last Programme Committee Session.

[XX] with the Organization's normative work and supporting for standard-setting.

While we recognize the high value of many of FAO's knowledge reports, we caution that these products fulfil a different role in FAO's mandate, and we encourage FAO to keep them separate. We also want to emphasize that FAO should pursue an inclusive innovation agenda for all forms of scientific, digital, technological and other innovations that contribute to fostering environmental, social and economic sustainability.

The Strategic Framework presents an opportunity to signal a clear welcome of all approaches and a commitment to modernizing agricultural practices, including with biotechnology and digital precision agriculture. In order to achieve food security for all, we must begin with a farmer, who must have the tools to increase production in a sustainable manner and the only way to do that is by embracing new technologies.

We also want to encourage FAO to prioritize agricultural methods that focus on improving food security and sustainability. Too many methods seek to offset reduced production through unsustainable subsidies or taxes that the least developing countries cannot simply afford. Modernization, innovation and sustainability are not mutually exclusive terms. In fact, they can be mutually reinforcing and contribute to reducing hunger.

The Strategic Framework should be also demonstrating FAO's goal to make data driven information available to Member States for policy decision-making. The United States of America believes FAO's comparative advantage includes the delivery of critical functions within its core mandate, normative and support to standard setting work, scientific-, evidence-based and impartial analysis and serving as a knowledge aggregator. We would like to see this elevated to the Strategic Framework.

In conclusion, FAO is well positioned to support building resilience to persistent and emerging threats and should focus on timely, science- and evidence-based responses and highlight the importance of global supply chains and international trade.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Thailand)

Thailand aligns itself with the statement of G77 and China made by Indonesia and also the statement of the Asia Regional Group delivered by the Republic of Korea.

We welcome the Outline of the new Strategic Framework and support the ongoing effort toward a dynamic and innovative FAO. In this regard, we encourage further clarification of three points.

First, you may get more information about the new theory of change.

Second, the link between the new Strategy Framework and the organizational structures and budget. Last, how governance changes in FAO will better support work in country offices.

We agree in principle of FAO's new way forward and on the roles of data, innovation and technology as accelerators of progress toward Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but recommend further analysis of issues related to global governance and regulations, further analysis of regulations of cyberspace and digital rights. For example, the questions related to data use, data protection, data localization, data ownership and data sovereignty and their impact on modernization of food systems through digitalization.

Moreover, information technology infrastructures and erecting cities, infrastructures are not available in many rural areas in several countries. All forms of knowledge and innovation shall be taken into due consideration, including traditional and indigenous knowledge and innovation systems and participatory co-innovation processes should be promoted.

We recommend that FAO in future would be increasingly responsive to bottom-up needs and be in line with its basic organizational attributes, particularly the provisions of neutral forums for dialogue, change and policies convergence and regulatory processes.

Thailand would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for FAO's support to the work of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP) as mentioned in previous Session by the Ambassador of the Russian Federation. As you may know, this week, on 5 December 2020, many countries and organizations around the world will celebrate the World Soil Day. At FAO also this year we will celebrate the World Soil Day on Friday 4 December at 13:00 hours, with its campaign *Keep soil alive, protect soil biodiversity*, which actually on 4 December, the Glinka World Soil Prize will be awarded and also the King Bhumibol World Soil Day Award will be announced.

To conclude, we look forward to further development of a meaningful Results Framework to enable quality monitoring and reporting.

Finally, we support and welcome the Outline of the new Strategic Framework of FAO.

Sr. Paul OQUIST (Nicaragua)

Agradecemos a la Secretaría por la presentación del informe. Acogemos con satisfacción el amplio y transparente proceso de consultas, tanto internos como externos, iniciados por la Administración con el propósito de lograr consensuar y aprobar durante la próxima Conferencia del nuevo Marco estratégico para a mediano plazo ajustarlos a la nueva visión estratégica que queremos en nuestra Organización para el futuro con una agenda ambiciosa e innovadora.

En este sentido, recordamos que hemos sido los Estados Miembros los primeros en solicitar y señalar la necesidad de avanzar en estos procesos de transformación necesarios como urgentes para lograr una FAO más inclusiva, dinámica, flexible y eficiente, pero sin perder su espíritu primordial.

En cuanto al documento, coincidimos en que la elaboración del nuevo Marco estratégico, el cual abarcaría un período de diez años, nuestra Organización sigue orientándose en las metas mundiales de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) y sus indicadores, en particular en el ODS 1, 2 y 10. Al respecto valoramos y consideramos sumamente importante el trabajo que será realizado por la nueva oficina para los ODS. Consideramos la pertenencia de los cuatro elementos impulsores y aceleradores transversales propuestos.

Apreciamos la inclusión de la tecnología, datos e innovación, no obstante, para alcanzar una transformación inclusiva y a la vez reducir las desigualdades concentradas en las zonas rurales. Hay que reconocer y [XX] a las innegables brechas tecnológicas existentes, así como impulsar una mayor cooperación técnica y apropiación de la labor normativa de la FAO.

En este sentido, invitamos a la FAO a tomar en debida cuenta las orientaciones derivadas de las Conferencias regionales que nos hace América Latina, priorizan en el marco estratégico propiamente el acceso a los pequeños productores a la innovación, la información y la asistencia técnica, la prevención, control y erradicación de plagas y enfermedades, la promoción de prácticas agrícolas sostenibles conforme a los contextos, prioridades y capacidades nacionales. El Marco estratégico

deberá guiarse en sus recomendaciones y en las de los Comités técnicos el enfoque participativo, solidario y de consenso.

Para finalizar, agradecemos y celebramos los avances que en el contexto de la Organización de la Cumbre de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Sistemas Alimentarios se están desarrollando, creando las justas sinergias y complementariedades aprovechando la oportunidad para reiterar el firme compromiso de nuestro gobierno en la exitosa consecución de los objetivos que ella persigue.

Con estos comentarios, acogemos y agradecemos el esquema presentado.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland would like to thank the Director-General for his Opening Statement and for his commitment to strengthening the impact of FAO. We would also like to thank colleagues in the Joint Meeting and the Programme Committee for our discussion earlier this month on FAO's Strategic Framework and we endorse their recommendations.

I would like now to take this opportunity to highlight four particular priorities that we urge Council to reflect in our guidance for management as the Strategic Framework is completed. First of all, clarity about FAO's business model and, in particular, clarity about funding is a priority. We know that FAO has four main sources of funding. Firstly, our core assessed contributions. Secondly, our voluntary contributions. Thirdly, funds from pooled funds, such as the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), and fourthly, funds that FAO mobilizes on behalf of its Members, like climate finance. We understand that the Private Sector Strategy also intends to raise further funds.

It is really important that the Strategic Framework is clear about which sources of funds will pay for which work and that FAO Members agree on FAO's business model. I would like to turn to FAO's work on climate change to illustrate this point. FAO raised USD 1.2 billion in climate finance for its Members in 2018 and 2019 and FAO is now leading 13 projects for the Green Climate Fund (GCF). These projects are worth more than USD 400 million.

FAO has used core resources to prepare and apply for these project funds and Members need to agree on how FAO decides which countries to support to access climate finance. Why is it that only two of the thirteen GCF projects that FAO is leading on are in Africa? We have consistently called for FAO to support the most vulnerable countries to access climate finance.

Why is it then that less than 5 percent of the funds that FAO has accessed from the GCF are going to African countries and less than USD 90 million of the USD 400 million are going to low-income countries? Why is it that so few of these projects focus on food and agriculture? We have a list of the projects, which countries and how much they are worth, and we are happy to circulate that to Members.

Secondly, I call on Council to underline the importance of FAO's work to monitor, provide guidance on, and respond to transboundary pests and diseases, including antimicrobial resistance and zoonotic diseases and I have heard many other Members make the same point today, as well.

We very much welcome the progress that has been made in tackling the Desert Locust in East Africa and beyond, but they remain a threat and we are particularly concerned about the situation in Ethiopia at the moment and the impact of the conflict there that could have on the spread of locusts, both in Ethiopia and beyond. This highlights the importance of FAO's work on transboundary pests and diseases.

Third, I would like to highlight the importance of a Results Framework for setting clear direction and providing accountability for the impact of FAO's work. Clarity on when the strategic results framework will be available for consultation with Members would be very welcome and indeed a priority next step.

Fourthly, we very much welcome plans to complete a Change Management plan that had been set out in an annex to the current document. In particular, we welcomed the agreement from Management during the Programme Committee that that Change Management plan will be made available to the Programme Committee and Council before their next meetings.

Finally, I would like to reiterate the points made in the Joint Meeting, in the Programme Committee and indeed by many others today on the importance of the global public goods, the normative work that only FAO can provide, the importance of the alignment of the Strategic Framework with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the importance of the alignment with the Framework with the repositioning of the United Nations Development System.

We would support the European Union proposal for a special focus on the One-Health Approach. We fully agree on the importance of this, but I will not go into that again because you have heard it from them, but it is a real priority.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Respecto a este punto tres, quisiéramos mostrar, en primer lugar, nuestro total apoyo a la intervención de la Unión Europea y de sus Estados miembros destacando a su vez lo siguiente. En primer lugar, agradecemos a FAO por el trabajo realizado para redactar el documento de base de la estrategia, así como el formato participativo empleado. Nos parece muy adecuado el enfoque a través de sistemas alimentarios, la inclusión de los resultados de la Cumbre de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Sistemas Alimentarios en la estrategia y la necesidad de transformarlos para que sean más sostenibles en sus tres dimensiones, económica, social y medioambiental.

Apoyamos la visión de FAO en que una agricultura sostenible no es el problema sino parte de la solución al hambre y a la malnutrición. Echamos, sin embargo, en falta que los trabajos y productos del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial (CSA) no ocupen un lugar más preeminente en el marco estratégico. Esperamos, asimismo, el fortalecimiento a la colaboración con otras agencias del sistema de Naciones Unidas, en particular con el PMA y FIDA.

Apreciamos la creación de áreas de especial consideración, tales como las alianzas transformadoras, la teoría general del cambio y el plan estratégico. En este sentido, solicitamos a FAO que incorpore dentro de las mismas el trabajo en el enfoque “Una salud” y, particularmente, la resistencia antimicrobiana. Apreciamos participar con FAO y con el resto de Estados Miembros en la transformación de la estructura organizativa de FAO a la luz de este nuevo Marco estratégico.

Apreciamos, igualmente, el papel tan importante que toman la tecnología, los datos y la innovación en todas sus formas. Un país como España volcado en la agrotecnología y el impulso a la digitalización de las zonas rurales puede ser de utilidad compartiendo conocimientos y experiencia en estos campos con la propia FAO y con sus Miembros.

Apreciamos también, y de manera especial, que se haya incluido las prioridades relacionadas con la cuestión de género en una manera más explícita y con enlace directo a la política de igualdad de la FAO. Seguiremos, por último, contribuyendo en tratar de construir un marco estratégico realista que de respuesta a los desafíos actuales y futuros, especialmente en lo que respecta a los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) de los que FAO es custodio.

Esperamos seguir colaborando en la creación del nuevo Marco estratégico en FAO y con el resto de Estados Miembros.

Mr Frank CARRUET (Belgium)

Belgium is fully in line with the statement delivered by Germany on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. We appreciate the inclusive manner in which the Strategic Framework is developed, taking into account global trends and challenges and the fact that the Agenda 2030 is at the centre of the Strategic Framework. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for which FAO is a custodian have here a particular relevance.

We support an enhanced integration of the United Nations reform into the FAO Strategic Framework. Belgium welcomes FAO's focus on profiling agriculture beyond production and macro-economic purposes to ensure food security and resilient livelihoods. We emphasise the important role of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) as the main inclusive platform for all stakeholders to ensure food security and nutrition and stress the importance to incorporate, to a greater degree, CFS and its work in the new Strategic Framework.

Belgium welcomes FAO's commitment to a transition towards more sustainable food systems and

calls for due attention to be paid to the challenges involved, in particular with regard to sustainability issues as soil degradation, biodiversity loss and water scarcity.

Belgium supports FAO to incorporate gender-related priorities and results in a more explicit manner in the new Strategic Framework.

Finally, we emphasize the important focus of FAO on normative work and highlight the fact that FAO's leadership role in normative work remains one of its strongest comparative advantages.

Sra. Liudmila KUZMICHEVA (República Dominicana)

Apoyamos la intervención de Indonesia a nombre del G77 y China, y subrayamos algunos elementos. Celebramos el proceso inclusivo y transparente de consultas reconociendo los desafíos de la pandemia que han llevado a elaborar un marco y un plan a plazo medio coherentes con la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible y los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS). Ambos documentos están llamados a lograr las cuatro mejoras con flexibilidad en su respectiva implementación.

La FAO debe continuar fortaleciendo su red descentralizada en coordinación con FIDA, PMA y las demás agencias del sistema de Naciones Unidas, así como, fomentando el diálogo de políticas incluyendo las recomendaciones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial (CSA). Todo ello con un enfoque en sistemas alimentarios poniendo énfasis en cuestiones transversales de género, juventud e innovación.

Celebramos también que se intensifique el uso de instrumentos como la Cooperación Sur-Sur y Triangular y que se amplíe el apoyo a las asociaciones innovadoras incluyendo alianzas con otras organizaciones, la sociedad civil, el sector privado, instituciones académicas y de investigación, parlamentarios y otras partes interesadas.

Para todo esto tenemos una herramienta clave, el Programa de Cooperación Técnica (PCT) que es la espina dorsal de esta Organización. El mecanismo indispensable para la lucha contra el hambre y todas las formas de malnutrición, como reconocieron los ministros de América Latina y el Caribe durante el 36.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional celebrada el mes pasado.

Con estos comentarios, expresamos nuestra aprobación a ambos documentos.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

Egypt aligns itself with the joint statement of the G77 and China Group and statements of the Africa Regional Group and the Near East Group as well. We would like to add the following points.

Egypt appreciates that the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are at the centre of the new Strategic Framework of the Organization and focus mainly on SDG 1, SDG 2 and SDG 10. We also welcome the inclusive and extensive consultations conducted with the Members and all the stakeholders in developing and formulating the document and we encourage FAO to take into consideration the national and regional priorities and the Regional Conferences as already indicated in the reports of the Regional Conferences and the Technical Committees, as well.

We would also like to urge FAO to enhance its collaboration with other relevant United Nations Agencies, including the Rome-Based Agencies. Egypt underscores, like other delegations, the importance of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) in the Strategic Framework of the Organization and the need to make it more responsive to the national needs and to maximize its impact on the ground, given that TCP is a significant instrument for the developing countries to achieve the SDGs, in particular SDG 1 and SDG 2.

Egypt reiterates the recommendation of the Joint Meeting and requests FAO to give more attention to mobilising adequate resources for the implementation of the Strategic Framework through knowledge sharing, technology transfer, capacity building and innovative financial mechanisms, such as debt swaps that are already being utilized by other United Nations Agencies, including the RBAs.

In our capacity as Chairperson of the Africa Regional Group, we would like also to appreciate the intervention made by the distinguished delegation of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, which highlighted the low benefit from the African Region from the financial resources that have been mobilised by FAO from the Green Climate Fund. We would like to ask FAO to give us

more clarification in this regard.

With these comments, we welcome the Outline of the Strategic Framework.

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

I wanted to come back very quickly to what the Ambassador of Argentina developed. I just wanted to recall that FAO should not intermingle with ongoing World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations. This is an appropriate forum to discuss, but not FAO.

If I remember correctly, the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees had a discussion on this already two weeks ago. There was no agreement there to include any language on this issue in the report of the Meeting and I wonder whether the situation changes here in Council.

I also wanted just to offer you a few elements on FAO and SDG 10. Just looking at the targets and indicators and I wonder what FAO can really do about, for instance, the indicators (10.4) to “adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality”; (10.5) to “improve regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen implementation of such regulations”; (10.7) to “facilitate orderly, safe and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies”; (10.8) to “implement the principle of special and differential treatment of developing countries, in particular least developing countries in accordance with WTO agreements”; and so forth.

In terms of the level of the goal, Members may see there is a link. When we look at the targets and indicators, please consider what FAO really has to offer in that context. Just for consideration of the Membership in the further discussion.

CHAIRPERSON

This brings to an end the list of members. Now I go to the Observers.

Ms Jackline Yonga (Kenya) (Observer)

Kenya begins by aligning itself with the statement made by the Minister of Cameroon on behalf of the Africa Regional Group and also associates itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the G77 and China group on this particular Agenda Item.

We appreciate FAO’s goal to strive towards the four betters, which is in fulfilment of SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 10 and SDG 12, and wish to emphasize the significance of the field offices to deliver on this aspiration. This should be done in very close collaboration with host governments. In this, there is need for continuous strengthening of field offices’ capacity, both in terms of staff and in terms of resource allocation if we are to fulfil the Strategic Agenda and realise the objectives of this new Strategy.

We believe that the Strategic Framework 2022-31 should provide clear reporting lines from the field to the headquarters. It is also important to put more emphasis on the innovation, sustainability and digital agriculture, particularly targeting the youth, a situation that will enable the youth to contribute and adapt agribusiness and this is because most of the African continent is full of youth and the percentage of youth is very high, especially in Kenya.

In conclusion, I want to commend FAO for such a detailed Framework, which has included the inputs from Member States through the consultations and we therefore endorse the Framework.

Mr Zoltán KÁLMÁN (Hungary) (Observer)

I wish to make some short comments related to this item in support of, and obviously aligned with the statement delivered by Germany on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its Member States.

Let me start my intervention with a personal note. This is my last FAO Council Session. My assignment in Rome is coming to an end soon. It has been an honour and a real pleasure working together with all of you during the past six years. I wish to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all Permanent Representative colleagues, FAO Management and staff for your kind and constructive collaboration and also for your friendship.

It is my hope and my wish that FAO will contribute to providing appropriate responses to all the challenges ahead of us. Eliminating rural poverty, reducing inequalities and achieving Zero Hunger require the transformation of world food systems, making them more sustainable. This should start in an overall assessment of all the food systems based on evidence and independent science.

In this regard, we very much appreciate Máximo Torero's efforts in the *State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) Report 2020*, using this approach and presenting some of the indirect impacts, the so-called hidden costs of our food systems. We strongly encourage FAO to continue this pathway and include true cost accounting in the Strategic Framework and Medium Term Plan and consider it as a guiding principle in providing policy advice.

On the basis of the outcomes of these assessments, we propose FAO to put more emphasis in the Strategic Framework on sustainability in all its three dimensions. Regarding the economic dimension of sustainability, we should be reminded, however, that this is mainly the consequence of subsidies, often provided to input-intensive, unsustainable farming models, turning them profitable.

In relation to the environmental dimension, FAO should focus on environmentally friendly solutions to address issues such as biodiversity loss, soil degradation or food losses and waste.

As to the social dimension, FAO should continue to act in an inclusive way, consulting national governments, local communities to preserve and create rural employment to improve livelihoods for all people.

All in all, FAO's approach should be people-centred and planet-sensitive. In this regard, we strongly encourage FAO to pay due attention to sustainable innovations, such as Agroecology, which is a combination of traditions and innovations and include these concepts more prominently in the Strategic Framework and the Medium Term Plan.

This is not a new idea. Let me remind of the need for respecting FAO's resolution adopted in 2019 on the further integration of sustainable agricultural approaches, including agroecology in the future planning activities of FAO.

Finally, I wish you all a fruitful Council and much success to the efforts to transform world food systems, making them more sustainable.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Mr Zoltán Kálmán. I would also like to pay tribute to you. We have worked together over the years in different functions. We first met when, on behalf of FAO, I was interacting with the Hungarian authorities and you were there as well. The topic for interaction was the setting up of FAO's shared services centre in Budapest. Since then, we have interacted in FAO in various Governing Bodies meetings, including in the World Food Programme, and it has been an honour working with you and I wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France) (Observateur)

Merci Monsieur le Président. La France s'aligne sur la déclaration de l'Union Européenne, et de ses 27 Etats membres. La France remercie la FAO pour les informations détaillées relatives au futur cadre stratégique de la FAO, et se félicite du processus de consultation des Membres. En particulier, la France souligne l'importance du mandat de la FAO sur les aspects normatifs et de durabilité qui doivent recevoir une attention particulière de l'Organisation.

Ces domaines d'interventions prioritaires doivent inclure notamment, bien sûr, la lutte contre la faim et la malnutrition sous toutes ses formes, mais aussi l'adaptation et la lutte contre le changement climatique, la lutte contre l'érosion de la biodiversité, l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes et l'amélioration de la résilience et de la durabilité des systèmes alimentaires et des agriculteurs familiaux.

Nous encourageons pour cela la FAO à adopter une définition large de l'innovation, qui ne se limite pas seulement aux nouvelles technologies et à la digitalisation dont nous avons d'ailleurs vu aujourd'hui encore qu'elles n'étaient pas toujours fiables, mais une définition large de l'innovation qui inclut également toutes les formes durables d'innovations dont l'agroécologie et les innovations

sociales.

La pandémie actuelle a souligné les liens étroits entre santé humaine, animale et environnementale. À ce titre, nous encourageons la FAO à promouvoir et refléter davantage dans son document, l'approche "Une Seule Santé", en collaboration avec l'OMS, l'OIE, mais aussi le PNUD. Nous saisissons cette occasion pour remercier la FAO pour son engagement dans le conseil d'expert de haut niveau, "Une Seule Santé" dont la création a été annoncée le 12 novembre dernier lors du forum de Paris sur la paix. La pandémie a également montré le lien étroit entre la disparition des habitats, notamment forestiers et l'apparition des zoonoses.

Il est essentiel de rehausser notre ambition commune en faveur de la forêt dans son ensemble, et des forêts tropicales et humides en particulier. C'est précisément l'objectif de l'Alliance pour la préservation des forêts tropicales humides, dont la charte constitutive a été adoptée le 3 juillet en présence de nombreux états membres. En tant que membre fondateur de l'Alliance, la France se tient avec ses partenaires prête à travailler avec la FAO pour porter cette ambition commune.

Par ailleurs, comme demandé dans le rapport du *joint meeting*, et comme souligné par d'autres collègues, par exemple la Thaïlande, concernant les questions numériques et les données, il est important que le secrétariat inclue dans le document des précisions sur la collecte, le traitement, la confidentialité, et la propriété des données, et que la FAO développe une politique transversale en matière de données.

La France rappelle également l'importance du renforcement de la coopération entre les agences romaines pour la mise en œuvre des objectifs de développement durable qui devraient être présentés dans le cadre stratégique. La France suit en particulier avec intérêt la mise en œuvre du plan d'action conjoint Sahel. Nous soulignons aussi l'importance que l'action de la FAO s'intègre pleinement dans le système de développement des Nations Unies.

Enfin, la France estime que le renforcement de la collaboration de la FAO avec d'autres agences des Nations Unies devrait être une priorité essentielle de l'organisation dans les années à venir. Nous demandons des précisions sur la mise en œuvre de cette collaboration dans le cadre stratégique. En ce qui concerne le CSA, il manque des références claires aux travaux importants du CSA et à ses produits, dans le document. Le CSA devrait se voir accorder une place plus importante dans le nouveau cadre stratégique.

En conclusion, je souhaite saisir l'opportunité de ma prise de parole pour saluer et remercier notre collègue hongrois M. Zoltán Kálmán, et lui souhaiter plein succès dans la suite, et je souhaite également réitérer à notre collègue de l'Argentine, les condoléances de la France pour le décès de Diego Maradona.

Je vous remercie Monsieur le Président.

Ms Madeleine KAUFMANN (Switzerland) (Observer)

Switzerland expresses its satisfaction with the orientation of FAO's Strategic Framework 2022-31 with the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Over the past years we have progressively reached the understanding that the way food is currently produced and consumed is not sustainable and responsible for much of the global loss of biodiversity, as well as for a large part of greenhouse gas emissions.

Sustainable agriculture and healthy diets are key to achieve the SDGs. Therefore, food systems need to be an integral part of the solution to the global challenges we face. This requires a transformative change of food and agriculture as we know it today. In order to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs, diets should not only be healthy for humans, but also healthy for the planet.

We welcome the focus of the new FAO Strategic Framework on SDG 1, SDG 2 and SDG 10, but this list is not complete. The Framework needs to strengthen the connection between sustainable production and diets. It needs to integrate a stronger focus on SDG 12 as an additional entry point for FAO's future work.

A high-quality normative backing of this entry point leads eminently to FAO's core competencies and

FAO's mandate. FAO's normative work needs to be further strengthened, as highlighted in the Outline of FAO's Strategic Framework. This should, in our view, cover strengthening FAO capacity in systematic, scientifically-sound quantitative risk analysis and evaluating different scenarios, as well.

In view of the finalization of FAO's new Strategic Framework, we would like to raise three important points. First - drivers. FAO undertook a great effort to elaborate all relevant external drivers and key parameters. However, these external drivers and parameters are not yet weighted and categorized.

This needs to be done in particular with regard to drivers related to climate change and biodiversity - in the case of driver 16, under Section D on environmental systems, for instance, we therefore suggest to separately list epidemics and degradation of ecosystems. While there are links between epidemics and ecosystem degradation, not every epidemic is caused by such degradation. This also allows to give biodiversity conservation and sustainable use a more prominent role in FAO's new Strategic Framework.

Second, accelerators. We would welcome further clarification of FAO's accelerators and how they link to the four betters. We see knowledge as a fifth accelerator of utmost importance for FAO as a knowledge Organization and do not see it covered under technology, data, or innovation.

Additionally, we would like to seek further clarification on the relation between the aspirations and the vision of FAO. We fail to understand the need for such an additional level of desired outcome next to the vision.

Third, programme priority areas. Figure 3 on page 14 highlights in a graphic view a preliminary indication of possible programme areas; under prosperity, better production, there is one empty blue box, which we assume is for the programme area of climate change.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Pido disculpas por hacer uso de la palabra nuevamente, pero obviamente, es porque lo consideré pertinente. Quiero referirme particularmente al Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) 10. Primero, permítanme agradecerle a la embajadora de Francia sus cálidas palabras respecto a mi país. Gracias, embajadora.

Reitero, el ODS 10 implica reconocer las inequidades sociales de manera transversal adentro y fuera, dentro y entre los países. Significa desigualdades que condicionan el acceso a los alimentos que, como reconoce el El estado de la seguridad alimentaria y la nutrición en el mundo (SOFI) 2020 es uno de los principales factores de la inseguridad alimentaria.

Se dice que hay alimentos para todos en el mundo, pero existe un problema de acceso y para abordarlo primero hay que reconocerlo y luego resolverlos. Por ejemplo, desigualdades de género en el acceso a las infraestructuras básicas, en los ingresos de los trabajadores rurales, y no solo, también de la población en general, entre los pequeños productores y los grandes productores, desigualdades en las inversiones, desigualdad en la información, en la educación de los consumidores. Por todo ello, Presidente, es que el G77 más China, y no solo, sostiene lo esencial que la FAO incluya como una de sus prioridades el ODS 10.

En otro orden, respecto a la contabilidad del precio de los alimentos, reconocemos que la producción de alimentos como de cualquier otro bien, se debe notar las externalidades positivas y las externalidades negativas, tanto en lo social como en lo ambiental. Sin embargo, la gestión de esas compensaciones, como la contabilidad de las empresas, son cuestiones que se regulan a nivel nacional. Y esto es un principio que está multilateralmente acordado. En virtud del Acuerdo relativo a la Aplicación del Artículo VI del Acuerdo General sobre Aranceles Aduaneros y Comercio (GATT) del año 1994.

Reitero, en virtud del Acuerdo relativo a la aplicación del Artículo VI del GATT del año 1994, por lo tanto, puede haber muchas iniciativas creativas, pero recordemos que es potestad de cada Estado si las toman o no y en qué sectores de la producción se aplican. Y por otro lado, sería bueno recordar que aparte del Comité de Agricultura (COAG), del Comité Forestal (COFO), del Comité de Pesca (COFI) y del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial (CSA), también existe el Comité de Productos Básico, cuya función es realizar un seguimiento de la evolución de los precios de los *commodities*, la

producción, la distribución y su consumo. De hecho, la FAO es sede de Sistema de información sobre el mercado agrícola (SIMA).

Animémonos a hablar de comercio. El comercio es parte de la solución no del problema.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Very briefly and thank you for giving me the floor for the second time. I would like to support entirely what the representative of Argentina just said and most especially what he mentioned regarding the part missing in the intervention coming from G77 and China Group.

If you allow me, I would also mention to other Members that it was not only Argentina that mentioned the importance of trade. We, and I am going to read, in the second comment that we made was: taking into account that food trade, especially international food trade, reinforces the access to food and its availability, variability, constancy and stability of prices.

Brazil believes that FAO should further emphasize the importance of an open, predictable, non-discriminatory trading system for its long-term strategic objectives.

Sr. Mario ARVELO (República Dominicana)

Muy brevemente mi intervención. Apenas para reafirmar lo que acaba de decir el Embajador de Brasil en referencia a lo dicho un momento antes por el Embajador de Argentina. La delegación dominicana apoya ambas intervenciones.

Mr José RODRIGUES (Portugal) (Observer)

Portugal aligns itself with the statement made by Germany on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States that we fully support. We appreciate the inclusive way the Strategic Framework is developed. We consider the participation of all Members of utmost importance and we are looking forward to having a real and inclusive debate during the next FAO Conference.

We will stress that a food systems approach is crucial for a world free of hunger and malnutrition in all its forms and achieving all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. That systems approach needs to be supported by sound science and be evidence-based, paying attention to the relevant dimensions of food systems in its sustainability.

It is important that FAO's normative role is at the heart of the Strategic Framework. Moreover, equal weight should be given to all forms of innovation.

We also endorse the introduction of the One Health Approach, including the fight against Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and respective cooperation with other relevant organizations in this domain.

In this context, we commend the newly launched One-Health Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance, co-chaired by the Prime Ministers of Bangladesh and Barbados, which includes the former Portuguese Health Minister Antonio Correia de Campos.

Finally, we look forward to a detailed assessment in the next Conference of the organizational changes currently being introduced against the new Strategic Framework once the latter is adopted.

Mr Yaya Olaitan OLANIRAN (Nigeria) (Observer)

Thank you, colleagues, for the hard work that has been done so far. I want to thank the Director-General for his opening statement and for all the hard work that his colleagues have been doing in conjunction with the Membership. Nigeria supports what G77 and China has presented on behalf of G77 and China group, as well as the statement made on behalf of the Africa Regional Group.

All said, the direction of work that is being proposed is going to make FAO what we all are looking for. A digital-promoting agricultural system and efforts being made to put in the components of elements that will enhance and encourage the implementation of the outcome of the Food Systems Summit.

The documents will be what we need as a print to follow, but more importantly the role of FAO in the implementation of not only producing quantity, but quality of food, interacting with all other United

Nations agencies and the private sector, to give us a better world.

I want to thank colleagues from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for bringing out this Green Climate Fund (GCF) document. My advice, on behalf of the Africa Regional Group and other areas that are vulnerable, is to pay attention to where the needs are required most and definitely from what is here. Africa has not been given the so-called priority preference that we expected, but rather ending up with the dismal 5 percent of the resources got on behalf of all of us.

Finally, I want to say my condolences to the Ghanaian Ambassador for the death of ex-President Jerry Rawlings and of course the most recent one, the death of Diego Armando Maradona of Argentina.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Nigeria. That brings to an end our list of speakers. I thank all the speakers who have intervened with valuable contributions. I now would like to invite the Chairpersons of the Programme and Finance Committees for their remarks in response to questions from Members which they feel, as Chairpersons of the two Committees, they may wish to comment on.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Netherlands) (Observer) (Chairperson Programme Committee)

After a long, but I think a very substantive Session, I will be very brief, certainly for the sake of time. I think what we have seen is an excellent discussion about the Strategic Framework and it reflects also what was said during the Joint Meeting of the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee.

You have read it in the conclusions, it really stated the importance of the inclusive nature of the consultation process, the centrality of the Agenda 2030, the focus on the 'four betters': better production, better nutrition, better environment and a better life, and all the elements which are tabled this morning and this afternoon by the Members.

In the Joint Meeting and also in the Programme Committee we could achieve a consensus on all the conclusions. There were some difficult issues which we have seen today as well, but with the support of everybody it is very important that we unite ourselves along the lines of the important conclusions of the Joint Meeting and the today's conclusions, because we have to give a clear signal as the Council towards, not only all the Members of the Council, all the Membership of FAO. Certainly, for those who need the most in COVID-19 difficult times that we can act, we can act strongly, and we can act together.

I do hope that we have a smooth running of your draft conclusions and can find compromises, if needed, because we found strong compromises both in the Joint Meeting, as well as in the Programme Committee.

Ms Beth CRAWFORD (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management)

I would like to very much thank the distinguished Delegates and Members for this very rich and informative discussion. I think that this process that we have been undergoing, that includes these formal and informal consultations really allows us to develop a document that will be embraced by the entire Membership and we are very thankful for that.

I will also be relatively brief. As I said, it was a very rich discussion, and I will just touch on a few of the elements. We appreciate your comments on the strategic narrative that guides the new Strategic Framework of promoting sustainable, inclusive and resilient food systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life while leaving no one behind.

Many distinguished Delegates also commented on the importance of the guiding lens of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1, SDG 2, as well as SDG 10, which has indeed been included to ensure that reducing inequalities is duly taken into consideration in FAO's programmatic interventions as we also believe this is the only way to achieve SDGs 1 and 2 sustainably. We are talking about reducing inequalities, we are talking about inequalities between rich and poor countries, urban and rural areas, men and women.

Similarly, when we are applying the proposed accelerators of technology, innovation and data, reducing inequalities will be an important element to take into consideration and help inform the trade-offs.

Of course, many of you also commented on the importance of other SDGs in FAO's work and we fully agree with this because indeed the entire Framework is designed around the importance and inter-connectedness of all SDGs. All SDGs are emphasized in the body of the Results Framework. This means that the articulation of achieving the core SDGs 1, 2 and 10 is interlinked with all the other SDGs across the four betters and that includes through understanding the trade-offs and synergies amongst them, while we are following an agri-food systems approach.

The Programme Priority Areas which are currently under development will further showcase this strategic contribution of FAO to the broad range of SDG targets and indicators through a well-defined theory of change. This is where you will see in more detail how are the accelerators being used, how are the crosscutting issues being used, how are FAO's other core functions being leveraged to show FAO's comparative advantage.

I would also emphasize that figure 3 in the document, which some of the Members commented on what is in the leaves of that figure, these are just illustrative examples of possible Programme Priority Areas. We will be coming back to you before the next Sessions of the Programme and Finance Committees to share with you the further elaboration of those Programme Priority Areas and discuss with you.

I would also mention that the Strategic Framework is the first in a suite of documents, all of which will go to Conference next year. That includes the Medium Term Plan for 2020-25, as well as the Programme of Work and Budget 2022-23. It is in those documents that we will be providing additional information such as on the funding aspects. Several of you have raised the importance of also having the correct enabling environment and the correct financing to implement the Strategic Framework. This will be further presented to you in the Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget.

There were also a few questions or comments on the Green Climate Fund (GCF) financing. While we will, in the Medium Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget, develop the funding sources more, the type of information that was raised in this discussion will be covered in more detail in the Mid-Term Review (MTR), which is currently being developed, and the Programme Implementation Report (PIR). So, there we will explain more about the GCF criteria. Of course, all the projects are country driven and FAO responds to the needs expressed by the national designated authorities. In the MTR and PIR we will provide further information on that.

I believe that this covers the main topics that were raised. We look forward to continuing the discussion in the consultative manner and the next step for us will be the presentation of the Programme Priority Areas with the further elaboration of the Results Framework.

Ms Ismahane ELOUAFI (Chief Scientist)

Let me join my colleague Ms Beth Crawford in saying that I am delighted to address you and it is really a very constructive feedback that we are hearing on the Strategic Framework. I see a lot of convergence in terms of how much we need science and innovation going forward. I think we all agree that to feed an increasing population, major transformation in the food production has to take place.

The task is ever more challenging with the rise in conflict, the global instability, the extreme weather events, the competition on natural resources, the more virulent pest and diseases, all this coupled with the current COVID-19 pandemic which has slowed down the global economy, will make the solution ever more challenging unless we take on the right approach. I think that is what FAO is trying to craft in its next strategy, to get the right approach for a centre for all the programmes.

Over the next decades, food systems will face a complex challenge to deliver sufficient, safe and nutritious food for all in a sustainable manner, reducing greenhouse gas emission and preserving ecosystems and biodiversity, while providing equitable livelihood to all the actors.

The attainment of these diverse goals gives a rise to complex synergies and trades off across economic, political, social and environment dimension. I think FAO believes that this major transformation in food systems, amidst this complex environment, can only take place if innovation, technology and science are employed at scale to lift people from hunger, poverty and malnutrition.

FAO's new Strategic Framework has put innovation and technology as the main accelerators in the transformation of food and agricultural systems, cutting across all sectors and programmes, so we can maximize our chances to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 and beyond; something you commended during the last Programme Committee just a few weeks ago.

That is one of the reasons that you have approved to have a new Chief Scientist and that the FAO Director-General and Management established an Office of Innovation to ensure prioritization of innovation, technology and science as a mainstream accelerator to other Organizations and to ensure that FAO applies science and technology and adopt innovative approaches in order to scale-up work at country and regional level.

In my capacity as the new Chief Scientist, I would like us to take advantage of all existing knowledge, wherever it is, be it within FAO, be it within our strategic partners and Members like you, or with new partners that we need to engage with and bring aboard our wonderful mission to end hunger in all its forms. This coordination role will allow us also to clarify agricultural research priorities, globally and regionally, in order for us to engage further with academia, with knowledge generators, wherever they are, so we develop together solutions to eradicate poverty and end hunger.

We will focus a lot on building strong external partnerships with scientific groups, think tanks, academia, national research centres, international research centres, civil society and the private sector from all geographic regions while keeping FAO's neutrality and impartiality, which we keep hearing from you and in which we are very attached to the neutrality of the Organization and the impartiality.

All FAO Regional Conferences have put innovation and technology as a priority in their conclusions. We put country demand and needs as top priority for us in our work and plans. I want to just clarify that for us innovation is not confined only to technologies, but it encompasses the business model, societal innovation, policy innovation, all kinds of innovation are needed in order for us to fulfil SDG 2 and SDG 1 by 2030.

I want to also assure many of the Members that women and youth are a major target group. Introducing technology along the whole value chain or food system entry level will be a priority for us to ease up the hard work of rural women and girls in their agricultural task and to attract young people to the agricultural sector and encourage them to adapt to rural living in areas through creation of a decent chance. I think we all agree that we need to build resilience at the individual, community, government and global food system levels, in such a way that the economic, societal and environmental basis are not compromised.

As you know, in FAO right now, teams are working currently on developing the Priority Programmes Area of the new Strategic Framework and I can assure you that science and innovation cut across all these programmes. As you know, we are really quite a small size Senior Management group who work very closely together. Right now, I am really close and will continue to work very closely with the Chief Economist and with my colleague, the Deputy Director-General, to ensure coherence, consistency and relevance of our work at FAO.

I am really delighted to be with you today and I am delighted to join FAO at this cross-cutting time in the history of food systems at large. I am really looking forward to continuing working with you and that together we can achieve the 2030 Agenda with the very little time that is remaining ahead of us.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, and welcome to FAO in this crucial time. I now give the floor to Mr Laurent Thomas, the Deputy Director-General.

Mr Laurent THOMAS (Deputy Director-General)

I have two comments. There were a number of comments on the importance of FAO to ensure in design of the Strategic Framework that we integrated some United Nations System repositioning the Secretary-General's reform of the United Nations Development System. I want to reassure all Members that this is a priority, and this will be a priority better detailed when we are going out to develop the full Strategic Framework, once you have endorsed the Outline.

We are committed; we have been a very active participant in the design of this United Nations

Reform, and we are already fully engaged in the implementation at the different levels, the country level mostly, but also regional and global. It is important to note that the Director-General, beyond his participation in the Chief Executive Board (CEB), like any Director-General, is himself participating in the other coordination *fora* the United Nations System, the first time I think in the history of FAO, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General.

We are actively participating in ensuring that we align our Country Programming Framework (CPF) fully to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal Cooperation Framework. We are among the first Agencies to ensure that our representatives are dual performance assessments by the United Nations Resident Coordinator and by our internal system of performance assessment. We are among the first United Nations entities to have fully signed off the key products of the Business Innovation Group, which is the mutual recognition of our administrative processes, recognition of our pricing policy and also the approach of client satisfaction.

A number of actions are being taken to ensure that we walk the talk. You can be sure that this would be better reflected in the detailed document of Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget.

To sum up on this point, we are quite satisfied of the progress being made with the United Nations repositioning, particularly with the independence of the function of the United Nations Resident Coordinator. This will be part of what would be described with regard to the discussion on the theory of change and within the theory of change all what touches the enabling environment.

This will also touch on the question of the Decentralization network. We want the capacity of the Country Offices, the Regional Offices and the Subregional Offices to better support government priorities. This is important. Kenya was asking to who the Decentralized Offices are reporting. I want to just tell Kenya that the Regional Representatives are reporting to me as Deputy Director-General, with a dual reporting arrangement, A and B, depending for which region, and also to Deputy Director-General or the Chief Scientist or Chief Economist being on the B co-management arrangement.

CHAIRPERSON

Do any Members wish to take the floor for any comments?

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I would like to thank Management for their response and in particular I would like to welcome Deputy Director-General Laurent Thomas's reassurance that the repositioning of the United Nations Development System will be fully reflected in the Strategic Framework. I would also like to thank Ms Beth Crawford for her reassurance that the Programme Priority Areas will include a Results Framework for each area when they are submitted to us for our consideration at our next meeting.

I would like to come back to the specific request that I made for the Strategic Framework to include a business model that sets out how FAO's activities will be funded. I note that Ms Crawford said that information on financing will be provided in the Medium Term Plan (MTP) and in the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB), but I do not think that is enough because that tends to focus just on how the core assessed budget will be spent.

As we have seen, FAO has access to different sources of finance and I really do think it is important that Members have an opportunity to have a strategic discussion about how FAO raises finances and indeed how it deploys the finance that it does raise.

I would like to suggest that when we reconvene to look at the Programme Priority Areas that in each of those areas Management is very clear about how that work will be financed, whether that is from the core budget, from voluntary funds, from pool funds or indeed from climate finance or other blended finance that might be raised through the Private Sector Strategy.

Thank you and I hope that request can be reflected in our conclusions.

CHAIRPERSON

I see no other request for the floor, so I will now put forward my conclusions on this Item. The text

will be projected on the screen.

I will read out my conclusions. “Item 3, *Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-2031 and Outline of the Medium-Term plan 2022-2025*.

1. The Council welcomed document CL 165/3, *Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-2031 and Outline of the Medium Term Plan 2022-2025* and in particular;
 - a. welcomed the inclusive and transparent consultation process with Members in the development of the new Strategic Framework;
 - b. appreciated the fact that the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are at the centre of the new Strategic Framework, thus allowing FAO to use a common language to articulate its mandated targets and respective results achieved across all Organization levels;
 - c. noted that the Strategic Framework builds on the momentum and the harmonized transformations already taking place in the Organization, including structural reforms, the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme;
 - d. appreciated the narrative guiding the Strategic Framework of promoting sustainable, inclusive and resilient food systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life;
 - e. stressed the centrality of three dimensions of sustainable development, economic, social and environmental, and highlighted the importance of monitoring, providing guidance and responding to issues related to the One Health approach, in particular anti-microbial resistance (AMR);
 - f. underlined the importance of an enhanced business model, enabling environment and change management approach for FAO to be embedded within the Strategic Framework for effective and efficient promulgation of its strategic and programmatic activities;
 - g. stressed the importance for clarity on the targeted use of funds from different origins, including large climate and environment financing sources such as the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund;
 - h. noted the guiding lens of SDGs 1 and 2, the renewed the commitment with SDG 10 and the emphasis on the importance and interconnectedness of all SDGs to support the achievement of FAO’s three Global Goals;
 - i. reiterated the importance of achieving sustainable food systems and, as such, recalled the transformation of food systems should be encouraged in a coherent manner, as appropriate, according to and dependent on national contexts and capacities;
 - j. stressed the need to consider duly all the available approaches, systems and tools to support Members in their achievement of sustainable food systems in an independent, neutral, balanced and science- and evidence-based manner;
 - k. emphasized the scientific and evidence based normative work of FAO as one of its main comparative advantages and welcomed Management’s efforts to strengthen and increase the visibility of FAO’s normative work and standard-setting support in the Strategic Framework;
 - l. recognized the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 and its expected outcomes, if agreed by Members, could support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, especially SDG 2, and should be considered by Members, as appropriate, through the Governing Bodies;
 - m. emphasised the strategic and catalytic importance of the Technical Cooperation Programme within the context of FAO’s institutional architecture, tailored to country specific needs in the efforts for achievement of the SDGs and Agenda 2030; and

- n. looked forward to the further development of the Strategic Framework in consultation with Members, and to reviewing at its next Session the Strategic Framework 2022-31 incorporating the recommendations from the Technical Committees in early 2021, as well as from the Programme Committee and its Joint Meeting with the Finance Committee at their March 2021 Sessions.

That ends the list of my conclusions. Are there any comments?

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Could we turn to subparagraph (f), please? As you have heard, as everyone has heard, I talked at some length about the importance of having a consultation and discussion on FAO's business model and I would very much like to have a separate subparagraph on that and in particular I would like to turn to some of the language that we agreed in the Joint Meeting. If I may propose something very similar to that here.

I would like to propose, the new subparagraph reads, "requested that the next version of the Strategic Framework and the Programme Priority Areas includes further analysis of FAO's business model, different sources of funding for different programme priority areas and how these will be reported on."

Excuse me, and perhaps we could say, "and information on how these will be reported on." Perhaps just before the line up where it says, "different sources," it could say, "the different sources."

Thank you. I think we could probably therefore leave out the reference to an enhanced business model in subparagraph (f).

I would also like to propose a subparagraph on the United Nations Development System. I do not mind where in the document it goes. Again, this would be very much based on the subparagraph that was agreed in the Joint Meeting and it would read, "welcomed Management confirmation that alignment with the repositioning of the United Nations Development System, including the role of Regional Coordinators, will be fully integrated into a Strategic Framework." Thank you.

Turning to the final subparagraph, the second line where it says, "to reviewing at its next session the Strategic Framework." Can we put, after 2022-31, "including programme priority areas and their results frameworks."

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

If we might move up to letter (m), the first one which talks of the Technical Cooperation Programme. "Emphasized the strategic and catalytic importance of the Technical Cooperation Programme," and I want to add something there, "and other technical work of FAO." I understand that this was taken from the Report of the Joint Meeting, but they missed that part, "and other technical work of FAO."

I would like to also go to the former (f). I want to add something here, a new subparagraph after that, which is, "stressed that the Strategic Framework shall consider specific narratives with regard to regional priorities as they have been discussed by Regional conferences in 2020 and outlined in their respective reports."

Moving to the last subparagraph, I understand that United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland made some amendment there, but I would rather suggest, "while we look forward to further development of the Strategic Framework in consultation with members, and requested a detailed roadmap to facilitate Members' interaction, including through informal consultations and leading to the adoption of the Strategic Framework, the Medium-Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget at the Conference in 2021." I wanted it to be in one subparagraph, but I think it will better fit there. Let us leave it at this first and see what is going to happen.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Could we please go first to what was originally in your draft version the letter (h)? After, "three Global Goals," I would like to suggest to add a new subparagraph, which reads, "recalled in this context FAO's broad mandate and custodian role for SDG's 2 (Zero Hunger), 5 (Gender), 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 12 (Responsible Production and Consumption), 14 (Life Underwater) and 15 (Life on Land) and expected FAO's Strategic Framework to reflect this broad mandate. Thank you.

That is this one.

Could we just go to what is now (o)? After letter (p), a new subparagraph. You are now at (q). Right, after letter (p). “Urged FAO to incorporate to a greater degree CFS and its work and products in the new Strategic Framework.”

Then what used to be in your draft version (j). Let me see, where is (j)? New subparagraph, “requested FAO to put overall more emphasis on sustainability issues, including climate change, biodiversity loss and soil degradation and suggested including a science and evidence-based assessment of the various food systems with due attention to the environmental footprint and the hidden costs of food.”

Then if we could go to what used to be (e)? New subparagraph, please. “Requested FAO in this context to introduce the One Health approach, including the fight against AMR, and respective cooperation with other relevant Organizations, as one of its areas of special consideration under the framework.”

Could we go up to what used to be (i)? New subparagraph, please? “Stressed that the food systems approach is crucial to realizing FAO’s vision of a world free of hunger and malnutrition in all its forms and achieving all SDGs by 2030”.

If we could go now to what used to be (l)? We follow up on this in this subparagraph, “appreciated FAO’s commitment to integrate the UN Food Systems Summit outcomes in its Strategic Framework and asked for more precise information on how this is to be done.”

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Disculpe, Presidente, no lo había escuchado porque es compleja la negociación y la discusión con tantas modificaciones así que vamos a ir por partes. Haremos una primera intervención con algunos puntos y volveremos a intervenir más adelante.

En primer lugar, me gustaría que fuéramos al subpárrafo E, por favor. Con respecto al subpárrafo (e), estoy hablando del ex subpárrafo... oh, no fue modificado. Okay. Ese subpárrafo (e), allí quisiera que vayamos a lo que fue acordado en el Comité de Programa en el subpárrafo (j). Le pediría por favor que la Secretaría incluya también el *wording* de lo que estaba. Si usted quiere yo se lo dicto, Presidente, como usted prefiera. Repito, ¿se entendió lo que dije,? Cambiar el *wording* del subpárrafo (e)...

Cambiar el *wording* que está en el subpárrafo (e) por lo que está expresado en el subpárrafo (j) del Comité del Programa. Si a usted le parece bien, le dicto exactamente lo que dice en inglés.

“Express the centrality of the spirit dimension of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental), the importance of the One Health approach, the role of inclusive trade and market access, and food prices.”

Allí. Todo lo demás no correspondería porque no respeta lo que ya fue acordado en el Comité de Programa.

En segundo lugar, me gustaría agregar en el subpárrafo (k) original. Correcto. Al final, después de *framework*, hablo en inglés.

“For the framework without redefining the result of normative work.”

Okay, agregar, *considering* – no, no en ese subpárrafo. Por favor, lo que sería el subpárrafo (u), al final. Okay. Ahora es (v), el último, el que aparece en pantalla. Correcto. Luego de *frameworks*, antes de *incorporated*. Luego de *frameworks*, allí, “coma.” Exacto. Allí, agregaría, “And considering priorities identified by the Regional Conferences.” Okay. Pero, el paréntesis no va allí sino va después de *frameworks*. O sea, *frameworks*, paréntesis de cierre. *Frameworks*. Exacto. Allí. No, cierra paréntesis. Después de *frameworks*, cierra paréntesis. Correcto, no abre paréntesis nuevo. Y tampoco cierra paréntesis luego de *conferences*. Perfecto.

Quisiera, una aclaración de la Secretaría respecto del subpárrafo (h) -- el ex (h) --. Lo que sería el anterior (g) y ahora es el (j). Entiendo que esta es una preocupación planteada por Nigeria. Primero por el Reino Unido y también por Nigeria, lo cual somos sensibles al tema, lo único que, según la información que tenemos, la FAO no recibe fondos del Fondo Verde para el Clima. Entonces, sería

bueno que la Secretaría aclare ese punto para no poner un *warning* que refleje lo que planteó el Reino Unido apoyado por Nigeria sin saber exactamente el concepto. Solamente un pedido de aclaración a la Secretaría sobre ese punto.

Luego, otro punto más. Con relación al planteo de el estimado embajador de Alemania sobre el tema de la incorporación de los productos del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial (CSA). Me gustaría que vayamos más abajo hasta encontrarlo porque ya perdí la capacidad de saber cuál es el subpárrafo. Un poco más abajo. Correcto. Déjeme mirar, por favor. Más abajo, me parece. Un poco más abajo, por favor. Creo que es el actual (t). Allí, primero digo la racionalidad y después digo la propuesta. Con relación a una mayor incorporación de los productos del CSA, no podemos presumirlo en forma general y automática al Marco estratégico de la FAO. La mayoría son productos de carácter voluntario y por eso es distinto al rol que cumplen los Comités técnicos de la FAO. Entonces, me parece que lo mejor para evitar entrar aquí en un debate que ya hemos tenido, usemos el lenguaje acordado en el Consejo anterior el cual, si me permite, voy a leer en inglés. “Underline the importance of CFS agreed products.” Sorry, of CFS and its agreed products.” Okay?

Por lo tanto, toda la primera parte, que fue la propuesta de mi estimado colega y amigo de Alemania, quedaría fuera si respetamos el lenguaje acordado en el último Consejo. Por ahora, me quedo aquí, Presidente, aunque tengo algunos otros comentarios pero prefiero para aquí para dejar hablar a mis otros colegas y, en todo caso, vuelvo a pedir la palabra.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

I guess we are going to have a long session this afternoon and maybe tonight. Of course, we are all ready to discuss and I hope we finish before 23:00 hours, when my team is going to play a soccer match. I would like to watch if possible, but this is a personal demand.

Going back to what was discussed, as a general remark, I would like to propose that we stick as much as possible to what was discussed and approved in the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees. This would spare us some time in discussions.

Concerning subparagraph (e), if you could scroll up, please? Yes, I would like to support what was proposed by Argentina for the reasons that I just said and remind that the subparagraph (f) just proposed by Germany is a repetition of what was previously stressed in subparagraph (e). I would propose that, again in the spirit of not reopening a discussion that was taken place in the Joint Committees, we would like to put this into brackets, the (f).

I would like to propose next, “stressing the importance of food trade, not only in our region, stressed this importance, but also Canada and another two or three countries if I remember well. I do not have a specific place to put this, but “recognize that food trade, especially international food trade, reinforces the access to food and its availability, reliability, constancy and stability of prices, FAO should further emphasize the importance of an open, predictable, non-discriminatory trading system for its long-term Strategic Objectives.”

Of course, I would have many other comments and remarks, but as my Argentinian colleagues, I will stick to this for the moment.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

There are three issues that we feel were brought up a lot in the discussions and are not reflected. They are innovation, trade and gender and youth. For the innovation piece, I was wondering if we can go to your old (j), I think it is the new (o), if I am not mistaken. Okay, that is (p).

So, “stressed the need to consider duly all the available approaches, systems and tools.” I would add, “innovations.” I know that the Joint Meeting in the Programme Committee stressed the central role of all forms of innovation for the sake of not doing this separately. We can add it there, but I am flexible there. I just want to make sure that it is reflected in the conclusions of the FAO Council.

For trade, we would like to thank the delegations of Argentina and Brazil for their proposals. We can support that, and we certainly support the reference to trade in the FAO Council conclusions.

On gender and youth, both the Programme Committee and Joint Meeting did underscore the

importance and many delegations as well in today's discussions. We would like to draw from the Joint Meeting conclusions, (o), for the sake of time as well, and we could put it before (j), before we go more into the process rather than the substance. Where would that be? I cannot see anymore, maybe further down? Okay, let us put it there, I cannot see all the text very well. To put, "underscored the importance of women and youth, in particular rural and indigenous women, together with smallholders and family farmers, as key stakeholders for the future of food and agriculture and sustainable food systems."

Maybe as well there was a proposal made by Germany, and I am not sure which subparagraph it was, but it did emphasize, it asked to emphasize FAO's work on sustainability issues. We would like to try to see how we can merge that with the subparagraph that talks about the centrality of looking at all dimensions of sustainability because we feel that there is a bit of a contradiction between stressing the importance of looking at all dimensions and then talking about sustainability in just one dimension.

I do not have now a proposal of how to put them together to ensure more coherence, but I think the Drafting Committee could do that if delegations are in agreement with the idea of merging the two.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

Mr Chairperson, I am sorry, I forgot two things. Can we go back to the last suggestion of Brazil? We support that fully, but we want to add another subparagraph under it. "Further recognizing the importance of trade in promoting the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), requested integration in the Strategic Framework elements of inclusive participation of countries in global value chains and more specifically addressing Regional Initiatives that facilitate trade."

The other one is I was a little bit confused from what Canada just said, how to merge it. Probably we continue to reflect on that and come back to you. Mr Chairperson, to see how we can bring it because it was a very important remark that Canada made. We support that, so that there should not be some discrepancies between the subparagraphs.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCH (Japan)

I have questions on the process. First, thank you for the draft. It seems to be concise enough and accommodates all the different views that each Member might have. After I read the original draft for the first time, a lot of the amendments on that and, seemingly, some of them, we can live with, and some of them we are not very comfortable with.

At the same time, I would like to say that some of the items do not reflect the deliberations or points which were not much touched upon in today's debate, but suddenly, it comes down into the bare detail, the language.

I am just wondering how we can proceed with this. I would like to make a comment after I read it carefully. The language in front of us, not by the improvisations that we have exercised now. When it comes to the substantial examples, one of the things that I would like to raise as another example, Germany proposed that the different Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our position is that SDG 1 and 2 should be at the centre of the Framework. This is contradicting our views on the point.

In our view, the original one has already said this, that calls for the interconnections among the old SDGs, we thought that was enough. Then, in that case, the language was able to accommodate the different positions that we have and, in this case, for example, the Germans have. What would you do in that case? I mean, we are seeing it with just the - not in the case for the improvisations, and no one knows exactly what it would be. Again, I would be more comfortable if I can make the comments on the old proposal after we read it carefully, and not by doing the hasty kind of improvisation at this moment.

Finally, I would like to ask you to make the consideration, I think time has already come to close the discussions. I mean, in Japan, it is already 01:30 hours so if continued this exercise, it is not very fair when it comes to the kind of burden which each delegate has.

I am just summing up my remarks, the question is how we go with this process, we are not very comfortable in making the improvisations but also that, you know, consideration should be made to the time differences.

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

I would like to echo the suggestion by our Japanese colleagues. Perhaps it might work a little bit more smoothly if we were to go subparagraph by subparagraph starting at the top now that we've had so many requests for changes.

I have a few short changes to propose, but first, let me defer back to you, Mr Chairperson, to see if you might prefer to do it that way.

CHAIRPERSON

I think considering the number of amendments, it may be more efficient and appropriate to go subparagraph by subparagraph, it may be easier for Members also to propose the amendments.

Let us go subparagraph by subparagraph, starting with subparagraph (a). May I suggest that the raised hands should be lowered, so we can start all over again. I cannot tell from the hands raised whether its in response to this or the previous. Therefore, could we lower the hands and then when we start the subparagraphs, we put up the hand.

Subparagraph (a), there is no comment on subparagraph (a).

We go to subparagraph (b). There is no comment on (b).

We go to subparagraph (c).

Ms Xi LI (China)

Actually, our opinion is not about the subparagraph (c), but we want to add another extra subparagraph after the subparagraph (c), if it is allowed.

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, go ahead.

Ms Xi LI (China)

We would like to say that “we welcome FAO’s efforts on transforming and strengthening partnerships across the spectrum, recognize the importance of South-South and Triangular Cooperation’s instrumental role in realizing the 2030 Agenda and encourage FAO to invigorate and further enhance South-South and Triangular Cooperation.”

We propose this is, because a lot of Members support it and it has been mentioned on the Joint Statement of our Asia Group, as well as China statements. In addition, we get the support from His Excellency, Ambassador for the Netherlands. Therefore, we believe that this is a point that should be added into the draft.

CHAIRPERSON

Before we move to the next subparagraph, perhaps Members could see whether they are okay with this subparagraph proposed by China.

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

Just thinking of the sequence in which it makes reference to South-South Cooperation. If you are providing guidance on the Strategic Framework profile in the future, I think South-South and Triangular Cooperation are an element, but not so central as it is now put here.

My question is, can we move this a bit further down the line? I have nothing against the subparagraph, but the position, I find it a bit surprising, but happy to listen to other comments of course.

CHAIRPERSON

Any other comment on this issue?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Gracias, es para respaldar absolutamente lo expresado, sobre todo conceptualmente, por la delegada de China. Porque no es solamente por lo que ella lo expresa ahora sino porque el G77 lo expresó

claramente. Y, además, porque no todos los países que están en el *Hand-in-Hand Initiative* son parte, por lo tanto, es complementario y es el lugar justo del texto a ser incluido.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I did not recall if there was already a subparagraph about partnerships. I think there is one about the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) collaboration, but I think that they would follow nicely.

If there is none on partnerships, I would like to include in this subparagraph as well. On the private sector, I think that there was also language in this regard in the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees. It is something certainly that many delegations raised, but I would suggest that they be, in terms of position, that they be the same place in the conclusions.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us go down and then we will come to your point.

Now I go to subparagraph (e). I see no request for the floor.

I go to subparagraph (f), which starts with the “stressed the centrality”.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I would like to suggest something which may avoid repetitions and also respond to the interventions of my distinguished colleagues from Brazil and Argentina, perhaps it would be a possibility to merge (f) and (g) with the following wording? We delete everything after in brackets “economic, social and environmental, the importance of the One Health approach, the role of inclusive trade and market access and food prices”.

I will explain why in a second, we delete that, and we continue this subparagraph with the second part of what is now letter (g) and suggested including the science and evidence-based assessment and so forth, right? It basically would be merged. There would be no repetition and the One Health approach as well as what is being said on the role of trade and market access follows anyway. We would not lose anything.

You would have to delete “the importance of the One Health approach, the role of inclusive trade, market access and food prices”. The other thing is we can delete the subparagraph (g) and the new subparagraph (g) goes without brackets, because then we have here the One Health approach. What was said to trade is reflected already under subparagraphs (h) and (i), perhaps that would be a solution to harmonize the various points.

Let me just see whether I forgot this analogy and suggest that I am requested, including in respect of cooperation, recognized and then the food language comes, the trade language comes down.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor as I see the raised hands. Please comment on the suggestion just made by Germany as well.

Ms Pernilla IVARSSON (Sweden)

I do not envy your job just now. I think we are moving ahead nicely, and I was actually about to suggest the same thing as Germany. I just put forward because I think as the discussion moved on, the initial proposal from Argentina, which was of course intended to find a nice solution, was then sort of developed when we added some further paragraphs on trade.

Therefore, I think with this suggestion, that would mean that we would have a separate subparagraph on One Health, which is something that I heard several delegations saying so we can support the proposal by Germany.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Gracias, señor Presidente, por ser muy breve y agilizar el debate. Me limitaré a suscribir lo dicho por Alemania. Concordamos exactamente con su propuesta y nos parece que engloba todos los asuntos que nos preocupan en este momento.

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

I want to express thanks to our German colleagues for this proposal. One slight edit we would like to request and to propose deletion of the clause that begins with the word “with” and goes to “food”. Delete “with due attention to the environmental footprint and hidden cost of food”. The reason is we feel that this is already adequately covered by the mention of the three dimensions of sustainable development, the reference above to economic sustainability and environmental sustainability.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

We also support the proposals by Germany, and we could live with the proposal by the United States of America, but if others feel strongly about it, then I had an alternative solution, which would be to replace the word “hidden” with “economic and social”, because then that would bring all three elements into that sentence as well. So that would be a proposal in order to keep that phrase.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Vamos en orden. En primer lugar, agradecemos mucho al embajador de Alemania por la propuesta que realizó.

Creemos que, desde el punto metodológico, nos parece adecuado dividir en tres partes, nos parece más prolijo el mensaje. Ahora, vamos por las cuestiones más conceptuales. Nosotros sugerimos invertir el orden, primero el subpárrafo (h), luego el subpárrafo (g). Pido por favor que no cancelemos, o sea, no borremos texto. En todo caso poner párrafos adicionales entre paréntesis, pero no borrar porque después es muy complicado volver. Repito, nuestra propuesta es colocar en lugar del subpárrafo (g), el texto del subpárrafo (h(h), el subpárrafo (g). Es un tema de orden en términos de énfasis.

Luego, me gustaría ir al [XX]. Ahora sigo, nos parece muy bien la propuesta planteada por la delegada de los Estados Unidos de America. Lo único que agregaríamos también, tachar desde la palabra, “and” – si puede subir el texto del subpárrafo (f), porque lo veo parcialmente nada más. Perfecto, hasta allí. Entonces, luego de “environmental” yo cancelaría absolutamente todo ese párrafo. La racional de esto es que, la verdad, “science- and evidence-based assessment of food systems” ya tenemos indicadores de la sustentabilidad de la producción agrícola que es el indicador 2.4.1 de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS). Más evaluaciones e indicadores no permitirían abordar de manera equilibrada los diversos sistemas alimentarios en los diversos contextos.

Y, además, este debate, y en esto le doy la razón a Japón y a algún otro colega, ya se dio. Esto lo discutimos en el Comité de Agricultura (COAG). Yo lo recuerdo perfectamente porque estuve allí y todos acordamos someternos a las herramientas que ya teníamos, y que tenemos, en los ODS. Por lo tanto, repito, por favor, la propuesta es tachar en el párrafo, subpárrafo (f), desde la palabra “environmental”. O sea, tachar “and suggested including a science- and evidence-based assessment” etc. Tachar, exactamente. Con esa propuesta, estamos absolutamente de acuerdo.

Perdón, hay que tachar, y después con respecto del otro punto también de ese párrafo, por lo cual voy a explicar la posición nuestra. No hay un método de cálculo internacionalmente acordado para medir la huella ambiental ni para incorporar costos ocultos. Ya lo expresé en mi intervención en el debate que, la contabilidad como ya dije es de responsabilidad nacional. Por lo tanto, no es razonable si, como digo, no tenemos un cálculo internacionalmente acordado y esto es una cuestión claramente de definición de cada uno de los estados; me parece que no es apropiado generar un debate o abrir un nuevo debate en esta instancia. Por lo tanto, repito, sacaría absolutamente todo ese párrafo a partir de “environmental”.

Esas son las explicaciones que tengo.

Mr Fernando Jose MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

We are comfortable with the current proposal for subparagraph (f), for stopping after “environmental” and deleting the rest.

Concerning subparagraph (h), I understand the One Health approach includes the fight against Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and there was a whole discussion, not conclusive, unfortunately, in the Joint Meeting of the Finance and Programme Committees concerning AMR.

I do recognize some countries mentioned the fight against AMR, but also mentioned the importance of facing transboundary pests and diseases, for instance. I would be more comfortable deleting what is included in the fight against AMR. I guess I am right, that One Health approach includes AMR among others. If not, well, I will come back to this.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

I am sorry, but when I raised the hand, it was to support the original proposal made by Germany. Now I cannot understand where we are exactly with the original proposal of Germany with the merging of two subparagraphs.

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

I am also a bit puzzled because I thought we had agreed we go subparagraph by subparagraph. I think we are now currently just discussing subparagraphs, (f), (g), (h) and (i) in a way so I am not sure where we are. I would not want to intervene now as long as we have not concluded subparagraph (f). I have a comment to make on subparagraph (g) and (i) and that I am happy to do it a little later when we get there. However, I think we should really remain disciplined and go subparagraph by subparagraph as we have agreed before and not jump forward and backward as some of our colleagues have been doing here.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us decide on subparagraph (f). Is there agreement on paragraph (f)?

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Coming back to subparagraph (f). We think that the “hidden costs”, or as our British colleague said or suggested as a possible compromise, the “economic and social costs of food” are indeed relevant, and it is for this relevance that the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2020 Report mentioned them explicitly. Therefore, we think that this part, which is now highlighted in yellow, indeed is important.

In a spirit of compromise, we could also speak about direct and indirect costs. If I am not mistaken, that was a terminology that our distinguished colleague from Argentina used today in his Council statement.

Again, this was highlighted as very relevant by the SOFI 2020 Report and I think we all agree that we should base our positions on science and evidence-based assessments and the SOFI report being produced by five organizations is an expression of this science and evidence-based assessment. We would really advocate for including and maintaining this subparagraph.

I do not speak now on letter (h), in obeying to the plea and appeal of my colleague from the European Union. I will come back to letter (h) when we reach this subparagraph.

CHAIRPERSON

We will go subparagraph by subparagraph and (h) will come later.

Japan, are you going to comment on subparagraph (f)? Okay. You have the floor.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

I support the United States of America’s proposal and we are also able to support Argentina’s proposal. I think they is seemingly a common ground among the Members that remains there, the language accommodates the different positions that each of the Members have. I would also like to echo the European Union, pointing out that the process of interventions should be a streamlined and disciplined.

CHAIRPERSON

There seem to be conflicting comments on subparagraph (f). I give the floor to Argentina.

Mr Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Necesito reaccionar porque se ha aludido nuestra posición por parte de mi estimado colega de

Alemania. Con respecto a eso quiero decir un par de cosas. La primera es que el SOFI, que es un instrumento muy importante, no es un producto acordado por los miembros; solamente están acordados por los miembros el punto 2.1.1 y el 2.1.2. Por lo tanto, me parece que es central tener en claro cuáles son los productos acordados y cuáles no. Justamente, si hablamos de productos acordados deberíamos recordar nuevamente lo que ya mencioné sobre el acuerdo relativo a la aplicación del artículo 6 del Acuerdo General sobre Aranceles Aduaneros y Comercio (GATT) en el año 1994.

Por lo tanto, yo quisiera volver a este punto (f) para tratar de que razonemos juntos que cuando se plantea una evaluación, yo me pregunto, ¿qué eslabones de algo que todavía no definimos que son el tema de los sistemas alimentarios, porque reitero, el concepto sistemas alimentarios todavía no está definido. No tenemos una definición internacionalmente acordada. Probablemente, en la Cumbre de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Sistemas Alimentarios discutiremos estas cuestiones, pero hoy por hoy todavía no tenemos una definición sobre el concepto de sistemas alimentarios.

Por lo tanto, estamos intentando y generar una discusión o abrir un debate sobre la posibilidad de evaluar algo que todavía no definimos y que vamos a evaluar pero que no sabemos qué clase de evaluación vamos a hacer, ¿es una evaluación de sustentabilidad? ¿Es una evaluación de eficiencia? ¿Es una evaluación de productividad? Y ¿quién la va a hacer la evaluación? Y ¿con qué objetivo? Yo no creo que sea pertinente abrir un debate en esta instancia de algo que no hemos discutido y que ni siquiera el concepto original que da la posibilidad de pensar en mecanismos de evaluación, todavía no está definido ni acordado internacionalmente por los Estados. Por favor, yo ruego que no intentemos hacer aquí un debate que todavía no está saldado en otras instancias.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to Sweden and then the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and if they still disagree, I would prefer to keep this subparagraph in advance and move forward and come back to this subparagraph afterwards, because otherwise we are going to be stuck in the same position.

Ms Pernilla IVARSSON (Sweden)

I thought earlier that there was a very good proposal from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on compromise language, and I think what we are referring to here is suggesting a science and evidence-based assessment. We are not really putting anything else that we want to refer to science and evidence-based assessment.

Of course, we will need to think about food systems even though we might not have the clear definition yet, but it will be something that we will need to focus on for the coming years. Maybe to continue that sentence with “due attention to economic and social costs for food”, that is what the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland suggested and then delete “environmental footprint and hidden”, and then that might be the elements of a compromise.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I know all of us will agree with my Argentinian colleague that we want to avoid a lot of debate on this one subparagraph and move on.

Indeed, Chairperson, I would very much welcome your guidance on the length of this evening's Session, and I am sure I am not the only one that has domestic commitments and children to look after, so it would be good to have some timing for our Session, so we can plan around that.

In terms of a compromise, I am looking at the definition of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2.4. That is something that we have all agreed to, and indeed, we are all committed to achieving. I thought it might be helpful to remind everyone what SDG 2.4 is: It is “by 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production that help maintain ecosystems, strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding, and other disasters that progressively improve land and soil quality”.

The whole world has agreed to that and I cannot see why this is so controversial. I wonder if we can, I hope we can, reach the compromise that my Swedish colleagues set up, but if we cannot, perhaps we could refer to SDG 2.4, which there can be no doubt on that, we all agree with and we are all working

towards.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Argentina, do you have a comment on what the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has just suggested on this subparagraph?

Sr. Carlos Benrardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Sí, por supuesto. Creo que la embajadora del Reino Unido ha interpretado perfectamente de qué estamos hablando. No podemos aquí empezar a iniciar debates que no están saldados a esta altura de la noche. Me parece que la cita al Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) 2.4 es algo que está internacionalmente acordado y todo aquello que tenga que ver con ir agregando palabras que son conceptos que no están acordados genera, naturalmente, un problema.

Por lo tanto, digo, el indicador 2.4.1 también está acordado y yo creo que allí estamos absolutamente todos de acuerdo. ¿Por qué vamos a abrir un debate en esta instancia donde no tenemos acuerdo? Yo estoy totalmente de acuerdo con la lógica planteada por mi estimada colega del Reino Unido y creo que no tiene ningún sentido que -- todavía falta mucho -- abramos debate. Repito, están saldados y los que no están saldados, nos los vamos a saldar ahora.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Argentina. Therefore, subparagraph (f) then stops at SDG 2.4. Does everyone agree on that? I see no comments so we can move to subparagraph (g).

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

Subparagraph (g) has initially been subparagraph (h), and I would recommend in what order we decided on. I am flexible, but I think subparagraph (g) and (i) belong together because they are both about trade. Subparagraph (g) is formulated to very much a thing of faith, rather than giving guidance to Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on its future financial Strategic Framework.

I am also concerned because we have not had references to trade in the previous Council Sessions and this is for good reason because FAO is not the main forum to discuss trade.

If there was a strong wish of Members to refer to trade, I would request that subparagraph (g) starts with additional wording please, “underlining that the World Trade Organization (WTO) is the prime forum to discuss matters related to trade”. That would be the request to add this and then really bring what is now (g) and (i) together because they are both on trade. Either subparagraph (g) becomes again (h) or subparagraph (i) becomes (h), whatever the Membership would prefer.

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

I do not envy your position now because the whole debate is now back.

We are addressing your summary and really, it does not look very comfortable if we start explaining and so on. I feel a little bit uncomfortable, but what I would say is that what you have addressed is what people said, not what the other people have in their mind. If Brazil has met, what is the suggestion being made, it is something that he said in his statement. That is what I believe in.

Counteracting is not productive at all, Mr Chairperson. If I may, at this point in time, let us keep what the suggestion of Brazil as it was without watering it down. We leave it the way it was. Please, do what the European Union just added in brackets.

Now, the subparagraph (i), the way normally it should go immediately after the subparagraph (h), no, (f) in that after (f) and not coming the subparagraph (i), please, the placing is not proper.

Let me address that, if you want to come back to where we are, the issues of do you want us to finalize subparagraph (f) now? Or you want us to discuss subparagraph (g)? Because now it is a little bit lost where we are.

CHAIRPERSON

Paragraph (f), I thought, was agreed by everybody with the amendment of SDG 2.4.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

If I may, then subparagraph (i) should follow subparagraph (f) indirectly and not come after we have discussed it. Subparagraph (i) should go indirectly under subparagraph (f) because it refers to what the dimensions sustainable development. That is my suggestion. Then, we will discuss subparagraph (g) and (h) together.

CHAIRPERSON

Let me just for one minute discuss with my colleagues about the Session and the time we are going to spend in the evening because the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland specifically asked. Just give me a minute.

One option is to complete this Item today or we adjourn the Meeting, and we take up the Item for tomorrow morning. I am told we have got interpretation for about two hours. My suggestion would be that we take a break for about 20 minutes now and reconvene to take these items up and we adjourn after completing this Item. Would that be acceptable?

Mr Fernando Jose MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Very briefly, I would like to react to the proposal coming from the European Union. We entirely agree with your proposal. Thank you. I would accept the proposal.

First of all, I would like to thank the support coming from Cameroon. It is always very welcome, and we appreciate it. Second, we would accept both proposals coming from the European Union on the understanding, however, that we would adopt the same logic and I am not advancing to another subparagraph discussion right now but adopting the same logic.

I would propose that subparagraph (i) would start “underlining that the World Health Organization (WHO) is the prime forum to discuss matters related to health”. We go ahead with this, not accepting the whole text yet for subparagraph (i). If we adopt this logic for subparagraph (g), I would like to adopt the same logic to subparagraph (i), and then we discuss the rest of the text.

CHAIRPERSON

We will adjourn for 20 minutes and then we will take this item up again.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCH (Japan)

I would just like to make a short remark and reaction to your proposal. I would like to repeat and point out that in our time zone it is almost 2:00 hours in the morning. If we have a break and then we go back to the lengthy text discussion again, we should be reminded that when we held the virtual Conferences, in some time zones, these accepted the burden of other time zones. We should be reminded of this and the concessions which have been made, and we should stick to the timeframe of the work.

Although, we have so much work there, it is a first day. We do that this kind of the negotiations either very late or very early in the morning, and then the other delegations will be in a more comfortable time zone. I do not think it is a good idea to put more burden on the one part and the support on the other. This is the kind of request that I would like you to make consolation to.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Japan. I see the difficulty, but because of this virtual meeting, there are problems with time zones, et cetera. The timetable and the timeframe proposed in these meetings is the central European one, the European time zone – the Italian one, because if we start talking about different time zones, we will be in serious trouble.

I know you have a very difficult situation, and we sympathize with that, but I do not know how to address this. We have got a situation on our hand. We are behind schedule. We should have been discussing Item 4 now, but we are still on Item 3 and the way it is going, it is not going to be very smooth.

Please bear with us and may I suggest we take this break of 15-20 minutes and come back and address this Item. I thank you.

Could we break for now, and come back in 15 minutes?

Mr Ulrich SEIDENGERGER (Germany)

We have a logistical problem because we can only stay in the embassy until 20:00 hours maximum. Then the embassy will be closed, and we do not get out anymore. Frankly, either you give us a little longer break, which allows us to transfer to our home and continue the meeting then or we have to think about an alternative solution.

We spent this morning, all in all, two and a half hours for the introductory statement and responses of Members to the statement and did not start with our Agenda, and I have a lot of sympathy for the colleagues from Japan where it is now apparently the middle of the night. What can we do? Would you allow us to break for half an hour or 40 minutes, or should we not then take a bold decision and cut off here and try to reconvene tomorrow, perhaps a little bit earlier? I do not know. Fifteen minutes is not good enough.

CHAIRPERSON

Could we break for half an hour?

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

Mr Chairperson, may I make a proposal? The situation is what I have just been told. We understand the difficulties and the difficult nature of the online system. Therefore, we should try to stick to the timetable. My suggestion is what the German colleague said that we reconvene tomorrow a little bit earlier or you distribute this paper to the Members at this moment and then we can submit our written comments to the draft in front of us and then we can restart our discussion on these issues tomorrow morning. Maybe a combination of reconvening a little bit earlier and written comments. This is my proposal.

Sr. Carlos Bernardos CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Yo quiero, solamente, decir dos cosas. Soy muy comprensivo de la situación de mi estimado colega de Japón, sobre todo porque cuando empieza el Consejo para América Latina y el Caribe estamos en las cuatro de la mañana o cinco o tres, depende el país. Por lo tanto, es tan importante la situación que tiene el delegado de Japón como la situación de mis compañeros de América Latina y el Caribe cuando se inicia este Consejo.

Lamentablemente, no tenemos muchas maneras de poder encontrar una salida para poder incluir a todos por eso se plantea que esto se haga con el horario de Roma porque, de alguna manera, quienes estamos en sede tenemos la posibilidad de estar aquí y tratar de gestionar.

Cada país resuelve esto de la manera que considere, pero quiero reiterar que cuando se inicia el Consejo, en mi región estamos en horarios tan incómodos como los horarios que en este momento está teniendo mi estimado colega de Japón.

Para poder incluir todos los problemas que trae aparejado querer poder incluir a todas las regiones porque son todas las regiones muy importantes y son muy importantes cada uno de los Miembros de esta Organización.

CHAIRPERSON

In fact, Argentina, thank you for your comments, this is what I was saying that this problem of the time zone is no easy to address that. That is why I have also suggested that our timetable is framed according to Rome's time zone and it gives a problem of planning for people in different time zones.

We have to get through the Agenda. I do not think it is to start early. How early can we start tomorrow? We will have different views on that from Members as well and I do not think it will be very convenient to have written comments on these things. We will have, again, the problem of consolidating, so we will have the debate again.

My suggestion is, we break for half an hour and carry on for perhaps another hour or so that we can try and finish this Item. Would Members agree to break for half an hour and then come back and work for one hour on this Item? I would like a specific response on that.

Ms Vincenza LONOMACO (Italy)

I think that we have to choose a method. The problem is that since this morning we are discussing one Item. It is the third item on the Agenda, but I think it is one of the three or four or five, I do not know, substantial items. Therefore, we need to understand how we will proceed because I am sure that in one hour's time, we will have the same situation that we are facing now. We have two possible choices.

Since some delegates told us that they are waiting for instructions from their capital, I would suggest to proceed with other items on the Agenda and to have a debate on the other items. Tomorrow, when we reconvene, we can have the discussion on the point we have tonight. This is a proposal. I do not know if it is acceptable, but I think we should see how to proceed. We are convening ourselves as a Drafting Committee in this specific Item. I understand, it is very important to have a discussion, but we cannot start. We are a Council, not a Drafting Committee.

CHAIRPERSON

I have been saying for two years we are not a Drafting Committee. Leave these things to the Drafting Committee. But time and time again Members have told me, not privately but in the Council, that these are not matters to be left to a small group. They want to negotiate these matters in the Plenary.

In fact, that is the reason this is happening, because it is the decision of the Members of the Council not to refer these matters to the Drafting Committee because these exact words, they have used time and time again. I became the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council in 2017 and at every Council meeting I have suggested that we are behaving like a Drafting Committee. I even once said, I bet if I move into a corridor and see some Members with a smile on their face, they are bound to be Members of the Drafting Committee because their work was being done in the Plenary.

However, Members have felt strongly that they do not want negotiations on these important issues to be done in a small group. They want it done in Plenary and that is the reason we are here. One way of proceeding forward is there have been suggestions of moving subparagraphs from (i) to (g), and (g) to (f). What we can do in this break of half an hour is to reformat these conclusions and come back and see if we can proceed forward in a quicker way.

If we are stuck on these two subparagraphs, I will go forward with the other subparagraphs and keep these in abeyance. If we can clear them today, well and good. If not, it has to be tomorrow. Therefore, my suggestion is to break for half an hour. In this half an hour we will reformat the subparagraphs. The wording, which is under dispute, is the placement of the subparagraphs. We will sort that out. I would like your agreement, whether we can break for half an hour.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Thailand)

I would like to support the proposal of Italy. Since we are still struggling with the summary, perhaps after the break we may consider starting discussion on Item 4. At least the Members can deliver their statements and at least we can finish all the statements and then tomorrow morning we come with a fresh brain. Perhaps we will be in a better position to be able to finalize the summaries of Item 3 and Item 4 together.

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

Whatever has been decided, I just wanted to alert you that with the constant move of subparagraphs, and this subparagraph which is now subparagraph (i) on the One Health approach, some text went completely missing and I would request that this is reincluded.

We have to discuss it again with the Membership as a whole, but I think it would be important that we bring back "highlighted the importance of monitoring, providing guidance and responding to issues related to the One Health approach." I am happy to repeat. "Highlighted the importance of monitoring, providing guidance and responding to issues related to the One Health approach."

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Are we jumping to subparagraph (i) now, with the proposal coming from the European Union?

CHAIRPERSON

What I am going to do, Brazil, because we are stuck on these subparagraphs, my suggestion would be to go beyond to the other subparagraphs and come back to these today after the break or tomorrow.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Yes, well, I do not think it will help because now people start proposing additional texts or change to any other subparagraph and we go back to what the initial discussion was.

CHAIRPERSON

No, put this in brackets. We go back to subparagraph (g).

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

My apologies but could we not first now come to an agreement about the further procedure? It does not make any sense now to jump from one subparagraph to the other. We first have to decide what we are going to do now. Do we have a break? For how long? And what do we then continue our discussion?

CHAIRPERSON

My suggestion is we break for half an hour and we come back, and we hold these subparagraphs in abeyance. I prefer to go to the next subparagraphs, perhaps we will move faster there. We seem to be stuck on wordings here, to use one word and not the other word.

My suggestion is break for half an hour, come back and deal with the other subparagraphs. Therefore, I want a reaction to my suggestion. Nothing about subparagraphs or adding words or deleting words. I am making a suggestion. I am putting it on the table – break for half an hour, come back. These subparagraphs are in abeyance and we deal with the other subparagraphs. Please let me have your views on that.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Estimado Presidente, mi posición siempre es constructiva. Yo lo sigo a usted en lo que usted crea que es lo mejor, pero déjeme decirle solamente una reflexión. Si uno quiere llegar a un acuerdo en un texto complejo, humildemente me gustaría decir que las conclusiones deberían ser más generales. Cuando vamos a conclusiones muy específicas, eso genera que cada uno quiera incluir su propia visión más específica.

Y, además, tenemos ya texto acordado en los diferentes comités del programa y en la Reunión Conjunta. En esta instancia aparecieron textos que no estaba acordados en esas instancias. Está claro que promover nuevos textos genera nuevos debates y esto no tiene posibilidad de cerrarse, se haga un *break* de 30 minutos, se siga mañana, se siga pasado.

Es un tema de voluntad política. Pocas conclusiones generales remitiéndonos a lo acordado en los Comités técnicos pero, si usted considera con su experiencia que debemos hacer un corte ahora y seguir, yo no voy a poner ninguna objeción. Pero, quizás sería intentar por lo menos que estamos todos muy enfocados en este debate, no sé si sería una buena idea pensar en empezar con otro punto, con otro tema a esta hora de la noche. Solamente lo dejo como inquietud.

Repito, yo lo apoyo en lo que usted considere que pueda ser lo mejor para todos.

CHAIRPERSON

Obviously, it will be the easiest thing to just go along with the Reports of the Technical Committees, being the Programme Committee, the Joint Meeting, et cetera.

However, the Joint Meeting and the Programme Committee has a certain membership and the Council is made up of 49 Members. Therefore, there are Members who are not Members of those Committees and they have a different view. That is why my proposal is not to go to the new item.

My proposal is to deal with the rest of the subparagraphs under this item and come back to these two

subparagraphs after that. I think let us break for half an hour, because we are just using up time not discussing the subparagraphs but just trying to discuss whether we should break or not.

Sr. Mario ARVELO (República Dominicana)

Lo que usted acaba de decir, nosotros estamos totalmente de acuerdo. Es decir, debemos tener ahora una pausa. Debemos refrescarnos un momentito. También estamos de acuerdo con lo que usted dice que la membresía de los Comités de Programa y de Finanzas y, por tanto, la membresía de la Reunión Conjunta está limitada a un número de Estados Miembros.

Mi delegación participa de todas las reuniones de ambos Comités y de la Reunión Conjunta, pero como observadores. Allí no podemos estar interviniendo. Yo he pertenecido al Comité de Programa y he sido, incluso, vicepresidente del Comité de Programa y en una época en la cual ni siquiera habían otros Estados como observadores.

Cuando llegábamos al Consejo, con mucha razón, y esa razón se mantiene ahora, entonces, hay Miembros del Consejo que dicen, “Un momentito, nosotros ni siquiera estábamos como observadores silentes allí.” Entonces, no tenemos necesariamente que hacer un “copiar y pegar” del lenguaje que se decidió allí.

Todos quisiéramos que nuestras intervenciones, como hizo mi delegación en este tema, quedaran reflejadas. Por eso es muy importante lo que acaba de decir el embajador de Argentina. Es decir que, no necesariamente debemos ir a un nivel de detalle que las conclusiones del Consejo reflejen palabra por palabra lo que dijimos en plenaria. Yo quisiera llamar la atención de dos puntos, rápidamente.

Primero, como Miembros que somos, la delegación dominicana del Comité de Redacción, no queremos, por favor; estamos en sus manos y en manos también de los Miembros del Consejo, de que tengamos tres plenarios. Porque ha habido una primera plenaria cuando todos los Miembros del Consejo y observadores que quisimos hablar lo hicimos.

Pero, esto se ha convertido en una segunda plenaria; es decir, vemos el texto que ha preparado el Secretariado, de manera muy buena para nosotros, pero ahora estamos con palabras, con párrafos, una sopa de letras. Entonces, esta se ha convertido en una segunda plenaria. Tenemos que tener más disciplina los Estados Miembros. Usted preside, pero no es el dictador del Consejo, es el Presidente independiente del Consejo. Y usted también está en manos de lo que decidimos los Miembros.

Pero los Miembros no podemos, y hablo directamente a mis colegas, no podemos convertir la revisión del texto en una segunda plenaria y, sobre todo, no podemos convertir el Comité de Redacción en una tercera plenaria. Esto no es posible, porque no es el mandado del Comité de Redacción y no es la capacidad del Comité de Redacción con 10 o 12, 13 o 14 miembros de decidir allí en tercera plenaria por los 49 Miembros del Consejo.

El segundo punto que quería hacer, para terminar muy rápidamente, es que tenemos la fortuna de que hemos hecho algunos puntos por correspondencia. Entonces, hemos preparado, hemos separado la semana del 165.º período de sesiones del Consejo con tres días de debates. Es decir, tenemos también el día jueves o parte del día jueves para hacer algunos trabajos. Estamos dispuestos a acompañarlo hasta la hora que usted diga mientras haya interpretación, pero también debemos recordar que tenemos un cierto nivel de flexibilidad.

Y debemos, para concluir, tener nosotros todos la disciplina de tener una sola plenaria no dos y de que el Comité de Redacción no se convierta ni en segunda ni en tercera plenaria.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

Mr Chairperson, very quickly. Your question is, shall we break for 30 minutes? I think we need to break for 30 minutes, allow our friend from Germany to go back home and continue the proceedings.

Secondly, I want to say that we are in your hands. You are the Chairperson, and you guide us and we follow your guidance. We need to be guided. Now that you have suggested that we should break, we are going to break definitely.

Thirdly, I would like to say very quickly in this debate is that we have tried that in the previous Sessions. If we have stopped somewhere, then we put everything in brackets and we send it to the

Drafting Committee and then the result is there, and it has been very successful. They could resolve the matters easily, those that were in brackets.

Therefore, if we cannot resolve those matters, we can send them to the Drafting Committee to resolve that. That is why there is a Drafting Committee, not a Rapporteur. I keep insisting that the debate to have the Rapporteur or a Drafting Committee was a hot debate during the Reform, and we decided to continue with the Drafting Committee because we wanted to avoid the situation where we are today.

Please take that into consideration, Mr Chairperson. We would like you to guide us. I follow your suggestion to break for 30 minutes and then not to start any new item tonight. I prefer that because we have virtually no time to start any item. Let us go as far as we can with this Item, even if we have to come back to it another time, after Item 4 tomorrow morning. We can come back to it before the beginning of the afternoon Session.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Cameroon. I entirely agree with you. I also agree on your comments on the Drafting Committee because I remember the debate you are referring to, during the Reform and the Independent Evaluation. It was consciously decided not to have a Rapporteur, but a Drafting Committee and the Drafting Committee used to work.

If there was a controversy, they used to consult the Verbatim Records. There were Members there representing regions. Therefore, the Drafting Committee was not just for minor things. The Drafting Committee dealt with substantive issues. However, over the years the Council has felt that there are certain issues they want to deal with in Plenary but I agree with your suggestion, that some matters could be left to the Drafting Committee.

Worse comes to worse, the matter comes back to the Plenary. We have got a tradition now, adopting the Report by acclamation, but there could be instances, like in the old times, if an issue which has been referred to the Drafting Committee is not to the satisfaction of the Plenary, the Plenary can deal with it again. It is not that Plenary is washing its hands of it by referring the matter to the Drafting Committee.

Therefore, I would suggest we break now because all we are doing is spending time arguing whether to break or not. We break, we come back. I entirely agree we should not use this time to start a new item and we should try and finish this and see what happens with the time of interpretation remaining to us. We are using up that time in a discussion whether to break or not. The suggestion for the break I made more than half an hour ago and we are still talking about it.

I give the floor to Angola, Japan and Egypt. Please just address this. You want to break now or not? It is no use having a debate on whether to break or not. My suggestion on the table is break for half an hour and come back and deal with this Item. Please address that issue.

M. Carlos Alberto AMARAL (Angola)

Merci Monsieur le Président. Je comprends parfaitement votre préoccupation. Nous sommes un peu en retard. Mais de toute façon nous comprenons la situation du Japon, et des autres collègues, peut-être de l'Australie, New-Zélande, d'autres coins du monde. Mais de toute façon, Monsieur le Président, je sais que nous devrions recommencer demain.

Finir aujourd'hui, recommencer demain matin, et analyser les points quatre, et après, au moment d'analyser les conclusions, mais également la conclusion des points d'aujourd'hui; s'il y a des difficultés, passer pour le comité (inaudible). Monsieur le Président, demain tout le monde sait bien que si nous continuons avec le retard, on va avoir une session le soir. Ça veut dire que tout le monde est déjà convaincu que nous allons avoir une session.

Aujourd'hui, je pense que les personnes sont fatiguées, elles ne sont pas préparées, et qu'il faut passer à demain. Je vous remercie.

Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

I just want to echo what our distinguished colleague from Angola said. I fully respect your guidance and your opinions of my colleagues but seemingly, it should be the simplest idea to just conclude now

and we reconvene tomorrow with a fresh atmosphere. This is my suggestion and our preference but of course I will leave it to my colleagues to decide.

CHAIRPERSON

There are different views, dear Members. There is a viewpoint that we should break now.

Therefore, as I say, it is up to Members to decide whether they want to carry on for a while or to break and come back tomorrow. Would Members agree that we stop now and come back tomorrow? Is there agreement that we adjourn the meeting today and come back and start with this Item tomorrow?

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I think the discussion shows that it would not be very helpful to continue the discussion tonight. I think we have spent now nearly an hour to discuss the procedure and have not got anywhere. I really would also echo what the distinguished colleague from Angola and the colleague from Japan said. Let us stop right at this point and reconvene tomorrow morning.

CHAIRPERSON

We will adjourn the Meeting now and we start at 09:30 hours tomorrow morning. Thank you very much. We will see you tomorrow. The Meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 19:00 hours

La séance est levée à 19 h 00

Se levanta la sesión a las 19.00

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-Fifth Session Cent soixante-cinquième session 165.º período de sesiones
Virtual Meeting, 30 November - 4 December 2020 Réunion Virtuelle, 30 novembre - 4 décembre 2020 Reunión Virtual, 30 de noviembre - 4 de diciembre de 2020
THIRD PLENARY SESSION TROISIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE TERCERA SESIÓN PLENARIA
1 December 2020

The Third Plenary Meeting was opened at 09:32 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La troisième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 32
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la tercera sesión plenaria a las 9.32
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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- Item 3. Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and Outline of Medium Term Plan 2022-25 (*continued*)**
- Point 3. Grandes lignes du Cadre stratégique 2022-2031 et ébauche du Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025 (*suite*)**
- Tema 3. Esquema del Marco estratégico para 2022-2031 y esquema del Plan a plazo medio para 2022-25 (*continuación*)**

(CL 165/3)

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, good morning to you. We can start our morning Session. I hope you had a good rest, and we can go through those subparagraphs which we were stuck on yesterday quickly.

I would also like to mention that since we are quite far behind our Agenda, we may have a third Session this evening with a break of about an hour. The third Session may go on to 21:30 hours in the evening. Therefore, perhaps you could plan your commitments accordingly. It is not necessary it will take place. It depends how quickly we move and catch up on our Agenda.

Let us go back to where we left off yesterday and I think the Secretariat can put the text on the screen. What they have done is, if you recall, last night there was a wish that the two subparagraphs could be brought next to each other, that is subparagraphs (g) and (h), to see whether they are seeing the same thing or they could be merged, etcetera.

You have the text on the screen, and I have already two requests for the floor.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

I would like to ask a favour. Could you send me the standing document by email or chat? I would like to see the current document. We can see the document on the screen, but we cannot see all of it. Therefore, it is a bit difficult to make our consultation on that. I would like to ask you a favour, to send this document so that we can see the whole document in front of us.

CHAIRPERSON

Although usually put the text on the screen, this procedure was agreed, but as an exception, we can send it to you.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Thailand)

Before we start our discussion about the Chair's summaries of Agenda Item 3 from yesterday, may I consult and also propose to the Chairperson, since yesterday we had a long debate of the Chair's summaries and perhaps this morning, we would like to make better progress. Perhaps you may consider to start our Session this morning with Agenda Item 4.

Let the Members deliver their statements and finish the Agenda Item 4. After that we come back to discuss the Chair's summaries of Agenda Item 3 and Agenda Item 4. Perhaps today we can make better progress compared to yesterday.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

Just to support what my distinguished colleague from Thailand said, I think it is quite a good arrangement, to proceed with Item 4 this morning and permitting the possibility to the delegation to better consult among themselves and with the capitals.

Mr Bommakanti RAJENDER (India)

I support what distinguished colleague from Thailand and Italy have just mentioned. In the interest of the time management, I think we can start with Item 4 and we can come back with these two subparagraphs later on. Members can make statements and we will not get stuck in this.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

Thanks a lot, Chairperson, for your leadership of our discussion. I think there was a kind of gentleman's agreement yesterday, when we ended our discussion, and we did not follow your

guidance to have an evening session to complete our discussion. We will start today with finalizing your conclusions on Item 3, then move forward to Item 4.

I just want to remind all the distinguished delegates that this is outlined for the Strategic Framework. That will be reviewed and will be developed further in the next six months and also will be again to be presented to the Joint Meeting of the Finance and the Programme Committee, after that the Council, to finalize this document to be approved by the Conference in July 2021.

If we just take all this time to just finalize the Outline, what we will do if we are going to discuss the most important document on our Agenda of this Council, which is the Strategy for the Private Sector? I just want to mention this is our personal views.

I just want to also request from all the distinguished delegates to focus on the main issues, main priorities and do not get into specific issues, that there is no kind of common agreement on it to move forward.

I am in your hands, Mr Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Egypt, for your very sound advice. I think you are right, this is an outline of the document of this topic and the main document is still to come, so I think we spent too much time yesterday sometimes arguing on words.

I have said even before, where I used to mention, let us not become a Drafting Committee, let us concentrate on the concept which you want reflected in the paragraph or the thoughts you want reflected in the paragraph and let the Drafting Committee put the words around the specific concept or thoughts you would like. But Members have always argued that the negotiation on items has to be done in Plenary and sometimes what happens is we get stuck.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Me gustaría decir dos cosas. La primera es que quiero reconocer especialmente su trabajo, Presidente, en particular porque la Secretaría hizo un excelente trabajo de síntesis en las conclusiones iniciales que yo creo que era una base absolutamente aceptable, en general, porque respetaba conceptos internacionalmente acordados, y porque apuntaba a establecer conclusiones más generales. Creo que ese es el espíritu.

El espíritu es tratar de llegar a un acuerdo de caballeros donde ninguna línea roja se cruce para nadie y de esa manera poder avanzar. Presidente, lo que presentaron a mi manera de ver era muy similar a esto que estoy diciendo. Lamentablemente, se abrió ese documento y hoy tenemos otra cosa que complica todo porque, obviamente, como expresé ayer, lo que vamos a tener ahora es ver quién coloca su máxima aspiración en cada párrafo.

Y todos sabemos que, para llegar a un acuerdo, para llegar al consenso, todos tenemos que estar parcialmente insatisfechos porque nadie puede pretender tener sus posiciones de máxima en cada uno de los párrafos y que eso pueda ser la base de un acuerdo general. Entonces, esto es el primer punto que quería decir.

El segundo punto, yo creo que Egipto sintetizó excelentemente bien mi forma de pensar. Lo único que tengo claro es que no podemos dedicarle más tiempo a discutir la metodología. Estamos en sus manos, Presidente, confiamos en usted y si usted decide que vayamos por un lado, yo creo que todos tenemos que respaldar su idea.

De nuestra parte, vamos a poner lo máximo que podamos para tratar de ayudar a buscar a través de conceptos generales e internacionalmente acordados, sin cruzar líneas rojas de ningún país, avanzando para un acuerdo lo más rápido posible.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I think it was very wise what my colleague from Egypt said. This is just the beginning of the discussion. This is the Outline of the Strategic Framework which will be further refined and negotiated in the months and sessions to come. Therefore, what is needed now is that we basically include our

main points, our, as my Argentinian colleague said, concepts and red lines and that is it. We do not have to negotiate now in detail. I fully agree with that.

If you remember, that is exactly the approach I chose yesterday, when trying to build a bridge between what seemed to be very strong interest from Argentina and Brazil, the mentioning of trade in a certain frame and our main point, the One Health approach, including the fight against Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). I suggested language that was supported by several delegations who took the floor.

Unfortunately, then the mess started, by introducing two specific subparagraphs on trade, plus making assertions that are just utterly wrong. It is just utterly wrong to compare the role FAO has to play with regard to One Health approach with the role or non-role that FAO should play or can play with regard to trade matters.

I fully agree that we should, with respect to each main point, mention them shortly and that is it, and let us leave the rest to the further discussions in the coming months. With that in mind, and with the spirit of reason that I see this morning from those who have taken the floor, I think we could very easily come to a consensus also on Item 3 now.

I would give it a chance, but I am in your hands. If you decide to move on with Item 4 first, that is fine with us as well. But, again, we should not get lost negotiating details and playing games because the topics that we are talking about are too serious and of a global relevance and importance that we should not get lost here in tactical games.

CHAIRPERSON

I tend to agree with you, that we should finish Item 3. Since this morning Members are looking at the issue with a fresh look, as it were, that we should give Item 3 a chance so that we agree quickly. As long as, like some of you have mentioned, let us deal with the concepts and the thoughts and not get bogged down in the words.

I would like to suggest and recommend that we carry on Item 3 If we follow what both Germany and Argentina said, I think we will get through it quickly, bearing in mind that this is just the Outline. The document is at a future date.

May I suggest that we carry on with Item 3 and look at what the Secretariat has done. It has sort of reformatted the text in accordance with your interventions yesterday and see whether we can move quickly forward.

I have a feeling once we get past this snag, the rest of the text we may be able to move forward. Would you agree and go along with that? I see there is no objection, so we will carry on with Item 3.

Please have a look at this reformatted text and let us move forward with that.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I think this is a very good procedural suggestion and I am confident that with a fresh mind this morning, and a spirit of compromise, we should be able to easily finalize our conversation on Item 3.

Let me put the cards on the table here. For us it is important to stick to the language of what is now (h), "requested FAO in this context to introduce the One Health approach, including the fight against Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and respective cooperation with other relevant organizations as one of its areas of special consideration under the framework".

Not acceptable for us, and a red line, is the suggestion to start this sentence with underlining the World Health Organization (WHO) as the prime forum to discuss matters related to health because this is just wrong. This is totally unacceptable. Food and agriculture sectors have a pivotal role to play in tackling AMR. In many parts of the world antimicrobial use is far greater in animals than in humans and it is rapidly increasing, as we all know.

FAO's work on AMR is implemented in coordination with WHO and World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) using a One Health approach and that is for good reasons like that, because it is not WHO which is the prime forum for that. So, we just have to avoid to make wrong assertions. That does not help us. So, if we could stick to this, what is now (h), that is fine with us.

I will not now speak on trade because that is not in the competence of the Member States, that is in the competence of the European Union Commission, but of course it is true that World Trade Organization (WTO) is the prime forum to discuss matters related to trade. We had this discussion in the Programme Committee and there was language found in the Programme Committee to basically accommodate the interests of some to have trade mentioned, but without basically trying here to create a parallel forum for trade negotiations in the FAO, which would be another red line for us.

With that in mind, I think we could live with what is now subparagraphs (f) and (h) and (i) and (j).

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

I think we are having a very bad start, to be frank with you. I just heard my dear colleague from Germany and apparently from the goodwill we just had two red lines. What is the flexibility shown in here? What is wrong with saying that World Health Organization (WHO) is the prime forum to discuss health matters? Are we going to dispute this? Very frankly, I do not understand.

The same way I do not want to dispute any affirmation concerning that the World Trade Organization (WTO) is the prime forum for discussing trade matters. If we are going to start putting red lines, okay. We already have the whole day, the whole week, the whole month, if you want, but it is not a good start.

As I mentioned yesterday, reacting to proposals coming from the European Union, it is not Brazil that proposed this, we would accept the first mention to WTO in the previous subparagraph if we include the same reasoning, the same logic in the other subparagraph.

This is only concerning the introductory part of both subparagraphs. I am not agreeing to any other text on subparagraph (h) or (g), if you want to join both of them.

Sr. Gustavo MOSTAJO OCOLA (Perú)

En aras de buscar un consenso y que todos pudiésemos trabajar, quizás, sobre textos que fueron acordados en la reunión del Comité de Programa, existe justamente en el tema del Marco estratégico el inciso (j), el subpárrafo (j), el cual básicamente es un texto acordado y que decía: “recalcó la centralidad de las tres dimensiones de desarrollo sostenible, económica, social y ambiental, la importancia del enfoque salud, la función del comercio inclusivo y el acceso a los mercados y los precios de los alimentos.” Si no es posible ponernos de acuerdo con esos cuatro párrafos, podríamos por lo menos transcribir lo que fue acordado en la sesión del Comité del Programa y esto podría solucionar el tema.

CHAIRPERSON

That is what I was going to suggest, and, in fact, I have the wording here of the Programme Committee’s Report. If I read it out to you to see whether there would be consensus or agreement on this wording, which is the Programme Committee’s wording, and move forward that way.

It starts “stressed the centrality of the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) and highlighted important issues, such as the One Health approach and the role of trade and market access.” This is what members of the Programme Committee agreed on. Would this be acceptable to Members here so that we can move forward? If you like, I can read it again or we can put it on the screen somehow.

I am sorry, what I read out to you was the Joint Committee. The Programme Committee is similar: “stressed the centrality of the three dimensions of sustainable development, economic, social and environmental, the importance of One Health approach, the role of inclusive trade and market access and food prices.”

I have read out two texts. One is the Joint Session, Joint Programme and Finance Committee and the other text is what the Programme Committee said.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

We would support also both agreed languages, in the Joint Meeting or the Programme Committee Meeting. They are both the same wording, with the only exception that in the Programme Committee the food prices are also stressed. I think this text would be acceptable by us and we support it.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Trataré de hacer una reflexión muy rápida. La primera es que creo seriamente que estamos acercándonos a lo que mencioné al principio, la idea de buscar una conceptualización más general, menos específica y que no cruce posiciones delicadas de ninguna parte.

Me parece que el embajador de Brasil hizo muy buen punto que permitió esta reflexión y estoy de acuerdo con la posición de mis compañeros de Perú y de Egipto, en cuanto a que la propuesta sobre el texto del Comité del Programa es adecuada para poder resolver con una solución de compromiso esta situación y destrabar discusiones que debemos tener, como dijo el embajador de Alemania hoy, discutirlos en otras instancias.

Porque si vamos a discutir especificidades tendríamos que empezar, por ejemplo, a plantearnos, entonces que todo lo que tenga que ver con biodiversidad lo vamos a discutir en el Convenio sobre la Diversidad Biológica (CDB), lo que sea cambio climático en el Convención Marco de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Cambio Climático (CMNUCC), o el medio ambiente en el Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente (PNUMA), lo que refiera a One Health en la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS), pero la realidad es que hay un proceso de transversalidad limitado en el cual la FAO tiene un rol que jugar.

Y en el caso de la Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC) que es algo que generó tanta discusión. La OMC es el principal foro para las reglas del comercio internacional, pero no tiene el monopolio de la discusión de cuestiones del comercio. De hecho, gran parte del proceso normativo de la OMC se nutre del trabajo desarrollado por la FAO.

Por lo tanto, plantearnos una transversalidad solamente en algún tema y no en todos, obviamente con los límites que implica no hacer superposiciones de funciones, es lo que yo creo más adecuado. Por lo tanto, en términos de síntesis, la posición de Perú refleja la posición que también nosotros sugerimos ayer y que el compañero de Egipto expresó también y, me parece que, si tenemos todos un esquema de compromiso que en su momento pudimos acordar, yo creo que este es el camino adecuado.

Sr. Mario ARVELO (República Dominicana)

Ayer tomamos la palabra para argumentar a favor de que el Consejo pudiese llegar a acuerdos detallados sobre una serie de cuestiones. Al mismo tiempo, hemos tenido la oportunidad de reflexionar. Durante la noche de ayer, hemos escuchado una serie de argumentos, hemos revisitado todas estas cuestiones y nos damos cuenta de que, como han dicho otros oradores, el Consejo no puede estar yendo una y otra vez sobre temas sobre los cuales no está muy cerca un acuerdo. Ya ha sido dicho hoy que el tema que podría ser el más complicado y controversial es el tema cuatro que todavía no hemos tratado.

También podemos darnos cuenta de que todo lo que han dicho los delegados que han tomado la palabra es verdad. Ninguno se ha inventado nada. Todos están explicando cómo entienden un sistema internacional muy complejo y, por lo tanto, hemos también visto que hay algunos textos que ya han pasado por un cedazo, en el Comité del Programa, en la Reunión Conjunta, si bien ayer estábamos haciendo un argumento en cuanto a que el Consejo debía hacer todos los esfuerzos, entiende mi delegación que estos esfuerzos ya han sido hechos.

Entonces, estaríamos acompañando lo que plantean Argentina, Egipto y Perú, de que podamos aceptar un lenguaje que ya ha pasado por ese cedazo, que ha pasado por la aprobación de un número de Estados Miembros menor al del Consejo, pero de que es una solución razonable para poder cerrar este tema y poder avanzar con las importantes cuestiones que tenemos por delante y que, como dijo, el embajador de Alemania, el mundo espera en este momento de crisis que el Consejo pueda concluir su trabajo y que podamos dar los mandatos que la FAO necesita para colaborar con nuestros gobiernos en la lucha contra el hambre y todas las formas de malnutrición.

CHAIRPERSON

Could I request the speakers to address this issue, whether we can agree on the wording of the Programme Committee or the Joint Session, whichever you prefer, they are similar, and move forward on this issue?

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I will refrain from a lengthy intervention. I think in the spirit of compromise, it would probably indeed be the best now to go back to agreed language.

We would be in favour of taking the language of the report of the Joint Meeting of the Programme Committee and Finance Committee. It was a broader forum. Subparagraph (h) reads: “stress the centrality of the three dimensions of sustainable developments (economic, social and environmental) and highlighted important issues such as the One Health approach and the role of trade and market access”.

We would favour this language for the reasons mentioned and would also indicate that this includes then also, from our side, renouncing the explicit mentioning of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). I think this would then be perhaps a good and tolerable compromise for all sides.

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

We are happy that there seems to be some understanding now from Members to get back to the language of the Technical Committees of the Council. I want to stress the fact that those Technical Committees are there to advise the Council and because they are advising the Council, their suggestions, definitely we can decide as a Council to take them into consideration.

The best way we have to do is to consider what they have said, especially if they have had long discussions on that issue. We will now at this point move forward, as you suggested to accept the language of the Technical Committees and then do away with whatever is now in subparagraphs (g) and (h).

Ms Yael RUBINSTEIN (Israel)

First of all, we support your idea that we will come back to the wording of the Programme Committee. I think it is a good compromise.

Secondly, I would like to suggest, or maybe to ask, why the chat box is closed because I think it could save us a lot of time if we can cooperate or coordinate also via the chat box. For instance, last night to decide whether to break for 15 minutes or 30 minutes, it could be easier to just write on the chat box which break we prefer.

Last but not least, we support the suggestion from our colleague from Japan previously, that was asking the versions of draft resolution to be sent to us by mail and not only to be shown by screen.

Ms Pernilla IVARSSON (Sweden)

It is going to be a fantastic day today as well. At this point we would like us to move forward and we think that the proposal to take texts from the Joint Meeting, as this was a wider approach and contained both the Programme and the Finance Committee would be a good step forward.

As someone has pointed out, this is just the beginning of the discussion of the Strategic Framework. We will continue to discuss it with the Membership. Therefore, we will have plenty of time to improve and add new data. It would be a pity if we at this stage would really be stuck in details and position.

I think we would favour that we move on at this stage.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Buenos días a todo el mundo. Por hacerlo breve y resumido queríamos manifestar nuestro completo acuerdo con la propuesta última realizada por la presidencia alemana de la Unión Europea. De tal manera que preferiríamos que el subpárrafo (h) estuviera tal y como lo redactó la reunión conjunta del Comité del Programa en su 129.º período de sesiones y el Comité de Finanzas en su 183.º período de sesiones.

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

I support also the proposed compromise and the understanding that this is a solution for the four subparagraphs that we are currently looking at, which are (g), (h), (i) and (j).

CHAIRPERSON

I have no more requests for the floor. I see that there is support for moving forward by adopting the words of the Joint Meeting and obviously that would mean the deletion of subparagraphs (f) (g), (h) and (j).

Do I have your agreement to use the wording of the Joint Meeting and the deletion of subparagraphs (f) (g), (h) and (j)? With that could we move forward, then.

Now we can move to the new subparagraph (g), which starts “underline the importance of an enhanced enabling environment.”

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

Thanks goes to all the distinguished delegates for the flexibility they have shown and to move forward. I just want to ask Chair to clean the text. So, once we clean something, those paragraphs should be cleaned so we could move forward. So, please delete the not agreed wordings here and clean the text to move forward.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us move forward, then we will clean everything, and you have a look.

Let us go to subparagraph (g) now.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

I do not understand why we remove the idea of global value chain, which came strongly in the statement of the African Group. We are not comfortable with the removal of the mentioning of the “participation in global value chains”, because it came very strongly in our statement.

The statement can be checked. We are not saying things that we did not say in the Plenary. Therefore, we are not very comfortable if this is removed.

CHAIRPERSON

Cameroon, do you want subparagraph (j) to be reinstated?

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

Mr Chairperson, I think people will understand that when we suggested that subparagraph yesterday, it was with reference to what was said in our statement as Africa Regional Group. The issue of “participation in global value chain” and reference to “regional initiatives in regional value chains.” These are things that we said in our statement.

CHAIRPERSON

In fact, the Secretariat has just put in some wording in paragraph (f). Would that be acceptable to all? The wording in yellow in paragraph (f).

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

Well, Chair, it has watered down what we wanted to express but really for the sake of compromise. We are not happy, but we will come back to it when the real discussions will start. For the sake of compromise and for us to move, we can accept what is being put there. We are not still satisfied, but we will go along.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Cameroon. I think that is a good suggestion, that when you have the full document in front of you, then these discussions could be moved further forward.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I had a minor comment on subparagraph (g). Should I make that now? Are we back onto subparagraph (g)?

CHAIRPERSON

We are on subparagraph (g); therefore, you could make your suggestion.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

A very small one. It is to replace the word “promulgation” with “implementation”.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Mi pedido de palabra es para respaldar lo planteado por el colega de Camerún. Yo escuché muy bien la declaración del grupo africano y fue en ese sentido. Y estaba pensando, para darle la importancia que ha tenido en esa declaración, quizás en el ítem, en el subpárrafo que dentro del texto se expresa sobre el “Food System Approach”, creo que esa fue una propuesta sugerida por el embajador de Alemania.

Quizás allí es el lugar donde podría tener la visibilidad, el peso y la importancia que el grupo africano le ha dado a esta cuestión. Lo planteo ahora, en todo caso, cuando lleguemos al subpárrafo específico podemos intentar si, obviamente, el representante de Camerún está de acuerdo, buscar un *wording* de consenso. Pero simplemente era eso.

CHAIRPERSON

We will move forward now, and we will see when we reach that subparagraph.

We can move to subparagraph (h) now. I see no requests for the floor; therefore subparagraph (h) is fine.

We go to subparagraph (i). There is no request for comment.

We go to subparagraph (j).

We can move to subparagraph (k).

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

En el subpárrafo anterior, estamos de acuerdo con el concepto pero queríamos que la Secretaría nos confirme si el *wording* es correcto de acuerdo a cómo es el funcionamiento o el rol que tiene la FAO en su relación con el Fondo Verde para el Clima, para no colocar en el informe algo que por allí no es exactamente como funciona. No es quizás el rol que tiene la FAO sobre ese tema.

Se acuerda que, en el debate, en el plenario, habíamos pedido una aclaración. Repito, no estoy haciendo un cuestionamiento al concepto que está en el subpárrafo. Estamos de acuerdo.

CHAIRPERSON

We will get the person from the Secretariat to answer this. In the meantime, we can move forward to subparagraph (k). But we will come back to subparagraph (j) when we have Ms Beth Crawford to join us.

Mr Mario ARVELO (Dominican Republic)

I will just come back to the subparagraph regarding the Green Climate Fund when appropriate.

CHAIRPERSON

We have Ms Maria Helena Semedo, Deputy Director-General to explain to us.

Ms Maria Helena SEMEDO (Deputy Director-General)

Good morning to all. Regarding the question raised by United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, we have two issues here. First, the demand for support from FAO will come from the country. The request for the projects to the Green Climate Fund will come from the countries.

Our responsibility is to support the countries throughout the preparation of the project and the submission to the Green Climate Fund. This is an issue. What Ambassador Marie-Therese Sarch referred to; we had a contribution coming from FAO funds to support the countries to prepare projects to be submitted to the Green Climate Fund.

Half of those resources were for Africa. Why we do not have so many projects from Africa is mainly linked to the standards of the Green Climate Fund. What the Green Climate Fund requests in terms of baseline, in terms of information, in terms of project preparation, the African countries sometimes, or not only Africa, the Asia or other countries, they do not have all the information.

What we have to do is to support the countries to build the information and then to be able to formulate the project and submit to the Green Climate Fund and this is the reason why in Africa we have mainly what we call 'readiness programmes or projects'. They are projects to support the countries to be heavy, to prepare projects to be submitted to the Green Climate Fund. I will be preparing a note with all the information to see how many readiness programmes we have for Africa, how many big programmes and from the USD 2 million, how much has been accommodated to Africa.

It is a process, and we think very soon we will be having more African and other regions' projects to be submitted to the Green Climate Fund. I think this is what I wanted to share for this moment, to explain the process that is followed.

Another issue is the entry point to the Green Climate Fund which is climate, adaptation or mitigation. It can bring co-benefits, but the majority of our projects are to support smallholder farms. The project beneficiaries are smallholder farmers.

I think this is what I wanted to share from now and I am available for any additional questions the Excellencies/Ambassadors may have.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for your clarification. I have Ms Beth Crawford to add some comments to this. Can I first give the floor to Ms Crawford, and then I will move to the Members?

Ms Beth CRAWFORD (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management)

From the point of view of the Report of the Strategic Framework, I would suggest that the sentiment of this subparagraph is actually already covered in the one above, here we are requesting to give information on the different sources of funding for different priority areas.

I would also remind the Members that at the time that you will be seeing the full Strategic Framework document at your next Sessions, you will also be seeing the Medium Term Plan, the Programme of Work and Budget, and the Mid-Term Review for 2020. It would be through that combination of those documents that you would have the full information that you are requesting here.

Sr. Mario ARVELO (República Dominicana)

Agradecemos las explicaciones que nos han brindado las funcionarias que han tomado la palabra. Esto es lo que entendemos nosotros, que el Fondo Verde para el Clima está trabajando con la asesoría o en coordinación con la FAO.

Sabemos que estos no son fondos que provienen del programa regular de la FAO sino que la FAO está aportando a través de su red descentralizada, su oficina regional, en el caso de mi país en Santiago de Chile, la subregional que trabaja directamente desde Panamá y la oficina nacional de representación que están trabajando con el Fondo Verde del Clima para identificar las áreas en las cuales procede con el mandato de la FAO en una mano y con los fondos que puedan ser movilizables por el Fondo Verde del Clima se puedan desarrollar proyectos y programas para beneficio como acabamos de oír de agricultores familiares y otros pequeños productores.

Entonces, nosotros vamos a querer escuchar lo que tienen para decir el embajador de Argentina y otros colegas porque tampoco queremos forzar una mención del Fondo Verde del Clima pero que sí pueda reflejar el Informe del Consejo que la FAO está trabajando de manera estrecha con esta instancia para beneficio de los Estados Miembros dentro del mandato de la Organización.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Gracias Directora General Adjunta, Sra. Maria Helena Semedo, por las clarificaciones y a la Sra. Beth Crawford. Gracias a mi compañero de la República Dominicana por explicar claramente también esta cuestión tan importante.

Yo quisiera proponerle un *wording* alternativo si es que me lo permite solo para corregir entonces con estas explicaciones la primera parte de ese subpárrafo, sería lo siguiente. Empezaría de esta manera “stress the importance for FAO, who continue supporting countries in their efforts to access funds, from different origins, to access funds from different origins”. Y allí me paro y continúa con la expresión, “including large climate” and so on. O sea, ese sería el texto. Lo único que habría que sacar de allí es: “Access funds from different origin including large climate”, and so on. Perfecto. Así quedaría la propuesta, obviamente si tiene consenso, solo con una visión constructiva que refleje las explicaciones por parte de la Secretaría y las expectativas de mi colega del Reino Unido de Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Thank you very much to Ms Maria Helena Semedo, and to Ms Beth Crawford, and to my colleagues from Argentina and the Dominican Republic.

The concept here is, it is really important for clarity, and transparency, for how FAO is supporting countries to access these funds. Absolutely, we are very supportive of FAO accessing those funds, and indeed, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and many of the other Members of Council sit on the Board of the Green Climate Fund and approve FAO’s access to these funds on behalf of their Members.

Therefore, of course, we do support them to do this, but we would like there to be clarity about how that is done. Indeed, we would like the Strategic Framework to plan, strategically, how FAO is going to use those funds. I do not object to the proposal from Argentina, but I do think it needs to bring back the sense of the need for us to be strategic, to have a discussion about the strategic prioritisation of how FAO uses its funds to, its core funds, to access the climate finance.

I think that is the concept I am trying to get through here. I am happy with the proposed wording.

CHAIRPERSON

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, are you satisfied with this additional wording which has just been added on?

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I think it might say, “on the targeted use of such funds within the framework”. Yes, but can we, can I have a few minutes to think about it, or can we come back to it again, when we have been through the rest of the document, just so I can have a think about it.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Quería, por supuesto, agradecerle a la embajadora del Reino Unido de Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte sus reflexiones. Lo único, la verdad, es que no entiendo muy bien la sugerencia sobre el tema de los fondos. Lamento tener que pedirle nuevamente a la Secretaría que intervenga para poder clarificar porque entiendo que esos fondos no son administrados por parte de la FAO. O sea, la FAO tengo entendido que lo que hace es un apoyo técnico, un acompañamiento técnico al pedido del país que quiere ser evaluado por parte del Fondo Verde del Clima.

Entonces, no queda claro en esa propuesta, en esa sugerencia, en ese texto, cuando se dice “use of such funds” no sé, no me termina de convencer de acuerdo a las explicaciones que dio la Secretaría pero quizás me supera técnicamente el tema. ¿Podría explicarlo un poco más todavía la Secretaría?

CHAIRPERSON

I have a request from various Members, but also the Deputy Director-General, Maria Helena Semedo has asked. Perhaps, I will give her the floor so she can provide some clarification, perhaps that may answer some of the doubts.

Ms Maria-Helena SEMEDO (Deputy Director-General)

I think we are talking about two different things.

Ambassador Marie-Therese Sarch is talking at the beginning when we start the formulation of the projects to be submitted to the Green Climate Fund (GCF): for the formulation of a full project, we are talking about USD 300 000 - 500 000 and the Green Climate Fund, contrary to the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), does not give funds upfront to formulate projects. Then, the Finance Committee, and thanks to the Members of the Finance Committee, agreed to give some resources, USD 2 million, for FAO to support the countries in the project formulation; this is what Ambassador Marie-Therese Sarch is speaking about.

However, what I can say is those resources have been exhausted and now the countries are contributing or using also Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), or other funds in partnership, to formulate the projects.

The Ambassador of Argentina is referring to when the project is approved. When the project is approved, the Green Climate Fund will transfer the funds to FAO and FAO is the accredited entity. FAO then will transfer the funds to the countries. Therefore, my understanding is that we are talking about two different things. Maybe Ambassador Marie-Therese Sarch, you can correct me, but this is what I understood from your explanation.

I would like also to thank the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and all the Members of the Board of the Green Climate Fund for your strong support to FAO and to FAO projects submitted to the Green Climate Fund.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Ms Maria Helena Semedo. Ms Beth Crawford, do you have to add anything?

Ms Beth CRAWFORD (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management)

I believe that Ms Maria Helena Semedo has covered everything.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. I now give the floor to Cameroon.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

I have a feeling that we are getting into the details for the negotiations of the Strategic Framework here, we want to base our discussion on the global principles which could surround the preparation of the next alteration of the Strategic Framework. If we get into the details of explaining the clarity of the targets, targeted funds, and so on, it is very cumbersome at this level of the discussion of the Strategic Framework.

I would really suggest that we do away with the last part which was added which is in red, because it gets into the nitty-gritty of what we intend to. Probably, it might be much more beneficial if it is in the Programme of Work and Budget, and less in the Medium Term Plan. In the Strategic Framework, you know, these are things that do not fit very much in that. If I may, I would end the sentence after "Green Climate Fund".

CHAIRPERSON

I tend to agree that, as some Members pointed out, we are dealing with the Outline, and you are going to get a detailed document for your next meeting, which probably would address all these points which you are raising.

I would again appeal, let us not get stuck on words. It is the concept, and the thought which is important, and the words we should deal with when we come the next time round, when we have a detailed document.

Sra. Rebeca CUTIE CANCINO (Cuba)

Buenos días a todos. Primeramente, quisiera agradecer a la FAO por todo su apoyo técnico a los países para presentar proyectos al Fondo Verde del Clima. Es un proceso excesivamente técnico, los proyectos tienen gran rigurosidad y, sobre todo, demuestra que la FAO está acompañando a los gobiernos en su compromiso para cumplir el Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) 1, el ODS 2 y, sobre todo, los proyectos tienen que estar fundamentados rigurosamente en cambio climático.

Por otra parte, apoyo la propuesta que ha hecho Camerún. Pienso que no debemos entrar en tantas especificaciones en este acápite y llamo, por favor, a tener en cuenta que tenemos varios temas de la agenda muy importantes que debemos abordar hoy.

CHAIRPERSON

In fact, I agree with you entirely, and I hope we move forward with that. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, you have the floor. Would you agree that we could stop at the word, “Climate Fund” and deal with this clarity issue when we have the full document?

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Thank you, Ms Maria Helena Semedo, for her explanation. Indeed, she has understood my point.

Can I suggest that we leave this paragraph for now, and perhaps, Ms Semedo can help us with the language to reflect the concept that I was getting at earlier. We will come back to it, if that is okay.

CHAIRPERSON

We will move on.

I think we have agreed subparagraph (k), and we move to (l). I see no request for the floor, so we move to subparagraph (m).

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I agree with this subparagraph because I had proposed it. However, now that I have read the text, I would just like to ask if it could be moved before the subparagraph (j) .

CHAIRPERSON

Canada, could we deal with this shifting of subparagraphs in the Drafting Committee?

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Certainly, if Members agree with that, yes. I was just trying to find a logical flow where we are mentioning the important issues, and this is also related to full components before other subparagraphs talk a bit more about the Framework, or the Outline of the Framework. We we can discuss this in the Drafting Committee.

CHAIRPERSON

This would enable us to move on to subparagraph (n).

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

Mr Chairperson, I am sorry, you did not see my hand up on subparagraph (m). In as much as I appreciate this contribution of Canada very much, I feel that it is incomplete. We think that it might be supplemented by an addition of a few words.

When we say at the starting point “women and youth, in particular rural and indigenous women together with smallholder and family farmers, as key stakeholders for the future of foods and agriculture systems”, “stressed the need for the Strategic Framework to address particular interests of those vulnerable groups”.

I think this may complete this sentence, because we appreciate it so much. If you heard our statement yesterday, we stressed the element of youth and women, and then I think, it is not only on the starting point, but we need to have action taken within the Strategic Framework in consideration of those.

CHAIRPERSON

We can move now to subparagraph (n).

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I am sorry to intervene again on Paragraph (m). I just wanted to welcome the suggestion made by Cameroon. Just a slight change as to say, address particular interests “of such, of those groups”. And then maybe, if we want to reflect the fact that they can be vulnerable, those groups in vulnerable conditions or situations.

Nevertheless, we do not like to refer to women, youth, or others, as vulnerable groups, per se, because we do feel that they have a lot of capacities, as well, and solutions to offer. Perhaps as a way, an alternative language of those groups, like this, or of those groups in vulnerable conditions.

CHAIRPERSON

Now we deal with subparagraph (n). We can move to subparagraph (o).

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I think this is now the subparagraph to which Ambassador Carlos Bernardo Cherniak from Argentina referred to when he mentioned the possibility to perhaps add what our colleague from Cameroon, Ambassador Moungui Medi, had suggested. To take this downhere, “the participation of countries in global value chains”. If the colleagues agree, I think it would fit, indeed, better there, than up there. “Stress that the food system is crucial to the...as well as the participation of countries in global value chains”. I do not know, perhaps like this.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

I just missed the opportunity; I would like to make a comment on subparagraph (n). Could you scroll up a little bit, please? Well, our position is that, you know, FAO should put more focus on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 and SDG 2, those are topics where FAO has a competitive advantage. We made an intervention quite clearly that those two Goals should be placed in the centre of that. I mean, I am not very much against referring to the other goals, but still, I would like to see those two Goals in the centre, and they should be different to the other Goals. In my view, the subparagraph before that, it refers to the interconnections, the interconnectedness of all this disease. This is enough.

We do not see that much necessity to have the next subparagraph or, to have the compromised language. I think the particular proposal, for us we should refer to the SDG1 with SDG2 as the two Goals in the centre. The other goals should be treated in a different way. I am sorry, at this moment, I do not have any particular language proposal, but if I may, we will get back to you with a complete proposal on this.

CHAIRPERSON

We will move on, and then, Japan, you can inform us what exactly is the addition or amendment you would like.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

Thank you, Ambassador Ulrich Seidenberger, for this addition, for the choice where to put that.

We only add something after “in this regard”. “Taking into consideration regional initiatives where” I thought that, because I do not want to add “in this regard”, but something should be added in, “to take into consideration”, “with due consideration”. Or we can push, “in this regard”, at the end, it is up to thewith due consideration to regional initiatives”.

CHAIRPERSON

I have no request from the Members, but a request from the Secretariat. Mr Máximo Torero Cullen, do you want to provide some clarification?

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

Only one clarification. If you can go to the subparagraph that was referred to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the food systems. I think is the one, that says, “stress that all food

system approach is crucial to realising FAO's vision of a world free of hunger and malnutrition in all its forms and achieving all disease by 2030". I do not think that is the mission of FAO.

We cannot assure that we will achieve all disease by 2030. What we are doing is looking at a world free of hunger and malnutrition in all its forms and understanding the trade-offs with all the different disease. But we should not be saying that we are going to resolve all the disease by 2030, I do not think that is the mission of FAO.

CHAIRPERSON

With this slide, we move to subparagraph (o). Can we move on to subparagraph (p).

Sorry, Japan, and then Canada, you want to speak about subparagraph (o)?

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

Yes, I would like to move back to the subparagraph (l). As I told you, I would be back with the proper language. I would leave out, "record in this context FAO's additional broad mandate for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 5, 6, 12, 15, and expected FAO's Strategic Framework to reflect this broad mandate". Of course, you can keep the words in the bracket, like the gender, [XX] and sanitation, but you know, I put the "additional" before the "broad mandate" and delete the "and the custodian role for the SDG2". Again, "FAO's additional broad mandate for SDG5".

We propose to delete the two. Okay? "Additional broad mandate for SDG5". Because SDG2 has been already mentioned in the previous subparagraph, with 1, which should be in the centre of the Agenda. This is an additional mandate, that is our intention.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I had raised my hand to discuss the other subparagraph, but since we are on this one. I understand the point made by our Japanese colleague. At the same time, I think that, by adding "additional broad mandate" it is as if the mandate of FAO was separated, and I think we want to have more linkages between the two.

I thought it was useful for the Strategic Framework to emphasise how FAO's mandate is quite vast, and it makes, as well, it is comparative advantage to other Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), because the other RBAs, as well, are doing Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 and 2. However, as well, because FAO has the custodian role for indicators within the SDGs, and I thought, as well, that was useful to highlight. However, you know, we can be flexible on this language.

For the subparagraph (o), I would just suggest to add in the second line, when we say "and contributing", to just add in "to contributing", so that it is clear that it is the food systems' approach which is crucial to that, and not that it is FAO's vision. I think it is line with, as well, the spirit of the Food Systems Summit, where it was seen as one of the factoring approaches that would be leveraged to the maximum benefit across the SDGs.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

For the reasons that my Canadian colleague just mentioned, going back to letter (l), I am afraid I have to tell my Japanese colleague that we are not really flexible on this. We indeed would like to go back to the original suggestion, because it is just a matter of fact that FAO has a broad mandate and has a custodian role for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) mentioned.

Therefore, this is not an "additional broad mandate", it is a "broad mandate", and it is a "custodian role", and we would really like to have this language reflected in the conclusions.

If you could go up, perhaps one subparagraph, we have already there, the guiding lens of SDG1 and 2 in subparagraph (k). I think this is what the Japanese colleague was looking at, and aiming for, and it is reflected in subparagraph (k). Therefore, I think there is no need to change subparagraph (l), and we would like to go back to this language.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

Just to react to what our German colleague said. Of course, we are very much flexible. But the point that I made is that we are not very much compatible to have Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 with other SDG goals in parallel. If you have any good language to accumulate our point, that would be very much appreciated.

In the case that we do not have the added language here, I would tend to suggest that the letter, put them in the bracket and we move forward. This is a point that we do not agree on, this is clear now, so maybe we can leave it to the work of the Drafting Committee, and we can move back to this particular subparagraph after their work, or to ask to move it first.

CHAIRPERSON

I think we can refer it; it is purely a question of language; it is not any particular concept or thought. Would everybody agree, we leave this to the Drafting Committee to sort out?

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I think we actually do not need to refer that to the Drafting Committee, because I think it can easily be solved. Actually, probably the Secretary General of the Council already started with exactly in the right way, when included “as well as”.

We could also add, for instance, record in this context FAO’s broad mandate, and custodian role for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 and 2, if the Japanese colleague would like to have SDG1 and 2, once again mentioned. I think it is an unnecessary repetition of the previous subparagraph, but for us, it would be okay. The important point is that the other SDGs are mentioned, and that it is described as a broad mandate. So perhaps that would be already a solution, and we could agree on this language.

Ms Pernilla IVARSSON (Sweden)

I would just like to support what Germany just said on this subparagraph. We think it is important to point out the custodian role.

CHAIRPERSON

Japan, with these amendments, maybe please go forward, because it takes into account your thoughts as well.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

Thank you very much for the efforts. I am now looking into that. Just to give you at a glance, we are not very compatible with that, but we will try to accommodate the ideas with at least amendments. I will be back to you.

Please keep it as it is, but in kind of a bracket. I am still yet fully agreed with this, but I will try to accommodate as much as possible with this amendment which I will be bringing forward soon.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Queríamos simplemente manifestar nuestro acuerdo con la propuesta de compromiso efectuada por Alemania.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

Italy wants to support with Germany, as Germany just said, the compromised proposal that we think we can accommodate.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

We can also support the language, but perhaps to be a bit more accurate, and not be misleading in general, is that the “custodian role is related to indicators” it is not for the whole Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Perhaps we could say, “custodian role for indicators related to”.

CHAIRPERSON

With this, we move forward.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Permítame, sin intentar abrir una discusión que teóricamente ya estaría acordada. En el subpárrafo (o), donde Argentina propuso que se incluya la sugerencia de Camerún al cual estamos absolutamente de acuerdo. En el agregado que luego hizo el representante de Camerún, nos queda con algunas dudas.

Nosotros complementaríamos ese párrafo con pocas palabras más pero que reflejarían, me parece, el equilibrio que aspiramos a que tenga este párrafo. Y diríamos, después de “initiatives” poner “and the multilateral trading system.” Stop. Para nosotros eso sería perfecto para poder hacer el equilibrio justo y el complemento con la “global value chain”.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

Thank you very much for the work done by some of my colleagues. I wish to speak of the compromise that we decide to accept this proposal.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Japan.

We are on subparagraph (p). I see no requests.

We go to subparagraph (q). I see no requests.

We go to subparagraph (r).

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

With regards to subparagraph (r), we would like to delete the words, where it says, “appreciate FAO’s commitment to integrate the United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards (UNFSS) outcomes”. We do not yet know the outcomes, they have yet to be determined. Therefore, we would like to suggest deletion of this portion, because we already have a reference to the expected outcomes above, where it qualifies that, if agreed to by Members. We do not want to pre-judge the outcomes and commit FAO to integrate the outcomes when they have not yet been decided.

CHAIRPERSON

Any reaction to that? I see none, we can move to the next subparagraph (s).

We can move to subparagraph (t).

We move to subparagraph (u).

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I was following all your conclusions, but unfortunately, I did not see any reflections about the guidance, or the recommendation of the Joint Meeting, that we will ask you all to make this Strategic Framework as flexible as we can to accommodate, and to address all the known and unknown challenges that will be coming in the years.

We do not know, we have been shocked by the impacts of the COVID-19, and I think there is a wording in the Joint Meeting, which could accommodate this. Therefore, we would propose to add a subparagraph here, “urge the development”, “urge FAO”, “urge the development of a Framework that is flexible, and responsive in preventing and mitigating effects of known and unknown future challenges on agriculture, and the food systems”. Which is already there in the Report of the Joint Meeting, on subparagraph (l).

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

I am always very uncomfortable when we tend to say the message would look like a ping pong between Management and Member. I would rather remove the idea for welcomed Management confirmation. That is not proper in the Report of a Governing Body. “Urge alignment with the repositioning of the United Nation Development”, I think it is properly said that way.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Can we just go back to that subparagraph (u)? Perhaps we do not need “alignment with”, we could just have, “urged the repositioning of the United Nations Development System will be fully”.

I am not sure we need, “alignment with”, but yes, the Drafting Committee could perhaps sort that one out. Just to get the language right, but I am happy with the concept of “urged”.

CHAIRPERSON

We are on subparagraph (w). I see no requests. Therefore, subparagraph (w) is okay.

That means we have completed Item 3.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, I thought you had said you would reword to a particular subparagraph, is that okay?

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I would like to go back to the subparagraph on the Green Climate Fund, if possible? I would like to perhaps suggest a different ending to that subparagraph. My proposal is that the end of the subparagraph would read, “as well as clarity on their contribution to FAO’s Strategic Framework”.

CHAIRPERSON

I assume everybody is fine with that. Therefore, I think we have completed Item 3. I would like to thank Members for showing flexibility, which enabled consensus to be developed.

Item 4. FAO’s new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement

Point 4. Nouvelle stratégie de la FAO relative à la participation du secteur privé

Tema 4. Nueva estrategia de la FAO para la colaboración con el sector privado

(CL 165/4)

CHAIRPERSON

We can go to Item 4, now.

Item 4 is *FAO’s New Strategy for Private Sector Engagement*. The introduction for this Item by the Deputy Director-General, Ms Beth Bechdol, has been circulated to you.

Please ensure you have document *CL164/4 Rev 1* and *CL165/4 Rev 1*, Information Notes 1 and 2. This Item was discussed at the Joint Meeting of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee and the 183rd Session of the Finance Committee, as well as the 111th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters.

With this, I open the floor to Members for Item 4.

Mr Bommakanti RAJENDER (India)

India has the honour to deliver this giant statement on behalf of Asia Regional Group. The Asia Regional Group appreciates FAO Secretariat, particularly Ms Beth Bechdol, and her team for their efforts to this document, which is indeed essential in order to achieve this date of 2030. We are also grateful to the Secretariat for providing Members more opportunity to interact with them on the initial stage, through several in common meetings prior to the Council. In general, we support this with the following observations.

Firstly, the Asia Regional Group requests FAO to maximize its comparative advantage in partnership with the private sector. We can briefly summarize the current context surrounding the Strategy as less than ten years to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) 2030, but hardly anticipate the timing of dissipation of the COVID-19 pandemic and needs are soaring compared to the limited resources.

At the same time, we see almost all of international organizations, including Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), seek more opportunities in strengthening their partnerships with private sectors. In order to achieve our goals in an efficient manner, even in these challenging circumstances, FAO needs to concentrate on its comparative strength. Through this focusing, we believe FAO will earn more successful outcomes.

Secondly, the Asia Regional Group request effort to work proactively in partnering and engaging the private sector. We cannot overemphasise the importance of lowering barriers for private entities to access FAO's work, particularly in terms of smallholder farmers and their organizations.

In this regard, we highly value the establishment of 'Connect' Portal which is one of new supporting mechanisms. We sincerely hope this portal to be a great help to many private entities, finding not only basic information such as contact info in possible working areas, but also deepening the partnership continuously. To that end, the Portal should be user-friendly, as well as well interconnected with other sites of FAO's main portal.

Thirdly, while the Asia Regional Group fully supports ten principles for engagement, we would request FAO to be flexible in collaboration with the private sector. We recognize the wide scope of the private sector encompassing entities from farmers, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), large firms, and philanthropic foundations.

As we are aware, each entity has its own unique characteristic, and this requires FAO to take more tailored approach. The strategy is to build more innovative partnerships with the private sector, and innovative partnerships may require new actions or measures, which sometimes are out of custom.

Thus, we urge FAO to work with private sector creatively, while keeping the basic principles. Last but not the least, the Asia Regional Group believes, key performance indicators, significant in terms of monitoring and assessment. Obviously, clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will develop the strategy further, as well as navigate it in the right direction. In this regard, we look forward to hearing updates on the KPIs in the near future.

With these comments, the Asia Regional Group endorses the Council's approval of this document.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for keeping well within your 5-minute time for group statements.

In fact, since we are behind our schedule, I would like to stress again, that it has been agreed that individual statements would be three minutes and group statements five minutes. I have been given a bell, so when you have reached your time limit, I will ring the bell to alert you so that you start concluding your statement.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Sobre la presente cuestión ya nos hemos abocado ampliamente durante la reunión conjunta, pero permítame realizar algunos comentarios.

En primer lugar, quisiéramos agradecer especialmente a Sra. Beth Bechdol por su presentación que hemos leído, junto a las notas informativas complementarias puestas a disposición, una vez más confirma la manera inclusiva, transparente y constructiva de elaboración de la Estrategia y el énfasis puesto en tener oídos bien abiertos para incorporar nuestras necesidades, puntos de vista, preocupaciones y prioridades. Todo ello, observado a lo largo del extenso proceso de consultas antes y durante las discusiones pertinentes en los Comités del Consejo.

Realmente apreciamos el trabajo realizado, sobre todo por la reacción demostrada en estas dos últimas semanas para acomodar en la Estrategia las solicitudes y comentarios realizados por todos nosotros en la Reunión Conjunta.

Como hemos expresado en su momento, las situaciones críticas se han multiplicado (COVID-19, la langosta del desierto, fenómenos climáticos catastróficos, para nombrar solo algunos), y así las exigencias son cada vez mayores para todos nosotros, incluida la FAO.

Ante esta situación y considerando que la FAO es una Organización que tiene crecimiento nominal cero de su presupuesto regular, la Estrategia de Asociaciones con el Sector Privado tiene una relevancia muy particular para mi país y los países en desarrollo.

El momento para implementar la Estrategia es ahora. Las urgencias crecen y, así, las demandas de las poblaciones más vulnerables de los países en desarrollo.

Damos la bienvenida a la elaboración de las dos notas informativas complementarias que responden a lo solicitado por los Miembros en el Informe de la Reunión Conjunta.

Felicitamos a la Secretaría por la elaboración de la Nota 2 en la que se exponen los comentarios y sugerencias recibidas y se formulan propuestas sobre su inclusión en la Estrategia, en caso de que la Estrategia sea adoptada por este Consejo, como también el calendario propuesto para las acciones que se tomarán en este contexto. Ello respeta el espíritu “vivo” del documento que deberá actualizarse de manera constante a partir de las enseñanzas adquiridas que surjan de su puesta en marcha.

Por su parte, el documento ante nosotros junto con los textos informativos ratifica a nuestro entender cuestiones que nos gustaría resaltar:

Primero, la Estrategia establece el marco adecuado para explorar colaboraciones con diferentes actores interesados, tanto grandes como pequeños, de diferentes partes del mundo, y no solo desde una perspectiva financiera. Además reitero es una Estrategia “viva”.

Segundo, la propuesta de Estrategia responde a nuestra necesidad de que la FAO profundice la movilización de capacidades, conocimientos y voluntades para una efectiva colaboración a fin de lograr soluciones para los distintos problemas y potenciar los resultados perseguidos por los países en nuestras regiones. Estimados colegas, las buenas prácticas están en todas partes, se pueden encontrar muy buenas prácticas en África, en Cercano Oriente, en Asia y América Latina, y la FAO se encuentra excelentemente posicionada para que todos nos beneficiemos con ellos.

Asimismo, en la Estrategia se aclaran los “principios de participación” destinados a proteger la neutralidad, imparcialidad, integridad y reputación de la FAO, así como a garantizar la adhesión a los valores de la FAO y de las Naciones Unidas en general. Con lo cual imagino estamos todos de acuerdo.

Respecto a los mecanismos y normas de diligencia debida, damos la bienvenida a las aclaraciones realizadas por la Secretaría para garantizar que las disposiciones que se establezcan para evitar conflictos de interés y para proteger a la FAO contra toda influencia indebida, en particular en los procesos referentes a la formulación y aplicación de políticas, normas, y reglamentaciones, sean respetadas sin excepciones.

Para finalizar, simplemente quisiéramos reiterar nuestra satisfacción con el documento presentado y las aclaraciones brindadas por la Secretaría y esperamos con ansias seguir analizando los pasos que adopte la Secretaría para la implementación y la actualización de la Estrategia.

Con estos comentarios, acogemos con beneplácito el proceso que ha dado lugar al documento frente a nosotros y recomendamos su aprobación por parte del Consejo de la FAO.

Mr Won-chul JOO (Republic of Korea)

The Republic of Korea fully aligns itself with the statement made by India on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. Korea welcomes the new Strategy of FAO for Private Sector Engagement that aims to expand cooperation with various private sectors.

Korea hopes that FAO shares its progress on private sector engagement with Members. In this context, Korea looks forward to the establishment of a connect portal to which information on partnerships will be shared. I see there is a separate Internet page on partnerships on FAO home page already, but I feel much information is scattered all over the website. In order for the member countries to search information easily, Korea hopes the FAO homepage and the new Portal are closely connected.

Korea would like to request FAO to communicate with Members and relevant stakeholders in a transparent manner regarding engagement in the private sector. It is important to make sure that collaboration between FAO and the private sector is to ensure global biodiversity and ecosystem and to reduce environmental footprint finally to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Korea fully agrees that decentralized offices play an essential role in strengthening cooperation in the field. The offices can materialize cooperation by promoting FAO strategies and identifying possible cooperative projects.

Importantly, the Republic of Korea has high expectations of the Partnership and Liaison Office (PLO) in Korea, which is establishing its annual working plan for next year. The Korean Government is in close communication with the PLO and taking this opportunity, I would like to ask the PLO in the Republic of Korea to closely cooperate with many players, including private sectors in Korea, to achieve 2030 SDGs.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Let me start off by saying that FAO's rapid response to the evaluation of FAO's Private Sector Strategy and the findings of that evaluation, is very welcome. It is right that FAO updates its Private Sector Strategy, and the inclusive process is very welcome.

We would also like to thank colleagues in the Joint Meeting and Programme Committee for our discussion on the proposed strategy last month, and we endorse their recommendations. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a number of key further steps that are needed.

Firstly, the Strategy should be fully aligned with the United Nations Global Compact principles, as required by the joint meeting. These principles have been endorsed by United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), and we call on FAO Management to ensure that the next version of this Strategy reflects them.

Second, while we welcome the recognition in Information Note 2 of the Joint Meeting request for a cost/benefit analysis of the Strategy, and, by the way, thank you for both Information Notes. However, I think the proposal to do this in an evaluation is not right. This analysis should be done by Management rather than an independent evaluation team and it should be part of the analysis of FAO's business model and, indeed, a part of the analysis that we have asked for under Item 3 we have just discussed.

Thirdly, the financial instruments that FAO plans to use is a fundamental part of its business model, as we have been discussing this morning. Paragraph 38 of this Strategy says that a more expansive set of instruments and tools will be developed. Please can Management explain the process for approving these.

Information Note 2 says that new instruments will be finalized by Management; however, these instruments may have financial implications and, indeed, as someone mentioned yesterday that debt swaps were a possibility. However, I do think instruments such as these will need to be reviewed by either/or the Finance Committee (FC) and/or the Audit Committee (AC) if they have financial implications and I very much welcome some more feedback from Management on how they propose to involve the FC and AC in improving any new instruments.

Finally, as India set out for the Asia Regional Group, we would very much welcome confirmation that outcome indicators and targets for the success of the Strategy will be included in the Strategic Results Framework. In the Programme Committee we suggested the insertion of a few extra words at the end of paragraph 41 that would clarify this, and I am sure colleagues in Management made a note of those when we were in the Programme Committee.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

We wish as well to echo our word of appreciation for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' (FAO) inclusive consultation process, including through the more recent information note, as well as efforts to take into account views from Member States throughout the process.

We look forward to developing an evolution of FAO's work to engage a private sector and encourage the FAO to continue to pursue less transactional partnerships. There is an opportunity for really transformative partnerships between the FAO and private sector, including by promoting gender lens investing strategies.

This holds true as well in context of the United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021, where the full potential of such partnerships to scale up gamechanging innovative solutions can be harnessed. And leveraging such partnerships were also part of the five key Strategic Recommendations of the Informal North America Regional Conference.

We welcome the additional information about FAO's efforts to integrate the work of the private sector at all levels, in particular regional and national offices. The Strategy also rightly recognizes the need for cooperative agreements at the local level.

We wish to underline the importance of allowing ample preparation time for private sector engagement programmes, establishing pilot investments to test the system and reaching out to learn from organizations that have experience in these partnerships.

An important feature of the strategy is its focus on quantifying and measuring results from the partnership with the private sector, including data and other metrics associated with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the Strategic Framework, combined with reporting, monitoring and evaluation. Not only would this be instrumental in assessing the impact of engagements with the private sector, identifying lessons learnt and scaling up good practices, it will also contribute to confidence building.

Canada welcomes a more efficient, effective private sector strategy, underlining the usefulness of having a clear and transparent process for accreditation of private sector organizations to the FAO. We also welcome FAO's efforts to ensure transparency and respond to Members' requests to be informed on the establishment and composition of the informal Private Sector Advisory Group.

It is important as well, like others have said, that the new Strategy fully align with the United Nations Global Compact principles in developing FAO's own risk management with modernized and streamlined due diligence and risk assessment procedures.

The strategy recognizes the need for decentralized decision-making on risk management. This must be accompanied with a strengthening of decentralized accountability and transparency mechanism as well.

Finally, Canada promotes the alignment of private sector partnerships across the Organization at all levels, noting the importance of collaboration with other Rome-based Agencies (RBAs). And we recognize that the private sector constituencies of the three agencies will differ, however we welcome FAO's commitment to collaborate to the full extent possible on joint initiatives, including knowledge sharing and good practices, in particular current frameworks for due diligence and environmental, social and governance standards.

With these comments, we are pleased to endorse the Strategy.

Sr. Elias REYES BRAVO (México)

Mi delegación considera que, en el entorno actual, el papel del sector privado es fundamental, ya que será una pieza clave en la reactivación económica y para perfilar nuevas formas de trabajo en beneficio del sector agrícola.

En este sentido, es importante reconocer que el intercambio de información, conocimientos y experiencias con el sector privado son de gran ayuda para la construcción de nuevas políticas y acciones que contribuyan a la construcción de un nuevo modelo de producción agrícola, procesamiento y comercialización, lo que permitirá amortiguar los efectos post COVID-19.

Un compromiso más amplio y profundo del sector privado con la FAO debe contribuir a mejorar el medio ambiente, con una producción sostenible, con una mejor nutrición, así como ayudar a los Miembros de la FAO a alcanzar los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS), especialmente el ODS 1 y el ODS 2.

Mi delegación ve con agrado que esta propuesta se considere como un documento vivo y por lo tanto pueda irse adecuando a las necesidades de la membresía, siempre teniendo en cuenta los "principios para la participación" destinados a proteger la neutralidad, imparcialidad, integridad y la reputación del trabajo que realiza la FAO, al tiempo de asegurar el cumplimiento de los valores de la organización y del sistema de las Naciones Unidas en general.

El calendario propuesto para la instrumentación de la estrategia es adecuado y vemos con buenos ojos que se consideren seriamente los comentarios y las observaciones de los miembros, sobre todo en lo que se refiere a un claro reconocimiento sobre la importancia de considerar cuidadosamente la

aproximación a las asociaciones incluyentes impulsadas por necesidades y demandas reales sobre el terreno, sobre todo en las iniciativas conjuntas en estrecha consulta previa con las comunidades locales e indígenas, con objetivos claros para lograr el hambre cero, la reducción de la pobreza -en particular la pobreza rural-, la reducción de las desigualdades, el aumento del empleo rural, un mejor acceso de los pequeños agricultores a la tierra y otros recursos naturales, servicios, finanzas y mercados con miras a mejorar sus medios de vida, proteger el medio ambiente y preservar la biodiversidad y la fertilidad del suelo.

Asimismo, consideramos fundamental asegurar el compromiso y la disposición de la FAO para trabajar con una gama equilibrada, amplia y geográficamente diversa de actores del sector privado, con un énfasis significativo en las micro, pequeñas y medianas empresas.

El proceso de rendición de cuentas a través de los informes de resultados no es menor, ya que permitirá la transparencia en los procesos al ponerse a la vista de todas las partes interesadas.

En ese sentido, agradecemos al Secretariado la publicación de la nota informativa con el listado de las asociaciones, cartas de intención y otras formas de acuerdos entre la FAO y el sector privado que se encuentran vigentes, incluso las firmadas recientemente. Consideramos muy positivo que se contemple su publicación en la futura plataforma 'Connect', en aras de principios fundamentales como la transparencia, la apertura, la inclusión, la rendición de cuentas y la integridad de la Organización. En ese sentido será importante no sólo la publicación de los mismos, sino también la evaluación que permita confirmar su apego, sintonía y coherencia con la visión que se propone en esta nueva Estrategia.

Con estos comentarios, mi delegación respalda la nueva Estrategia de vinculación de la FAO con el sector privado y alienta a la Organización a seguir el proceso como que se ha delineado para su instrumentación.

Sr. Julio Eduardo MARTINETTI MACEDO (Perú)

Estamos convencidos que la creación de asociaciones basadas en principios y dirigidas a objetivos concretos, lograrán resultados significativos para que nadie se quede atrás. En ese sentido, debemos entender que las actividades de colaboración de la FAO con el sector privado darán lugar a asociaciones estratégicas que permitirán ampliar los esfuerzos colectivos de las múltiples partes interesadas, aportando soluciones innovadoras, dirigidas y controladas por los Estados Miembros, para ayudar a los países a lograr los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS).

El Perú respalda los principios, así como las nuevas estructuras adicionales de colaboración con el sector privado, particularmente en materia de innovación, intercambio y difusión de datos, y apoyo al financiamiento y a la inversión.

Concordamos con los pilares rectores de la Estrategia a través de la vinculación proactiva con el sector privado, empleando como mecanismos de apoyo: el portal 'Connect' y el grupo asesor informal; así como el apoyo transparente y ágil para el establecimiento de las asociaciones y, asimismo, el mantenimiento de la colaboración, cuantificando y midiendo sus repercusiones y ampliándolas. No obstante, nos permitimos sugerir la incorporación de un cuarto pilar relacionado a catalizar los esfuerzos, así como los resultados exitosos, extrapolando su alcance local, nacional, regional e internacional.

Como refiere el documento, son necesarios un conjunto amplio de instrumentos normativos y operacionales claros, sobre aspectos de gestión de asociaciones, facilitación, evaluación de riesgos y la diligencia debida. En ese sentido, resultará conveniente que la Estrategia precise los enfoques, mecanismos y procedimientos para el establecimiento de las asociaciones y/o acuerdos; el marco actualizado de diligencia debida, así como los medios adecuados para la determinación y gestión de riesgos.

Respaldamos los criterios de exclusión propuestos, que hacen referencia a las prácticas que se consideran intrínsecamente incompatibles con los valores de las Naciones Unidas, sus tratados y otras normas internacionales. No obstante, sería conveniente que se precisen también aquellas categorías

que están más vinculadas a otras preocupaciones cercanas a la propia labor de nuestra Organización, como, por ejemplo, la tala y la pesca ilegales.

Finalmente, respecto a las funciones y responsabilidades, concordamos que la División de Movilización de Recursos y Asociaciones con el Sector Privado se encargue de la supervisión operacional y preste apoyo en la aplicación de la Estrategia. Sin embargo, nos gustaría tener más claridad respecto a la responsabilidad de la diligencia debida en las asociaciones con el sector privado, debido a que se estaría encargando esta función a la División de Apoyo a los Proyectos y no a la División de Asociaciones y Colaboración de las Naciones Unidas.

Con estos comentarios, el Perú considera adecuada la aprobación de la nueva Estrategia, contando con las seguridades otorgadas por la administración y ofrecidas en los debates sostenidos en este órgano, sobre el carácter dinámico del documento y del seguimiento cercano de los Estados Miembros durante su implementación.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

We welcome FAO's initiative to strengthen and enhance the working relationship with the private sector and agriculture, forestry and the fishing industry and of course systems supported by the many private sectors. FAO's cooperation with the private sector is required to reform the agricultural, forestry, and the fishing industry, and the food systems to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG's). We support the effort for this.

In particular, the private sector consistently grasped the changes happening in each side and responds to the needs very swiftly too. Therefore, we would like to request more effective activities from international organizations by utilizing and benefiting from the knowledge, experience and expertise from the private sector.

When it comes to the collaboration with the private sector, however, appropriate governance controls should be carried out so as not to impair the value of FAO and the neutral international Organization, especially when working with a private company. It is necessary to endure a transparent process so that the particular companies are not engaged in an arbitrary way in accessing all the data and digital technology that will create change to the system. It is necessary to promote the right use of the data and protect the necessary rights and work on the concept of reliable and free data distribution. Data free for all with trust.

In addition, in order to enhance the effectiveness of the cooperation with the private sector, it is important to take a look at appropriate protection of intellectual property. I would like to point out the importance of bringing about a way by which all the relevant parties and stakeholders will be benefiting by creating more added value through adequate protection of the intellectual property rather than being stuck in a conventional and elaborate debate on either the protection of intellectual property or the lines of the farmer should be prioritized to the other.

We request regular reporting in order to examine the way the appropriate cooperations and the governance controls are being carried out. As for the United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021 and the Nutrition for Growth Summit that will be hosted by Japan next year, we hope that FAO's activities will further enhance the cooperation with the private sector.

Having said all this, again I reiterate that Japan will be welcoming FAO's efforts to strengthen the relationship and the cooperation with the private sector.

Ms Yael RUBINSTEIN (Israel)

We are pleased to be here today and extend our gratitude to Deputy Director-General Ms Beth Bechdol. COVID-19 has immensely disrupted our progress towards the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)s. Today, more than ever, we need to come together to find concrete, gamechanging solutions, and in this framework, the involvement of the private sector is of essence.

We feel we are still lacking concrete guidance regarding the private sector, namely measurable goals and targets for their involvement and contributions. How would we measure success or failure and accordingly adjust?

On page 7, paragraph 16, it is mentioned that FAO Private Sector Engagement will bring, and I quote, “measurable, sustainable impact and benefits”. We cannot help but ask, what is the definition of success and what are the parameters of its measurements?

We also would like to encourage including academia and research institutions under the new Strategy, even though they are not traditionally a part of the private sector since they are, in fact, an integral part of this ecosystem.

Two final remarks for recommendation. First, it is essential to have a Private Sector Strategy that represents all private sectors, in all countries around the world. The Strategy cannot focus on a specific number of countries, all FAO Members should benefit from it. The Private Sector Strategy should campaign to raise the private sector awareness, not only for the global needs, but for the action taken here in the Rome-based organizations and lead them. This could act as an incentive to collaborate with FAO.

Second, each national mission knows its private sector the best and has the capacity to find the right people and companies and bring them on board to work with FAO. Obviously, there is an economic department in each embassy working closely with the domestic private sector. We should use this resource as a direct line of communication and partnership connecting it to FAO.

With these comments, Israel supports the private sector strategy.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States.

In light of the 2030 Agenda and the wide set of global challenges before us, it is of utmost importance for FAO to have a strategy for private sector engagement which is more fit for purpose.

We welcome, as others, the inclusive process undertaken by FAO to develop the new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement and appreciate the responsiveness of FAO Management to Members’ concerns and suggestions. We urge Management to continue applying this method of work.

We appreciate the deliberations held with the private sector to ensure the mutual benefit of partnerships. We also welcome the wide definition of private sector entities, providing flexibility to seek partnerships where there is the most value added, and we also appreciate the special attention given to women and youth.

The EU and its Member States agree with the vision and principles of engagement set out in the background document and in Information Note 2. We in particular appreciate the following reassurances and commitments received from FAO Management. There will be enough competence within the Organization to handle partnerships in a professional, timely and highly qualitative manner. There will be full transparency, including on existing partnerships, and regular reporting, evaluation and follow-up - also on key performance indicators. If necessary, the implementation of the Strategy will be adjusted. All efforts will be made to avoid additional budgetary implications and the governing bodies will be consulted on the results on the cost-benefit analysis; and the Strategy will be fully aligned with the UN Global Compact and related documents, as referred to in *UN General Assembly Resolution 73/254 of 20 December 2018*, to meet risks of engagement and adhere to a set of exclusion criteria which will be applied when considering partnerships. Furthermore, we would highlight the need for partnerships with the private sector to be fully in line with the UN values of integrity, neutrality and independence. In this regard, the 'Connect Portal' will be a useful instrument for ensuring transparency. We would welcome this portal becoming operational as soon as possible.

When implementing the new Strategy, it is indeed very important to ensure continued close involvement of the FAO Membership. Furthermore, the design and implementation of field projects with private sector involvement will require due consultation with local communities and representatives of beneficiary groups. In addition, where there are plans for interaction with companies that might present significant risks, we urge Management to be very cautious. In such cases, Management should present a thorough analysis to the relevant Governing Bodies.

Furthermore, we fully support the proposal of the Joint Meeting that FAO should encourage private sector partners to consider adopting the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) policy instruments.

Adopting CFS policy instruments should be included in the due diligence process. We would very much welcome regular updates on the number of partnerships where CFS policy instruments have been adopted.

The EU and its Member States are looking forward to FAO's review and impact assessments of current partnerships, as requested by the Joint Meeting, and any conclusions and proposed actions that this review might bring.

Based on the roadmap and the reassurances and commitments provided by FAO Management in Information Note 2, the EU and its Member States are ready to endorse the new *FAO Strategy for Private Sector Engagement 2021-2025*, on the understanding that our comments will be duly taken into account and that *Information Note 2* will be considered to be an integral part of the Strategy. We stand ready to continue a close dialogue with Management on its implementation and evaluation.

Sra. Patricia RODRIGUEZ (República Dominicana)

Como indicó el Director General esta mañana en su discurso de introducción —que incluyó una rendición de cuentas de los logros alcanzados en su primer año de gestión y también mostró su visión para el porvenir— el doctor Qu Dongyu expresó que la colaboración con el sector privado es de importancia crucial para la FAO estar en mejores condiciones de cumplir su mandato.

En un marco presupuestario de crecimiento cero, la experiencia del sector privado en la movilización de recursos es vital. El más cercano involucramiento del sector privado se construye sobre bases bien conocidas, incluyendo la experiencia revolucionaria de 2009, cuando la reforma del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial abrió las puertas a un Mecanismo del Sector Privado.

Entendemos que este será un documento vivo, que continuará incorporando elementos para armonizarlo con las estructuras de la Organización, tales como el nuevo Marco estratégico y el Plan a plazo medio.

Hace cinco semanas, los Ministros reunidos en la trigésima sexta Conferencia Regional para América Latina y el Caribe acordaron resaltar la importancia de que la FAO continúe colaborando con el sector privado para lograr una alimentación saludable y sistemas alimentarios sostenibles, con énfasis en la inversión, la innovación y la transferencia de conocimientos.

Deseamos subrayar que, como acordaron los Ministros de nuestra región, cito, “se estipulen disposiciones para evitar conflictos de interés y para proteger a la FAO contra toda influencia indebida, en particular en los procesos referentes a la formulación y aplicación de políticas, normas y reglamentaciones, en particular con respecto a las contribuciones financieras o en especie de entidades del sector privado”, termina la cita.

Siempre es saludable recordar que la autoridad para tomar decisiones en la FAO, como organización intergubernamental creada en el marco de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas, es provincia exclusiva de los Estados miembros.

También es saludable recordar que en el sector privado hay grandes empresas multinacionales y, también, pequeñas y medianas empresas nacionales y locales, así como pequeños agricultores familiares y las asociaciones y cooperativas en las que éstos se integran.

Con estos comentarios, República Dominicana aprueba la Estrategia de la FAO para la colaboración con el sector privado.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

Australia welcomes the highly consultative development of the FAO's Private Sector Strategy which recognises the vital role private sector investment in agriculture plays in improving farmers' access to agricultural inputs and diversifying access and products. We appreciate that private sector engagement is crucial for the inclusive integration of smallholders and family farms into value chains, and the important contribution to overall poverty alleviation and food security. With 2030 looming upon us, getting a comprehensive and facilitative strategy which is grounded in sound governance is not only timely, but urgent. Within this context we wish to extend our gratitude to Deputy Director-General Ms

Beth Bechdol and her team for their efforts, in particular in the responsiveness to concerns raised by Members.

Australia takes this opportunity to offer the following three comments. Firstly, we welcome the inclusion of information on fit-for-purpose due diligence to assessing and managing risk, and we emphasise the importance of probity considerations in guiding FAOs relationships with the private sector. We also appreciate that careful balance is required in order to ensure the adequate management of risk against the introduction of prohibitive engagement processes, an area of key criticism and weakness of the FAO approach to partnerships of the past.

Secondly, we appreciate the inclusion of a monitoring and engagement process on engagement and outcomes. We consider that we should always remember that lessons can always be learned, and successful partnership models can be scaled accordingly.

Thirdly, we welcome the inclusion of regional and country offices in the development of this plan noting that it is at this level where all of the action is likely to occur. In this regard, we support the need for tailored action plans in recognition of the different needs of regions and countries to meet the common goal.

With this and noting the information contained within *Information Note 2*, Australia is happy to endorse *FAO's Strategy for Private Sector Engagement 2021-2025*. In recognising the living nature of this document, we also flag our continued interest in working with FAO Management on any future modifications, including through our participation in the Governing Bodies such as the Finance Committee.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Brazil thanks the Secretariat for the presentation on the new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement, as well as for the Information Notes. We welcome the inclusion of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and development investors as priority constituencies and support the focus on prospecting private sector partnerships on the framework of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, as well as the promotion of global instruments such as the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems.

Brazil welcomes the acknowledgment that this is a 'living' strategy and the willingness of the Management to incorporate comments and suggestions by Members. In this regard, we thank the Secretariat for the clarifications provided on the elaboration of the due diligence framework and risk management in order to avoid conflicts of interest. We request that the steps for its elaboration and review by Governing Bodies be reflected in the report of this Session.

Unfortunately, despite having repeatedly expressed our concerns on mechanisms to protect FAO's work on policies, norms and standard setting, we still have not received any clear or specific manifestation of the Secretariat in this respect.

Since the 163rd Session of the FAO Council, Brazil has requested that the new Strategy establishes a clear restriction on the use of financial and in-kind contributions from private sector entities to FAO's normative work. The World Health Organization (WHO) Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors (FENSA), adopted in 2016, is a good example in this regard, as it has a clear restriction to private sector engagement in WHO's standards setting work. In the view of the creation of the FAO/WHO Centre and considering the existing FAO/WHO scientific advice programme to CODEX Alimentarius, we would like to caution against the possibility of lack of consistency in having different criteria on this crucial area for FAO's neutrality, independence and reputation. Therefore, we ask the Secretariat, again, to provide a clear explanation on how these contradictions shall be addressed. Receiving further clarifications in this respect would be very much appreciated.

We would also like to thank the Dominican Republic for reminding the Council of the decision taken in the Regional Conference regarding this aspect.

Finally, as stated in the Outline of the Strategic Framework, "FAO's normative work is a major comparative strength of FAO as a UN specialized agency". We would add that it should be protected

from any undue influence or conflict of interest, so as to ensure there is no interference in FAO's advisory function to Member States.

Ms Marija MILIVOJEVIC (Sweden)

I deliver this statement on behalf of the Nordic Countries - Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and my own country Sweden. The European Union (EU) Member States, Denmark, Finland and Sweden, align themselves with the EU statement.

The Nordic Countries underline the need for increased efforts to meet the global challenges and reach the Sustainable Development Goals. This means that all stakeholders need to be engaged and encouraged to do their part. FAO should use all available knowledge and experience to accelerate its work towards achieving Agenda 2030.

We therefore welcome a new take on private sector engagement. The Strategy seeks to broaden FAO's collaborations and to make them more pertinent and effective. We support this approach in general. The Nordic Countries underline that FAO partnerships with the private sector need to be fully in line with the integrity, neutrality and independence of the UN and its values, including the UN Global Compact and related documents.

We welcome the diversity of private sector entities in the Strategy. We would like to highlight the micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, including start-ups, which have the flexibility and potential to implement smart innovations and solutions. In this respect the enterprises of women and youth deserve a special attention.

We appreciate the inclusive process and multiple occasions for discussion and input that FAO has offered. We look forward to continuing working in this consultative manner to ensure buy-in and collective ownership of important policies throughout FAO and its Membership. The Nordic Countries request FAO Management to be fully transparent and provide regular reporting, evaluation and follow-up - also on key performance indicators - on the outputs of the Strategy.

We recognize that one of the most important components for good collaboration with the private sector is experienced staff. There needs to be enough competence within the organization to handle partnerships in a professional, timely and highly qualitative manner. We particularly appreciate that FAO has noted this in the Strategy.

Now speaking briefly as Sweden, I would like to inform the Council and FAO that we will do our part to contribute to this regard by seconding a senior partnership officer specifically for partnerships with the private sector to the partnership division of FAO.

Sra. Rebeca CUTIÉ CANCINO (Cuba)

Concedemos alta prioridad al trabajo de la FAO en los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) 1 y 2, también comprendemos la necesidad de abordar el trabajo en otros ODS, como el ODS 17 y sus metas referidas a las asociaciones y a la diversificación de fuentes de recursos. A la vez, reafirmamos la necesidad de que se cumplan los compromisos de la asistencia oficial al desarrollo.

La estrategia de la FAO con el sector privado debe garantizar una colaboración eficaz, transparente, al tiempo que se respeten los principios de neutralidad, imparcialidad, integridad e inclusividad. También deberá velar por la selectividad de los asociados, evitar los conflictos de interés en respeto a los valores de la FAO y del sistema de Naciones Unidas en su conjunto. Proponemos estudiar más a fondo la experiencia de la alianza de la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS) con el sector privado; en particular, las lecciones aprendidas y avances de la estrategia mundial sobre el régimen alimentario, actividad física, salud e industria alimentaria.

En esta estrategia, la transferencia de tecnología avanzada y de conocimientos es fundamental. Es necesario que la colaboración de la FAO con el sector privado permita a los diferentes actores de este sector dar su contribución en la búsqueda de soluciones viables a los problemas globales de la pobreza, el hambre, el cambio climático y las desigualdades. También debe esta colaboración impulsar patrones de producción y consumos sostenibles.

Vemos con agrado la afirmación en el documento de que las actividades de asociación estarán armonizadas con las prioridades nacionales y con los Objetivos Estratégicos de la FAO. Igualmente, la estrategia estará plenamente armonizada con el nuevo marco estratégico cuando se apruebe en la Conferencia de la FAO en julio de 2021.

Apoyamos que la FAO presente a los Miembros un informe anual sobre la aplicación de esta estrategia, así como los acuerdos contraídos. Consideramos de importancia clave que la FAO preserve el carácter intergubernamental en la toma de decisiones de la Organización, así como el respeto a la legislación nacional de los miembros y que garantice los tres ejes del desarrollo sostenible en sus programas y asociaciones.

Mme Maria de Fátima JARDIM (Angola)

L'Angola et Cabo Verde interviennent au nom du Groupe régional africain. Monsieur le Président, c'est un honneur pour moi de présenter au nom du Groupe africain des considérations sur les stratégies du secteur privé 2022-2025.

En Afrique, la production agricole appartient en grande partie au secteur privé, qui est constitué, pour l'essentiel, d'une agriculture familiale. Le secteur privé pourra se développer avec des investissements couvrant les infrastructures et améliorant l'organisation au niveau des machines. Différents engagements doivent être pris, de la formation à l'innovation, en passant par un plus grand soutien au secteur privé, ainsi qu'à l'accès aux institutions financières, afin de tirer parti du développement et de l'Organisation, avec un impact qui se traduira par la création d'emplois et l'amélioration des conditions de vie des agriculteurs et des familles rurales.

Nous tenons à saluer les efforts consentis pour mettre à jour cette Stratégie, compte tenu de l'évolution des événements, notamment le Covid, le changement climatique, qui ont incité à adapter la Stratégie au Programme de développement durable. L'application de cette Stratégie pour l'Afrique doit tenir compte de la vision de l'Union africaine, ainsi que de son Agenda 2063 et de la déclaration de Malabo, déclaration ministérielle conjointe sur l'impact du Covid sur la sécurité alimentaire et la nutrition en Afrique.

Les stratégies régionales doivent prendre en compte les spécificités des pays, respecter la législation et les priorités nationales, faire l'objet d'un accord préalable des gouvernements et sauvegarder les intérêts du secteur privé issu des grandes, moyennes et petites entreprises, vu dans nos champs et aux côtés de nos agricultures familiales. Les synergies doivent être mises à profit, de même que le savoir-faire, l'accès aux marchés et aux capitaux, la capacité à innover et à former à tous les niveaux, pour le bénéfice de tous, et en particulier des petits agriculteurs, des communautés rurales locales et des plus pauvres, des associations et des coopératives, en vue d'atteindre les objectifs de développement durable.

Il est nécessaire d'impliquer les communautés scientifiques des différentes régions, car elles seules seront aujourd'hui sensibles aux préoccupations majeures de la communauté internationale concernant l'effet de serre, la réduction de consommation de l'eau, l'énergie, les engrais, la lutte contre les ravageurs et autres, et pourront trouver les meilleures solutions pour parvenir à une agriculture plus rationnelle avec moins de dépenses.

Le transfert des connaissances entre certains pays des différentes régions est essentiel. Nous pensons que la Stratégie proposée comprend une vision claire et qu'il est important de recourir à des innovations transformatrices afin que personne ne soit laissé pour compte, grâce à des systèmes alimentaires durables, inclusifs et résilients, comme indiqué dans le document.

Le principe défini mérite notre accord, en particulier sur la contribution aux objectifs de développement durable et le respect des valeurs de la FAO et des Nations Unies.

La Stratégie n'étant pas un document définitif, le Groupe africain juge pertinent de préparer des rapports annuels sur sa mise en œuvre et d'évaluer périodiquement son application. Cela permettra de prévenir les risques éventuels, ceux liés notamment aux conflits d'intérêts et à la réputation de la FAO, et de prendre toute mesure corrective afin que les objectifs attendus de cette Stratégie soient atteints.

Il sera important de définir certains indicateurs clés pour un suivi de la Stratégie, qui devra faire partie du Cadre stratégique de la FAO pour 2021-2025.

En ce qui concerne le financement de la nouvelle Stratégie, nous pensons qu'il devrait être soutenu par des exercices extrabudgétaires de la FAO.

Nous espérons que la FAO garantira le multilinguisme au niveau du Portail et des réunions des groupes consultatifs pour assurer une plus grande transparence et une plus grande inclusion.

Le Groupe africain, se joignant au consensus, approuve la Stratégie de la FAO sur la collaboration avec le secteur privé, tout en demandant que la spécificité de notre région et les commentaires ci-dessus soient pris en considération lors de la mise en œuvre de cette Stratégie.

Nous voudrions encourager le Directeur général à continuer le dialogue, les réformes et les initiatives parce que l'Afrique soutient la transformation agricole pour une vie meilleure.

Mr Kip TOM (United States of America)

The United States of America reiterates its appreciation for the inclusive and transparent process that led to the updated completion of the Private Sector Strategy, and we look forward to its implementation. The new Strategy places a greater focus on the realities on the ground and will ultimately allow FAO to expand around the partnership opportunities to address long-standing challenges faced by all agriculture producers in developing countries.

We also appreciate the Strategy's focus on the beneficiaries by ensuring more successful partnerships whose ultimate goal is to identify the most appropriate and innovative solutions to solve the most urgent challenges on the ground. We appreciate the Strategy includes a broad definition of FAO's private sector partners and includes a focus on large, as well as small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

We believe for it to be successful and strategic; FAO's partnership should include both small- and large-scale actors. We echo the comments of the Ambassador of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, regarding the conclusion of the joint meeting and that is on the need for the strategy to align with United Nations Member States agreed principles, such as those on the United Nations Global Compact.

We would like to see this chart change reference in the published version of the strategy particularly in paragraphs 20, 49 and 52 (c). With this clarification we are delighted to endorse the Strategy.

In conclusion we applaud FAO's responsiveness to Members in developing this Strategy, which we believe will greatly amplify FAO's ability to improve food security, especially among the most vulnerable. It is long overdue, and we cannot wait another day or to another Council.

There are hungry people round the world counting on each of us in this conversation today. The United States of America is committed to the private sector strategy to improving lives and livelihoods.

Sra. Mónica ROBELO RAFFONE (Nicaragua)

Mi delegación agradece a la Secretaría la presentación del documento sobre la nueva Estrategia de la FAO para la colaboración con el sector privado (2021-25) y las notas informativas complementarias, por el amplio proceso de consultas realizadas con los diferentes grupos regionales y otras partes interesadas.

Reconocemos la pertinencia y la importancia de ampliar el diálogo y las esferas de colaboración con el sector privado más aún en el contexto actual que nos requiere sumar esfuerzos para cumplir con los objetivos y metas fijados por la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible, siendo un vehículo para alcanzar los desafíos que se plantean para el futuro.

Consideramos que estas colaboraciones deberán priorizar aquellas alianzas estratégicas en grado de conjugar las mejores experiencias, pericias técnicas de asesoramiento y complementarlas con el amplio bagaje de conocimiento y experiencias en el terreno acumulado por FAO, centrándose en los objetivos y prioridades determinadas por cada país en tema de desarrollo.

Enfatizamos la importancia de que la nueva estrategia de FAO con el sector privado sea desarrollada de modo transparente sobre la base de los principios jurídicos generales y el marco institucional conforme a los Textos fundamentales, ajustándose estrechamente a las políticas y valores del sistema de Naciones Unidas.

Coincidimos en la modificación del nombre de la esfera prioritaria de asociación en promoción y desarrollo rural y la erradicación de la pobreza rural, orientando mayores esfuerzos en beneficio de los pequeños y medianos productores rurales, incluidos los campesinos de subsistencias, quienes desempeñan un rol clave en la producción de alimentos nutritivos y saludables.

Las colaboraciones tendrán que cubrir, además, una alta gama de esferas prioritarias para los Miembros que pasan por el desarrollo de capacidades técnicas, el uso y aplicación de las nuevas tecnologías. En especial, se deberá considerar el fortalecimiento de las Oficinas Regionales, subregionales y oficinas de país para que los Estados Miembros podamos acceder directamente de los beneficios de las asociaciones con las partes interesadas.

Para finalizar, instamos a FAO a realizar y presentar oportunamente evaluaciones de los resultados de las posibles colaboraciones con el propósito de mejorar y perfeccionar la estrategia. De igual forma, invitamos a garantizar la participación activa de los Estados Miembros en el proceso de implementación y en la toma de decisiones siendo la estrategia un documento vivo y abierto a futuras recomendaciones.

Con estos comentarios, mi delegación aprueba la nueva estrategia de la FAO para la colaboración con el sector privado.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

Italy aligns itself with the EU statement, and I would like to add some comments.

We recognize all the Management's efforts, and in particular the crucial role played by the Deputy Director-General Ms Beth Bechdol, to provide additional information, as requested at the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committee through two *Information Notes*.

In this respect, we would like to express our endorsement to the Private Sector Strategy. We are aware that it includes a section on a broad involvement and engagement from private sector entities, from small to bigger ones, and we point out that this would be also reflected in the informal Private Sector Advisory Group.

We are confident that the engagement with small private entities on the ground is important for the successful implementation of the Strategy and we appreciate the path taken by FAO and Ms Bechdol towards this direction.

We also appreciate the work together on the Food Coalition, a strategy promoted by Italy since the very beginning of the pandemic to mitigate the effects of the crisis caused by the COVID-19 and to ensure access to food for all.

In this context, we invite FAO to work on a wide and broad vision, open to all, for the Food Coalition (for FAO members, small and bigger private entities, civil society, academia) based on a transparent process of screening and due diligence.

We strongly believe that no matter big or small, all actors can play a critical role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is a wakeup call for all of us to act.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

Egypt aligns itself with the statement delivered by Ambassador of Angola on behalf of the African Regional Group and this statement will be delivered by Kuwait on behalf of the Near East Group.

We would like to add the following comments.

Egypt appreciates the extensive and inclusive process to develop the Strategy in order to bring country-owned and country-led innovative solutions through the longstanding challenges in order to help FAO Members achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We welcome also the two Information Notes provided prior to the Council to respond to the requests of the Joint Meeting of the Finance and Programme Committees, which provides us with a clear roadmap and a timeframe to incorporate Members' comments in the document.

Egypt requests FAO Management to continue its diligence mechanisms, to manage any risks and to avoid any conflict of interest with the private sector while protecting FAO's neutrality, impartiality, integrity and reputation and as well as ensuring adherence to the values of FAO and United Nations systems, including the United Nations Global Compact.

Egypt underlines that the private sector partnership should be implemented to support the national priorities of the Members and with close coordination with the governments. We underline the need that the new strategy should give high emphasis on engagement with a balanced, broad and geographically diverse range of private sector actors, including national private sector.

Egypt echoes other Members' comments by emphasizing the need to receive regular reports on the implementation of the Strategy and to guarantee the engagement of the Members in the follow-up mechanisms and to maintain a balanced and equal representation of all the regions in the Membership of the informal Private Sector Advisory.

With these comments, Egypt endorses the new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement 2021-2025.

CHAIRPERSON

We have reached the end of our morning Session.

We adjourn for lunch, and we shall reconvene at 14:30 hours sharp. The meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 12:34 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 34

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.34

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-Fifth Session Cent soixante-cinquième session 165.º período de sesiones
Virtual Meeting, 30 November - 4 December 2020 Réunion Virtuelle, 30 novembre - 4 décembre 2020 Reunión Virtual, 30 de noviembre - 4 de diciembre de 2020
FOURTH PLENARY SESSION QUATRIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE CUARTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
1 December 2020

The Fourth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14:29 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La quatrième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 29
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la cuarta sesión plenaria a las 14.29
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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Item 4. FAO's new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement (*continued*)**Point 4. Nouvelle stratégie de la FAO relative à la participation du secteur privé (*suite*)****Tema 4. Nueva estrategia de la FAO para la colaboración con el sector privado (*continuación*)**
(CL 165/4)**CHAIRPERSON**

We can commence with our afternoon Session. I have got on my list six Members who asked for the floor, and then there are about five Observers. I will give the floor to Costa Rica.

Sr. Federico ZAMORA CORDERO (Costa Rica)

Costa Rica recibe con beneplácito la propuesta de la Estrategia de la FAO para la colaboración con el sector privado durante el período 2021-25 y desea respaldar lo planteado por algunos de mis colegas que me han precedido sobre la importancia de que el documento se mantenga como una herramienta viva para guiar la intervención entre la FAO y los distintos actores del sector privado, permitiendo a la Organización adoptar no solo las lecciones aprendidas por otras agencias del sistema de las Naciones Unidas sino adaptar sus propias experiencias al proceso de evolución en el marco de la colaboración con el sector privado.

Es de particular agrado para Costa Rica la importancia que da esta estrategia a la colaboración con las Micro, Pequeña y Mediana Empresas (MIPYMES) agroalimentarias y rurales no agrícolas, incluidas las nuevas empresas. Entidades que desempeñan un papel crucial en la consecución de la seguridad alimentaria y la erradicación de la pobreza.

El potencial de esta estrategia para promover la cooperación técnica y la difusión de los conocimientos y la investigación es muy amplio y mi país recibe con agrado la intención de la FAO de regular en forma más concreta estos elementos de interacción con otros aliados en la lucha por no dejar a nadie atrás, en el esfuerzo por alcanzar los objetivos de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible.

Con estos breves comentarios, Costa Rica aprueba el documento sobre la nueva Estrategia de la FAO para la colaboración con el sector privado (2021-25).

CHAIRPERSON

Perhaps I should inform you that I am following the list which was the list of requests before we adjourned for lunch.

Ms Ratchanok SANGPENCHAN (Thailand)

Thailand aligns itself with the regional statement delivered by India on behalf of the Asia Group in appreciating the FAO Secretariat and Deputy Director-General Beth Bechdol for preparing the comprehensive document and presentation on this Item.

We appreciate the efforts of FAO in promoting the inclusive process and consultation among Members to develop the new vision, aiming at delivering meaningful impacts towards the achievement of 2030 Agenda. Thailand welcomes FAO's new Strategy and would like to share our view in building partnerships with private sector.

We recommend maximum transparency and prudent monitoring of private sector partnerships to avoid potential conflicts of interest and risks of losses of reputation, neutrality and independence of the Organization.

We look forward to the future submission of FAO's business model to clarify how and where new private sector resources will be mobilized.

We would like to suggest FAO to incorporate compliance with Committee on World Food Security (CFS) agreed policy products, such as the 'Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems', into FAO's new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement.

Lastly, we recall the importance of engaging with a balanced, broad and diverse range of private sector actors, particularly with micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, to foster grass-root level

development. We need to take into consideration the concerns and interests of small-scale farmers and vulnerable groups as a priority.

With this statement, Thailand endorses the FAO Strategy for Private Sector Engagement.

Ms Agustina SETA RUKMALASARI (Indonesia)

Indonesia aligns itself with the statement made by India on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

Indonesia notes with appreciation the comprehensive FAO's new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement for 2021-2025, which resulted through an inclusive process of consultation with Members and the private sector entities.

It is a positive effort to support the proposed Medium Term Plan and beyond within the context of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022 –2031.

In principle, aligned with our National Development Strategy and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2021-2025, we support FAO's vision to increase alignment and expand more transformative partnership with the private sector.

We share the same view regarding the important role that the private sector has played in supporting global efforts to enhance agriculture and food systems, particularly through innovative solutions, technology transfers, and investment.

We welcome priority partnership areas, as elaborated in point 30, and support six additional modalities of engagement to the current structures, as we believe it will provide more flexible partnership arrangements and enhance operational transformation.

We take note reporting, monitoring, and evaluation mechanisms as part of the Strategy and encourage FAO to regularly provide an update to Members on the implementation progress and its contribution to FAO Strategic Framework.

With these few comments, Indonesia supports endorsement of the document and wishes to see the Strategy ingrained into the Strategic Framework.

Ms Jeehan ALESTAD (Kuwait) (Original Language Arabic)

The State of Kuwait has the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Near East Regional Group. While the Near East Regional Group commends the great effort to produce this comprehensive document, owing primarily to intensive consultations with its members through Regional Groups and members of the Programme Committee.

In view of the recommendations that emanated from those consultations, the Near East Regional Group would like to make some brief observations to support the implementation of this Strategy towards a constructive and effective partnership with the private sector for the period 2021-2025.

However, before we make our comments below, we should like to commend FAO's new vision on establishing partnerships with the private sector in line with the principles of cooperation within the United Nations for the full realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the world and paying due respect to FAO's Constitution and its Members.

The Near East Group stresses the importance of transparency in every aspect of the strategic plan, including the continuous reporting to Members on all developments and on a regular basis.

The Group also emphasizes the balance and equitable participation of all regions in this plan, without exceptions, regardless of the size of the required investment.

It is expected that regional, sub-regional and local offices of the Organization will play their role in influencing the course of implementation of the proposed Strategic Plan. Therefore, this issue must be taken into consideration by tightening oversight and accountability in the implementation of the proposed plan in the aforementioned offices.

The eventual additional cost implications should be taken into account if this Strategy is to be implemented effectively.

With these brief observations, the Near East Regional Group concludes its statements, wishing the Organization further progress in its partnership with the private sector under the current COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

Ms Lieselot GERMONPREZ (Belgium)

Belgium is fully in line with the statement previously delivered by Germany on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its Member States.

We appreciate the inclusive process undertaken by FAO to develop this Strategy and the fact that the proposed Strategy is a living document.

We welcome the FAO commitment that there will be full transparency, including on existing partnerships, and regular reporting, evaluation and follow-up, also on key performance indicators.

We urge FAO Management to present a thorough analysis to the relevant Bodies, when considering interactions with companies that might present significant risks.

Following up on our statement made yesterday on Item 3, where Belgium emphasized the role of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in the new Strategic Framework, also under this Agenda Item Belgium expresses its full support for the proposal of the Joint Meeting that FAO should encourage private sector partners to consider adopting CFS policy instruments and it should be included in the due diligence process.

To conclude, Belgium appreciates the special attention given to women and youth.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

En lo relativo a la Estrategia de FAO para la colaboración con el sector privado 2021-2025 quisiéramos destacar lo siguiente: En primo luagr, manifestar nuestro total apoyo a la intervención de la UE y sus EEMM.

Agradecemos a FAO el trabajo realizado para redactar el documento de base de la Estrategia, así como el formato participativo empleado, reconociendo la inclusión de las aportaciones efectuadas por los Miembros en aras del enriquecimiento y perfeccionamiento del texto y por consiguiente de su efectividad en la consecución de sus objetivos.

Enfatizamos la necesidad, ante la magnitud de los retos actuales a los que debemos enfrentarnos en un contexto de intensa globalización, de que las organizaciones con competencias en la Gobernanza mundial, como FAO, cuenten con la imprescindible perspectiva del sector privado, así como la de la Sociedad Civil, que contribuya a dar una respuesta holística y más eficaz a los citados retos.

Destacamos la notabilísima contribución del sector privado a la generación de riqueza, empleo y desarrollo socioeconómico a través de su colaboración institucional.

Recordamos la necesidad de asegurarnos que, en el marco de esta estrategia de colaboración público-privada, el sector privado respete íntegramente los principios y valores de Naciones Unidas y tenga en cuenta la adopción de las directrices y recomendaciones políticas del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial, al tiempo que se actúe con la debida transparencia y se fomente especialmente la integración sociolaboral de las comunidades y personas más vulnerables en el marco de su colaboración institucional, y de modo particular a las mujeres y los jóvenes del medio rural en todo el mundo.

Instamos a FAO a que, en el marco de esta colaboración público-privada, garantice la justa participación de las empresas de mediano y pequeño tamaño, las microempresas y aquellas empresas radicadas en el medio rural en condiciones de igualdad con las empresas de mayor tamaño y capacidad, como mecanismo de fijación más directa del beneficio socioeconómico en el territorio. Incidimos en la necesidad de que la Administración de la FAO presente un análisis exhaustivo a los órganos pertinentes, en aquellos casos en los que se consideren interacciones con empresas que puedan comprometer los principios de la Organización; revisando, incluso, cuando sea necesario la implementación de la Estrategia.

Con estas observaciones, España respalda la nueva Estrategia de colaboración con el sector privado 2021-2025, esperando que nuestros comentarios serán debidamente tenidos en cuenta y que la Nota Informativa 2 se considere parte integral de la Estrategia, al tiempo que mostramos nuestra disposición a continuar un estrecho diálogo con la FAO sobre su aplicación.

Ms Mietani CHAUKE (Zimbabwe)

Zimbabwe associates itself with the statement delivered by Angola on behalf of the Africa Regional Group.

Zimbabwe welcomes FAO's new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement. It is a timely intervention for closing financing in our question for agricultural transformation. We also appreciate the fact that the document is a living document and can be adapted accordingly.

This initiative comes at a time when the Government of Zimbabwe is actively pursuing a programme entitled *The Agriculture and Food Systems Transformation Strategy*, a strategy which is underpinned by the necessity to revitalize the country's agricultural sector in a holistic manner, taking into account emerging challenges, the need for sustainability, resilience and the economic empowerment of small-scale and family farmers. The strategy is also being supported by the AgrInvest Initiative, which is part of the implementation of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative in Zimbabwe.

The country faces a number of challenges, including drought, COVID-19, which has disrupted agricultural production and the food systems, and a lot of economic challenges. This is unfortunately why the country calls for a commitment to a credible poverty alleviation initiative, which require collaboration with the private sector to address financing and funding gaps. Consequently, the strategy envisages a private sector net agricultural development strategy, which is in line with Africa's Agenda 2063, the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) 's regional development aspirations, as well as FAO's Private Sector Engagement Strategy.

Zimbabwe is of the view that true transformation in the agricultural sector must include the full involvement of women and youth. We have a youthful demographic, comprising of over 60 percent of the population of our 16 million people, and these young people are below the age of 25. A major challenge faced by the youth is access to financing. We see complementarities between Zimbabwe's Agricultural Transformation Strategy and FAO's Private Sector Engagement Strategy, as well as the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, in addressing this need.

In conclusion, Zimbabwe wishes to express its appreciation for and endorses FAO's new Private Sector Engagement strategy.

Mr Hongxing NI (China) (Original Language Chinese)

We agree that the private sector has major advantages in this area and the promotion of high-quality partnerships between the FAO and the private sector will foster the development of these advantages by the private sector around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the mandate of the FAO. The private sector will thus provide additional resources and synergy with FAO and will contribute to the transformation of food systems.

After an extensive and inclusive consultation process, FAO has developed a comprehensive Strategy for Private Sector Engagement, which will guide this action of FAO with the private sector over the next five years. We hope that the Strategy will be improved in accordance with the views expressed during the Joint Meeting and during the current Session of the Council, following their consideration of the Strategy.

The new Strategy has to be strictly consistent with the relevant policies, principles and standards set out by the United Nations. It is extremely important and essential for us to underline this point and we attach great importance to it.

As regards possible risks in FAO's engagement with the private sector, we agree this must be strictly monitored and controlled. The methods for assessing and managing risks set forth in the Strategy need to be implemented in practice and institutional arrangements are necessary for risk management, to ensure that such risks are minimized.

Finally, we encourage FAO to keep Members promptly informed of the latest progress in its engagement with the private sector and to enhance Members' participation and transparency in the implementation of the Strategy.

We support the adoption of the FAO's new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement.

CHAIRPERSON

That completes the list of Members. Now, I will go to the list Observers.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France) (Observateur)

La France s'aligne sur la déclaration de l'Union européenne et de ses 27 États membres. La France reconnaît l'importance des partenariats avec le secteur privé pour renforcer l'efficacité de l'action de la FAO. L'objectif doit être de progresser vers la réalisation des objectifs de développement durable. À ce titre, nous saluons les efforts de la FAO pour améliorer ses partenariats avec le secteur privé, notamment afin de renforcer leur transparence vis-à-vis des États Membres.

Cet effort s'inscrit dans un effort plus général des Nations Unies et doit s'intégrer dans le cadre défini par l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies, tel que développé notamment dans sa résolution 73/254 du 20 décembre 2018. La France rappelle et souhaite souligner l'importance des commentaires des États Membres tels qu'approuvés dans le rapport de la Réunion conjointe du Comité du Programme et du Comité financier. Il est important de les intégrer.

En particulier, la France salue l'engagement de la FAO de prendre en compte les commentaires de cette Réunion conjointe en termes de transparence, de redevabilité et d'inclusivité de l'ensemble des acteurs du secteur privé, notamment des micros, petites et moyennes entreprises, y compris dans le Groupe consultatif informel du secteur privé. J'ajoute que pour l'inclusivité de ces travaux, la question du multilinguisme sera un élément important.

Je souhaite par ailleurs insister sur trois points.

Premièrement, la nécessité d'un alignement complet de la Stratégie avec les principes et critères du Pacte mondial des Nations Unies.

Deuxièmement, l'importance des produits du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale.

Troisièmement, l'importance pour la FAO de limiter au maximum les implications budgétaires de la mise en œuvre de la Stratégie puisque cette Stratégie vise précisément à mobiliser des financements externes supplémentaires pour la FAO, et non pas des dépenses supplémentaires. Cette disposition doit concerner non seulement le Programme de travail et de budget en cours, mais aussi les suivants.

Nous apprécions la nature évolutive que la FAO souhaite conférer à cette Stratégie et nous attendons de la Direction de la FAO qu'elle procède dès après l'adoption du document par le Conseil, aux modifications encore nécessaires pour tenir pleinement compte, et les intégrer, des conclusions de la Réunion conjointe.

En se fondant sur cet engagement de la FAO, la France assure de sa disponibilité et de sa volonté à continuer le dialogue avec la FAO pour la mise en œuvre et l'évaluation de cette Stratégie.

Mr Johannes M. BRAND (Netherlands) (Observer)

The Netherlands aligns itself with the Statement made by Germany on behalf of the European Union (and its 27 Member States).

We believe that it is important for FAO to have an updated Strategy for Private Sector Engagement in the light of the challenges that lie ahead in view of the delivery on Agenda 2030 and from this line also for the Food Systems Summit next year.

We need to mobilize the knowledge and know-how not only from scientific institutions but also from businesses and other private sector partners in support of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Dialogue and partnerships between public and private actors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and knowledge institutions have been at the heart of the Netherlands' success in the agri-food sector, and in that respect, we strongly support the multi-stakeholder approach in FAO's new Strategy.

Especially the private sector plays a dominant role in re-shaping food systems. To make the Summit truly action- and results-oriented, it is therefore key that private companies be actively involved.

From multinationals to micro-enterprises and from input suppliers to retailers: we need a broad range of people with their feet on the ground to help redesign models of food production and consumption.

Equally key is an enabling environment: social acceptability, adequate rules, transparency, regulations and procedures and a level playing field are necessary conditions for companies to contribute to more sustainable food systems.

Ms Teresa TUMWET (Kenya) (Observer)

Kenya aligns with the statement by Angola on behalf of Africa Regional Group on this Item. Kenya appreciates the inclusive consultative process in the development of FAO's Strategy for Private Sector Engagement 2021-2025, which included rich views and recommendations from the Members, private sector and other stakeholders as well as lessons learnt from the FAO 2013 Private Sector Strategy.

Kenya recognizes the role played by the private sector institutions across all the agricultural sectors and as a country, we have put in place enabling environment in recognition of the very vibrant, robust and mature private sector. We also note that the youth are actively engaged in the private sector organizations in all the sectors and in particular agribusiness value chains.

We therefore welcome FAO's Strategy for Private Sector Engagement 2021-2025 and call upon the Organization to actively partner with the local private sector as a bid to build synergy on institutional and human capacity to enhance agriculture production and productivity and eradicate poverty, improve livelihoods for sustainable development.

Mr Victor VASILIEV (Russian Federation) (Observer)

Thank you for conducting this meeting. I believe that today we are discussing private sector engagement and most of the [XX]. My delegation fully supports this approach, and we believe that we shall not establish any dividing lines or any barriers for this cooperation.

We looked carefully at the document that had been prepared by the Secretariat in preparation, including the outcome of the Financial and Programme Committees that substantially discussed their Engagement Strategy. Unfortunately, some of the language that appeared in the last version of the document does not fully align with those discussions.

I am referring to the exclusionary of criteria that had also been part of the Strategy. Some of those exclusionary criteria have nothing or little to do with the mandate or with the [XX] of FAO. Some of those arrangements or agreements did not come into force. Some of them have their own review processes and they are being reviewed on a certain basis and there are some discussions going on those specific Treaties or Conventions or engagements. As we mentioned more than once, we do not want to have the political discussion to be moved to FAO Headquarters.

Many delegations, representing different Regional Groups, including the statement delivered by the distinguished representative from Germany on behalf of the European Union, mentioned or stressed the need to align FAO's Strategy with the overall United Nations Strategy. It was mentioned that we need to observe the principles and the Initiative of the United Nations Global Compact as it was reaffirmed by the United Nations General Assembly *Resolution 73/254* of 20 December 2018. Many delegations spoke that we need to reflect those discussions in the final version of the document, and we are looking forward to receiving the revised version and to support it.

Once again, we want to avoid the situation where we will be more than one time reviewing the documents and of course we need to have a consensus approach on the very crucial and important issue, like the engagement with the private sector.

Sr. Porfino PESTANA DE BARROS (Venezuela, República Bolivariana De) (Observador)

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela reconoce los esfuerzos de la FAO por contribuir al logro de los objetivos de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible. En particular, la importancia de las asociaciones, como indicado en el Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) 17. Asimismo, esperamos que como lo señala el documento examinado, los textos fundamentales, las normas, los

procedimientos y la composición de los órganos rectores de la Organización no se vean afectados por esta estrategia, ni se modifiquen las normas, los procedimientos y la composición actuales de dichos órganos.

Por último, deseamos que los actores involucrados se identifiquen con el mandato y los valores institucionales de la FAO con los esfuerzos mundiales para lograr sistemas alimentarios sostenibles y que tenga en cuenta los derechos de los campesinos, pastores, pescadores en pequeña escala, pueblos indígenas, trabajadores agrícolas y los consumidores de alimentos.

Con estas palabras, expresamos nuestro apoyo a la nueva Estrategia de la FAO para la colaboración con el sector privado (2021-25).

Mr Luís COELHO-SILVA (Portugal) (Observer)

Portugal aligns itself with the statement made by Germany on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

The inclusive process that FAO has undertaken to develop the updated Strategy is welcomed.

We also recognise the need for a new Strategy considering the 2030 Agenda and other global challenges.

We support the proposal of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees that FAO should encourage private sector partners to consider adopting the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) policy instruments.

It is worthwhile to echo the request to FAO Management for giving a thorough analysis to the relevant governing bodies about the interactions with companies whose activities are not consensual in food and agriculture sphere and that can pose reputational risks to the organization as pointed out by several Members.

We understand that the comments we just listening to, made by Members, will be duly considered for future development of the Strategy and that Information Note 2 will be an integral part of the Strategy.

CHAIRPERSON

That concludes my list of speakers. I will now invite the Chairpersons of the Programme and Finance Committees and the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) to make any remarks on the discussions which have taken place.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of the Programme Committee)

Great to be here in the important meeting of the Council. I think the discussion and the intensive discussion we had during the Joint Meeting reflects exactly the same discussion as we have seen now here in the Council. I think all the members of the Joint Committee clearly stated and appreciated the extensive and inclusive consultation process that has been conducted before we were discussing this important issue, the new Strategy for the Private Sector Engagement in the Joint Meeting.

I think all the members of the Joint Meeting very much supported the need for a new Strategy for the Private Sector Engagement. I think the members of the Joint Committee clearly stated the impartiality, the integrity and the reputation as important principles for the FAO in its engagement with the private sector. I said this morning and this afternoon also reflected clear criteria around conditions around due diligence mechanisms to avoid risk and potential conflicts of interest, especially also full alignment of the Strategy with the United Nations Global Compact.

I think it is also important that, when we speak about engagement with the private sector, that it is an inclusive engagement with the private sector, not only when you look to the regions but also when you speak about small, medium, micro and also large enterprises. I think that is very important for the implementation of the Private Sector Strategy. As reflected by many speakers this morning and this afternoon, it is important to increase transparency of FAO about this working and its engagement with the private sector.

The results reflected that there should be no budgetary implications and, as said by many, the Strategy is a living document. When you speak about a strategy, it is a strategy for the next coming years. We need its implementation. What we are seeing with measuring of the Biodiversity Strategy, it comes now to the implementation of the Strategy.

I think many of the comments and suggestions made by the Members of the Council could be incorporated in its implementation. I think it was also very much appreciated your openness and transparency of the Management to include many of the remarks made by the Joint Committee.

That was part of why at the Joint Meeting we commended its adoption by this Council, and I think we could do the same as we have done in the Joint Meeting, to adopt the Strategy and it is very important in your conclusions that you also incorporate the two *Information Notes* as part of the Strategy.

The comments made by the Members of the Council should be incorporated in the final decision of the Private Sector Strategy. It is crucial when we go to the Food Systems Summit that also FAO, as one of the three Rome-based Agencies, with an adopted Private Sector Strategy. It comes now to the implementation of the decision of the Council, including the document of the strategy, the two Information Notes, as well as the comments made by the Members of this Council.

Ms Daniela ROTONDARO (Chairperson of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters)

Thank you for all the Members of the Council and the Observers for their precious inputs.

As you know, the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) considered this Strategy and was called to consider it from the legal and constitutional framework under which this Strategy has been drafted and is currently under development.

Based on the presentation that we had from Management, we focused on the overarching legal principle for FAO's engagement with the private sector. We welcomed it within its specific mandate, and we welcomed the intensive and inclusive consultations that were conducted with Members and this is what we heard also in the interventions this morning and this was underlined and welcomed.

It is also important to say that the Committee endorsed all the overarching legal principles that would govern FAO's engagement with the private sector with a view to preserve the legal and constitutional status of the Organization in accordance with its Basic Rules. I heard this morning interventions that were in line with the endorsement of the CCLM, which really underlined and endorsed the need to maintain FAO's impartiality, integrity and reputation, implementing due diligence mechanisms and risk management to uphold those legal principles.

The Committee also encouraged all consultations with the regions, with the sub-regions and with Members in order to assure this accountability and transparency which are fundamental for the engagement with the private sector also in achieving the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We also recommended that, and I heard that many delegations underlined this, the Strategy should closely follow and be consistent with the United Nations System policies and reports and that it is very important that in implementing the strategy FAO balances respected interests, which are FAO's goals, and which should prioritize and promote United Nations values.

I am very happy to hear that all the interventions were aligned with the recommendations of the CCLM.

CHAIRPERSON

I am told the Chairperson of the Finance Committee is not there, so I will go to the Secretariat to respond to Members' questions.

Ms Beth BECHDOL (Deputy Director-General)

Distinguished delegates and Members, thank you for this very rich and informative discussion. I would like to start by expressing my sincere appreciation to so many of you for your full engagement and substantive comments that came through multiple consultations on this Strategy, in all five of the

Regional Conferences and many bilateral discussions and written comments provided to us by many of you.

As my colleagues and I reflect on this overall process, I think it is clear to us that this new Strategy is undeniably the result of the important input that has been received over much of this year through, as you have said, an extensive, transparent and inclusive consultation process with our own FAO colleagues across the entire Organization, with private sector enterprises and Organizations and, most importantly, with you, our Members.

This way of working, as I understand, has not always been the *modus operandi* of FAO and I hope that it is what we expect of one another going forward. The Director-General said yesterday in his comments on the private sector Strategy that an efficient, transparent and inclusive FAO is his highest priority. This will certainly be what continues to guide our way of working with you as we begin to implement this Strategy and strategically engage with the private sector.

I would like to summarize a few key points from our discussion today and to respond to a number of comments emphasized by you. Most importantly, the new Strategy is focused on ensuring Sustainable Development Goals' (SDGs) alignment and achievement of the 2030 Agenda in all of our new engagements. It is focused on countries and engagement with different private sector entities at the country level.

This is a critical point that many of you raised today and this will be ensured during implementation with our country and regional colleagues. Country-owned and country-led solutions will be key to helping Members achieve the SDGs at the country level. This translates for FAO into a greater emphasis going forward on decentralized accountability and prioritization for capacity development to support more private sector engagement.

The new Strategy I believe is inclusive and I am pleased to hear your reinforcing comments on the beneficiaries of the Strategy, meaning the people we collectively serve, including all smallholder and family farmers, cooperatives, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), start-ups, women and youth. Africa Members, for example, emphasized the importance in alignment of the African Union vision and Agenda 2063, the importance of building the capacity of the private sector as an important actor to support these beneficiaries and others in the food value chain and the private sector can support or be engaged in more coordinated efforts, like the newly formed food coalition.

We also agree with your direction to engage with private sector partners from across all regions, across all segments of food and agriculture and of all sizes. This balance is indeed important.

We are together committed to safeguarding FAO's neutrality and impartiality, especially safeguarding our standard setting work, and welcomed the important emphasis given to this very point by so many of you. We agree with you on the importance of never compromising our normative and standard setting expertise.

I also very much appreciate that the Brazil Ambassador rightly mentioned that during the 163rd Session of the Council the evaluation of FAO's Private Sector Partnership Strategy was welcomed, and FAO was encouraged to develop this new vision, also underlining the need for a more robust due diligence process.

Further, the Joint Meeting also emphasized the importance of due diligence and risk management to avoid potential conflicts of interest, specifically in, but not limited to, FAO's work on standard setting, and requested we bring forward an updated due diligence mechanism to you. With this clear guidance in hand and taking every measure to avoid conflict of interest and with Council's approval of this Strategy, we are ready to take this next step and take your guidance to develop that framework.

In the same manner as the World Health Organization (WHO), the Strategy is developed by the Members having regard to their specific mandates and the priorities of the Members in this setting. Of course, because we are all a part of the United Nations System and we have similar matters to consider, we have indeed well reviewed the strategies of other United Nations Organizations, World Food Programme (WFP), International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP) and also the Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors (FENSA) of WHO.

Based upon the inputs of Members, this Strategy is considered uniquely fit for purpose for FAO and designed to respond to the priorities identified. Indeed, an example of how we are tailoring this strategy to FAO is the encouragement by many of you of the adoption of the Committee on World Security (CFS) policies by private sector partners.

Regarding how we ensure that monetary contributions from the private sector to FAO will not go to standard setting work, I can say that our existing rules and procedures have sufficient safeguard mechanisms to manage and avoid the risk of undue influence by the private sector in our standard setting work, the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CODEX), the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), for example. This will be further clarified in the new due diligence framework.

We commit to a continued high level of transparency with this Strategy and its implementation, as we have demonstrated in the process of developing the Strategy itself. This includes the development of the Connect Portal and the Informal Advisory Group, both of which we also acknowledge will need to be crafted with our multilingual approach to communication and working together.

Finally, just a few additional specific points that were raised that I think are important to address for clarity. To the point of importance of regular monitoring and reporting to Members made by many of you, Management will indeed, as the Strategy is proposed, complete a cost-benefit analysis (CBA) in 2021 and also ensure the regular annual reporting on progress being made with the private sector is delivered to you.

In addition to regular reporting, we recognize the importance of the alignment with the Strategic Framework and the appropriate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will be developed in accordance with the Strategic Framework. Coordination with the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) is already underway, with regular meetings now taking place among the private sector teams of the three Agencies.

Regarding new instruments, referred to by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, I would just like to clarify that this particular point is about the potential for new contractual instruments, legal instruments such as new ways of structuring Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) templates, which are the starting point for negotiations. These indeed may need to be modified, as opposed to referring to new financial instruments.

Finally, I would like to make a reference to due diligence and the comments made about full alignment to the United Nations Global Compact. Management can assure you that the Strategy will comply with your comments today and also the Joint Meeting report that expressed the need for full alignment of the strategy with the United Nations Global Compact. We also today noted the very specific paragraph references made in this regard.

In addition, under the due diligence framework, we will incorporate specific sectors which are sensitive for FAO, given the potential conflict between the private sector industry and FAO's mandate. The due diligence unit itself must avoid any conflicts of interest with the facilitation of private sector or other partnerships and does, therefore, reside in our Project Support Division, as opposed to the Resource Mobilization and Private Sector Division or our Partnerships and United Nations Collaboration Division.

A point was also raised about inclusion of academic and research Organizations in the Strategy. Of course, FAO intensely values these partnerships, but also acknowledges the unique organizational structures and contributions that they make as distinct from the private sector, which this Strategy is indeed tailored to.

I would be remiss if I did not thank Sweden for the coming secondment of one of their nationals to our private sector team. This support to our own capacity is important and we will be sure that we are well managing the budgetary considerations that go into implementation of this Strategy. I would also encourage others of you to consider following in Sweden's footsteps.

Chair, thank you again for the opportunity to share with you and all of the Council Members this culmination of our important and timely work together. This Strategy should indeed represent a new approach to working in collaboration for all of us, for the benefit of those most in need. It is critically important to our shared commitment for the 2030 Agenda and you, our Members, have our full commitment to update, engage and seek your valued and trusted input as we deepen our meaningful and impactful work with the private sector.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Ms Beth Bechdol, for your comprehensive comments and clarifications. This brings us to the end of our discussion on this Item. I will read out my conclusions, which will also be put on the screen.

Item 4, *FAO's New Strategy for Private Sector Engagement 2021-2025*:

1. The Council welcomed document *CL 165/4 rev 1, FAO's New Strategy for Private Sector Engagement 2021-2025* and related Information Notes 1 and 2 and;
 - a. Appreciated the inclusive process that led to completing the strategy and approved the recommendations in this regard of the joint meeting of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee and the 183rd Session of the Finance Committee.
 - b. Welcomed the importance of a more inclusive and proactive process to engage with the private sector, based on mutual trust.
 - c. Endorsed the legal principles for FAO's engagement with the private sector, as reflected in the report of the 111th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters and emphasized the need to strengthen safeguards and mechanisms to maintain FAO's impartiality, integrity and reputation.
 - d. Emphasized the importance of due diligence mechanisms and risk management to avoid potential conflicts of interest, specifically in, but not limited to, FAO's work on policies, norms and standard setting. Requested full alignment of the strategy with the United Nations Global Compact and requested the due diligence mechanisms and rules to be updated and annexed to the strategy.
 - e. Underscored Management's commitment to increased transparency and looked forward to reviewing the partnership agreements more thoroughly once the Connect Portal is launched.
 - f. Requested FAO to encourage private sector partners to consider adopting Committee on World Food Security (CFS) policy instruments, given their voluntary nature.
 - g. Stressed the need to avoid any incremental budgetary implications for the Organization arising from the strategy, including the fact that no regular programme budget resources be transferred to private sector entities and requested further analysis in this regard within FAO's business model in the new strategic framework.
 - h. Reaffirmed the importance of alignment of the strategy with the new Strategic Framework 2022-2031 and requested FAO to ensure the full alignment of the strategy with the new strategic framework once the latter is finalized.
 - i. Stressed the need to launch the strategy in a timely manner to meet the demand from member countries.
 - j. Recalled that the strategy was a living document, subject to review and update by Members.
2. Contingent on its comments outlined in paragraph 1 above and with the understanding that information notes one and two are incorporated fully in the strategy, the Council approved the FAO Strategy for Private Sector Engagement 2021-2025.

That is the end of my conclusions. I open the floor now for Members.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

At this point just a procedural suggestion. Would it not be recommendable to again go through the text subparagraph by subparagraph in order to save time and lengthy discussions?

CHAIRPERSON

I agree. We go subparagraph by subparagraph. It would facilitate our agreement on the subparagraphs, otherwise we will be jumping from one subparagraph to the other. Therefore, paragraph 1, subparagraph (a). Subparagraph (b).

Ms Marija MILIVOJEVIC (Sweden)

I only have a small proposal for subparagraph 1(b), which I think many others also highlighted. We could add something on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) there, something along the lines of “particularly highlighting the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)”. I am open to other types of drafting, of course, as well.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

I agree with the proposal of Sweden. It is the same proposal I would see in this context.

Sr. Mario ARVELO (República Dominicana)

Para manifestar lo mismo que acaba de decir la embajadora de Italia quisieramos recordarle en nuestra intervención hicimos hincapié en la importancia de que se tome en cuenta y se recuerde que el sector privado también lo componen pequeñas y medianas empresas, agricultores familiares. En este sentido, hay muchos lectores de este documento que no están participando como lo hacemos nosotros y, entonces, tienden a creer erróneamente que cuando hablamos de sector privado solo nos estamos refiriendo a grandes empresas multinacionales y no es así.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Siguiendo la misma línea de Italia, República Dominicana y Suecia, me gustaría solamente agregar después de “importance of micro, “comma” y luego manteniendo el texto tal cual como fue sugerido por los colegas preopinantes.

Mme Maria de Fátima JARDIM (Angola)

Nous voudrions ajouter des éléments concernant la stratégie régionale qui doit tenir compte des spécificités des programmes de chaque pays, respecter les priorités nationales, sur lesquelles les gouvernements se trouveront en accord.

Il faut sauvegarder les intérêts de ce secteur privé local, car c'est très important pour l'Afrique, ainsi que nous en avons parlé au niveau du Groupe africain. Il faut ajouter une autre chose, car il est nécessaire dans cette Stratégie d'impliquer la communauté scientifique. Je crois qu'il faut l'inclure très clairement dans la présentation que vous avez faite à propos du point 4.

Pour continuer notre commentaire, au niveau des micro et petites entreprises, je crois qu'il faut tenir cette dimension également présente, parce qu'il est très important pour l'organisation du secteur privé d'y inclure aussi ce qui touche à l'agriculture familiale.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Yo estoy de acuerdo con la parte sugerida por la representante de Angola sobre el tema de los contextos, pero creo que una mejor redacción de esa propuesta, al menos desde nuestro punto de vista, sería “taking into account different regional and local context.” Creo que eso refleja mejor lo que dice nuestra querida representante de Angola y la cual no es importante solo en África, lo cual nosotros estamos totalmente de acuerdo, sino también en nuestra región.

CHAIRPERSON

Subparagraph (b) with its current wording.

Mr Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

“Taking into account regional, national, and local context.”

CHAIRPERSON

Therefore, subparagraph (b) as amended.

Mr Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Presidente, falta la palabra “different”. “Taking into account different...”.

CHAIRPERSON

With this current amendment, can we approve the subparagraph and move to subparagraph (c)? I think we can. Subparagraph (c).

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

It is going to be very minor, because I do not know how they look at it in the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM). I appreciate the Report of the CCLM Chairperson, but I wonder whether we are here to endorse the legal principle of our engagement. I would simply suggest another drafting. Does the recommendation of the 111th Session of the CCLM (CCLM 111) or the recommendation contained in the report of the CCLM 111 offer that? Abide by the legal principle” and it goes on. That is my suggestion.

CHAIRPERSON

With this amendment, can we move to subparagraph (d)? Yes. So, subparagraph (d). I see no requests for the floor. Therefore, subparagraph (d) is adopted.

Subparagraph (e).

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I waited to ask for the floor. I do not have a suggestion for subparagraph (d), but for an additional subparagraph after (d) that should read “requested FAO Management to present a thorough analysis to the relevant Bodies, when interactions with companies that might present significant risks are considered”.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

Now, “under the following...” is the new (f).

CHAIRPERSON

I see no objection to new subparagraph (e).

We go to subparagraph (f) now.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

To my state of mind, I am very much uncomfortable with this way of looking at things. I want to come back to it again. I think “underscored the necessary commitment” or “the necessary...” or “the importance of to increase transparency”. I do not want it to be a kind of ping-pong between Management and Members. “Underscore the importance to increase transparency and look forward to review the Partnership Agreement”. That is my suggestion.

CHAIRPERSON

I see no requests for the floor. We can go to new subparagraph (g).

Ms Lieslot GERMONPREZ (Belgium)

Belgium would like to include, as we stated in our statement this afternoon, “to encourage private sector partners to consider adopting Committee on World Food Security (CFS) policy instruments, given their voluntary nature”. This should be included in the due diligence process.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

I am a bit lost here because this is a recommendation which is very hard to apply. How does that adoption take place? This is something that we probably should consider applying, because we have already adopted some of the instruments as a Governing Body.

For the private sector, how will that adoption take place? This is a big question here. We have no control rights. Even FAO cannot have control rights. It looks like a wishful thinking statement here. I would rather use a different word, which I do not have now. The Legal Counsel can help us to use that word, instead of adopting.

CHAIRPERSON

Argentina, do you have a comment on this paragraph (g)?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Sí, creo que la propuesta de agregado.

Con respecto al nuevo subpárrafo (g), quiero decir que Argentina no está de acuerdo con la propuesta de agregar el texto sugerido por la estimada representante de Bélgica. Me parece que la lógica explicada por mi estimado colega de Camerún es correcta.

Y, además, creo que sobre este texto sea importante tener en consideración que hemos tenido un gran debate en los diferentes comités, sobre todo en la Reunión Conjunta y, el cual debate fue reflejado tal cual, textualmente, en el mismo contenido de la Reunión Conjunta. Creo que eso reflejó una solución de compromiso en ese momento que sería interesante tenerla en consideración para buscar un consenso.

Por supuesto, todo está abierto a discutirse, pero me parece bien que la sugerencia que hicimos sea tomada en consideración para no abrir un debate interminable.

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

I am speaking to agree with our colleague, the Ambassador of Argentina, that we believe this addition is not appropriate here because the Committee on World Security (CFS) policy instruments and products are voluntary, and we would therefore support deletion of this added phrase.

Sr. Mario ARVELO (República Dominicana)

Nosotros no nos oponemos a lo que plantea Bélgica, pero también podemos estar de acuerdo con lo que plantea la Argentina y Estados Unidos de America. Lo que sí es importante en este punto, es que hay que tomar en consideración que entre los Miembros del Consejo tenemos al Presidente del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial (CSA).

Lo que sucede es que siempre, en el marco del CSA, discutimos sobre los productos de políticas, que todos sabemos y estamos de acuerdo que son voluntarios: es decir, no son tratados internacionales, no son leyes obligatorias de cumplimiento para nadie, sino que son recomendaciones de políticas. Un tema que sale una y otra vez en cada conversación, en cada discusión y en cada debate y aprobación es que debemos, los Estados Miembros de la FAO, del Fondo Internacional de Desarrollo Agrícola (FIDA) y del Programa Mundial de Alimentos (PMA), exhortar a todas las partes relevantes, incluido el sector privado, la sociedad civil, el mundo académico, instituciones financieras internacionales, etcétera, a que puedan tomar en consideración en sus diálogos de políticas - a medida que están participando de una manera u otra en la lucha contra el hambre - estos productos de política.

El embajador de Brasil en su intervención, por ejemplo, se refirió en particular a los Principios para la inversión responsable en la agricultura y los sistemas alimentarios y nosotros, en nuestra intervención hicimos referencia a la importancia de estos productos de políticas. Entonces, que lleve o no el lenguaje que plantea Bélgica, esto se puede discutir y nosotros no tenemos problemas de un lado o de otro.

Lo que sí queremos reafirmar es la importancia de que los productos de política del CSA formen parte de esta Estrategia para la colaboración con el sector privado. Porque el sector privado entra la FAO por la puerta del CSA en la reforma de 2009.

CHAIRPERSON

Belgium, maybe go ahead with this subparagraph without your addition.

Ms Lieselot GERMONPREZ (Belgium)

We do not want to make a big and long discussion about that. We can leave it as it was before. We would just like to ask, if Management was listening, that they can ask potential private sector partners to pledge their compliance with these Committee on World Security (CFS) products, as the Private Sector Mechanism of CFS was involved in the discussion and elaboration of these policy instruments.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

Thank you, Belgium, for that flexibility. I think we are fine, but the issue of adopting is still there. I would rather propose we request FAO to encourage Private Sector Partners to consider using or applying the Committee of World Food Security (CFS) policy instruments, I think adoption is a whole process. Those instruments are already adopted. Another adoption, I do not know.

CHAIRPERSON

With that change I think we can go to subparagraph (h).

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Thank you very much to Deputy Director General Ms Beth Bechdol for her comprehensive response to all of our queries. I did hear her saying that Management would undertake a cost-benefit analysis next year and that is very welcome. I wanted to suggest some edits to this subparagraph to reflect that.

Before I do that, I also wanted to highlight a potential area of ambiguity here in this subparagraph. I heard several Members stressing the need to avoid any incremental budgetary implications. I have also heard Management say that no Regular Programme budget will be going to the private sector. However, Management does intend to use Regular Programme resources to fund the Private Sector Strategy during the next biennium. I think those two things are slightly at odds with each other and this subparagraph is ambiguous in that respect.

If we go with the first part of the sentence, “stressed the need to avoid any incremental budgetary implications for the Organization”, you do not really need the words “including the fact that no Regular Programme budget resources be transferred”. Therefore, I think you could delete that, and it would avoid the ambiguity. Although I recognize Management are planning to use core budget resources in the following biennium. Anyway, I will see what others have to say about that point.

The other amendment that I wanted to make was where it says, “requested further analysis in this regard”. Could we say, “requested a cost-benefit analysis of the Private Sector Strategy within FAO’s business model” and leave the rest of the sentence as it is? I am happy with that subparagraph as it is, but I am keen to hear other views as well.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

This is a very difficult path. Firstly, I would suggest that, from stressed to the Strategy, we do away with the first two lines. We start with “requested...” because we cannot pre-empt what is going to happen in terms of cost for the Strategy, especially as there is in the background the possibility of capacity building in developing countries to implement the Strategy. We cannot pre-empt today what is going to happen in terms of budgetary implications.

We are putting a straitjacket to us by stressing that “no incremental budget” should be there. I would prefer “requested”. The word “cost-benefit analysis” is a little bit difficult. That is really micro-economics. What I prefer is “requested a thorough analysis of the budgetary implication to implement the Strategy, especially in developing countries”. I think that may say clearly what we want to apply here and then we do away with the rest of the sentence.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

First of all, it is not just an analysis of the budgetary implications that we are asking for. We have asked for a cost-benefit analysis and we have made that point and it was reflected in the conclusions of the Joint Meeting and, indeed, in the Information Note.

The reason that it is important is not just an analysis of cost. It is analysis of what the outcome from expenditure of resources will be, and that is a really important strategic decision-making tool. You cannot just analyse costs without thinking about what you are going to get from the return of those costs. It will be significantly undermining the Strategy, if we were not to have an analysis of benefits as well as costs. That is my first point.

Secondly, we have to recognize that several Members actually said that they wanted to avoid incremental budgetary implications. I do not think you can just delete that and ignore the fact that Members have said that. I do think it is important and I would be interested to hear what other Members have to say on that point too.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCH (Japan)

I just wanted to echo what the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland colleague said. I think the reference to the incremental budgetary implications is important and we prefer to retain it in the subparagraph.

CHAIRPERSON

Cameroon, can you go along with the way the subparagraph reads now? I think the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has a point on the cost-benefit analysis. Even the Deputy Director-General said that they would be carrying out this exercise next year, I believe she said. Can you go along with this subparagraph the way it is worded?

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

If we go into the commitment of the Secretariat, I have no problem with that. We can go along that way but what we really want is that we should not put ourselves in a straitjacket from the outset. Because if you do that, we have no flexibility later on.

We are not comfortable with the sentence, “stressed the need to avoid any incremental budgetary implications arising from the Strategy”, because we are sure that when they will do the cost-benefit analysis in future, or even next year, we show that there may be requests from countries for support to implement the Strategy. That one we are sure, 100 percent.

How do we put ourselves in a straitjacket right now? We have not even yet started building the Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023. Therefore, we are not comfortable with that last part of the sentence. If we can leave it in the new Strategic Framework, we are okay.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Just to echo what my British colleague said, this was a consensus found in the Joint Meeting and these points that you raised were under subparagraph (n). I do not see any reason why we should now unwrap that again. We should stick to this language that the Joint Meeting agreed upon.

CHAIRPERSON

Any other comment on this? For the text of the Joint Meeting to be put here, the Joint Meetings text is given below. Cameroon, the text of the Joint Meeting does have all these elements and plus, during the present debate this question was emphasized by several Members. Therefore, could we go ahead? The cost-benefit analysis of the Strategy would not necessarily put us in a straitjacket. The cost-benefit analysis would give the true picture and from there Members would be able to judge how to go forward. This is just a guidance in carrying out the cost-benefit analysis.

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

As much as the text of the Joint Meeting is here, we can go along, because it is put only for 2021. For the rest, we will take the decision later on, after that cost-benefit analysis is done. We can go along with the text of the Joint Meeting.

CHAIRPERSON

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Germany, would you be comfortable if we stop the subparagraph at “framework”, so a cost-benefit analysis is carried on, and if the result of that is that there should be an incremental aspect of the budget, Members would be able to decide then based on the actual information they have to decide what to do.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

From our perspective, that does make sense, and I will be content with that. However, my bigger point is that many other Members of the Council made this point. If the rest of the Council is content with that approach, then so am I. I am just highlighting the fact that many other Members of the Council did raise this issue again, but yes - that does make sense from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland perspective.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

As already mentioned, the Joint Meeting text says that there is no additional budgetary implication in 2021 and, therefore, I think it would be better to also remain the second half of the sentence and subparagraph (h), as it was also mentioned in the statement of the European Union and its Member States, and I think also in statements of others. Yes, that is our position. If there is another diverging or conflicting view of other Members, then we are flexible, but I think we would prefer the full text.

CHAIRPERSON

We should then put a reference to 2021 in subparagraph (h), like it is in the Joint Meeting text because there it is “no additional budgetary implication in 2021”. Therefore, it is restricting it to that year. It could be restricted to that year and the next decision could be after you have the cost-benefit analysis, so you would be making a more informed decision.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

We are comfortable with the text of the Joint Meeting. If anything needs to be changed, we want to make sure that the reference of 2021 is there, as the Joint Meeting has concluded.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

We would prefer to take the full text of the Joint Meeting. It has different aspects and elements, and they should all be reflected in the Council conclusions.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I might have to come back on the German proposal. I had an alternative but if you perhaps give me a minute just to review it, I will come back to you.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

As my distinguished colleague of Germany said, we prefer very much the text already approved in Joint Meeting.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I also support all the distinguished delegates of Cameroon, Germany and Italy and we prefer to have the full text of the Joint Meeting.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I am content with the text of the Joint Meeting as well.

CHAIRPERSON

Therefore, we take the text of the Joint Meeting and move to subparagraph (i). We are now on subparagraph (i). I see no requests for the floor. We can move to the next subparagraph (j).

Mme Maria de Fátima JARDIM (Angola)

Je crois qu'avant de confirmer le compromis sur cette Stratégie, la contribution du Groupe africain sur ce point est importante, il s'agit du transfert des connaissances entre les experts des pays des différentes régions et aussi de l'implication de la communauté scientifique.

Une autre question essentielle pour l'Afrique est celle de l'accès aux marchés, au développement des capacités, à l'innovation technologique et aux capacités également de formation à tous les niveaux; c'est très important pour les pays en développement, surtout au niveau du secteur privé.

Enfin, reste à trouver un compromis sur la question du financement et je voudrais être claire à ce propos: il faut l'inclure dans cette Stratégie, surtout au vu des nombreux problèmes que nous connaissons.

CHAIRPERSON

Angola, we are adopting the conclusions. Do you have a suggestion to amend a particular subparagraph? We are going through the conclusions.

Mme Maria de Fátima JARDIM (Angola)

Nous avons déjà réaffirmé dans notre déclaration que capacité de développement pour l'Afrique, accès aux marchés et transfert de technologies et de connaissances sont des éléments qu'il faut ajouter dans un paragraphe, et nous pourrions vous y aider.

CHAIRPERSON

That is the new subparagraph (i).

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

I think we are fine with what Angola just added. We are okay with this, but I want to have an addition in the next subparagraph. We are talking here only on the Strategic Framework, but the planning process has many steps. After the Strategic Framework we have the Medium Term Plan. I think there should be full alignment with at least those two documents. We are not talking about the Programme of Work and Budget but at least with these two documents there should be full alignment. Put also 2022-2025.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

I would like to say that we can support Angola's proposal. Having said that, we drafted one more subparagraph after that.

I will read it out. "Stressed the importance to take the route of appropriate protection of intellectual property for enhancing the effectiveness of cooperation with the private sector".

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

I would like to express our support to the subparagraph included by Angola. We are okay with subparagraph (i).

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

We also support the subparagraph (i) proposed by the Ambassador of Angola.

I also want to add very minor amendments to this, because when the Ambassador of Angola speaks on behalf of the African Regional Group, we are asking for this training and capacity building at decentralized offices. Therefore, after the "Strategy", "especially at decentralized offices".

CHAIRPERSON

With this we can go to the next subparagraph. The new subparagraph (l), "stressed the need to launch".

Mme Maria de Fátima JARDIM (Angola)

Je crois qu'il faut ajouter un nouveau point sur la préparation de rapports annuels sur sa mise en œuvre et d'évaluations périodiques de son application. Cela permettra d'évaluer les risques éventuels, notamment ceux qui sont liés aux conflits d'intérêts, étant donné que notre objectif est dans la

réalisation de la Stratégie. Et avant de réaffirmer l'importance d'aligner cette Stratégie sur une nouvelle, il faut tenir compte du rapport et des informations qu'il fournit, y compris des évaluations périodiques de sa mise en œuvre.

Une autre chose essentielle aussi pour nous sera, dans les prochaines rencontres, d'assurer et garantir le multilinguisme, tout comme l'a déclaré la représentante de la France. Il s'agit d'un point très important pour nous et pour l'Afrique, dans cette Stratégie du secteur privé, fondamentale pour relever le défi du continent africain, augmenter et transformer son agriculture. Ce point donc mérite notre attention et nous voudrions l'inclure dans un nouveau paragraphe.

C'est là aussi l'expression du Groupe africain qui vous remercie.

CHAIRPERSON

It would be good if you can give us a proposed wording.

Mme Maria de Fátima JARDIM (Angola)

Oui, «Garantir le multilinguisme au niveau du portail et des réunions consultatives pour assurer la transparence et aussi l'inclusion.» .

Je crois qu'il faut dire aussi «l'inclusion», pas seulement «l'engagement»: «la transparence et l'inclusion».

Permettez-moi d'insister, je crois qu'il faut inclure un point sur la préparation de rapports annuels, sur sa mise en œuvre et l'évaluation périodique de son application.

CHAIRPERSON

These two subparagraphs (k) and (l), I think they take care of the points you mentioned.

Mme Maria de Fátima JARDIM (Angola)

Oui Je crois que c'est court et presque complet.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Thank you to Angola for including new subparagraph (l).

Another point that quite a few Members made, particularly the Asia Regional Group highlighted, is the importance of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Therefore, we could add to paragraph (l), "looked forward to annual reports on implementation and progress against KPIs" or bring in the KPI point somewhere in that sentence, because so many Members actually mentioned it. Perhaps the Drafting Committee could do that rather than trying to finesse it here.

I did also have a comment on new subparagraph (n).

My proposal with subparagraph (n) is that this follows paragraph 2 because any launch of the Strategy can only come after the approval. Therefore, it seems a bit odd to have that before the paragraph on approval. The launch of the Strategy is, of course, contingent on all of the comments of the Council above.

CHAIRPERSON

I see there are no requests, so we go to subparagraph (o).

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Quizá soy yo el que no entendí. ¿Cuál es la lógica que la embajadora del Reino Unido de Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte tuvo para proponer agregar en el punto 2 ese texto? O sea, para juntar esos párrafos. Me gustaría entender cuál es la lógica que justifica ello.

CHAIRPERSON

What the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was saying, you have to launch the Strategy after the Strategy has been approved, so paragraph 2. "the Council is approving the Strategy."

The launch should come after that approval, or the reference to the launch because the Strategy can only be launched once the Council has approved it.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Yo lo que no tengo claro es lo siguiente. Interpreto que lo que estamos haciendo es preparar el informe para hacer un “endorsement”, una aprobación, de la Estrategia en este acto. Por lo tanto, no tengo en claro si lo que está en ese párrafo pone en discusión la aprobación de la Estrategia misma. No quisiera que queden dudas sobre lo que estamos aprobando en este acto.

Si eso no hay dudas, no tengo particular preocupación por el agregado, pero no me termina de quedar claro.

CHAIRPERSON

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, would you be able to comment on that?

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Thank you, Ambassador from Argentina. Yes, it makes it very clear including it as a separate paragraph, paragraph 2 is the approval and paragraph 3 is the Launch.

CHAIRPERSON

Argentina, I take it you are satisfied now with this presentation?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Sí, lo que no me queda claro es una sola cosa. Se aprueba y, en el momento que se aprueba, se lanza. Me parece que no entiendo la distancia del tiempo entre la aprobación y el lanzamiento. Es decir, yo interpreto que se aprueba para lanzar la Estrategia. No la puedo lanzar si no la apruebo. A partir de su aprobación la lanzo. No entiendo la diferencia de tiempo. Entiendo que es un mismo acto, pero en realidad es inmediato una cosa de la otra. Una es precondition para la otra y es de manera inmediata. Creo que allí con la palabra “immediately”, estamos zanjando la situación. Okay. Me parece que con la palabra “immediately” estamos zanjando la duda que yo tenía.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

Before what Angola added that “reaffirm the importance of knowledge transfer, technology, capacity building and training in the aims of the activities of the Strategy at the decentralized office.”, we should insert somewhere reaffirm the need to consider the update of scientific knowledge in which the private sector concern is operating.”. That is the addition we wanted.

Furthermore, I appreciate the idea behind “the Council needs to launch the Strategy immediately”, because the first one “in a timely manner...” was a little bit difficult to understand. I also do not know about the last part “demand from Members” of the text “the Council stressed the need to launch the Strategy immediately to meet demand from Members”, because I am a little bit confused how it will operate in normal terms. Is it operating like the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), where everything is based on the demand of Members? Rather we leave it like “the Council stressed the need to launch the Strategy immediately.” I prefer this way.

CHAIRPERSON

Members, I would like to ask, are we okay with this wording?

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I think “immediately” is a little bit unrealistic. What about “as soon as possible” or something like that? It is not going to be launched this evening or on Friday or is it? Let us be realistic.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Yo creo que la palabra “immediately”, obviamente, tiene un nivel de subjetividad que tiene que ver justamente con el sentido: “Inmediatamente que sea posible”, pero para mí está bien y no tengo problema. No la modifique. Está bien la sugerencia del Reino Unido de Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del

Norte. Me parece razonable. Es decir, cuanto antes sea posible, pero está perfecto. Yo no tengo objeciones.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

The plan is always to set timelines. I prefer the wording differently such as “The Council stressed the need to launch the Strategy in early 2021.” Because any planner, all of us are part of that community, so we need to set dates that are measurable. I prefer “in early 2021”. We cannot say “as soon as possible” and then it is 2022.

Sr. Mario ARVELO (República Dominicana)

Escuchando esta conversación, me parece que lo dicho por la embajadora del Reino Unido de Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte y por el embajador de Argentina suena razonable. En este momento lo que tendríamos que hacer es preguntar a la Secretaría si la FAO ha estado haciendo actos preparatorios y preparando borradores de documentos. Ya ha habido todo eso, porque ha sido explicado en las notas informativas. Ya ha habido un amplio proceso de consulta con el sector privado y con nosotros todo esto se ha discutido en los comités técnicos.

Entonces, quizás esto está listo para arrancar esta noche, el viernes, la semana que viene o en enero. Entonces, aquí lo que hay es que, en vez de nosotros estar poniéndole un calendario a esto, tendríamos que preguntarle a la Secretaría: “¿Cuándo ustedes entienden que esto ya sería lanzado, y sería comenzado a implementar?”. Entonces, el Consejo aprueba dependiendo de lo que nos diga la Secretaría. Si el Secretaría nos dice: “Esto lo tenemos preparado para dentro de seis meses”, o pensamos que los actos preparatorios todavía llevarán tres meses o dos semanas. No lo sabemos, por eso tenemos que preguntar.

Entonces, la Secretaría nos dice: “Esto lo tenemos listo para el viernes a las 8.00 de la noche o el lunes a las 9.00 de la mañana o en enero.” Entonces, allí podemos poner una fecha cierta. Pero, “tan pronto como sea posible”, cubre todas estas cuestiones.

CHAIRPERSON

I think it is a good suggestion. Ms Beth Bechdol, can I ask you what is your envisaged timeframe?

Ms Beth BECHDOL (Deputy Director-General)

Thank you for asking for our input on this particular topic.

We view the Strategy clearly as a roadmap for the way that we are to begin engaging with the private sector and the kinds of principles that are aligned here. The time needed to begin planning for a number of the specific deliverables are outlined not only in the Strategy, but also in the Information Note 2. We are indeed ready to roll up our sleeves and get to work on the launch and the implementation of the Strategy right away.

The choice of wording, whether it is “immediately” or “as soon as possible”, is something to the Members’ discretion, but I would say this is an area of work that we have begun planning for in anticipation of the adoption of this Strategy. Therefore, we are ready to commence work as soon as the Council is completed, and the Report is adopted.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I would prefer, “as soon as possible,” and indeed the Deputy Director-General Ms Beth Bechdol said that is fine. Other Members have said that is fine too, so let us stick with that.

CHAIRPERSON

After listening to the Deputy Director-General, let us go with this wording. We know what it means. This brings us to the end of this Item, which is a positive achievement for us.

Item 5. FAO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic: Building to transform**Point 5. Action menée par la FAO pour faire face à la COVID-19: construire pour transformer****Tema 5. Respuesta de la FAO a la pandemia de la enfermedad por coronavirus (COVID-19): construir para transformar***(CL 165/5)***CHAIRPERSON**

Now we go to Item 5, which is *FAO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic: Building to transform*. The document before Council is *CL165/5*. The introduction provided by the Chief Economist, Mr Máximo Torero Cullen, has been circulated to you. The Item was discussed at the Joint Meeting of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee and the 183rd Session of the Finance Committee.

Introduction to Item 5: FAO's response to COVID-19: Building to Transform

Mr Máximo Torero Cullen, Chief Economist

In response to the request of Members of the Programme Committee (PC 128) and FAO Council (CL 164), an update on FAO's response to COVID-19 between June and October 2020 has been prepared (c.f. document *CL 165/5*).

The coronavirus pandemic and measures to contain it have plunged the global economy into the worst recession since World War II, worsening food insecurity and malnutrition. Even before the pandemic, nearly 690 million people were undernourished, 2 billion people did not have regular access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food and 3 billion people could not afford healthy diets. The principal challenge of food security continues to be one of access to food, rather than availability of food. Food markets continue to face uncertainties due to prospects of weak economic growth and unstable energy and currency markets. African swine fever and a catastrophic desert locust outbreak constitute major challenges, in addition to the threats and shocks of climate change.

A major increase in acute and chronic food insecurity and malnutrition has already been observed. Still, near-term prospects point to generally well-supplied food markets at global level. Beyond the response to the current pandemic and mitigation efforts, agriculture can be a driver of rapid and inclusive recovery and should be made more resilient to future shocks. More boldly, the current crisis presents an opportunity to "build to transform", as recommended by the UN Secretary-General's June 2020 Policy Brief on The Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security and Transformation. There is an urgent need to accelerate the transformation of food systems to end hunger and all forms of malnutrition, to address the inequalities that deny access to healthy diets and to reduce the impact of food systems on biodiversity, natural resources, ecosystems and the climate.

The FAO COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme has been developed through a bottom-up process to address seven priority themes, as follows:

- a) *The Global Humanitarian Response Plan*: Addressing the impacts of COVID-19 and safeguarding livelihoods in food-crisis contexts.
- b) *Data for Decision-making*: Ensuring quality data and analysis for effective policy support to food-systems and Zero Hunger.
- c) *Economic Inclusion and Social Protection to Reduce Poverty*: Pro-poor COVID-19 responses for an inclusive post-pandemic economic recovery.
- d) *Trade and Food Safety Standards*: Facilitating and accelerating food and agricultural trade during COVID-19 and beyond.
- e) *Boosting Smallholder Resilience for Recovery*: Protecting the most vulnerable, promoting economic recovery and enhancing risk management capacities.
- f) *Preventing the Next Zoonotic Pandemic*: Strengthening and extending the One Health approach to avert animal-origin pandemics.
- g) *Food Systems Transformation*: "Building to transform" during response and recovery.

To strengthen resource mobilization and maintain holistic coordination and oversight, the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme has been established as an umbrella programme. Such a funding

modality provides FAO with the means to effectively communicate and fundraise for the overall programmatic requirements and also to manage the programme with the greater than usual flexibility to integrate diverse actions as needed in response to shifting requirements.

The COVID-19 Food Coalition (Food Coalition) has been established as a multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral mechanism to activate and mobilize support for unified global action for COVID-19. The Food Coalition aims to mobilize both resources and technical expertise, promote advocacy initiatives to prevent the health crisis from becoming a food crisis, and establish a space for dialogue among diverse stakeholders.

The Food Coalition will promote also the establishment of a web-based platform that provides access to country needs, necessary actions and desired results with respect to COVID-19 and its impacts in the form of "Action Sheets" being developed by FAO's thematic working groups. This would serve as a "Basket" of country-specific needs where Members and other partners could easily access project-focused information and data as well as the funding gap on the ground and the type of assistance that would be required in order to facilitate mobilization of resources and expertise.

Finally, FAO has been an active contributor in all phases of the UN's comprehensive response to the COVID-19 Crisis. FAO has undertaken a large and active role in shaping and supporting the UN's Global Humanitarian Response Plan and has collaborated closely with the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to fashion the revised appeal. As one of the core founders of the Global Network Against Food Crises, FAO is closely collaborating with WFP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in countries experiencing food crises within the Global Network framework.

FAO is also active in the Global Food Security Cluster's Technical Working Group on COVID-19, where it provides technical advice to maintain livelihoods assistance during the Covid-related restrictions and to meet other emerging needs. FAO and WFP are collaborating on data collection and analysis, which will provide real-time updates on the situation on the ground concerning acute food insecurity as a result of COVID-19 related restrictions.

With FAO's support to government-led desert locust response, 1.7 million tonnes of cereal have been saved, which could feed almost 11.4 million people for one year. Damage to rangeland and livestock tropical units was prevented, helping an additional 792 900 pastoral households not to lose their livelihoods.

FAO, WFP and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) joined forces with six other UN entities and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) to develop the system-wide perspective that informs the Secretary-General's Policy Brief on the Impact of COVID-19 and Food Security and Nutrition. The policy brief complements the UN Framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19 and served as the basis for developing UN system indicators for the measurement of food and agriculture objectives under the Framework.

CHAIRPERSON

Now I open the floor for Members to comment. The floor is open. I see Mexico has asked for the floor. Mexico, you have the floor.

Sr. Elias REYES BRAVO (México)

México se suma al reconocimiento de los impactos realizados por la FAO para brindar información, análisis de políticas y recomendaciones basadas en hechos comprobados, con el fin de abordar las consecuencias en la seguridad alimentaria y la nutrición por la crisis derivada del COVID-19.

Coincidimos en que, para garantizar la seguridad alimentaria en todo el mundo, es importante el acceso a los alimentos, por lo que es muy importante mantener el comercio multilateral abierto, basado en normas, datos científicos y hechos comprobados, predecibles, no discriminatorios y justos.

Toda vez que no existe evidencia científica de que los alimentos o envases sean un medio de transmisión del COVID-19, apoyamos que la FAO colabore con las organizaciones internacionales y regionales en iniciativas que busquen mejorar la seguridad alimentaria, así como la producción, elaboración y distribución de los alimentos durante la pandemia.

Coincidimos en la importancia de seguir trabajando para atender los compromisos de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible para reducir el hambre y la pobreza, y que la FAO intensifique su labor para proporcionar conocimiento, datos, análisis y apoyo técnico a los países para reforzar sus capacidades en materia de políticas, y para orientar y acelerar las inversiones que los ayuden a reconstruir mejor.

Asimismo, estamos de acuerdo en que la FAO deberá evaluar las consecuencias de la crisis del COVID-19 en lo que se refiere a las personas en estado de mayor vulnerabilidad, para que ningún país o persona quede rezagada ante la crisis. Finalmente, respaldamos que se fomente, a través de la FAO, un mayor intercambio de experiencias entre los países en términos sanitarios, económicos y sociales, con respecto a la contención y las consecuencias que ha traído consigo la crisis del COVID-19, con objeto de evaluar la eficacia de las medidas implementadas.

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

The United States of America appreciates the information provided and looks forward to continuing to work with FAO to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on global food security. We believe that contributions from the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) at this time of stress in food systems needs to focus on both the short-term and the long-term.

In the short-term, efforts should focus on shoring up food supply systems. In the long-term, this virus must not distract us from the central challenge of our time, to increase production and accessibility to feed a growing population in the world from the limited and diminishing natural resource base.

We welcome and recognize the work FAO is doing to assess the scope of this problem and to provide evidence-based recommendations for increasing the resilience of global food systems.

Finally, we very much support FAO's emphasis on better data collection and collaboration among nations and various United Nations agencies. We do feel that the protection of data and intellectual property and transparency of such collaboration needs to be strengthened in order to facilitate increased technology sharing.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Germany is honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States. We congratulate FAO on its continued efforts in tackling the pandemic's multiple negative effects on food systems. The FAO COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme and its seven areas of work is a well-articulated umbrella Programme.

A comprehensive approach is crucial to meet country's urgent needs and the One Health approach is key in order to prevent new pandemics.

We noted with interest the official launch of the Food Coalition in response to challenges posed by COVID-19 and the online hub of the Food Coalition, which offers a space for mobilizing resources and exchanging expertise. We call for the Coalition to coordinate with relevant initiatives and bodies, including the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

We express deep concern for the major increase in acute and chronic food insecurity and malnutrition caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to other dramatic challenges, namely the African swine fever and the Desert Locust outbreak, amplified by the effects of climate change, the current crisis calls more than ever for the transformation of food systems towards more sustainable and resilient models.

We must strive towards a more resilient and sustainable agriculture through inclusive models, use of appropriate and context adapted innovation and better infrastructure, with a specific focus to supporting smallholders and family farmers, youth and women.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

I totally align with the European Union (EU) statement and I would like to add some national comments.

Food security is a fundamental right for the dignity of the human being a key element to reach a longstanding peace, as the recent Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the World Food Programme has shown to all of us.

Italy has always seen food security and sustainable agriculture as a pillar of its action for development. With this spirit and respecting the cultures and traditions of all of us, Italy has promoted with FAO the Food Coalition, an alliance among countries, united by the will to prevent the health crisis from turning into a food crisis.

I would like to reiterate our thanks to FAO and to the Director-General in particular, for immediately accepting our proposal of building such a new instrument based on the key issue of health, food security and social development.

It is also a system of national expertise based on a large pool of specialists from institutions, research centres, universities and civil society sharing practices to mitigate the effects of the crisis. Building on the existing collaboration against hunger and malnutrition will be crucial to ensure access to food for all.

Italy is fully committed to the success of the Food Coalition that will be a key topic of the agenda of the G20 Italian Presidency. Italy intends to lead the G20 to contribute effectively to the success of the Food Systems Summit 2021 convened by the United Nations Secretary-General.

Sra. Julia VICIOSO (República Dominicana)

Por primera vez en el sistema de las Naciones Unidas, los gobiernos de todos los países tienen una misma prioridad: las amenazas surgidas de la presente pandemia. El mandato de la FAO adquiere un protagonismo especial, porque como expresó la embajadora del Reino Unido de Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte en una de sus intervenciones de ayer, esta crisis nos permite comprender a cabalidad la necesidad que todos tenemos de una entidad como esta.

Al aprobar las respuestas de la FAO a la pandemia, respuesta que se expresa en el más amplio sentido de su mandato, exhortamos a que todos los ámbitos de la Organización aprendan sobre la marcha de las experiencias, tanto de diseño estratégico como de implementación sobre el terreno, incluyendo las labores conjuntas con el Fondo Internacional de Desarrollo Agrícola (FIDA) y con el Programa Mundial de Alimentos (PMA) y con toda la familia del sistema de las Naciones Unidas, para continuar brindando todo el apoyo que nuestros gobiernos. Por primera vez, en el sistema de las Naciones Unidas, los Estados miembros nos encontramos con una misma prioridad, que son las amenazas surgidas de la presente pandemia.

Mr M. Ikhsan SHIDDIEQY (Indonesia)

Indonesia aligns itself with the Asia Regional Group comments delivered by colleagues from the Philippines and we would like to deliver the following brief points.

Indonesia notes with appreciation the progress of FAO COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme and supports seven priority areas in line with the Indonesian Government efforts to ensure food security during the pandemic of COVID-19.

However, we would like to in particular underline the importance of food reserves at regional, national and community levels and also food diversification based on local wisdom, including animal protein sources from livestock to ensure the availability and accessibility of food for all people at all time.

Indonesia in general supports the initiation of the Food Coalition as an effort to measure the impact of COVID-19 pandemic to food security. Nevertheless, we should keep in mind that there are several similar international organizations, such as the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) that are also tackling food security, especially in this pandemic.

We should also consider the mandatory contributions that might mean most to countries during this initiative.

Sra. Amarilli VILLEGAS CORDERO (Costa Rica)

La delegación de Costa Rica celebra los esfuerzos que la FAO está realizando en forma combinada, con el resto del sistema de las Naciones Unidas, para hacer frente a la crisis que implica la pandemia provocada por el COVID-19. Concretamente, al integrarla como una oportunidad única para construir sistemas alimentarios más justos, resilientes y sustentables.

Costa Rica coincide con que ahora es cuando debemos actuar de manera urgente, con la intención de construir para transformar. Hoy es indispensable apoyar a las productoras y productores, a las pequeñas y medianas empresas, a los agricultores familiares y a las organizaciones locales de la sociedad civil, para asegurarnos de que la producción continúe y se suministren a la población alimentos asequibles, adecuados, seguros, variados y culturalmente apropiados.

El Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería de Costa Rica redobló los esfuerzos para poner a disposición de los productores de bienes de origen agropecuario y pesquero plataformas virtuales y de mensajería de texto, para facilitar la comercialización de sus productos. Asimismo, se encuentra implementando ferias virtuales en el marco del programa La Finca Agropecuaria con el fin de promover el acceso directo a mercados de los productores, a pesar de las restricciones provocadas del COVID-19. Esos son solo dos ejemplos de cómo la tecnología puesta al servicio de los productores permite generar un comercio más fluido y fortalecer sistemas alimentarios, creando opciones de participación allá donde antes del COVID-19 no existían.

Si la pandemia nos ha enseñado algo en estos diez meses es que la colaboración con todos los niveles es clave para vencer este reto. Por eso, Costa Rica recibe con tanto beneplácito el trabajo realizado por la FAO en el marco de la Coalición Alimentaria del COVID-19.

El contagio masivo de un virus puede poner al mundo de rodillas, pero la difusión global del conocimiento lo puede ayudar a andar de nuevo y esta vez por un camino donde la seguridad alimentaria sea una realidad para todos y todas.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

This item is most important. COVID-19 is deteriorating the global food security, not only in the developing countries, but also in the developed countries. This is a challenge for the various countries.

We welcome FAO's efforts for food security and here I would like to make two points for enduring global food security. The first is to make the food system, from production to consumption, more resistant to shocks. That is an important point that we should pursue.

Second, as FAO issued in a joint statement with World Health Organization (WHO) and World Trade Organization (WTO), each country should refrain from imposing unnecessary export restrictions were holding as a measure to deal with COVID-19. It is also important to share the food supply and demand information in order to endure the free trade of the food and agriculture products. We should be working together with the guidance of the FAO to create the environment that would prevent those situations.

I hope that FAO's activities in this field will be fully carried out.

Ms Marie-Noëlle DESROCHERS (Canada)

COVID-19 has tested the resilience of our food systems like never before. Food supply chains, as well as people's livelihoods, have been disrupted, threatening food security around the world.

The document being studied today articulates well how trade is central in increasing resilience. For example, exports can mitigate losses in revenues and imports can import food availability and stabilize local food prices. Trade can improve access to various markets to boost producers' productivity and income in both exporting and importing countries.

Canada applauds FAO for its swift and effective emergency response to the global pandemic through analysis, policy guidance, adaptation and its fruitful collaboration with other Organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

As noted by the Director-General yesterday, we are glad to see that lessons were learned in 2008 and that to date countries have understood the dangers of resorting to export restrictions. The priority

themes were well identified, in particular data for decision making and trade and food safety standards are critical areas of focus for which FAO has clear comparative advantage.

Canada recognizes that recovery from the pandemic and the oncoming recession will likely affect livelihoods and access to food for the poorest and most vulnerable segments of the population. Women and girls have been disproportionately affected. It is critical that the response and recovery to COVID-19 be gender responsive, including technology, innovation and data.

We urge that analysis going forward continue to be as fact-based and neutral as possible. Canada continues engaging with the FAO and other partners to respond appropriately globally, regionally and at the country level. We commend FAO's efforts to promote coherence through the establishment of the FAO response and recovery programme with both short and long-term focus on seven priority areas of work.

Such programme recognizes the linkages between the health emergency, the food emergency and development, as well as between emergency resilience and development, including by strengthening the One Health approach, the use of data for decision making, ensuring an open, rules-based, non-discriminatory and predictable international trade and integrating the humanitarian response.

Canada looks forward to future updates on FAO's work in tackling the COVID-19 crisis and its consequences for food security and food systems and will appreciate the continued frequency and transparency.

Mr Yael RUBINSTEIN (Israel)

We would like to extend our gratitude to Mr Máximo Torero Cullen and his team for their hard work.

The spread of the COVID-19 pandemic threatens to reverse all long-term gains and the rights and prospects of women and children are neglected in the rush to find immediate solutions. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased vulnerability of women and children.

We need an Organization like FAO that can promote as well as engaging the people who have been left behind to fully participate and consult. The COVID-19 Food Coalition launched by the Government of Italy and led by FAO is an excellent example of how we can collaborate together to achieve greater results. Last week Israel donated money for the COVID-19 Food Coalition with the great faith that more countries will do the same.

In this historic moment we have the opportunity to re-shape the world into a just, equal and sustainable one. We believe that the COVID-19 pandemic provided an opportunity to work together as a single global village. Let the crisis be an opportunity and the lessons learned from the past and take actions to increase gender equality and the women's peace and security agenda.

Ms Lynn Marlar LWIN (Myanmar)

Could you please allow me to pass the floor to the Philippines as it will deliver the statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group and then let me take the floor after the Philippines?

Mr Domingo NOLASCO (Philippines) (Observer)

The Philippines has the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We thank the Secretariat for the informative update on the progress made and the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme. We particularly appreciate FAO's prompt response and sound policy advice aimed at minimizing disruptions in food supply chains and agricultural trade.

The health pandemic has evidenced the fragility and interconnectedness of current food and health systems. In several areas of the world, the health crisis turned into a food crisis and the state of food insecurity and malnutrition has significantly deteriorated, particularly in those countries previously hit by pest outbreaks, conflicts, natural catastrophes and in net food importing countries.

We commend the seven areas of action of FAO's Response and Recovery Programme and would like to comment as follows.

The Global Humanitarian Response Plan is the utmost importance to safeguard livelihoods, ensure food availability and stabilize access to food of vulnerable people, especially smallholders and family

farmers, women and youth, indigenous peoples and local communities. Agricultural trade is essential to grant food availability and access and we support FAO's contribution to advance regulatory cooperation towards the establishment of a fair, non-discriminatory and rule-based multilateral trade system.

The One Health approach and the foresight approach are indispensable to build resilient and healthy food systems and we fully support FAO's work in this regard, particularly in consideration of the need to prevent future zoonotic pandemics and also avoid the current pandemic to evolve into a pan-zoonosis.

Quality data is crucial for decision making and need to be collected and analysed in a reliable and consistent way in order to allow best management of the new circumstances. We urge FAO to provide technical support to enhance the capability of Members to collect, assess and monitor data to better respond to new emergencies that may occur in the future.

The Asia Regional Group welcomes the Food Coalition Initiative and supports FAO's work to strengthen agri-food systems. Global challenges require global response and joint action from multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral and multilateral mechanisms to facilitate resource mobilization, innovation and knowledge sharing.

We look forward to receiving more updates on collective efforts and outcomes in complementing FAO's relevant works in these areas, including information requested by the recent joint meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees on the resources mobilized for COVID-19 response, as well as regular updates on the impact of COVID-19 and the recent process to FAO's operations and its recommendation to exert efforts to strengthen internal control mechanisms, as undertaken by the World Food Programme.

Lastly, we highly commend FAO's efforts to transform this crisis into an opportunity and concur with the United Nations Secretary-General's approach to build to transform. FAO has an important role to play in providing technical assistance and expertise to enhance system wide perspectives, while addressing humanitarian responses, resilience and development efforts.

Therefore, we encourage FAO to continue this important work in close collaboration with United Nations and other relevant Agencies in an effort not only to build to transform, but also to build forward better in order to achieve FAO's vision of the four betters, better production, better nutrition, environment and life, and aligned with the 2030 Agenda.

Ms Lynn Marlar LWIN (Myanmar)

Thank you for facilitating our request and thank you for giving me the floor again. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Philippines on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. Myanmar would like to express its appreciation to Management for providing comprehensive updates of the FAO response to COVID-19.

We share the concerns about the rise of global hunger, even before the outbreak of the pandemic and now with the pandemic it may add 83 million to 132 million people to the total number of undernourished in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has disturbed the economic activities, which have significant impact on the poor's access to food and pose a great challenge to food security in many countries.

Myanmar has faced similar challenges and experienced delay of commodity flows, limited access to market, supply and demand imbalances and declines in exports, among others. All these have impact on our agriculture sector, which we can invest mainly in productivity.

Accordingly, the Government has adopted the COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (CERP) which allocates JPY 92.61 billion for rural development. This is in line with the policy recommendation made by FAO to ensure that vulnerable groups received help through social protection programmes and cash distribution.

Myanmar welcomes FAO's initiative in developing the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme with seven priority areas along with their recommended actions. We share the view that it

is very timely to address the fundamental issues of food systems by taking measures from immediate crisis mitigation to accelerated recovery and transformation.

Myanmar also supports the approach taken by FAO to use the data and analytical platform along with the matchmaking approach to partnership making as foundation for all of FAO's work, both at the national and regional level.

We are very pleased to learn that FAO is playing an active role in shaping and supporting the United Nations' Global Humanitarian Response Plan, while making sure immediate food assistance has reached to the needy ones. We would like to encourage FAO to continue providing the livelihood support, technical assistance and expertise for their long-term development and resilience.

Ms Koschina MARSHALL (Bahamas)

The current pandemic has increased the number of persons suffering from hunger and malnutrition and negatively impacted economies. With most of the region being net importers and heavily dependent on tourism, the region, under the guidance of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, developed a COVID-19 Risk Management Framework and action plan to protect the incomes and livelihoods of rural producers and to ensure access, affordability and stability to the food supply chains.

Member states have all developed COVID-19 national production plans, drawing on CARICOM's COVID-19 Framework. Given our present state, and as we aim to build back better, it is our hope that FAO would provide the following assistance: technical and financial support to Members in need of assistance to implement their action plans; innovative approaches to build inclusive and suitable agricultural and food systems using science and technology, bridging the digital gaps in rural populations; continue to support member states in designing, implementing and assessing recovery policies and programmes for the economic and social crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic; assist with proper access to and sustainable use of water for agricultural production; facilitate the mobilization of public and private investments and public/private partnerships for food system recovery and production of crops, livestock, fisheries, aquaculture, forestry and other non-agricultural rural activities, including those that drive demand for products derived from agriculture, such as tourism, including but not limited to the Hand-in-Hand Initiative; provide information, dialogue and collaboration between Members to deal with the crisis, including early information to dispel all doubts on the role of food in transmitting any diseases; support the introduction of new digital technology in agriculture and productive assets to better members' capacity to meet the growing needs of their population for safe and nutritious food; assist member states with the implementation of national operational plans aimed at developing inclusive and sustainable food systems with a focus on vulnerable groups and at-risk populations.

Recently CARICOM's Member Countries met to begin planning its ten-year strategy. The main goals were to develop strong economic growth, reduce poverty, improve quality of life and reduce environmental vulnerability. To achieve the 2030 Goals, the following critical component require attention: Sustainable food systems and food security; climate resilient agriculture; rural development focusing on youth employment and smallholder income generation; increased use of innovation and digital technology; improved agricultural data collection, statistical analysis and market information; creation of sustainable livelihood and incomes; increased inter-regional trade.

CHAIRPERSON

I must alert you that you have gone well beyond three minutes. Could you start concluding, please?

Ms Koschina MARSHALL (Bahamas)

Areas requiring assistance will include, but not limited to, agriculture insurance, innovation, technology, climate smart agriculture and mitigation. We will provide a detailed report for the record.

I thank FAO for the work it has done, and we look forward to working together in the future to build greater resilience to withstand pandemics using the lens of food and agriculture.

Sra. Rebeca CUTIÉ CANCINO (Cuba)

Felicitemos a la FAO por su rápida respuesta ante la pandemia de la enfermedad por coronavirus (COVID-19). Este Programa es fundamental para evitar que la crisis sanitaria se convierta en una crisis alimentaria. Agradecemos a Italia la propuesta de la Coalición Alimentaria, así como el apoyo recibido de varios Estados Miembros. La crisis de la COVID-19 ha generado múltiples perturbaciones en los sistemas alimentarios, con serias afectaciones en la producción de alimentos. La salud de los agricultores, el acceso a los insumos agrícolas, el acceso a los mercados, el empleo y los medios de vida rural. Es necesario que la FAO mantenga la vigilancia ante las disrupciones del comercio. También llamamos la atención sobre el apoyo que requieren los pequeños Estados insulares en desarrollo (PEID).

Apoyamos que la FAO fortalezca y amplíe el enfoque de “Una salud”. Estamos de acuerdo con la visión de reforzar la movilización de recursos en la FAO para este plan de respuesta. La actual crisis no se debe a una falta de alimentos. El crecimiento del hambre es un síntoma de un sistema alimentario deficiente, que ha permitido que millones de personas padezcan el hambre en un planeta donde se produce suficientes alimentos para todos. En el 75.º aniversario de la FAO y de la fundación de las Naciones Unidas, llamamos a hacer realidad el llamado de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo sostenible de no dejar a nadie atrás. La FAO debe mantener estrecha coordinación con los gobiernos para abordar las necesidades que puedan surgir en los diferentes contextos, previniendo los efectos a corto, mediano y largo plazo de la COVID-19, sobre todo en las poblaciones más pobres, así como en los países afectados por el cambio climático, los desastres naturales, los conflictos y las sanciones económicas y las medidas coercitivas unilaterales contrarias al derecho internacional. La pandemia ya ha cobrado más de un millón de vidas. Se impone cambiar los paradigmas de desarrollo que priorizan los intereses del mercado. Cuba mantiene un alto compromiso con el derecho a la alimentación para todos.

Ms Baoying ZHU (China) (Original Language Chinese)

We agree with the joint statement made by the Philippines on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

Responding to the negative impact of the COVID-19 on the global food system, FAO has taken timely and effective measures to cope with the situation. FAO developed the COVID response and recovery programme around the seven priority areas and through the Food Coalition, as well as other ways, FAO mobilized resources and technical ability to promote a unified global response.

We appreciate what FAO has done in response to the pandemic. We encourage FAO to continue to improve relevant measures and to respond to the crisis. In particular, to help developing Members to build their resistance and the resilient food system. At the same time, FAO should monitor and analyse the long-term impact of COVID-19 on the food systems and to help each member to proceed to the post-COVID food system transformation.

Ms Jeehan ALESTAD (Kuwait) (Original Language Arabic)

Kuwait has the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Near East Regional Group. Our group appreciates the content of this comprehensive document. The document presents FAO's response to COVID-19 and its impact.

In addition to other fundamental challenges, namely the African swine fever and the desert locust outbreak. We are happy with FAO's assessment of the developments in food markets and the recommended actions, particularly the state of food markets and the recommended policy responses in light of the pandemic.

The Response and Recovery Programme is clearly articulated by FAO adopting seven priority areas, addressing the impact of the pandemic on the vulnerable livelihoods in the context of food crises, ensuring as well quality data and analysis for effective policy support to food systems. This Programme will contribute to facilitating and accelerating the trade of food and agricultural commodities during the pandemic and beyond it. It will also enhance, among other things, the resilience of the smallholder farmers and it will protect the most vulnerable economies.

We fully agree with the International Food Coalition, which represents a major support to FAO's overall support in current and future times, thanks to its multi-stakeholder, multi-sector mechanism. The Coalition is capable also of ensuring the transformation of food systems.

We hail the participation of FAO in the framework of the United Nations response to the pandemic by supporting and drafting the United Nations global humanitarian response plan in collaboration with World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

In conclusion, we encourage FAO to continue its excellent work regarding the response to COVID-19 and looking well beyond.

CHAIRPERSON

Members, it is now past 17:30 hours and, as I mentioned in the morning, we were planning a third Session.

My suggestion would be that we break now and reconvene at 18:30 hours and then we will have a Session from 18:30 to 21:30 hours because we are far behind on the Agenda and we need to catch up. This is why I had mentioned in the morning that we will have this third Session.

May I adjourn?

Mr Paul OQUIST (Nicaragua)

We had a technical problem that is now fixed, could I give the presentation? We had sound problems previously, but now it is fixed.

CHAIRPERSON

No, but you are on the list with some other speakers and your turn on my list, the next speaker is Thailand and then yourself.

Could we take it up when we reconvene because otherwise our break would never take place? As I said, we would break now and reconvene at 18:30 hours.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

I could understand that we are well behind the schedule and I am not insisting that we should stop now, although it is at 17:30 hours which was on the timetable. But, if we take a one-hour break, then we will continue for the next three hours, in our time zone it is going to be 05:30 hours. It is not very realistic.

I hope that you can make a bit of consideration to that situation. For example, instead of the one-hour break, maybe we can take 15 minutes or 20 minutes or half an hour, something like that, and another three hours we can accommodate, but a one-hour break and three hours continuous work is not very realistic for us.

CHAIRPERSON

Japan, we realize the difficult position which you are in. However, as Argentina explained yesterday, when there were the Regional Conferences, they had this problem of time zones. Unfortunately, this is what we are faced with. It is the different time zones.

I would give it to Members, but Members have been in session since 14:30 hours. A fifteen-minute break and then another three and a half hours or three hours.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

I would understand and I am trying to accommodate this problem and difficulties. I am not insisting that we should stop now, but at least we can shorten the break from the hour break to half an hour or something, and instead of another three hours, maybe we can do another two hours or something like that? I wish you would understand. It is up to the Members, but I do not see much necessity for taking a one-hour break at this moment, given the situation.

CHAIRPERSON

Members, can I have your view?

Sr. Federico ZAMORA CORDERO (Costa Rica)

I agree with Japan. Why do we not just keep on going and stop at 20:30 hours. The hour we are going to stop, we can work it all through and stop at 20:30 hours instead of 21:30 hours. I do not know why we have to stop. Just keep on going.

Mr Paul OQUIST (Nicaragua)

This is the position of Nicaragua also. We are completely prepared to finish this and there is not much more to go, so why stop now. We agree with Japan and Costa Rica.

CHAIRPERSON

I have just been informed that we need at least half an hour break to organize the interpretation. So, we need a little break to get the team of interpreters on board.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Iba a decir esto, justamente lo que usted acaba de decir, que entiendo que por una cuestión de organización de recursos humanos seguramente iba a haber un problema con el cambio de intérpretes, pero solamente para ello y para continuar apenas estén listos los intérpretes del nuevo turno, poder recomenzar y tratar de terminar lo antes que se pueda. Pero yo creo que, en realidad, hay un gran trabajo de los intérpretes que hay que valorizar y agradecer y que es lógico que haya un cambio de guardia como habitualmente ocurre en estas reuniones.

Así que, en la línea de lo sugerido por mis colegas preopinantes, pero reconociendo que tenemos que esperar que los nuevos intérpretes se hagan cargo de sus puestos.

CHAIRPERSON

The meeting is adjourned, and we will reconvene at 18:10 hours.

The meeting was suspended from 17:41 to 18:10 hours

La séance est suspendue de 17 h 41 à 18 h 10

Se suspende la sesión de las 17.41 a las 18.10

CHAIRPERSON

I have my next speaker is Thailand. Thailand, you have the floor.

Ms Supajit SRIARIYAWAT (Thailand)

Thailand aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Philippines on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

Thailand appreciates FAO's prompt response on the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme. We commend adoption of a comprehensive bottom-up assessment approach to identify the pandemic's impact on food supply chains for trade and markets.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the fragilities and weaknesses of recurrent food and healthcare systems. It is proof that the resilience of our food systems and agricultural sectors need to be strengthened and we believe that each country has developed lessons learned and practices to meet national specific context.

Thailand has adopted social protection and relief measures through the implementation of the principle of Self-sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) and the concept of a new theory of agriculture. The principles are aimed to minimize vulnerability of smallholder farmers, to promote sustainability, food security and nutrition, both at community and national level. The measures encourage family farmers to increase food production and enhance their entrepreneurship, focusing on shortening the food supply chains.

From the COVID-19 pandemic, we have learned that strong local food systems will grant resilience as through food self-sufficiency and self-reliance. We still continue implementing the Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs) activities to transform food systems and agriculture towards increased sustainability, in order to ensure that our people have access to affordable healthy diets.

With regard to the seven areas of actions of FAO's Response and Recovery Programme, Thailand would like to highlight the need for quality data for decision making. We request FAO to enhance country capacity in data collection methods and analysis to conduct evidence-based policy for post-COVID-19 economic and social recovery.

We also stress the need to strengthen the One Health approach and mutual resources management at all levels. We request FAO to provide technical support on safety measures and standards for agricultural and food products to prevent the spread of trans-boundary animal and plant pests and diseases from border trade.

Thailand welcomes the Food Coalition Initiative and supports FAO's work to transform our agri-food systems. In response to this crisis, we need strong cooperation to support each other. We will continue collaborating with FAO and member states through the South-South Cooperation and Hand-in-Hand Initiative. Together we can transform the food systems to be resilient and sustainable for all.

Sr. Paul OQUIST (Nicaragua)

Agradecemos a la Secretaría por la presentación del documento *CL 165/5 Respuesta de la FAO a la pandemia de la enfermedad por coronavirus (COVID-19): construir para transformar*. En primer lugar reconocemos los esfuerzos realizados por la FAO por haberse ajustado y activado rápidamente ante la inesperada pandemia de COVID-19.

Cuyas repercusiones podemos en estos momentos considerar en parte, sin la certeza del impacto real que tendrá en los próximos años en la economía mundial y en los sistemas alimentarios y, por consecuencia, en la lucha de la erradicación del hambre y de la pobreza. En 75 años desde la fundación de nuestra Organización, nunca antes nos habíamos enfrentado a retos de esta magnitud por lo cual la FAO, los organismos multilaterales, la comunidad internacional juntos con los Miembros compartimos estos desafíos y la responsabilidad histórica.

Tomamos nota del informe presentado por la Secretaría, el llamado a la movilización internacional transparente, coordinado, responsable que complementa los esfuerzos nacionales dirigidos a prevenir los contagios por COVID-19 y a preservar nuestras economías. Consideramos que FAO debe continuar proporcionar el proceso de evaluación país por país y región por región, identificando las amenazas que afectan la disponibilidad de alimentos entendiendo que fenómenos destructivos, recurrentes, ocasionados por el cambio climático afectan aún más nuestro sistema de respuesta y a la seguridad alimentaria.

Acogemos con satisfacción las diferentes acciones a emprender por FAO - como el Programa de respuesta y recuperación a la condición alimentaria la cual es considerada en un ámbito más amplio - deberán exactamente relacionarse con la iniciativa Mano de la mano. En este sentido, invitamos a la FAO a gestionar y movilizar recursos adicionales, incluso considerando modelos alternativos y a trabajar con mayor coordinación con los países [XX].

Finalmente agradecemos a FAO por haber logrado, a pesar de la pandemia, a realizar con éxito las Conferencias Regionales. Con todas y cada uno de ellas se ha abordado de forma exhaustiva las perspectivas de nuestros países en relación a la actual pandemia y las transformaciones necesarias post COVID-19.

Solicitamos, por lo tanto, a la Dirección tomar nota de los resultados y orientaciones de estas Conferencias Regionales, pues contienen efectivamente nuestra visión de cara a las necesidades más urgentes a corto y mediano plazo.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Siempre hemos dicho que es muy importante visibilizar los efectos concretos en el terreno de la labor de la FAO. Y el trabajo realizado, y el que se está realizando durante la pandemia del COVID-19 es muy relevante.

Los decisores de política pública de nuestros países tomaron muy en cuenta el trabajo de la FAO. No solo es útil, sino es imprescindible. Los datos, la comunicación, la alerta temprana a cualquier disrupción del comercio, el reconocimiento a aquellos países que mantuvieron la cadena alimentaria desde la producción hasta el transporte y el comercio internacional, son todos elementos en que la FAO ha colaborado en momentos muy difíciles para nosotros.

Ya no es necesario pedir la palabra para sensibilizar a los Miembros a que entiendan que la pandemia está haciendo estragos en América Latina y el Caribe como en otras regiones del mundo. Y si hay alguna experiencia que podemos ir obteniendo de esta tragedia es la necesidad de invertir en desarrollo, en aumentar las capacidades de los países en desarrollo, en construir un fortalecimiento del rol de los gobiernos para que la recuperación sea sólida, inclusiva y sostenida.

El COVID-19 vino a visibilizar las inequidades socioeconómicas preexistentes, por eso es que apoyamos desde el Grupo de los 77 más China que el Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) 10 tenga un rol de pivote en la nueva Estrategia de la FAO para la colaboración con el sector privado. No podemos asumir a la inequidad socioeconómica que existe como un dato normal del sistema. Es un escándalo.

Por otra parte, coincidimos, en este sentido, en lo afirmado en el documento respecto del rol central del comercio internacional, especialmente para mejorar el acceso a los alimentos y los ingresos de los productores. Por ello, alentamos a la FAO a continuar trabajando en pos de favorecer el normal funcionamiento de las cadenas agrícolas, no solo durante la pandemia sino también en la fase posterior para que la recuperación sea sólida, inclusiva y sostenida, incluyendo a las referidas cadenas.

Celebramos la creación de la Coalición alimentaria promovida por Italia en tanto mecanismo que busca respaldar los esfuerzos de los países para cumplir el ODS 2 y otros ODS conexos. Estamos dispuestos a empezar nuestras conversaciones con Italia para evaluar la posibilidad de empezar a trabajar juntos.

Ms Pernilla IVARSSON (Sweden)

I deliver this statement on behalf of the Nordic countries, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and my own country, Sweden. The European Union (EU) countries, Denmark, Finland and Sweden, align themselves with the EU statement.

The COVID-19 crisis demonstrates just how crucial multilateral action and institutions are to our health, prosperity and security. We want to reiterate our appreciation of FAO's quick and effective response at the outset of the pandemic and continued efforts to mitigate the increased food insecurity starkly highlighted in the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2020 Report.

We support FAO's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme with the seven areas of work and trust that FAO's role in the global response will only grow in importance as the world gradually transitions to the recovery phase.

As raised by other delegations, it is our firm belief that the One Health approach is instrumental to effectively responding to the ongoing pandemic and in preventing the escalating adverse effects of future zoonotic diseases.

Rest assured that the Nordic countries remain a committed partner to FAO in this time of crisis.

Mme Jeanne DAMBENDZET (Congo)

Le Nigéria et le Congo font cette déclaration au nom du Groupe régional Afrique.

La pandémie de Covid-19 a plongé le monde dans une crise sans précédent. L'incertitude qui règne sur les marchés alimentaires, la faible croissance économique et l'instabilité des marchés, la peste porcine africaine et la résurgence catastrophique du criquet pèlerin sont des défis majeurs, qui s'ajoutent aux menaces et aux chocs liés au changement climatique.

Il est urgent donc d'accélérer la transformation des systèmes alimentaires pour éliminer la faim et toutes les formes de malnutrition, de redresser les inégalités, qui interdisent l'accès à une alimentation saine, et de réduire l'impact des systèmes alimentaires sur la biodiversité, les ressources naturelles, les

écosystèmes et le climat, dans le respect des trois piliers du développement durable. Aujourd'hui, nous sommes invités à l'action afin de construire pour transformer les systèmes alimentaires.

La FAO doit aider les pays à mettre en place des systèmes alimentaires sûrs et efficaces, qui soutiennent l'agriculture des petits exploitants et réduisent la pauvreté et la faim dans les zones rurales et urbaines. Convaincus que le défi de la sécurité alimentaire reste lié à l'accès aux aliments, plus qu'à leur disponibilité, il est donc indispensable de prendre des mesures visant à augmenter la disponibilité des aliments nutritifs sur les marchés alimentaires locaux, nationaux et régionaux, en termes de qualité, de quantité, de diversité et d'accessibilité, pour permettre à tous de bénéficier d'une bonne nutrition et d'une alimentation saine, grâce au renforcement des systèmes alimentaires.

Nous saluons le programme FAO d'intervention et de redressement dans le contexte de la Covid-19 et les principales mesures qui ont été déployées dans sept domaines, sur la base des besoins et des priorités des pays.

Nous félicitons la FAO pour les travaux qu'elle a réalisés en matière d'alerte rapide et de collecte de données et d'informations aux fins de la prise de décision.

Nous souhaitons souligner l'importance du renforcement de l'approche «Une seule santé», l'utilisation des données aux fins de la prise de décision, l'importance d'un commerce international ouvert, réglementé, non discriminatoire et prévisible, et l'intégration de l'action humanitaire.

Nous apprécions les recommandations pratiques sur les mesures à prendre pour résoudre les problèmes qui découlent de la pandémie, ainsi que du rôle majeur que la FAO joue en facilitant la coopération mondiale et les interventions conjointes, faisant intervenir divers acteurs et partenaires.

Nous appuyons la réalisation des analyses et des évaluations pour déterminer les lieux où les initiatives ont produit de meilleurs résultats, tout en mettant en lumière les faiblesses. À cet égard, les efforts consentis seront orientés vers le renforcement des capacités afin d'accélérer le redressement.

Nous reconnaissons l'urgence et l'importance de mener une action mondiale coordonnée pour empêcher la crise sanitaire actuelle de se transformer en crise alimentaire. Nous prenons note de l'inauguration officielle de la Coalition en faveur de l'alimentation, qui vise à faire face aux difficultés liées à la Covid-19, ainsi que de sa plateforme en ligne qui rassemble des données et des informations sur les besoins et les exigences des pays.

La pandémie a montré le caractère stratégique des secteurs qui rentrent dans le mandat de la FAO. Nous félicitons la Direction pour le laborieux travail accompli face à la crise. Nous sollicitons des informations sur les ressources mobilisées pour faire face à la Covid-19, ainsi que des comptes rendus réguliers sur ses répercussions et sur les risques qu'elle fait peser sur les opérations de l'Organisation.

Monsieur le Président, en vous exprimant toutes nos félicitations, nous vous assurons de notre appui et de notre engagement à soutenir l'action de notre Organisation commune pour des lendemains meilleurs.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO (Malaysia) (Observer)

Malaysia aligns itself with the Asia Regional Group statement delivered by the Philippines. On the onset, Malaysia would like to acknowledge the excellent work and the leadership of the Director-General of FAO, and the Management of FAO to leverage FAO's technical expertise and international standing to raise awareness, disseminate knowledge and delivery with concrete actions since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Malaysia would like to express its support to the Global Humanitarian Response Plan, which is expected to address the impact of COVID-19 and safeguarding livelihoods in food crisis contexts. We recognize that ensuring continuity of the critical food supply chain for the most vulnerable populations is critically important and of most importance.

Malaysia also supports the One Health approach and the foresight approach which is crucial to build resilient and health food systems and we fully support FAO's work in this regard.

Malaysia also welcomes and fully supports the proposal by Italy on Food Coalition, together with FAO as one of the important platforms to address the challenges of food security due to the COVID-19 pandemic and we look forward to working with Italy to further develop this initiative.

Finally, Malaysia appreciates FAO's efforts to work together with WFP, IFAD and the six other United Nations entities and International Food Policy Research Institute to develop the system wide perspective that informs the Secretary-General's policy brief on the impact of COVID-19 and food security and nutrition.

Ms Liz NASSKAU (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland would also like to thank FAO for this document and to thank colleagues for the very interesting and useful discussion, both this afternoon and during the Joint Meeting Meeting last month of the Finance and Programme Committees.

We very much endorse the Joint Meeting recommendations, and we would like to take this opportunity to underline the importance of FAO's work on early warning and working to ensure collection of data for decision making.

We would also like to join others in welcoming Italy's commitment to the Food Coalition as a priority also in the context of the Italian led G20 next year. It is also the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland's G7 Presidency next year and we are looking forward to closely working together with Italy and all members in the run up to the 26th Session of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) at the end of the year.

We would also like to highlight the importance of the Joint Meeting's recommendation on this Item and to urge the Council to reflect that in our conclusion. That is the request for regular updates on the impact of COVID-19 and the risks that it poses for FAO's operations. In particular, we welcome the endorsement on the recommendation to strengthen internal control systems in response to challenges around the operating environment and the challenges and risks brought about through the COVID-19 situation.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France) (Observer)

La France s'aligne sur la déclaration de l'Union européenne et de ses 27 États membres. En quelques mois, la pandémie de Covid-19 a touché et continue de toucher des millions de personnes. Jamais dans l'histoire récente nous n'avions été confrontés à un choc si brutal et massif. Sa singularité tient évidemment à son extrême gravité et à l'ampleur de ses conséquences dans tous les domaines.

Cette crise agit comme un formidable révélateur, elle met à jour la nature des défis auxquels la communauté internationale doit faire face depuis plusieurs années et qui demeureront demain des tendances lourdes avec lesquelles nous devons continuer à composer. Avec la Covid-19 nous avons été et continuons d'être tous frappés, sur tous les continents.

Face à ces défis, les réponses doivent être collectives et concertées. Cette crise nous rappelle les trois impératifs qui devraient nous guider face aux défis mondiaux d'aujourd'hui.

L'impératif de coordination d'abord, l'impératif de coopération ensuite, et enfin l'impératif de solidarité. Il est essentiel, comme le souligne la FAO, que la communauté internationale soutienne et tienne compte des besoins particuliers des régions et des populations les plus vulnérables, notamment en Afrique.

La France salue l'engagement et les moyens mis en place par la FAO dans la gestion de cette crise systémique sans précédent. Elle a su dès les premiers instants s'adapter et montrer la pertinence de son action dans la préservation de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale. Nous l'encourageons à tirer les enseignements de la gestion de la crise.

Nous devons envisager les moyens les plus efficaces pour reconstruire en mieux. À cet égard, la crise a en particulier rappelé les liens étroits qui existent entre la santé animale, humaine et végétale. Elle a démontré le besoin d'actions concrètes, qui traitent de manière intégrée les facteurs d'émergence des maladies zoonotiques, et l'importance de renforcer l'approche «Une seule santé», à l'image de la coopération tripartite entre la FAO, l'Organisation mondiale de la Santé (OMS), l'Organisation

mondiale de la santé animale (OIE), mais également le Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement (PNUE). Nous remercions à cet égard la FAO pour son engagement dans le Conseil d'experts de haut niveau «One Health», dont la création a été annoncée le 12 novembre, à l'occasion du Forum de Paris sur la paix. Ce Conseil d'experts de haut niveau aura pour charge de collecter et de diffuser des informations fiables et indépendantes, fondées sur des faits scientifiques, sur les liens entre la santé humaine, animale et l'environnement.

La pandémie a aussi montré le lien étroit entre la disparition des habitats, notamment forestiers, et l'apparition des zoonoses.

Nous soulignons par ailleurs l'importance du renforcement de la collaboration de la FAO avec les autres organismes des Nations Unies et avec le Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale, y compris en prenant en compte les rapports du Groupe d'experts de haut niveau.

Nous souhaitons par ailleurs continuer de travailler étroitement en vue de la présidence italienne du Groupe des Vingt (G20).

Enfin, comme l'ont souligné plusieurs intervenants précédents, il est important de porter une attention particulière à la question de la collecte, du traitement, de la confidentialité et de la propriété des données, et nous rappelons, de nouveau, la demande de la Réunion conjointe du Comité du Programme et du Comité financier que, de manière générale, la FAO développe une politique transversale des données, et nous remercions le Secrétariat de l'inclure dans le rapport de ce Conseil.

Ms Teresa TUMWET (Kenya) (Observer)

Kenya aligns with the statement by Congo on behalf of the Africa Regional Group on this Item of FAO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, rebuilding to transform. We recognize FAO's engagement in the development of the United Nations framework for the Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19 in collaboration with the member states.

Kenya has experienced many shocks to food and nutrition security in the recent past, including floods, droughts and desert locust invasion and the pandemic has only made the situation worse. Indeed, Chairperson, there is a real threat of another desert locust invasion. While we first and foremost thank FAO for working closely with the Government to combat the invasion in December 2019, which was the largest in 70 years, we request collaboration in strengthening Institutional and other capacities.

CHAIRPERSON

That brings to an end our list of speakers. I now invite the Chairperson of the Programme Committee and the Chairperson of the Finance Committee to make some remarks on the discussions that have taken place.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of the Programme Committee)

Given the late hour, I will be very brief because I think the discussion in the Joint Meeting was along the same lines as we have seen this afternoon and this evening.

I think the Joint Meeting characterized the COVID-19 as not only unprecedented, but also among the worst global crises in the last recent years. I think it complemented FAO for its work and appreciated the actions taken by FAO. I think one of the elements which came clearly in the discussion was that it also called for analysis and assessment of where and why efforts had been most successful or most challenging.

I think that is also important for lessons learned on how we can support the countries who need it the most in tackling this unbelievable crisis. I think it acknowledged the global coordinated action, which is needed to support countries and, last but not least, it encouraged FAO to enhance measures and actions, including and not limited to linkages to the Hand in Hand Initiative, which would address the [XX] and build back better. I think also they stressed the need for extra-budgetary resources to assist the country.

CHAIRPERSON

I am told we do not have the Chairperson of the Finance Committee with us, so I will go to my next speaker. I will request Mr Máximo Torero Cullen to respond to any of the comments which were made.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

Thank you for all the comments and the support that we have been receiving from all the Members of FAO.

As all of you recognize, we have been extremely active in working in all fronts because these are very complex crisis. It is not a supply and demand shock, but it is also a crisis that has affected all the countries in the world. It has something very special, which is any containment measure to reduce the curve of COVID-19 as a consequence in terms of increasing the economic recession, what we call a trade-off.

As much as we try to flatten the dynamic curve, we increase the recession and that is a big problem to be able to move forward from this crisis. As a result of this, we will be facing one of the deepest recessions in history as the Chairperson of the Programme Committee has mentioned. This means that we will have a significant potential financial crisis and a potential recovery and an 'L shaped' recovery curve and not a 'D' or a 'U shape', like we expected before.

FAO, as all of you have recognized, we have worked in several dimensions. We have brought all the technical expertise we could together with our partners and international standing to raise awareness of the dissemination of knowledge, really concrete action, including joint statements with our Organizations, World Health Organization (WHO), World Trade Organization (WTO), World Bank, World Economic Forum, World Food Programme (WFP) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

We developed a dedicated website with more than 70 analyses and policy brief documents on the various aspects of the pandemic impact, as well as a series of tools to help governments to track policies, track export restrictions, track news. Every day we keep updating those tools so that we are in the frontier, like for example what we presented last week. We have now the tool that is tracking financial situations in financial banks which could be affecting the economy of the poorest countries, which is our area of emphasis.

We work with all regions and our country offices to do country assessments and action plans for recovery and we are actively working with them to be able to assess situations and where we can learn from the best practices, where we can learn from mistakes, so that we can keep improving.

We will continue working on country capacities through all our tools and country offices. For this we are using the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and also South-South Cooperation and any form of Triangular Cooperation.

As you mentioned, we also launched the plan of the comprehensive COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme for immediate and medium-long-term actions to prevent the health crisis becoming a food crisis. The Programme aims to support countries to build back better, but this requires action and that is where we need to move faster and not as slow in our capacity of response. We need to strengthen long-term resilience of food systems and livelihoods, addressing socio-economic impact of the pandemic and reflecting the three pillars of sustainable development.

Up to now, the Programme has mobilized more than USD 183 million through voluntary contributions and Technical Cooperation Programmes. This is around 15 percent of the needed resources since the launch of the Programme five months ago.

We have also launched the Food Coalition, an initiative proposed by the Government of Italy and led by FAO, with the participation of key and strategic partners. The Food Coalition supports the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme by raising awareness, mobilizing financial resources, technical expertise and innovation. We hope you will keep supporting the Food Coalition so that we can really convert it into a platform of action on FAO.

FAO serves as a neutral leader and convenor of the Food Coalition, using its expansive network of country offices to ensure that the views and needs of countries and national partners are fully prioritized.

Now the question is where we are moving in the future and what the actions that we are aiming for. Actions need to be important because we need to increase resilience of food systems and it means, as we have been explaining, minimizing risks and increased capabilities to cope with risks when they occur.

The second element is the one that will aid us to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, SDG 1 and SDG 10, which is central as it was mentioned by many of you.

To minimize risk, we continue to improve our early warning systems and we have been working intensively in trying to bring all the elements of early warning, not only prices, stocks, commodities, but also bringing in climate issues and bring in zoonotic diseases and pests and diseases together so that we can have a fully integrated and comprehensive early warning system, which we hope will allow us to have more predictive power in the future. We want to keep improving and being in the frontier.

The One Health approach, as promoted with FAO, World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and WHO to prevent the emergence of new zoonotic reservoirs from the current COVID-19 pandemic and increased access to agricultural insurance, combining index-based insurance solution and access to finance, as it was nicely presented by Queen Máxima of the Netherlands in our big conference a few days ago. Normally we neglect the importance of access to finance for smallholders and this COVID-19 has also exacerbated the situation and we believe it is essential to be able to push for that.

To cope with risk, we have to focus on Social Protection Mechanisms to support access to food for the poor and those whose income is most affected and here, again, we need to keep innovating to be able to target the most vulnerable and to be able to adapt the Mechanisms of Social Protection Programmes so that they deliver what is needed right now. Here is where we are combining tools of traditional Social Protection Mechanisms with also valid work programmes that will allow us to bring productive action and results of what we do.

We need to align incentives and bring evidence on what is the impact of subsidies and what can be resurrected to support commodities that will be more nutritious. We need to use trade to boost farmers' productivity and income and part of our job is to try to find ways in which we can show the importance of trade, reduce non-tariff barriers through improvement of food safety and also improve access to markets. We need to link value chain infrastructure with initiatives to the financial systems. We need to link what we do in infrastructure to the financial systems so that we can boost productivity of farmers.

Finally, use technology wisely to support investment and digital innovations in food and agriculture, which have shown that has a significant impact. Again, digital technologies can only play a role if we comply with elements which are central, which is good content, good access to all, not increase the digital divide, and good connectivity, but also capabilities and that is again the capacity building and one of our core accelerators, which are the complements which bring all these elements together.

Let me finalize, we need to keep accelerating our work to make possible to convert this crisis into a real opportunity for the Agri-Food system transformation and the only measure we have to do right now is to keep acting and keep moving forward with the countries.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, I think that is the end of the discussions, so I can make my conclusions on this Item, which will be put on the screen.

Item 5, FAO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic: building to transform.

1. The Council welcomed document CL 165/5: FAO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic: Building to transform and;

- a. Appreciated FAO's work on early warning, collection of data and information for decision making, policy recommendations provided to address the challenges posed by the pandemic and FAO's strong role in facilitating global cooperation and joint actions among diverse partners and stakeholders;
- b. Supported further strengthening of the One Health approach, expanding the work on data for decision making and intra-regional trade in addition to an outcome assessment so as to focus build back better efforts to enhance resilience and contribute to accelerated recovery;
- c. Noted the information on the official launch of the Food Coalition in response to challenges posed by COVID-19 and urged global coordinated action to avoid the current health crisis from becoming a food crisis;
- d. Encouraged FAO to enhance measures and actions, including through linkages to the Hand in Hand Initiative that would address the impact of the pandemic, in particular to assist countries to strengthen their resilience and build back better; and
- e. Looked forward to information at its 166th session with regard to the resources mobilized (voluntary contributions and technical cooperation programme) for the COVID-19 response, as well as updates on the impact of COVID-19 and the risk it poses to FAO's operations and recommended efforts to strengthen internal control mechanisms.

That is the end of my conclusions. I now open the floor for Members.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

Thank you, Chairperson, and to countries that supported the programme of FAO Food Coalition. May I ask, if I can, to add after, "noted the information," in subparagraph (c), at least, "noted with interest the information on the official launch." At least, "noted," I would very much like, "welcomed," but I understand it is stronger, so I thank you very much.

Sr. Mario ARVELO (República Dominicana)

Sobre lo que acaba de decir la embajadora de Italia, realmente mi delegación estaría muy de acuerdo con que el Consejo pueda decir que le dio la bienvenida, porque escuchamos a numerosas delegaciones tratar este tema. Es una enorme contribución que se está haciendo a la lucha de los Estados Miembros, en particular de los países en desarrollo para superar la situación por la que estamos pasando a consecuencia de la pandemia.

Mi delegación entiende que el Consejo podría mostrar más alegría y de alguna manera demostrar con un lenguaje más positivo este hecho que todos vimos durante la Plenaria.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I would like to suggest a new subparagraph (a) that reads, "Commended FAO for its immediate and articulated response to the current crisis, within its mandate and in close coordination with other United Nations entities."

Then, after the new subparagraph (b), I would like to suggest a new subparagraph. Perhaps this subparagraph has to be put somewhere else. I will read it and then we will have to see where it fits best. "Expressed concern for the major increase in acute and chronic food insecurity and malnutrition caused by the COVID-19 pandemic." It may actually be this would be a good first subparagraph to be followed then by, "Commended FAO..." I am flexible there.

Then after subparagraph (c) I would like to suggest, "Stressed the urgency to address the pandemic's multiple negative effects on food systems with a holistic approach which strives to accelerate the transformation of food systems towards more sustainable and resilient models."

CHAIRPERSON

I think we will follow our previous procedure. We will go subparagraph by subparagraph, otherwise we may run into difficulties.

Would you agree that we move subparagraph by subparagraph? I believe there is no comment on paragraph one, so new subparagraph (a)?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

No tenemos inconveniente en la lógica planteada por el embajador de Alemania sobre el párrafo, pero yo ya me expresé también en mi intervención. Preferimos plantear que las situaciones críticas y graves expresadas, mencionadas en ese párrafo no son causadas sino agravadas y debidas a la pandemia del COVID-19.

O sea, queremos poner luz en que hay una situación grave previa que está siendo agravada, debida, como consecuencia de la pandemia. “As a consequence or due to the”. Agravada y visibilizada por la pandemia del COVID-19.

CHAIRPERSON

Subparagraph (a), with this revised wording. Is everyone okay with it?

We move to new subparagraph (b). I see no request.

Subparagraph (c)?

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

In recognition of comments, including ours, we would propose an addition to subparagraph (c), after the semi-colon, “called for Strengthened Protection of Data and Intellectual Property Rights in this regard.”

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

I am sorry to drive you back to subparagraph (b), it is just that there is a word missing which we wanted to add, “with other United Nations entities and Regional Bodies,” because we have had so many discussions organizations with the African Union in regard to COVID-19.

CHAIRPERSON

We now go to subparagraph (d).

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

No, Chairperson, it is subparagraph (c). If we can add something on (c), just after “early warning.” We can add something like, “and early action,” “early warning and early action.”

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

Our concerns regarding this new added subparagraph really revolve around the fact that we do not have a definition for a holistic approach or even food systems. Therefore, I would propose that we would have, “stressed the urgency to address the pandemic’s multiple negative effects on food systems.”

I would argue that adding in a holistic approach, I fear that there is just not an agreed definition of what is a holistic approach. One possible alternative could be “emphasizing the need for the three dimensions of sustainability, economic, social and environmental sustainability.” That would be one option, but perhaps, “stressed the urgency to address the pandemic’s multiple negative effects on food systems, emphasizing the three dimensions of sustainability, economic, social and environmental.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Para reaccionar positivamente a lo propuesto por la representante de los Estados Unidos de America y para sugerir un subpárrafo adicional antes de ese subpárrafo voy a proponer un “wording”, y lo haré en inglés. Es como un subpárrafo aparte. Sería un nuevo subpárrafo (e). “Acknowledged the importance of an open, rules based, not discriminatory and equitable international trade, in order to assure the well-functioning of the food supply chains.”

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

First, I would like to support what the United States of America amended. It makes sense and it is more general and accommodates what we meant.

I also support the Argentine insertion of the new subparagraph, given that trade has an important role in this context.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Coming back to the proposal of my distinguished American colleague, since she has a problem with the holistic approach or the terminology “holistic approach”, I would suggest that we delete what is in brackets with “the holistic approach, which strives to accelerate the transformation of food systems”, and we leave it to “stressed the urgency to address the pandemic’s multiple negative effects on food systems towards more sustainable and resilient models, emphasize”, no, just delete what is in the brackets until “towards” and then the rest can stay as it is.

With regard to subparagraph (e), the suggestion of our Argentinian colleague, I would suggest to replace, “equitable” by “predictable”, which I think is the agreed language of the Report in the Joint Meeting. If I am not mistaken, it is subparagraph (c).

Sr. Gonzalo EIRIZ GERVÁS (España)

Simplemente queríamos apoyar la solución de compromiso que acaba de aportar Alemania para los subpárrafos (d) y (e), sobre todo, teniendo en cuenta el lenguaje acordado.

CHAIRPERSON

We move forward with the wording of a new subparagraph (d) and new (e). I think we can.

We move to the next subparagraph (f).

Sr Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

La palabra « equitable » que fue incluida en nuestra propuesta se basa en el ODS 17.10, que es absolutamente acordado universalmente. Promoting universal rule-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system.”

Creo que los ODS reflejan ese lenguaje acordado. Esa sería la lógica por la cual propuse ese texto.

CHAIRPERSON

Germany, would you have a comment on what Argentina has just said?

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

No, I do not at this point because I have to look it up, but we were sticking to the language of the Joint Meeting before, so I do not know why we should not stick to this language now.

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

Just to say that we support the language of the Joint Meeting, which we too have recalled was using the word “predictable” instead of the word “equitable”. We do not want the word “equitable”. We prefer “predictable”.

CHAIRPERSON

The extract of the Joint Meeting does use the word predictable.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Dos cuestiones para ser discutidas. La primera, insistir que no entendemos cuál es el problema con incluir el lenguaje acordado en los Objetivos de Desarrollo sostenible (ODS) porque es algo que está acordado por todos, por lo tanto, creo que los ODS son un poco más importantes que lo que se haya consensuado en los diferentes comités de la FAO. Me parece que es un tema más fuerte. Podríamos perfectamente poner “predictable and equitable,” pero reitero, creo que lo que intentamos es simplemente fortalecer los ODS y ese es el lenguaje acordado en los ODS. Esa es mi primera reacción. Yo pondría que una solución de compromiso es poner “predictable and equitable,” para poder respetar el lenguaje que está establecido en los ODS.

CHAIRPERSON

Germany, United States of America, would you like to comment on that?

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

We would prefer to stick with the language used by the Joint Meeting and use the word “predictable” by itself.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I would refer to the European Union delegation because in trade matters the Commission has the competence. I indeed would also prefer the language of the Joint Meeting, but this is something the European Union delegation would have to decide in the end.

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

I think we can go both ways. If we stick to the text in target 17.10, because it reads, “promoting universal rule-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable modular for trading system under the World Trade Organization, including through the inclusion of negotiations under its Doha Development Agenda”.

I would say we can, of course, go along the text that we had from the Programme Committee as it was there. I am not sure why it is now disappearing, because it is not. This is now basically part of the quote of the target and then put into a new context. In that sense I would prefer the language as the United States of America and as Germany have already indicated.

CHAIRPERSON

Argentina suggestion of using both words would not be acceptable to the European Union?

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

Well, it is put into a new context. For that reason, I would need more time to look at that, but I would definitely prefer to have the language of the Joint Meeting as it is on the screen.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Mi intención no es hacer una discusión *in aeternum* de esto, simplemente estamos citando un Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) que está universalmente acordado por lo cual yo sugeriría continuar con el trabajo de los demás artículos y que sigamos repensando este tema porque es un ODS acordado universalmente.

Invito a que todos los Miembros puedan recordar la lectura de ese ODS para ver que estamos simplemente, no dando una opinión, sino citando el 17.10. Por eso para no frenar el proceso de párrafo por párrafo, podemos dejarlo esto para continuar de retomarlo al final o en el momento que usted determine.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Argentina. Let us go to subparagraph (f). I see no request for the floor.

We can move to subparagraph (g).

We can move to subparagraph (h).

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I would like to propose very minor amendments starting with this subparagraph. We started with, “welcomed FAO Response and Recovery Programme and encourage FAO to enhance”. I would like to propose here, starting with, “welcomes establishment of FAO’s Response and Recovery Programme” and you can move, “encourage” and delete it from the beginning.

CHAIRPERSON

Any other comment on subparagraph (h)? I see none.

We can move to subparagraph (i). I see no request or comments.

We can go back to subparagraph (e) which we still have to agree. Can we have some views on this so that we can move forward?

Ms Pernilla IVARSSON (Sweden)

Given the discussion we had yesterday, I think we would go along with using the words from the Joint Meeting because that is something that we seem to be able to agree on. We would prefer that.

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

Same here.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Nosotros siempre hemos tenido una posición absolutamente constructiva y la seguimos teniendo. Nosotros no vamos a interrumpir este proceso que está tratando de fluir lo más rápido que podamos, pero no entendemos cómo podemos estar en contra de un Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) que es universalmente acordado. Quiero solamente sensibilizar a los Miembros sobre que es un antecedente muy negativo no estar de acuerdo en este contexto, o sea desconocer el acuerdo universal sobre los diferentes ODS.

Mi posición sigue siendo constructiva como siempre. No voy a forzarlo, a demorar más tiempo con esto. Yo prefiero el texto que está propuesto originalmente por nosotros con la palabra “predictable” y no a lo que refiere el ODS Joint Meeting. Si estamos de acuerdo con eso, yo estoy dispuesto a terminar la discusión aquí.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

I am not participating actively in the debate, but I am following with attention the whole afternoon. I would just like to comment that if we are going to establish a comparison between the Office of Support to Decentralized Offices (OSD) and the very wide international participation in the whole process with the Joint Meeting, with all due respect, I guess the first one would have some priority over this comparison.

The other aspect, I would like to remind our colleagues, dear delegates, that “predictable” and “equitable” are not equivalent expressions. Of course, everybody understands this. It is not a matter of preference. We are discussing or representing very different qualities for what we are trying to describe here.

CHAIRPERSON

Argentina, did I understand correctly that you are willing to go along with the wording of the Joint Meeting?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Creo que es muy útil y muy importante lo que acaba de decir el embajador de Brasil porque nosotros hemos demostrado siempre una gran flexibilidad. Lo que me preocupa es ser flexible respecto de un Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) porque allí es donde creo se vaya a crear un antecedente complicado.

De todas maneras, repito, si no hay posibilidad de llegar a un acuerdo, yo mantendría nuestra propuesta original y permitiría llegar a un acuerdo sobre el texto

“Acknowledge the importance of an open, non discriminatory, predictable international trade in order to assure the well-functioning of the food supply chains”. Pero repito, es un antecedente muy complicado, el hecho de no reconocer un ODS universalmente acordado por todos los miembros. Me parece que es un punto importante llamar la atención de los que estamos. Yo no voy a bloquear, pero simplemente quiero llamar la atención.

Entonces, el texto es el que está en el subpárrafo (e), en el cual solamente quisiera sacar la palabra “equitable” y mantener “predictable international trade”.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for your cooperation, Argentina. With that we agree to the concluding remarks.

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

May I ask the Secretariat to put in the deleted text once again? The Joint Meeting and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) quote that you had there.

I would then suggest the following, that we start with the text from the Joint Meeting, “emphasized in particular strengthening the One Health approach, the use of data for decision making, ensuring a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization (WTO)”.

If we go for a reference to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17, target 17.10, then we should take the text from there. If then there is also the wish to reference the Doha Development Agenda, then we should do this as well, but then we take the entire quote.

CHAIRPERSON

European Union, Argentina had agreed to that, the original wording which had been proposed which had been supported by Germany and the United States of America. Argentina has agreed, so I do not think we should go back and reopen the question, because with Argentina’s cooperation and his agreement to the original text, we have agreed. Therefore, if we put this new text in, the whole debate will start again.

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

I do not understand. If we have reference text from the Joint Meeting and we add exactly the part Argentina has asked for, what is now the problem?

CHAIRPERSON

European Union, Argentina withdrew that. So, it was no longer on the table because Argentina’s last statement was that he withdrew that.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Primero quiero reiterar que la norma de un Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) mata cualquier otro tipo de informe de un comité de la FAO. Nosotros, por una cuestión de flexibilidad, nuevamente, mantenemos el texto que hemos propuesto originalmente y sacamos equitativo para poder llegar al acuerdo con lo planteado por Alemania y Estados Unidos de América para evitar una discusión adicional.

Pero si la Unión Europea vuelve a plantear el tema, volvemos al punto original de lo que dice el ODS y de allí no nos movemos porque es universalmente acordado el lenguaje. Es universalmente acordado. De un nivel más alto que cualquier otro tipo de acuerdo que se haya hecho en un comité en la FAO.

Entonces, es simple. Somos flexibles con esas condiciones y si no aceptamos todos ser flexibles, bueno, entonces, lamento, volvemos al punto original de su propuesta. Estoy en sus manos de acuerdo a lo que usted indique. Pero, repito, esa es nuestra posición, flexibles con limitaciones.

CHAIRPERSON

European Union, can I address you before I give the floor to other speakers, because Argentina very positively agreed to the text which Germany and United States of America (USA) were supporting. That is what I was saying. Since Argentina showed flexibility and cooperation and agreed to the text, which Germany and USA were supporting, then to put a new text on the table opens the question again. I see I have got six speakers on the line again.

Therefore, would you agree that we go along with the original text which Germany proposed, USA supported and, finally, to show cooperation, Argentina also came back to support it. Could I go ahead

with that text? Because I have got six speakers and the whole question is open again. Argentina is not asking for the text of the SDG to be included.

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

Please go ahead with the text of subparagraph (e) as it is now.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, European Union.

Sr. Federico ZAMORA CORDERO (Costa Rica)

No quiero entrar en discusión sobre el término que se utilice en ese inciso en discusión pero sí quisiera dejar plasmada mi preocupación y la de mi delegación porque sin razón alguna se está excluyendo lenguaje ya acordado, como bien lo dice mi colega de Argentina, de los Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) y que eso es algo que está por encima de cualquier otro comité o cualquier otra reunión que se haya pactado.

Eso me parece muy grave, muy peligroso y quisiera dejar constar mi preocupación independientemente. Me parece muy admirable la posición de Argentina con flexibilidad con tal de seguir adelante con esto, pero no quisiera quedarme callado ante un atropello que se está haciendo contra el lenguaje acordado de los ODS.

CHAIRPERSON

Costa Rica, what does that mean? Do you want to insert that wording?

Mr Federico ZAMORA CORDERO (Costa Rica)

No, I was just saying my preoccupation, because some Members are not accepting the official language of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is just a manifestation of worry.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

We would like to commend your leadership and we support the voting in front of us and let us move forward please.

CHAIRPERSON

We are moving forward because Members have shown, especially Argentina, a very cooperative attitude. We have agreed on this Item and we can go to the next Item now.

Item 6. The Hand-in-Hand Initiative

Point 6. Initiative Main dans la main

Tema 6. La Iniciativa Mano de la mano

(CL 165/6)

CHAIRPERSON

The next Item is Item 6, *the Hand-in-Hand Initiative*. The relevant document is CL 165/6, the introduction by Mr Máximo Torero Cullen, Chief Economist, has been circulated to you. This Item was also discussed in the 129th Session of the Programme Committee.

Introduction to Item 6: The Hand-in-Hand Initiative

Mr Máximo Torero Cullen, Chief Economist

In response to the request of Members of the Programme Committee (PC 128) and FAO Council (CL 164), a summary of the Hand-in-Hand (HIH) Initiative's implementation progress between June and October 2020 has been prepared (c.f. document CL 165/6).

As of 20 November 2020, 30 countries have started to engage with the Hand-in-Hand Initiative: Afghanistan, Angola, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guatemala, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malawi, Mali, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Rwanda, Solomon Islands, Syria,

Tajikistan, Tuvalu, Yemen and Zimbabwe. This number is expected to increase rapidly in the coming weeks until a first target of 50 countries has been reached.

The HIH Geospatial Platform was officially launched in July 2020. FAO engaged a number of technology companies and public data providers, as well as other UN Agencies, research institutions and space agencies to build the geospatial platform. This work is ongoing, but more than 8 000 users from 123 countries now access the platform each month. The platform's model-based analytics and territorial approach help policymakers pinpoint areas of opportunities and identify trade-offs that stymie progress. A "train the trainers" approach is being implemented to enable Members and staff to use the HIH Geospatial Platform. FAO has established a data lab within the Statistics Division to validate country data and fill data gaps.

While FAO data platforms are designed as global public goods, rules and mechanisms have been put in place to protect Member data, which FAO has been requested to keep confidential. Documentation of the protocols governing the handling, use and protection of data is being developed for review by the end of the first quarter of 2021.

HIH programme dashboards, consisting of data visualizations with the most current data inputs from implementing partners, are being developed. The dashboards will provide country-specific as well as aggregated information on the programmes designed in each country, the progress toward implementation (objectives and key results) and programme impacts measured against Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outcomes. The dashboards support alignment and create transparency for all partners, enable improved coordination and communication, and track progress toward intermediate milestones and ultimate objectives. The dashboards will support consultation among partners to address emerging operational bottlenecks. They will ensure government control and mutual accountability among the partners. The prototypes will be available before year-end.

FAO has launched a robust partnership-building effort to engage non-state actors including research institutions, non-governmental organisations and non-profit civil society organizations, private philanthropies and private-sector entities, all within the same dashboard-supported transparency, coordination and accountability framework.

The HIH "matchmaking" presents an important innovation in FAO's approach to partnership building. Early examples include joining forces with Mars, Inc. to test and publish, as global public goods, models for predicting aflatoxin outbreaks in order to improve food safety, protect small producer incomes and livelihoods, and boost food security and nutrition. Participation of all partners is arranged based on programmatic requirements with the specific consent of the national government. The matchmaking approach will lead to sustained programmatic work that results in knowledge creation and sharing, capacity development, and accelerated joint action towards achieving the SDGs.

Key decisions about partner participation within the HIH framework rests with the national governments as well as each of the partners invited through the matchmaking process. FAO support is built from the ground up, with FAORs coordinating communications with the FAO Member Nation. Focal points at national, regional/sub-regional and headquarters levels and a representative of the FAO Investment Centre form the backbone of programme support. Overall supervision is led by the Chief Economist (DDCE) with support from the Director of the FAO Investment Centre (CFI), the Senior Officer responsible for the Global Network against Food Crises (OER), and the Senior Officer responsible for Governance and support to Hand-in-Hand (DDCG).

CHAIRPERSON

I open the floor for Members' comments.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

It is just a suggestion; I think we can commend ourselves for making a move forward and progress in these discussions. The next Item is a very important one, and I think it requires a lot of time, it is a heavy Item.

Given the difficulty in the time zone differences, I would just like to suggest that we stop now and go back to this new Item tomorrow morning. But of course, we respect the Chairperson's judgement and our colleagues' judgement. It is just a suggestion.

CHAIRPERSON

Japan, as I have said before I sympathize with this difficulty of the time zone, but if we keep moving in this fashion, we will not finish our work. We will have to work evening Sessions every day.

I put this question to the Members. We are stuck with these virtual meetings and there are various time zones. There is not just one time zone and we are behind our Agenda. At this rate, you will have to work evening Sessions every day, otherwise you will not finish.

My suggestion is we continue, because that is what we agreed, we will break for 20 minutes and come back. We have still got a lot of items left and I have a huge list of speakers on this Item.

Mr Paul OQUIST (Nicaragua)

We already agreed a half-hour break and then to continue the session. That was the agreement.

CHAIRPERSON

I think we will have to carry on. Japan do you want to take the floor?

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

It was just a suggestion, of course I will fully respect your decisions and our colleagues' decisions.

Ms Jeehan ALESTAD (Kuwait)

I would like to gently request to follow the speech to Sudan as a speaker for the region.

Ms Saadia Elmubarak Ahmed DAAK (Sudan) (Observer) (Original language Arabic)

Sudan would like to take the floor on behalf of the Near East Group with regards to the Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

First and foremost, the Near East Group would like to convey its appreciation to the efforts of FAO in order to accomplish the strategic objectives aiming at achieving sustainability and preserving natural resources.

FAO has strived to establish the right mechanisms in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. We fully value the Hand-in-Hand Initiative launched by the Director-General in order to accelerate the transition necessary for a better rural transformation therefore eliminating poverty and hunger and all forms of malnutrition.

The Near East Group would like to commend FAO for this Initiative. It is indeed a special Initiative. It is unique and it creates an environment able to assist governments, because they will not only be users of this Initiative, they will be partners and they will be also monitoring this Initiative. This Initiative will benefit the most vulnerable, and it will focus on productivity in the field of agriculture. It will improve production, productivity and nutrition.

The Near East Group insists on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative being able to build capacities. This is particularly important; it is also necessary to create the capabilities to build the agricultural sector according to the priorities of the given country. We insist on the need for countries to also benefit from the platforms created by FAO. We also appreciate this innovative tool in order to gather resources. We also appreciate the possibility of all forms of resources being dedicated. We insist on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative also helping towards better access to markets. We encourage better collaboration and work with the various international and regional organizations.

The Near East Group looks forward to clear data to measure performance so that the Hand-in-Hand Initiative will be measured according to a clear dataset. Furthermore, we believe that work on the regional and national level is of paramount importance if we are to succeed in the Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

The Near East Group would like for the Hand-in-Hand Initiative to expand so that it encompasses countries impacted by conflicts, particularly those countries that suffer because of chronic and acute malnutrition and undernutrition.

The Near East Group would hope for the Hand-in-Hand Initiative to be a successful one so that nobody is left behind.

Ms Yael RUBINSTEIN (Israel)

The Hand-in-Hand Initiative is an essential element for the movement towards Agenda 2030, guided by FAO. There are two key issues that are at the heart of the Initiative which are important for us to know today.

First, the use of the technology and innovative solutions for the improvement of lives and livelihoods in one place, using methods and best practice from another. Implementation of technology could alter the way challenges are tackled and offer new solutions where innovative thinking is needed.

Second, the ability to appropriately match two countries or more, is a clear added value of FAO. We are all doing it and working bilaterally or even trilaterally, but of course doing it through FAO has much more potential and could have greater impact.

On a practical level we are eager to know what the expectation for Members is. How do we continue from here? We are convinced this is time to act. Israel will be honoured to be the very first country to take part as a pilot in the Initiative. We could offer our knowledge, expertise and technology in various fields such as water management, desert agriculture, livestock management, irrigation, meal production, food safety regulations, emergency response and others. We look forward for a mutual exchange of knowledge and expect to learn a lot from this matching.

By starting the pilot, we will all be able to learn from our failures as well as from our success. The success of this platform and the accumulative knowledge and data would allow for the best possible matching, and the guidance towards understanding the needs, the best chance for collaboration and the relevant solutions. Nevertheless, it is important for us to emphasize one challenge that we think we should handle very carefully right from the start, and obviously we mean data protection and privacy.

It is important to identify which safety and security measures are in use in order to protect the existing and future data stored and used by FAO.

Mme Joséphine OUEDRAOGO (Burkina Faso)

Le Burkina Faso et le Sénégal s'expriment conjointement au nom du Groupe régional Afrique sur le point 6 de l'ordre du jour, relatif à l'Initiative Main dans la main.

Tout d'abord, nous tenons à féliciter le Secrétariat de la FAO pour l'excellent document qu'il a produit, fournissant au Conseil des informations exhaustives sur l'état de mise en œuvre de l'Initiative en tentant de répondre aux interrogations des pays membres sur divers sujets.

L'Initiative Main dans la main, lancée en octobre 2019, est sans doute l'un des premiers actes forts posés par le Directeur général pour matérialiser sa vision d'une FAO dynamique et flexible, et nous sommes heureux de constater qu'elle est bien alignée sur l'objectif de l'Organisation, qui est de contribuer à atteindre la sécurité alimentaire pour tous, en assurant l'accès de tous à une nourriture suffisante, saine et régulière.

Nous saluons l'engagement du Directeur général pour la mise en œuvre de sa vision et l'assurons de notre plein soutien dans sa volonté de transformation de l'agriculture et de renforcement du développement durable par l'agriculture durable.

Par ailleurs, nous nous réjouissons de l'approche assignée à l'Initiative consistant à mettre en relation les pays bénéficiaires avec des donateurs, des organisations du secteur privé, des institutions financières internationales, des instituts de recherche et des organisations de la société civile afin de concevoir et réaliser des programmes adaptés à chaque situation locale.

Nous notons avec satisfaction l'adhésion suscitée par l'Initiative auprès des pays membres et invitons la FAO à prendre en compte et étudier avec célérité le désir d'un nombre croissant de pays africains

d'en être bénéficiaires. À cet égard, tout en reconnaissant la pertinence des choix opérés ayant permis de retenir 44 pays bénéficiaires lors de la phase de lancement de l'Initiative, nous suggérons que la FAO élargisse la base des critères d'admissibilité des pays pour en maximiser l'impact à travers le monde.

Sur la question des données, nous saluons l'accès accordé à tous à la plateforme géospatiale de l'Initiative lancée en avril 2020. Ceci favorisera un partage des données entre tous les Membres et partenaires, et renforcera les capacités nationales en matière d'analyse et d'intégration des données, condition *sine qua non* pour l'évaluation des programmes. C'est pourquoi nous saluons l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre des protocoles de la FAO sur la sécurité d'accès et d'utilisation des données.

Nous encourageons la Direction à accélérer son travail sur la mise en place d'une base de données infranationale avec les activités des donateurs dans les secteurs de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture. En fait, une base de données sur les activités des donateurs. Par ailleurs, nous espérons que le programme prioritaire de formation des formateurs, qui sera lancé bientôt pour améliorer la maîtrise des protocoles de sécurité d'accès, ainsi que les programmes qui suivront, couvriront un large éventail de pays africains intéressés.

Les principes directeurs du cadre d'analyse de l'Initiative Main dans la main, décrits dans le document, nous paraissent tout à fait pertinents. Il faut cependant poursuivre la réflexion sur leur affinement pour prendre en compte d'autres éléments tel que le rôle des populations bénéficiaires dans l'analyse des résultats des programmes. Le Groupe africain se félicite de ce que la gouvernance de l'Initiative et de ses programmes soit conçue pour intégrer les acteurs nationaux des pays bénéficiaires dans une démarche coordonnée et transparente.

Nous nous réjouissons du schéma de partenariat public-privé, qui inspire la formulation des programmes Main dans la main, et du rôle d'appui qu'entend jouer la FAO dans leur impulsion et leur mise en œuvre à partir des pays hôtes.

Notre Groupe attend avec intérêt de recevoir davantage d'informations sur le rôle précis de tous les acteurs, qui seront mis en relation dans la conception et l'exécution des programmes, ainsi que sur les tableaux de bord élaborés aux fins de suivre et de communiquer de façon transparente sur la mise en œuvre de l'Initiative.

Avec ces commentaires, Monsieur le Président, le Groupe régional Afrique renouvelle son attachement à l'Initiative Main dans la main et à sa mise en œuvre à grande échelle.

Sra. Diana INFANTE QUINONES (República Dominicana)

Al acoger el informe *Iniciativa Mano de la mano*, resaltamos la relevancia de la Iniciativa para acelerar los avances hacia el logro de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible y los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS). Celebramos el enfoque colaborativo basado en el uso de nuevas tecnologías, innovación y datos geoespaciales. Como nos hemos comprometido a no dejar a nadie atrás, proponemos que se compartan elementos de la iniciativa con los Miembros que aún no están dentro de la misma, como la utilización de la plataforma geoespacial y el análisis de datos. Esta propuesta es un reflejo del acuerdo de los Ministros de América Latina y el Caribe reunidos en el 36.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para América Latina y el Caribe, que solicitaron a la Organización para que los países que aún no están incluidos en la Iniciativa, cito, “i) facilite la aplicación del enfoque y de las herramientas de dicha Iniciativa, [...] movilizand o contribuciones voluntarias para tales efectos; ii) amplíe el alcance de la Iniciativa a más países de la región, incluyendo a los países en desarrollo, de renta media y alta”.

Mi delegación que brindó su apoyo a la Iniciativa desde las presentaciones iniciales de su lógica y alcances, tanto en Roma como en Nueva York, desea reiterar el extraordinario valor que la Iniciativa aporta a los países en ruta de lograr los ODS y en el marco del mandato de la FAO.

Sr. Paul OQUIST (Nicaragua)

Agradecemos a la Secretaría por la presentación del informe y la información sobre los avances relativos a la Iniciativa Mano de la mano. Nicaragua considera la cooperación, la complementariedad y la solidaridad como instrumentos necesarios e indispensables para el desarrollo de los pueblos. En

este sentido, reconocemos en la Iniciativa Mano de la mano una oportunidad de cooperación eficaz e innovadora que incorpore el apoyo a asistencia técnica necesaria para los países para mejorar la calidad técnica y la eficiencia de los programas y proyectos destinados a promover una transformación social y productiva sostenible en las poblaciones rurales.

Compartimos el contenido del documento, en particular el numeral dos y sus subpárrafos en relación a una nueva visión holística para apoyar la demanda de los Miembros respecto a la agricultura y la alimentación. Reconocemos que la actual pandemia de COVID-19, sumado a otras emergencias previsibles, como aquella relacionada a los impactos del cambio climático, de los cuales los países centroamericanos seguimos siendo víctimas, pondrá a dura prueba en los próximos años las capacidades de respuesta de nuestros países.

En este sentido, como iniciativa global permanente, la Iniciativa Mano de la mano debería incorporar a un número creciente de países beneficiarios y que así lo requieren en un contexto tan cambiante e incierto.

Para abordar los múltiples objetivos relacionados con la Agenda 2030 de Desarrollo Sostenible, en especial los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) 1 y 2, es necesario que FAO mediante esta Iniciativa siga involucrando a diversos actores que permitan garantizar por una parte, una adecuada movilización de recursos, y por otro favorecer los medios de [unintelligible 0:47:18] necesarios para reducir las brechas de desarrollo que afectan a los territorios rezagados, principalmente en las zonas rurales.

Finalmente, son muchos los ámbitos de sectores relacionados con la alimentación, la agricultura y la nutrición en donde la Iniciativa Mano de la mano puede contribuir. Instamos a FAO a que en todas estas iniciativas se reconozca el rol protagónico de las mujeres y jóvenes rurales, y se [unintelligible 0:47:51] mejores oportunidades.

Para finalizar invitamos a la FAO a tomar nota de los resultados de las Conferencias Regionales. Los países de América Latina y el Caribe hemos apostado por un mayor alcance de la Iniciativa y a que se incluyan los países en desarrollo de renta media y alta, [0:48:13] la aplicación del enfoque y las herramientas de dicha Iniciativa.

Con estos comentarios, felicitamos a FAO por los esfuerzos realizados hasta la fecha y esperamos contar en futuro con información sobre los avances de la Iniciativa y los resultados sobre el terreno.

Sr. Federico ZAMORA CORDERO (Costa Rica)

Costa Rica celebra el progreso realizado respecto a la Iniciativa Mano de la mano hoy presente en seis países de América Latina y aprovecha la oportunidad para recordar la urgente necesidad de que la Iniciativa se extienda también a los países en desarrollo de ingresos medios y altos a fin de garantizar que nadie se quede atrás. Esto de conformidad con lo solicitado por otros órganos de la FAO y según lo que se acordó en el Informe del 36.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional de la FAO para América Latina y el Caribe (LARC 36).

En estos momentos es imperativo que la FAO trabaje con más urgencia que nunca por facilitar la cooperación técnica en las inversiones dada su capacidad de transformación. Las comunidades más vulnerables, muchas de ellas en América Latina y el Caribe, no podrán alcanzar los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) sin el apoyo y la cooperación técnica y económica necesarios para erradicar el hambre y la pobreza extrema. Por eso es esencial llevar esta Iniciativa a muchos otros lugares.

Por su carácter asociativo, la Iniciativa Mano de la mano es la respuesta ideal a un contexto globalizado. Si juntos nos vemos afectados por distintos retos, juntos podemos construir las respuestas necesarias para atender estos retos. Por eso, Costa Rica recuerda el llamado que se plasmara en la LARC 36 para flexibilizar la implementación de esta Iniciativa, fomentar la cooperación entre miembros y fomentar el trabajo de la FAO para promover la articulación entre los niveles y sectores de gobierno y otros actores para consolidar canales de cooperación.

No quisiera cerrar esta participación sin antes aprovechar para recordar que el impacto transformativo que la cooperación internacional ha tenido en mi país y cómo estas experiencias han permitido que al

día de hoy Costa Rica sea poseedor de un importante cúmulo de fortalezas técnicas y capacidades listas para poder compartir con países en desarrollo.

Como un actor de rol dual, con un perfil tanto de receptor de cooperación internacional como de oferente, nuestro gobierno ha sistematizado su cartera de oferta técnica incluyendo, entre ellos, el catálogo de oferta de cooperación técnica de Costa Rica en materia de agricultura y alimentación, catálogo desarrollado con la asistencia de FAO y otras instituciones del país y que ponemos a disposición de la Organización y de sus Miembros para explorar la posibilidad de compartir en el marco de la Iniciativa Mano de la mano estos conocimientos con otros países en desarrollo.

Ms Mietani CHAUKE (Zimbabwe)

Zimbabwe associates itself with the statements delivered by the G77 and China Group as well as the statement delivered by the Africa Regional Group.

Zimbabwe is one of the first countries where the Hand-in-Hand Initiative was introduced. This started with the launch of the AgrInvest Project in November 2018. The Hand-in-Hand Initiative was officially launched on the 27 November 2020, making Zimbabwe one of the eleven African countries where the Initiative is being implemented. Significant progress has been noted in value chain analyses which will lead into the development of Sector Development Plan Agreements. Zimbabwe is grateful for this, and it is optimistic that this Initiative will be extended to other needy countries, which is important as we are all collaborating to end the scourge of hunger.

The Hand-in-Hand Initiative contains all the tenets of a programme geared towards true agricultural transformation through the implementation of enabling policy environment, promoting appropriate investment, and innovative tools and approaches. State-of-the-art technologies, such as the Geospatial Data Platform, that aims to deliver key information for decision-making, is a sterling example. It is our belief that such innovations will contribute to Zimbabwe's Vision 2030, which is informed by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Malabo Declaration, in particular, attaining Zero Hunger and halving poverty by 2030.

In Zimbabwe, we consider the Hand-in-Hand Initiative as most appropriate, as described by the Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Water and Rural Resettlement of my country as, "a credible poverty alleviation initiative". Our Hand-in-Hand theme for Zimbabwe is: "Hand-in-Hand Initiative, building purposeful collaborative partnerships to end Poverty and Hunger in Zimbabwe".

I mentioned it this afternoon and I reiterate that most of the people in Zimbabwe live in rural areas. Out of the 16 million people, two thirds of them live in rural areas. Slightly over half of them are women and nearly two-thirds of them are a young population which is below the age of 25. In this regard, it is the Government of Zimbabwe's view that the implementation of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and the creation of value chains for grain, edible oil and beef will economically empower the rural population of small holder farmers and family farmers, especially women and youth, from a life of subsistence farming to one of sustainable livelihoods.

In conclusion, Zimbabwe wishes to express its appreciation for the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and welcomes the close collaboration with the FAO in our shared goal of alleviating poverty and the attainment of the SDGs, which also enshrined in the country's Vision of attaining Upper Middle-Income Economy status by 2030.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States.

The EU and its Member States are fully committed to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and we stand ready to support and participate in all actions that can bring us closer to that objective. Due to the pandemic, the 2030 deadline has become even more challenging. Our actions will therefore have to be even more carefully tailored and implemented in order to be effective. This is also true for the Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

Hence, we thank FAO Management for the further information on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative provided in the background document and for responding to a number of our previous questions and

concerns, such as the need to increase the focus on strengthening capacity-building measures in beneficiary countries in order to allow them to make full use of the Initiative's potential.

In particular, we also welcome the information on FAO's data policy and privacy mechanisms and the development of the documentation on the protocols governing the handling, use and protection of data for review by relevant units in the first quarter of 2021. We look forward to the presentation of this important issue in the governing bodies. In this regard, we appreciate the launch of the Geospatial Platform and the coordination with the Statistics Division to help identify opportunities and improve data quality.

There are, however, certain points that we do not see fully reflected in the background document yet. While there is a reference to closely working with the UN Resident Coordinator and other UN entities at the beginning of the document, the presentation on the Inception Phase and the Governance, in which the roadmap for the initiation and implementation of the Initiative is presented in detail, focuses very much on the work done within FAO. It is not very clear at what point, and in which manner, the UN Resident Coordinator, other partners and development actions are integrated into the process in order to create synergies and avoid duplication. We would appreciate further information on this point, and we recall the importance for the Initiative to be fully integrated into the joint programming of the UN Development Group Agencies and the 2030 Agenda.

We recognise the need for the Initiative to focus on enhancing agriculture productivity in a sustainable manner to improve food security and nutrition and raise rural living standards. Digitalisation and innovation will be of critical importance in this regard. In order to ensure that the future partnerships can resort to and benefit from all forms of innovations it is essential that innovation is defined broadly and understood as science- and/or evidence-based solutions and dealt with in a sustainable manner. All projects under the Hand-in-Hand Initiative should contribute to protecting biodiversity, genetic resources and natural ecosystems; effectively implementing the One Health Approach; as well as promoting diverse innovative approaches, including Agroecology.

Furthermore, while we appreciate and encourage the involvement of the private sector in the Initiative, it is crucial that certain standards are met so as to protect FAO's integrity and independence. For reasons of time, we do not want to repeat the points made under Item 4 on the Private Sector Strategy. However, we reiterate their importance and stress the need for the development and the implementation of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative to be aligned with the new Private Sector Strategy.

To conclude, we look forward to deepening the discussion on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, in particular its governance and budgetary aspects and its potential implications for FAO's organisational structure in the context of the Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023. We reiterate our commitment to working closely with FAO on further shaping the initiative as an additional means of contributing to the achievement of the SDGs within the limits of FAO's mandate.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

Italy aligns itself with the European Union (EU) statement and I would like to add some comments.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlights the importance of collaboration, partnership and leveraging knowledge. In this context, we consider the FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative could play an important role in ending poverty and hunger and meeting the agreed goals under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We are aware that partnership, innovation, data, technology and inclusiveness are at the core of the initiative, which could help develop inclusive food systems and could ensure farmers have access to financial services.

In the framework of the FAO actions against the effects of COVID-19 crisis on agriculture and food security, we believe that the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, together with the COVID-19 response programme and the COVID-19 Food Coalition will help building stronger and more resilient food systems in the post-COVID-19 environment.

We appreciate that the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and the Food Coalition are both based on two web-based platforms that can strengthen and promote new and innovative interactions between FAO members and all the relevant stakeholders. We believe in the importance of a coordinated action

among the FAO COVID-19 Response Programme, the Food Coalition and the Hand-in-Hand Initiative. We are ready to give our contribution in order to reach such a target.

Sr. Gonzalo EIRIZ GERVÁS (España)

En lo relativo a la Iniciativa Mano de la mano, quisiéramos destacar los siguientes puntos. Lo primero, por supuesto, es manifestar nuestro total apoyo a la intervención de la presidencia alemana en nombre de la Unión Europea y sus Estados miembros.

Por supuesto, agradecer también a la FAO y a su colaboración con los Miembros en la aclaración de las posiciones y dudas presentadas. Y, en este sentido, también acogemos con agrado la información sobre la política de datos y los mecanismos de privacidad de FAO esperando la presentación de más información sobre ellos ante los órganos de gobierno.

Subrayamos, asimismo, la necesidad de asegurar una colaboración más estrecha con otras iniciativas que persigan objetivos similares con el fin siempre de evitar la duplicidad de esfuerzos con el consiguiente malgasto de energías y de recursos. Consideramos, así mismo, de gran utilidad avanzar en esta iniciativa de la mano del Programa Mundial de Alimentos (PMA) y del Fondo Internacional de Desarrollo Agrícola (FIDA) y otras instituciones del sistema de las Naciones Unidas lo que permitiría un enriquecimiento de las ideas. En este sentido resulta, desde nuestro punto de vista, necesario especificar debida y detalladamente qué mecanismos de colaboración se prevén.

Agradecemos el lanzamiento de la plataforma geoespacial y la coordinación con la División de Estadística (ESS) para ayudar a identificar oportunidades y mejorar la calidad de los datos contribuyendo, de este modo, a mejorar la orientación y la adaptación de las intervenciones en materia de políticas, de innovación, financiación e inversión y de reforma institucional. Animamos, asimismo, a FAO a incorporar la innovación en todas sus formas, en los programas de la Iniciativa Mano de la mano, puesto que se necesitan todos los avances posibles para lograr los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS).

Para terminar y respecto a la participación del sector privado, recordar lo necesario del respeto de este sector a los principios y valores de Naciones Unidas, actuando siempre bajo el criterio de la transparencia y priorizando su labor en pro de las comunidades y personas más vulnerables y, de modo particular, a las mujeres, los jóvenes del medio rural en todo el mundo.

Mr Shoaib SARWAR (Pakistan)

Pakistan has the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Asia Group.

We thank the management for the progress report of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative (HIHI) covering the second and third quarter of 2020.

We reaffirm the Initiative as evidence-based, country-owned and country-led that brings together beneficiary countries with donors, private sector organizations, international financial institutions (IFIs), research institutions and civil society organizations to mobilize means of implementation that support accelerated actions to realize Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 and SDG 2.

We recognize the six principles of the Initiative and urge the Management to fully adhere and implement those principles in an equal and balanced manner. While noting that 27 countries have begun engagement with the Initiative, we expect more countries can be engaged.

We recognize the importance of data and the capacity building for countries on data gathering, classification and analysis. In this regard, we welcome that the Geospatial Platform of the Initiative is open for all available resources to all Members with immediate effect. We appreciate that currently a training programme is being organized to address the diverse needs of FAO Members as well as FAO teams in the country and regional offices to familiarize the standards and protocols of the Platform.

We recognize that the Geospatial Platform is a crucial tool accessible to all stakeholders to help advance all efforts to create more resilient food systems post-COVID-19 and a foundation for the full range of activities to promote agricultural and rural transformations that support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

While noting the platform's model-based analytics and territorial approach that will, *inter alia*, generate scenarios that quantify and visualize the impact of alternative courses of action, we underline that this is conducted with the national authority dealing with statistics and in line with national priorities of the related country.

We welcome the steps taken to ensure that FAO's data governance is compliant to international standards, and subject to ongoing internal oversights. We support the documentation of the protocols governing the handling, use and protection of data and urge that this document is made available to Member States as part of FAO's accountability.

We note with appreciation the efforts to promote and facilitate partnerships, including with private philanthropies, private-sector entities, civil society organizations, universities and research institutions, through innovative problem-solving matchmaking at country level. We underline the need to consult the host government at every stage of this endeavour. We also underline the importance of these efforts to be fully in line with the FAO's New Strategy for Private Sector Engagement and the Evaluation of FAO's Civil Society Partnership Strategy.

We welcome the description of steps taken in the inception phase of the Initiative at the country level and emphasize the importance of transparency of this process to the related national government.

We appreciate that the governance of the HIHI programmes is supported.

Ms Tin Myo NWE (Myanmar)

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Pakistan on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We wish to thank the Management for the progress report of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, and we are glad to learn that the initiative aims to address many limits of international development assistance projects.

We further welcome the six principles adopted by FAO in developing and implementing the Hand-in-Hand analytical framework and we share the view that these guiding principles will better strengthen country's ownership and leadership in designing sustainable development programming.

We have noted how the Initiative prioritized the countries and currently the initial engagement has begun with the 27 countries and Myanmar also responded to the FAO outreach by expressing our interest to take in the Initiative and we are waiting for further communication from the FAO in this regard. We hope that the Initiative will engage more countries, including Myanmar.

With regards to the geospatial information platform, we noted the appreciation that it is accessible to all stakeholders and a train-the-trainers approach is being implemented. We wish to encourage FAO that the trainings are also made available to all Member States, especially to those on the ground.

While expressing our appreciation to the Management for providing updates in implementing the Initiative, we wish to encourage FAO to include feedback and evaluation from the beneficiary countries in this next report and update.

Ms Baoying ZHU (China) (Original Language Chinese)

We go along with the statement made by Pakistan on behalf of the Asian Group. We are happy to see that since the Initiative was launched various policy information has been continuously improved and an increasing number of countries have come on board.

FAO, through measures such as geospatial information platform, is continuously providing its support. This is helpful for the realization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which we extend our congratulations to.

We have noticed that the Initiative is country led and country owned. We support that FAO fully respects the wish of all parties involved and continuously strengthens partnerships through matchmaking. We encourage the Secretariat to maintain the current good practice and to regularly update member states of the progress made in this regard.

Mr Asmarhansyah ASMARHANSYAH (Indonesia)

Indonesia aligns itself with the group statement delivered by Pakistan on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. Indonesia welcomes the information provided to date on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative (HIHI), including the most recent information presented in *CL 165/6*. We underline the need for a country-led and country-owned nature of this Initiative.

We note that full engagement with 30 countries is underway and we request FAO to keep Members up to date regarding its implementation. We appreciate FAO's intention of enhancing the coordination of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative to accommodate the increasing number of interested countries.

Further, we welcome the Geospatial Platform and expect FAO to regularly provide capacity development, including through Country Offices, to Members in order to access and optimize the use of the Platform.

We also encourage FAO to consider ways to enhance complementarity and extend the HIHI's analytical and partnership-based approach to strengthen FAO country support to achieve countries' priorities and objectives, as well as FAO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated impacts.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

Japan fully assigns itself with the joint statement that was delivered by Pakistan on behalf of the Asian Regional Group.

We welcome the Initiative to clarify the priorities of assistance based on evidence and to identify the countries and regions in need of assistance most. I would like to request that FAO's activities be focused upon areas with comparative advantage in the integrated efforts of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), including existing support.

We also expect that the underlying data and its analysis will be based on reliable and free data distribution without being monopolized by a specific country or the companies of any entities and the analysis process will be unclear enough. We would like to request transparency of this process. In addition, protection of data and intellectual property rights is extremely important.

We would like to request that the implementation status of this Initiative be reported to the Members on a regular basis and that the efforts reflect the discussions by the Members.

Mr François CLOUTIER (Canada)

Canada appreciates FAO's Hand-in-Hand Initiative and its six guiding principles. We stress the importance of the country-led and country-owned nature of this Initiative. We see a benefit of improving use of data analytics to enable better informed decision making and relevance of innovations, practice and technology investments, policy and institutions. We appreciate FAO's effort to promote a transparent approach to monitoring performance for the multi-partner Hand-in-Hand Initiative while stressing the importance of data governance, data integrity and privacy.

Sr. Gustavo MOSTAJO OCOLA (Perú)

Agradecemos a la Secretaría por la presentación del Informe sobre los avances en la aplicación de la Iniciativa Mano de la Mano así como por la información adicional que nos permite a los Estados Miembros comprender más ampliamente el alcance de esta iniciativa.

Compartimos el enfoque que se trae el apoyo a los países donde los progresos son insuficientes para erradicar la pobreza y poner fin al hambre y a todas las formas de malnutrición, y donde las capacidades nacionales están más limitadas por razones históricas, conflictos o desastres naturales. En ese sentido, concordamos con los seis principios que orientan la aplicación de la iniciativa, en especial, el estar centrado en los más pobres, diferenciando los territorios y estrategias según su potencial agroeconómico, evaluando todas las dimensiones de los sistemas agroalimentarios, empleando el hambre en todas sus dimensiones como parámetro para medir el impacto de la intervención. No obstante, sugerimos también incorporar el parámetro relativo al índice de pobreza multidimensional rural.

Saludamos la exposición de la FAO de proporcionar más información para comprender con mayor claridad el alcance de la iniciativa, asimismo conocer cómo la Organización está apoyando y poniendo

en práctica este enfoque, facilitando el acceso de los miembros a la plataforma y sus datos. Deseamos que este enfoque de ámbito nacional orientado a prestar asistencia para el desarrollo logre la mayor colaboración posible a través del emparejamiento y asociaciones estratégicas para abordar los problemas fundamentales a los que se enfrenta la población de los países beneficiarios de la iniciativa.

La iniciativa se constituye como una herramienta que puede lograr mayores impactos para alcanzar los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) y cumplir la promesa central y transformadora de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible de no dejar a nadie atrás. El Perú renueva su adhesión a esta Iniciativa y hace votos por el éxito en su implementación.

Mr Johannes M. BRAND (Netherlands) (Observer)

The Netherlands aligns itself with the Statement made by Germany on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States.

We welcome the Hand-in-Hand Initiative (HIHI), recognizing the impact it can have in curbing the recent trend in the number of food insecure people in the world. In particular the countries that are most in need.

We underline the need for a country-led and country-owned nature of this Initiative and the importance of strengthening national and local capacities, according to governments' priorities, for improved data integration and analysis, designed to address multiple objectives under the 2030 Agenda.

The Hand-in-Hand Initiative's analytical and partnership-based approach can strengthen FAO country support as well as FAO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The benefit of improved use of data and analyses enable better informed decision-making, and integration of all forms of innovation, technology and investment, is of critical importance.

We would like to encourage FAO to build on Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) collaboration and on private sector engagement in line with FAO's new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO (Malaysia) (Observer)

From the outset, Malaysia aligns itself with the Asia Regional Group statement delivered by Pakistan. We thank the Director-General and the Management of FAO for the Initiative, as well as for the progress report of the Ha Hand-in-Hand Initiative covering the second and third quarter of 2020.

We appreciate that this Initiative brings together beneficiary countries with donors, private sector Organizations, international financial institutions (IFIs), research institutions and civil society organizations to mobilize resources and stimulate action.

Malaysia also recognizes the substantial progress in the implementation of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and requested the Initiative also be extended to middle and high-income developing countries. We support mechanisms to enhance complementary and broaden the Hand-in-Hand Initiative analytical and partnership-based approach to strengthen FAO's country support in achieving countries' priorities and objectives.

We acknowledge the need to develop a crosscutting data policy to ensure data governance, data integrity and privacy, as well as international property rights and to adhere to international standards and protocols.

Finally, Malaysia appreciates FAO's efforts to underline the six priorities to guide the development and implementation of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative analytical framework. We believe that this approach will produce a truly positive impact and important to strengthen the models for improved income and profitability for diverse agri-food stakeholders.

We look forward to receiving more updates on the efforts and outcomes in enhancing FAO's relevant work in these areas.

M. Aly COULIBALY (Mali) (Observer)

Nous félicitons le Secrétariat de la FAO pour la qualité du document produit sur l'Initiative Main dans la main.

Le Mali souscrit à la déclaration présentée par le Sénégal et le Burkina Faso, et nous félicitons cette Initiative qui est en droite ligne avec l'atteinte des objectifs de développement durable, à savoir les ODD 1 et 2.

Nous apprécions l'approche rigoureuse de l'Initiative Main dans la main, axée sur la mise en relation des pays bénéficiaires avec des donateurs, des organisations du secteur privé, des institutions financières internationales, des instituts de recherche et des organisations de la société civile, afin de mobiliser des moyens pour sa mise en œuvre, ce qui s'avère être un véritable laboratoire de collaboration avec le secteur privé.

L'engouement de la part de plus en plus de pays à participer à cette Initiative est de bon augure. La nouvelle mouture de l'Initiative Main dans la main, pilotée par les Représentants de la FAO travaillant en partenariat étroit avec les Coordonnateurs résidents et les équipes de pays des Nations Unies, est bien avancée dans sa collaboration avec le secteur privé. Nous espérons que cette collaboration va apporter la preuve d'une contribution nette à la réalisation des ODD.

Nous souhaitons que cette collaboration avec le secteur privé ne compromette pas la neutralité, l'impartialité, l'intégrité et l'indépendance, ainsi que la crédibilité et la réputation de la FAO, et qu'elle soit gérée de manière efficace, évitant tout conflit d'intérêts ou tout autre risque pour la FAO.

L'accessibilité de la plateforme géospatiale de l'Initiative à toutes les entités des Nations Unies est appelée à servir de pilier aux analyses communes des pays, utilisées pour établir les plans cadres de coopération des Nations Unies et suivre les progrès réalisés en direction des objectifs nationaux définis en lien avec le Programme 2030 et les ODD.

Avec ces commentaires, nous prenons note de l'approche d'une gouvernance des programmes, caractérisée par la transparence et l'utilisation de la technologie, qui est en cours d'élaboration avec l'Initiative Main dans la main, à laquelle de nombreux partenaires sont associés.

Mr Luís COELHO-SILVA (Portugal) (Observer)

Portugal aligns itself with the statement made by Germany on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States, that we fully support.

We appreciate FAO's response to questions and concerns raised by the EU and its Member States, especially on strengthening national capacities and the Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

Considering the FAO's role as a global public goods provider within its mandate, it is of utmost importance that the base data used to build the geospatial databases be available on open-access basis, beyond the recipient and donor countries involved in each particular 'Hand in Hand' arrangement, as already mentioned by other delegations. It should be ensured close linkage of the HHH with other existing initiatives, creating synergies and avoiding duplication.

In this context, we agree that more clarification is needed about the role of the other Rome-based Agencies, development partners, the UN Resident Coordinator and other relevant UN agencies.

We are willing that the Membership be closely involved in the further shaping of the Initiative, in particular its governance and budgetary aspects in the context of the Programme of Work and Budget for the biennium 2022-2023.

CHAIRPERSON

That ends my list of speakers. Now I invite the Chairperson of the Programme Committee to make any remarks he may wish to.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of the Programme Committee)

Good to see you lively and kicking still at this hour. It is great to say something about the Hand-in-Hand Initiative because the richness of the discussion which we had in the Programme Committee on

the Hand-in-Hand Initiative was multiplied this evening in the Council. I think many elements which came forward in the Programme Committee were highlighted this evening and the growing importance of this tool for the work of FAO to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, but also supporting other initiatives, like the South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

I think important elements were mentioned today also came up in the Programme Committee that it should be country-led and country-owned. That it should strengthen national and local capacities. That it should enhance the complementarity and the extent of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative to other programmes. That it should be fully integrated in the joint programming of the United Nations Development Group and also, I think it was highlighted, which is very important because it is also linked to the Private Sector Engagement Strategy, the flexible and innovative matchmaking approach to building a multidimensional partnership. Let us not forget that it also has now a strong monitoring performance mechanism which is very important to monitor the progress and get lessons learned in the implementation.

Last, but not least, there is clear need to develop a crosscutting data policy to ensure data governance, data integrity and privacy, as well as intellectual property rights and to adhere to international standards and protocols. It was clearly stated this evening, but also one of the importance conclusions of the Programme Committee.

I think it is a powerful instrument and we would like to follow it closely.

CHAIRPERSON

I would now like the Secretariat, Mr Máximo Torero Cullen, to respond to some of the questions which have been raised.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

Thank you, very much, to all the countries and the Members for their support to this Initiative. First, let me repeat one more time that Hand-in-Hand Initiative is a country-led and a country-driven Initiative. The countries are the ones who decide what we do and how we do it, we just bring evidence to them and act as a bridge to be able to help them to identify priorities with information that we can bring to them.

The Hand-in-Hand Initiative is already supporting 30 countries and increasing every day. In Myanmar's case that was requested, we are looking into it and we will be soon be moving into implementation. It is aimed to end poverty, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1, end hunger among these forms of malnutrition, SDG2 and, again, is country-owned and country-led.

We use state of the art technology that includes many dimensions of geospatial information and this is the Hand-in-Hand Geospatial Data Platform to leverage key information for decision making. That is how we work with the countries to identify priorities. We also have links with Earth Map and the Google engine and with many other entities to try to bring the best possible tools.

The Hand-in-Hand Geospatial Platform is public, is available to all Members, and we are working as much as we can to build the capacity building materials in several languages and to create the training-of-trainers, so that we can train everybody at velocity with the limitations we have. That is the aim. That is how we are building capacity, so this information can be available.

We also have the Big Data Lab, and it is helping to bring information, going through the procedures with the Office of the Chief Statistician that could bring data in countries where we do not have data, but could also help to work to validate existing data. The Big Data Lab has also been used significantly during the COVID-19 and is an initiative that has also helped this process.

The data policy and procedures, we are there right now as we are under the umbrella and following the policy and procedures of the United Nations. Although FAO does not have a data policy, which I understand and we have agreed that we will start to develop a data policy and procedures, the Hand-in-Hand Initiative in all its dimensions is complying with all international protocols under security and privacy.

The design of the Geospatial Platform has a secure environment for countries that do not want to share publicly their information. All data in all our platforms is anonymous and there is no privacy valuation and is respecting all property rights. However, of course, we have to develop, and this is something historically that FAO does not have one, but we have to develop a data policy that has been requested before.

There was a comment regarding the coordination, and it is very important to understand that the Hand-in-Hand Initiative is really a mechanism of coordination not only within FAO, but across FAO, across Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) and across all other Agencies operating in countries. That is why we partner with international financial institutions (IFIs), we partner with RBAs, we partner with United Nations Agencies and we partner with the United Nations Resident Coordinator.

Just two days ago I had the meeting with Zimbabwe, an official lunch with the Government and with the United Nations Resident Coordinator, which the one presenting the work we are doing there. In every country we cooperate with the United Nations Resident Coordinator, where it exists of course, and they are the ones that are being identified by our country office representatives so that this is completely coordinated across the United Nations Agencies.

We also work with the Rome-Based Agencies. We have cooperation with IFAD, in some of the products in which the Investment Centre is also operating, and with WFP, when we have areas of emergency, together with emergency unit of FAO.

Everything we do with the private sector under the Hand-in-Hand Initiative follows all the mechanisms that FAO has today, and it will follow all the mechanisms that FAO will have with the new private sector strategy that was approved today. We are completely consistent with all the mechanisms of due diligence that FAO has. Although at this point what we are doing with the private sector is basically facilitating the bridge, but if we do any arrangement, because the private sector will operate with the governments, we always will go through the due diligence mechanism that we have at FAO.

There was a comment about duplication and non-complementarities. It is very important to understand that the Hand-in-Hand Initiative is the first Initiative as to what I know that is not only bringing the projects of a specific union or group of countries but is bringing all the projects that we can identify, of multiple donors of different countries, and projects of the country in a Geospatial Platform, so that we know what is being implemented where.

Of course, there was, from databases that we are using that already existed, but we are bringing all of them together so that we do not substitute, we do not duplicate, but on the contrary we complement. That is the whole aim and the idea behind the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, how we can gain complementarities and understanding of what is happening.

If the project that is happening there is not working and is not resolving the problem, then we will bring that information to the respective donors or implementers, so that we can help in the process. If we find that there are better solutions, we also will bring the evidence so that those solutions can be implemented.

In terms of building capacities, there are very clear, concrete examples. The Hand-in-Hand Initiative was launched in April. The whole geospatial platform, the whole five elements of our principles and our framework and today Ecuador has developed their own unit and they are implemented by themselves the Hand-in-Hand Initiative. Ethiopia is on the same track and we hope other countries are going to follow exactly the same track.

In every country, our job is building capacities with the country because it is country owned and that is what we are trying to do. In countries where the capacities are not there, we will build capacities and we will support them with the capacities that we have as One FAO. Not a 'Headquarters FAO', but One FAO.

The framework incorporates differentiated strategies. We bring all the elements of the food systems, it is the first Initiative, because this was even before the Food Systems Summit, that brought the concept

of food systems, brought the concept of measuring trade-offs and brought the concept of minimizing trade-offs.

Part of our framework has a food system dimension, information on donor interventions, a geospatial platform, the differentiated strategies and the prioritization of interventions. All of these elements are part of this Initiative and that is why we are customizing the programmes to the needs of every country, based on the demands of the country. We try to bring evidence to them as much as possible to try to cooperate with them.

With that, I hope I have answered all the questions and I am here if any other questions arise.

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

I was explicitly late to lift my hand because it is on an issue related to the subject that we are discussing today. It is related to the newest release of FAO of yesterday concerning Cooperation Programme that we have with the Government of Papua New Guinea where FAO is the implementing Agency. This is on the announcement referred to a cooperation with the private sector for smallholder farmers in the cocoa sector.

I just wanted to make the point that this is a Programme that exists already. This pilot has been developed since 2014 and we are very happy that they found with FAO a good implementer for this, but also that it is a Programme in which several United Nations Agencies are involved. FAO is the lead Agency, but also United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) are involved in this Programme.

I think it also tells us something about the value of cooperating of FAO with other United Nations Agencies. Also, the spread of sector cooperation is the result of a longstanding cooperation that we have with FAO on sustainable value chains more broadly and this is not a Hand-in-Hand Initiative programme, it pre-dates it since a couple of years. It is a very good cooperation programme and we are very happy that they have found with FAO a good implementing Agency for this.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, European Union, for highlighting this important Programme.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

Do you allow me to add something?

CHAIRPERSON

Mr Máximo Torero Cullen, do you want to say something?

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

Yes, please, because it is very important to have full transparency and clarity here. In the news release that was referred to by European Union, it clearly states that more specifically the new partnership, which is in line with the FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative. We are not saying that this is the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, we are saying it is in line with the Hand-in-Hand Initiative because Papua New Guinea is a country, which is a Hand-in-Hand Country.

CHAIRPERSON

That brings our discussions to an end. I would like to conclude on this item, Item 6, the Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

1. The Council welcomed FAO progress and ongoing reporting of the Hand in Hand Initiative and;
 - a) Appreciated the importance of strengthening national capacities for improved data integration and analysis in order to identify interactions and quantify trade-offs amongst actions and highlighted the benefit of improved use of data and analytics to enable better informed decision making to promote innovation in practices, technology, investment, policy and institutions.

- b) Recommended to enhance and extend the Hand in Hand analytical and partnership-based approach to strengthen FAO country support to achieve other FAO priority objectives, including for response to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated impacts.
- c) Welcomed the flexible and innovative matchmaking approach to building multi-dimensional partnerships that strengthen mobilization of means of implementation and stressed the importance of ensuring transparency and measuring impacts of all partner actions to maintain the effectiveness and the accountability of all actors.
- d) Recognized the critical and urgent importance of developing robust IT-based dashboards for enabling beneficiary governments and all their diverse development partners to track progress, communicate and coordinate action in a sustained and effective manner throughout the lifecycle of the Programme.
- e) Highlighted the need to ensure compliance with the highest standards of data governance for data integrity and privacy and to adhere to international standards and protocols and requested this be reported to the next Session of the Council in April 2021; and
- f) Requested Management to continue to provide implementation updates.

That is the end of my conclusions. May I suggest that we go subparagraph by subparagraph if we have any amendments because it is quicker that way?

I open the floor now to Members.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Chairperson, if you allow, I think you should indicate that we are talking about first.

CHAIRPERSON

Paragraph 1. Subparagraph (a)?

Subparagraph (b)?

Subparagraph (c)?

Mr Federico ZAMORA CORDERO (Costa Rica)

I would like to include in subparagraph (c) as a new subparagraph, “requested that the Hand-in-Hand Initiative also be extended to middle and high-income developing countries to ensure that no one is left behind.”

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I would like to suggest a new subparagraph under subparagraph (b) that reads, “underlined the importance of ensuring close linkage of the Initiative with other existing initiatives to avoid duplication and create synergies, and further clarification of the role of the RBAs, development partners, the United Nations resident coordinator and other relevant Agencies.”

Mme Joséphine OUEDRAOGO (Burkina Faso)

Je voudrais m'excuser si je reviens au tout premier paragraphe A parce qu'il manque une dimension à la deuxième partie de la phrase.

Paragraphe A, lorsqu'on dit: «In order to identify interactions and quantify trade-offs among actions», je ne sais pas si l'on intègre l'idée, qu'en réalité, le renforcement des capacités par l'intégration des données est surtout pour permettre l'évaluation des programmes et leur réajustement au fur et à mesure de leur exécution.

C'est dans la première partie du paragraphe que je voudrais insérer: «In order to assess» ou «evaluate programmes». C'est à partir de la deuxième ligne qu'il faudrait ajouter cet aspect, être capable d'évaluer les programmes et procéder à leur réajustement au fur et à mesure.

CHAIRPERSON

Is that the wording you wanted to suggest Burkina Faso?

Mme Joséphine OUEDRAOGO (Burkina Faso)

Oui, être capable d'évaluer les programmes et les ajuster au fur et à mesure de leur exécution. C'est ça, c'est cette idée.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Normalmente yo pido la palabra para hacer propuestas pero, la verdad es que los tres aportes hechos por mis tres colegas, en particular lo presentado por el embajador de Costa Rica, pero también la embajadora de Burkina Faso y el embajador de Alemania, me parece que han enriquecido el texto. Así, que era solamente para expresar mi agradecimiento a los tres colegas.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Thanks to Mr Carlos Bernardo Cherniak, Argentina, for his kind words, because the Ambassador of Costa Rica suggested a new subparagraph what is now subparagraph (d).

I would like to also suggest a new subparagraph after what is now subparagraph (d), subparagraph (e) that should read, “recalled the need to adopt a broad definition of innovation in order to ensure that the future partnerships can resort to all forms of innovations, dealt with in a sustainable manner.”

CHAIRPERSON

I take it that the wording of new sub-paragraph (c) is agreeable to all.

We can move to new paragraph (e)? Mr Máximo Torero Cullen?

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

The addition of Burkina Faso, which is very appropriate, I think will fit better in the Dashboard where we do the monitoring and evaluation, because that is where evaluate programmes and adjust them, based on what we learned on the monitor and evaluation system.

CHAIRPERSON

May I just ask if all the text in red, as the new text, are acceptable to Members, so that we can move on? I see that they are.

We can go to subparagraph (g).

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I would like to suggest a new subparagraph under what is now subparagraph (f) that reads, “stressed the importance for the Hand-in-Hand Initiative to be aligned with the Private Sector Strategy.”

CHAIRPERSON

Could we go to subparagraph (h)?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Quiero agradecer al colega, al embajador de Alemania, por su sugerencia. Lo único que me gustaría es hacer una modificación sobre esa propuesta del embajador en cuanto a que no quiero que queda como una iniciativa o una estrategia que esté subordinada a la otra. En todo caso que ambas estén alineadas. El wording sería... “stress the importance that the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and the private sector strategy should be aligned.”

CHAIRPERSON

I take it that subparagraph (h) is okay with Members. I see it is.

We move to subparagraph (i).

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

I would like to make a minor amendment after the “privacy,” the comma, “and to protect data and intellectual property rights.” That is good as it is.

CHAIRPERSON

Is subparagraph (i) with this amendment fine with Members? I see it is.

Subparagraph (j)?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

La verdad es que me gustaría poder entender la lógica, la racionalidad de la sugerencia de mi estimado colega de Japón. Si le podemos pedir, por favor, si puede explicarlo porque no logro entender el párrafo. Me gustaría si nos pudiera explicar la lógica, la racionalidad que está detrás de su sugerencia.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

When it comes to how to deal with the data in this context it is quite important to protect the data and the intellectual property rights. The reason the paragraph there was governance for the data including the privacy, but it does not necessarily touch upon the protection of the data itself and the protection of intellectual property rights. I have to make this point clear, but I can open for better language if you have it.

CHAIRPERSON

Argentina, your reaction? We will give the floor to Argentina, then Germany.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Me parece que estaba primero Alemania. Le cedo el derecho a hablar primero, por favor.

CHAIRPERSON

I will give the floor to Germany, however I thought since you had asked a question from Japan because Japan gave an explanation, and I thought we could have your immediate reaction. However, Germany, you have the floor.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I am happy to come second. I think this discussion between Japan and Argentina should be concluded first.

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, that is what I thought. Argentina.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Gracias, estimado colega de Alemania. Yo lo que me gustaría entender en la propuesta del representante de Japón, cuando dice “to protect data and intellectual property rights.” La pregunta sería, “according to what?” Digamos, ¿de acuerdo a qué? Respecto a cuál sería el marco normativo al cual esta sugerencia se subordinaría, ¿sería la Organización Mundial de la Propiedad Intelectual (OMPI)? ¿Qué sería? Me gustaría si pudiera ser más claro en esto. Es con un ánimo muy constructivo. No es que tenga un problema con la propuesta. La quiero entender para poder estar de acuerdo.

CHAIRPERSON

Germany, would you still like to take the floor?

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Yes, but I do not know whether Japan wants to answer now, directly, because I have a different point.

CHAIRPERSON

Okay. Japan, could you clarify further for the benefit of understanding the wording you proposed?

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

I just want to be very brief. The original intention is just general, I wanted to underline the importance of the protection of data and intellectual property rights when it comes to how we deal with data,

because the Hand-in-Hand Initiative does touch upon the data dealings. There could be a reference however I do not see it at this moment. I did not find exactly what the reference should be. If you have any suggestion, we are very much open to listen to that.

CHAIRPERSON

Argentina, would you have a suggestion for amending or adding to that?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

No, no tengo ninguna enmienda para sugerir. Vamos a hacer una cosa, yo le sugiero, si a usted le parece bien, esperar unos minutos, seguir con el texto y pensamos algo, como para poder darle un amplaje, alguna plataforma de sustento a la lógica que plantea mi estimado colega de Japón, por favor. Continuemos con el texto y demos unos minutos para pensar.

CHAIRPERSON

In the meantime, I will give the floor to Germany.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I would like to suggest an addition to subparagraph (j), where it reads “to continue to provide implementation updates and expected to be closely involved in the further shaping of the Initiative, in particular its governance and budgetary aspects in the context of the Programme of Work and Budget for the biennium 2022 to 2023”.

CHAIRPERSON

We will make the amendment by Germany, and then I would suggest having a look at the wording. This is the amendment which Japan proposed. A similar aspect was discussed in the Programme Committee. I will have the text of the Programme Committee put on the screen to see if that wording would help in us moving forward.

Therefore, we have two things, one is the yellow highlighted text which is the Programme Committee’s Report dealing with intellectual property rights, etc. Then there is the proposal of subparagraph (j), the amendment proposed by Germany. However, let us first deal with subparagraph (i) and the text of the Programme Committee. Japan, would a text similar to the Programme Committee be acceptable to you?

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

Of course, we can live with that, we can accept that, or you can extract the relevant parts from the Programme Committee text to the old one. I am just trying to put my concept into that original text as much as the text remains the same. Both accommodate the point that I would like to make.

CHAIRPERSON

Subparagraph (i), as amended by taking some wording of the Programme Committee’s text, is that acceptable now?

The amendment to subparagraph (h) by the addition of “as well as intellectual property rights,” is that okay?

I see various Members and the Secretariat have asked for the floor. Perhaps it would be best if I give the floor to the Legal Counsel who has asked for the floor. Perhaps her intervention might help us move forward. Legal Counsel, you have the floor.

Ms Donata Mary RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

I wanted to explain and provide some background. Work is ongoing on a data protection policy, as we speak. We are guided by United Nations System practice. For example, on personal data protection, we are actually drawing on the principles of the High-Level Committee on Management.

At the same time, we are looking at wider United Nations experience, where other organizations have also developed detailed protocols and, of course, we are looking at the principles that are reflected in a number of regional or national mechanisms for data protection and intellectual property rights.

From this we are moving forward. We already have at the moment, and are about to, in fact, move forward and promulgate a high-level policy, which will then be developed further to address the specific types of activity where we need good, strong data protection mechanisms.

I thought that that might assist in the discussions because, yes, there is not a single standard that would necessarily apply because of the broad variety of FAO's activities, but we are drawing upon a well of United Nations system and other mechanisms.

Then, in light of our Basic Texts and our obligations, as per international principles or internationally recognized principles, this is what would, in fact, be coming forward as FAO data protection policies. We should certainly be able to report on this matter, if this language is approved in the Report, to the next Session of the Council in April 2021.

I hope this is of assistance.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Legal Counsel. I give the floor to Argentina.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Yo entiendo perfectamente ahora lo que desea manifestar mi estimado colega de Japón. Creo que la fórmula acordada en el Comité del Programa tiene más coherencia, es más sólida, me parece que incluye en gran medida la preocupación de mi estimado colega de Japón y nos evita tener que entrar a abrir una discusión que ya hemos hecho en algún momento y que, me parece que, este texto del Comité del Programa lo refleja de manera equilibrada.

Preferiría, para evitar una discusión que, ya siendo las 9.25 de la noche, un tema que también le preocupa a mi colega de Japón, como preocupa a mí, me parece mejor cerrar el tema con la propuesta ya cerrada del Comité del Programa.

Espero que esto sea de consenso de mis colegas.

CHAIRPERSON

Argentina, the Programme Committee wording, as shown in subparagraph (i) now, the addition of "as well as intellectual property rights" is not the whole Programme Committee subparagraph.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

No, mi propuesta es mantener el texto que está en el punto, en amarillo, por lo menos en lo que yo veo en mi pantalla en amarillo, que es el texto, valga la redundancia, textual establecido en subpárrafo (k) del capítulo V del Informe del Comité del Programa. Eso me parece que es una fórmula de compromiso que incluye la preocupación de mi colega de Japón pero que nos evita abrir todo un debate nuevo a esta hora del día.

CHAIRPERSON

I understand now what you are saying to substitute the yellow highlighted text for what is it now. Japan, is that okay with you?

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

As I told you, the text is just fine with us. I just wanted to try not to change much of the original drafted text, that was the point, and now, again, the yellow highlighted text is good. However, if you would take up the yellow highlighted text, would it lose some of the components in the original one? I do not know.

In any case, our concern is accommodated in both text proposals, I just leave it to my colleagues to decide, however one thing that I would like to stress here is that I very much agree with what my distinguished colleague from Argentina said. We should not be going into it here – the big discussion on this language.

CHAIRPERSON

Now, this new subparagraph (j), the wording of the Programme Committee with the addition of “requested Management to report to Members on this at its next session in April”, is that fine with you? The only addition is “reporting at the next session,” otherwise it is the wording of the Programme Committee.

I was asking whether the subparagraph (j), as now drafted, has the wording of the Programme Committee. The only addition is the last line which says, “and requested management to report to Members on this at the next session of the Council in April 2021.” Is this acceptable to you now?

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

If you are asking me, of course, it is very much fine with us, however I do not know who you are asking?

CHAIRPERSON

I am asking Argentina.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

A mí me parece perfecto. Si hemos hecho lo máximo que podemos, pero permítame, hacer un reconocimiento público a la labor de la Secretaría, particularmente, el Secretario General del Consejo, el Señor Rakesh Muthoo, porque la verdad, nos está ayudando muchísimo.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Argentina. I agree with you.

Mme Joséphine OUEDRAOGO (Burkina Faso)

Je voudrais revenir au paragraphe F, dans lequel il est demandé qu'on élargisse l'accès à l'Initiative aux pays en voie de développement à moyen et à haut revenu.

Nous sommes tout à fait d'accord qu'il faut effectivement élargir le programme, l'Initiative Main dans la main, à un maximum de pays. Et pour rendre cohérent ce qui est proposé avec l'idée première du Directeur général, qui était d'appliquer l'Initiative aux pays insulaires et aux pays sans littoral à faible revenu, je pense qu'il faudrait insérer dans ce paragraphe ce que le Groupe Afrique a proposé, c'est-à-dire élargir la base des critères d'admissibilité, afin de permettre à des pays à moyen et à haut revenu d'être sélectionnés et de bénéficier du programme, selon des critères qu'il faudrait définir. Je ne sais pas si ce qui est écrit en anglais correspond à l'idée: «Material for selection in order to»... de manière à donner une chance, une possibilité à des pays à moyen et à haut revenu de bénéficier du programme.

CHAIRPERSON

I think everyone is agreed on the wording. It is the last subparagraph, subparagraph (k).

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

I have a concern with the change that was proposed by Burkina Faso. I am okay with “requested expansion of the criteria for selection in order to provide an opportunity for middle- and high-income countries to benefit from the approach of the Initiative”. However, if we are going to implement the Initiative, then that has significant budgetary implications. I would prefer to argue on the approach like Latin America agreed to in the Regional Conference where basically, they followed the approach of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

Sr. Mario ARVELO (República Dominicana)

Tomo la palabra después de haber escuchado al Economista Jefe, el Doctor Torero. La había pedido justo un segundo antes que él y me alegro de que haya sido así porque estaba pidiendo la palabra para recordar justamente que este párrafo, el subpárrafo (f) que tenemos aquí ahora que formó parte de la intervención de mi delegación y de otras, es algo que estamos trayendo desde Managua, Nicaragua donde se celebró el 36.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para América Latina y el Caribe, la cual acaba de referenciar ahora el Doctor Torero en su intervención.

Entonces, él ha añadido aquí unas palabras. Yo no voy a estar a esta hora reiniciando una discusión sobre este párrafo. Lo importante, porque el Economista Jefe es la persona que da la cara por FAO sobre este tema y sobre tantos otros, pero sobre este en particular. Lo importante es que el mandato emanado de los 33 ministros que estuvieron allí, todos se dieron cuenta de la importancia de esta iniciativa y de como no necesariamente todos los 33 países de la región van a ingresar en ella, pero sí, la iniciativa comienza, porque es bueno que los Miembros del Consejo lo sepan.

La Iniciativa comienza con unos criterios en los cuales solo uno de los 33 países de la región estaba bajo los criterios para ingresar a la misma. Entonces, esto causó una gran perplejidad, una gran conmoción entre los ministros desde hace aproximadamente un año. Y hubo una convergencia en la Conferencia Regional para ver cómo podíamos ampliar estas posibilidades. Entonces, yo no voy a proponer aquí, una discusión sobre palabras. Me gustaría saber qué tiene para decir el embajador de Argentina que participó en esta negociación virtual que tuvimos en la Conferencia Regional, pero sí me reservo con su anuencia, la posibilidad, el derecho de volver a intervenir porque aquí tenemos que dejar claro lo que los ministros han pedido.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Celebro la intervención de mi amigo, el embajador de República Dominicana. Lamento en este momento no compartir la idea del Economista Jefe. Generalmente tenemos bastante coincidencia, en este punto no y, además, creo que es necesario que, si no hay un pedido especial para que la Secretaría haga un aporte, mejor que nosotros tratemos de resolver este tema entre nosotros. Por lo cual voy sí a proponer texto para poder intentar con el enriquecimiento que hizo mi estimada colega de Burkina Faso, tratar de que el texto refleje lo que los ministros de América Latina y el Caribe expresaron.

Entonces, la primera cosa que quiero decir es déjenme ir al texto. Eliminar “the approach” Las palabras “approach of”, fuera, borrado. Eso no es lo que dijeron los ministros. La segunda cosa, “from the initiative,” directo. Y después... “to provide” no es “an opportunity to include.” “To provide an opportunity”, no, “in order to include middle- and high-income developing countries” etc. “In order to include.”

Yo espero que a esta hora que estamos, no tengamos que volver a tener un debate profundo sobre este tema que es un tema que, repito, no solo salió de la Conferencia Regional, sino que además está incluido claramente así dentro del Informe del Comité del Programa. Así que, ya en varias oportunidades, la manera de saldar la discusión fue a través de los textos de los comités, salvo en la única excepción que tuvimos en la cual se dejó de lado de manera preocupante un Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS), pero después las maneras de resolver fueron cuando teníamos necesidad de un texto acordado, usar lo que ya había sido incluido en los comités.

Así que, “benefit from the initiative.”, perfecto.

CHAIRPERSON

This was discussed in the Programme Committee and what I can do is put the text of the Programme Committee here as well. That may help us come to an agreement. Secretary-General, can you put the Programme Committee text on the screen?

Here is the Programme Committee text, which has been agreed. Considering the late hour, since the text has been agreed by a Committee which facilitates the work of the Council perhaps, we could... Argentina?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Esto es un documento vivo, como hemos dicho varias veces sobre algunos otros documentos. Lo que planteó la embajadora de Burkina Faso nos pareció a los que hemos propuesto este texto, nos pareció muy bien. Lo enriqueció, por lo tanto, yo lo que estoy diciendo es mantener la lógica y el texto del Comité del Programa con el enriquecimiento que hizo la embajadora de Burkina Faso.

Por lo tanto, eso no fue objetado por ninguno, mantengamos el subpárrafo (f) tal cual está en el texto y no vayamos para atrás con lo del Comité de Programa porque ya está incluido en ese subpárrafo (f) con el enriquecimiento que hizo la embajadora de Burkina Faso. Ésa es la propuesta, porque quiero que quede claro.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Just to support what the Representative of Argentina said, I guess normally we could prefer the wording coming from the Programme Committee or the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committee, however we do not always have to stick to it. I listened very attentively to all of the interventions and no one was against this. I would kindly ask other colleagues to accept this proposal. Firstly, it represents what was discussed. Secondly, it is a matter of reality, and we should not go back to the Joint Meeting or the Programme Committee wording, always, to solve a problem.

Sr. Federico ZAMORA CORDERO (Costa Rica)

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo con las observaciones del embajador de Argentina y ahora el colega de Brasil, también. Creo que ese punto, así como está, como lo puse al principio con el enriquecimiento de la delegación de Burkina Faso queda perfecto y es exactamente lo que hemos estado discutiendo en varios foros. No veo por qué haya que cambiar ese texto. Así que, pues, por favor, ya lo habíamos pasado. Eso era una prueba superada, no sé por qué volvimos otra vez atrás. Preferiría eso que se quede tal y como está en el subpárrafo (f).

CHAIRPERSON

I take it there is agreement on subparagraph (f)? We can adopt subparagraph (f), it is agreed. The only outstanding subparagraph is subparagraph (k). Could we comment on that and then close the Session? I see there is no request for the floor, so I take it that Members agree on this subparagraph.

That means we have completed Item 6.

I would like to thank Members for their cooperation and flexibility in coming to an agreement on the text, not only this one but the previous one. We are still behind in our Agenda; however, we made some progress. We have cleared some of the main substantive items and therefore we will adjourn the meeting today. Tomorrow morning, we will start our Session, again, and carry on with the Agenda.

The meeting rose at 21:46 hours

La séance est levée à 21 h 46

Se levanta la sesión a las 21.46

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-Fifth Session Cent soixante-cinquième session 165.º período de sesiones
Virtual Meeting, 30 November - 4 December 2020 Réunion Virtuelle, 30 novembre - 4 décembre 2020 Reunión Virtual, 30 de noviembre - 4 de diciembre de 2020
FIFTH PLENARY SESSION CINQUIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE QUINTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
2 December 2020

The Fifth Plenary Meeting was opened at 09:31 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La cinquième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 31
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la quinta sesión plenaria a las 9.31
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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Item 8. Technical Committees**Point 8. Comités techniques****Tema 8. Comités técnicos**

Item 8.1 Report of the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (28 September-2 October 2020)

Point 8.1 Rapport de la vingt-septième session du Comité de l'agriculture (28 septembre-2 octobre 2020)

Tema 8.1 Informe del 27.º período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura (28 de septiembre – 2 de octubre de 2020)

(C 2021/21)

CHAIRPERSON

We can start today's Session with Item 8, the Technical Committees. This is the Fifth Meeting of the 165th Session of the FAO Council. We will now address the Reports of the Technical Committees starting with Item 8.1, *Report of the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture*, which took place from 28 September to 2 October 2020.

The document is *CL 2021/21*. The introduction by the Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture, Mr Bommakanti Rajender, has been circulated to you. I would like to bring to the attention of the Council, that under this Sub-Item 8.1, the Council is invited to endorse four draft Resolutions for submission to the Council. These are the eradication of *Peste des Petits Ruminants* by 2030, an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, an International Day of Plant Health, and an International Year of Date Palm.

You may find these draft Conference Resolutions in the report of the 27th session of the Committee on Agriculture, Document *C2021/21*, under Appendices D, G, H and I, respectively.

Introduction to Item 8.1: Report of the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (28 September - 2 October 2020)

Mr Bommakanti Rajender, Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG)

The Committee on Agriculture (COAG) held its 27th Session from 28 September to 2 October 2020 and was, for the first time, conducted as a virtual event. Of the 129 Members of the Committee, 121 registered for the Session, including 9 Ministers, and over 850 participants attended over the Zoom meeting platform.

The *Report of the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG 27)* is submitted to the Council in document *C 2021/21*. COAG 27 had 23 items on its agenda and reviewed priority and substantive issues, as highlighted below.

The COAG 27 discussed as main theme the livestock sector contributions to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In particular, the Committee requested FAO to produce a comprehensive, science and evidence-based global assessment of the contribution of livestock to food security, sustainable food systems, nutrition and healthy diets, and to develop a technical document of good practices. The Committee discussed the prevention, anticipation and response to high-impact animal and plant diseases and pests and welcomed the draft resolution for consolidating the implementation of the *Peste des Petits Ruminants* Global Eradication Programme (PPR GEP) to achieve the goal of a PPR-free world by 2030, to be submitted to the Council at its 165th Session and subsequently to the FAO Conference at its 42nd session for adoption.

The Committee, in accordance with Rule VII.1 of its Rules of Procedure, established a Sub-Committee on Livestock and invited the Council at its 165th Session and the Conference at its 42nd Session in 2021 to endorse the Sub-Committee as an intergovernmental forum with a mandate to discuss and build consensus on livestock issues and priorities, including in poverty alleviation, food security and nutrition, sustainable livelihoods and the realization of the 2030 Agenda and adopted the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Sub-Committee. It recommended that the first

session of the Sub-Committee on Livestock be held, subject to the availability of extra-budgetary funds, during the first quarter of 2022.

The Committee reviewed the progress in the implementation of FAO Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) 2016-2020, and the proposal for a new FAO Action Plan on AMR 2021-2025, and requested progress updates on the Action Plan to the Programme Committee and to other Technical Committees and acknowledged FAO's work to reduce the burden of AMR in food and agriculture.

The Committee further discussed the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on food security and nutrition, and food systems, and requested FAO to assess the specific impacts on women, youth, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, smallholders and family farmers and those exposed to conflict and protracted crisis. Further, it requested FAO to continue its support to Members in developing sustainable food systems, to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, and to provide full support to the preparatory process towards the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit. The Committee also discussed the Urban Food Agenda for further elaboration of the concept and its integration into FAO's strategic work to be presented to the FAO Council.

The Committee requested FAO to develop a new Food Safety Strategy to serve as an international guidance, policy and advocacy instrument for decision-makers and to collaborate with the WHO to ensure that respective food safety strategies are aligned and mutually supportive.

The Committee welcomed the proposed Voluntary Code of Conduct for Food Loss and Waste (FLW) Reduction (CoC), noting the role it can play in contributing to FLW reduction globally and to sustainable food systems development and achieving the SDGs, in particular SDG target 12.3, and requested to prepare a revised document in consultation with Members and under the guidance of the COAG Bureau, which is foreseen to be submitted to the 42nd Session of the Conference.

The Committee endorsed the Rural Youth Action Plan (RYAP) as a living document, which can be updated to align with new FAO objectives and emerging issues such as the COVID-19 pandemic. COAG reviewed FAO's work towards enabling smallholders and family farmers to access and participate in appropriate innovation, information and advisory services for sustainable agrifood systems. It requested FAO to strengthen its strategic guidance and knowledge competencies, its technical support and capacity at headquarters and decentralized offices in this area, and to develop programmes to support Members in improving demand-driven innovation, information and advisory services, for bridging the gap between information generation and use by smallholders and family farmers as well as other vulnerable groups, by strengthening linkages between research, extension and farmers.

With respect to the Terms of Reference of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture, the Committee requested FAO to ensure that this initiative will create synergies between international organizations and stakeholders, to include in the Terms of Reference reporting mechanisms through which voluntary guidelines from the Platform on issues related to digital food and agriculture are submitted to the FAO Members for consideration through the FAO governing body process, develop a solid funding plan based on voluntary contributions; and continue developing and refining the Terms of Reference for the Platform for further review by the Programme Committee and the FAO Council.

The Committee reviewed the draft 2021-23 Action Plan for the Implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors and provided detailed comments to be reflected in the next version of the draft Action Plan for consideration by the Council. It requested FAO to consider the outcomes of on-going processes in other *fora*, including the development of the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in the implementation of the Strategy, and its Action Plan, and to strengthen collaboration with all relevant partners, taking the "One Health" approach.

The Committee endorsed the "Global Programme on Sustainable Dryland Agriculture" and requested to integrate it into FAO's work, and suggested it be subject to monitoring and evaluation, including under the SDG monitoring framework in partnership with countries with technical experience of sustainable management of dryland agricultural systems and South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

The Committee reviewed progress of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP) and the findings of the GSP evaluation and requested the Secretariat to carry out a detailed analysis of the legal and financial implications, to be submitted to the COAG at its 28th Session and endorsed the “Resolution for International Exchange of Soil Samples for Research Purposes under Global Soil Network (GLOSOLAN)”.

The Committee reviewed FAO’s Programme of Work in Food and Agriculture under the FAO Strategic Framework, and the global developments and trends identified by FAO in the context of the Corporate Strategic Foresight Exercise, and new emerging interconnected drivers and trends. The Committee endorsed the main priorities identified for FAO’s work in food and agriculture and encouraged additionally to maintain a strong focus on eradication of hunger and malnutrition, food systems and nutrition while strengthening work on digital agriculture, capacity development at country level for data, information and tracking of SDG indicators for better decision making, reducing food loss and waste, addressing issues related to climate change and biodiversity, and a strategy for innovation with inclusion of smallholder farmers, as well as to further strengthen its important normative and standard setting role, and increase focus on One Health, Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), food safety and addressing transboundary pests and diseases and encouraged FAO to invest and advocate for all innovative approaches for sustainable agriculture and food systems, while ensuring gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Further, the Committee reviewed the implementation of the recommendations of the 26th Session of the Committee and its Multi-Year Programme of Work of the Committee (MYPOW) for 2020-2023.

Finally, the Committee endorsed the draft Conference Resolutions for the proposals for an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, an International Year of Date Palm and an International Day of Plant Health for approval by the 165th Session of the Council and adoption by the 42nd Session of the Conference.

CHAIRPERSON

Now, I open the floor for Members for their interventions. The floor is open.

Ms Esti ANDAYANI (Indonesia)

Indonesia is honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The Group of 77 and China welcomes the main theme of Committee on Agriculture (COAG) 27 on livestock sector contributions to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We support the Committee’s discussion on the prevention, anticipation and response to high impact animal and plant diseases and pests.

We welcome the establishment of a Sub-Committee on Livestock according to Rule 7.1 of the Rules of Procedure of COAG and endorse the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Sub-Committee. We would like to know from the Management regarding the composition of the Sub-Committee on Livestock and the timeline. We look forward to the Sub-Committee’s work on building a balanced narrative in terms of its contribution to food security and nutrition.

The Group of 77 and China welcomes the Committee’s discussion on the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on food security and nutrition and recognizes the relevance of regional and international trade in ensuring access to food. We also recognize FAO’s continued support to Members in developing sustainable food systems to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. We encourage FAO to continue supporting the preparatory process towards the 2021 UN Food System Summit and look forward to a stronger involvement of Members in the Summit.

The Group welcomes the progress in the elaboration of the *Voluntary Code of Conduct for Food Loss and Waste Reduction* and the role it can play in contributing to food loss and waste reduction globally and to sustainable food systems development and achieving SDGs, in particular SDG target 12.3, and looks forward to its further development.

We endorse the Committee’s proposal regarding Rural Youth Action Plan as a living document, which can be updated to align with new FAO objectives and emerging issues such as the COVID-19

pandemic and, in this regard, look forward to its further revision by the Governing Bodies. This also works towards enabling smallholder and family farmers for sustainable agriculture food systems.

The Group acknowledges the Terms of Reference of International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture, which will create synergies between international organizations and stakeholders. The Group called for the inclusion of information on the reporting mechanisms through which voluntary guidelines on digital food and agriculture would be submitted to FAO Members for consideration through the Governing Bodies.

The Group of 77 and China also highlights the importance of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the FAO strategy on mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors and appreciates the discussions that were held by the Committee on this matter. We look forward to the finalization of the Action Plan through an inclusive consultation process. The Group endorses global programme on sustainable dry land agriculture under the SDG monitoring framework under South-South and Triangular Cooperation. We appreciate the progress of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP) and finding of GSP evaluation and endorse the Resolution for international exchange of soil samples for research purposes under Global Soil Network (GLOSOLAN). However, we would like to know from the Management the latest progress and road map for Global Soil Partnership.

The Group recognises the Committee's review on the implementation of the recommendations of 26th Session of the Committee and its Multi-Year Programme of Work of the Committee (MYPOW) for 2020-23.

Finally, The Group of 77 and China endorses the Committee's proposal on the draft conference resolutions for an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, International Year of Date Palm and International Day of Plant Health.

Ms Ratchanok SANGPENCHAN (Thailand)

Thailand has the honour to make this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group and aligns itself with the statement by the Group of 77 and China. We congratulate the successful conduction in virtual mode of the 27th Session of Committee on Agriculture (COAG 27), and would like to highlight the broad participation, including at ministerial level, in the virtual modality made possible.

The Asia Group appreciates the main theme of COAG 27, the livestock sectors contribution to the achieving of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We support the committee's requests to produce a comprehensive, science and evidence-based global assessment of the contribution of livestock to food security, sustainable food system, nutrition and health diseases and to develop a technical document of good practices. We welcome the establishment of Sub-Committee on Livestock as an intergovernmental forum and the adoption of its Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure. We look forward to its first meeting and request the management to provide regular updates on budgetary resources made available for its operationalization.

The Asia Regional Group acknowledges the FAO's new Action plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) 2021-25 and supports FAO's work to reduce the burden of AMR in Food and Agriculture and to promote the prudent and responsible use of antimicrobials in food production.

We appreciate FAO's engagement in response to COVID-19 impact on Food security and nutrition and food systems and request FAO to assess the specific impacts on women, youth, children, the elderly persons with disability, smallholders and family farmers and those exposed to conflict and protracted crises. With regard to Agricultural Innovation Systems, we emphasize the importance of enabling access and enhancing participation in appropriate innovation, information and advisory services for smallholders and family farmers, in order to unleash the full potential of innovation for achieving sustainable agriculture, food systems and nutrition, and lift millions of people out of poverty and food insecurity, thereby achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and implementing the UN Decade of Family Farming.

The Asia Group supports COAG's request to FAO to develop a new food safety strategy, based on the recognition of strong link between Food Safety and Food Security as there is no food security without food safety. The Asia Group supports the proposed development of a voluntary code of conduct on

food loss and waste reduction meeting the role it played in contributing to food loss and waste reduction globally. We look forward to receiving an update on the timeline for the concrete steps in this regard.

The Asia Regional Group appreciates the Committee's endorsement of the Rural Youth Action Plan as a living document which can be updated to alleviate with new FAO objectives and emerging issues such as COVID-19 pandemic. The Asia Regional Group appreciates the Terms of Reference of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture and the Action Plan of FAO's strategy on mainstreaming agricultural biodiversity across agricultural sectors. The Asia Group supports the committee's endorsement on the Global Programme of Sustainable Dryland Agriculture and commends the works done by the Global Soil Partnership.

We support the implementation of the recommendations of the 26th Session of the Committee and its Multi-Year Programme of Work of the Committee (MYPOW) for 2020-23. The Asia Regional Group supports the committee's endorsement of the Draft Conference Resolution for the proposal for an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, an International Year of Date Palm and an International Day of Plant Health for approval by the 165th Session of the Council and adoption by the 42nd Session of the Conference.

Finally, we would like to appreciate the stewardship of the Committee by the outgoing Chairperson, Ambassador Mohammad Hossein Emadi, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Vice Chairperson, Ms. Jennifer Fellows, and Bureau Members, and congratulate the newly elected Chair, Dr. Bommakanti Rajender of India and the new Bureau Members.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Thailand, for this statement on behalf of the Asia Group. It occurs to me that because we are behind our schedule, as far as our Agenda is concerned, perhaps I should remind Members that there has been the practice for many years, that when a Group makes a Regional Group statement, individual countries of that Group do not repeat the same arguments, as contained in the Regional Group statement.

Therefore, may I request Members to bear that in mind, when there is a Regional Group statement, please individually, when you take the floor, do not repeat the same arguments, because it just cuts into the time we have at our disposal.

Sra. Maria Cristina LAUREANO (República Dominicana)

Deseamos felicitar a la Presidenta del Comité de Agricultura (COAG), la Señora Jennifer Fellows de Canadá, quien asumió la conducción del Comité en complejas circunstancias y cuyas cualidades de liderazgo facilitaron el éxito del 27.º período de sesiones.

Apoyamos la intervención de Indonesia a nombre de G77, subrayamos algunos elementos.

Al celebrar que la sesión tuviese, en general, un enfoque de sistemas alimentarios y, en particular, examinase las labores de respuesta a la pandemia, acompañamos todas las conclusiones y recomendaciones emanadas del 27.º período de sesiones del COAG; deseamos subrayar las siguientes.

Damos la bienvenida al nuevo Subcomité de Ganadería del Comité de Agricultura, porque al establecer un espacio intergubernamental especializado estamos reafirmando que el sector pecuario es indispensable para la producción agroalimentaria sostenible y, en consecuencia, para la seguridad alimentaria y nutricional.

Nos congratulamos del paso hacia delante en materia de resistencia a los antimicrobianos con la aprobación del Plan de acción, y esperamos que esta innovación asista a los Estados Miembros, en especial a los países en desarrollo, en la movilización de asistencia técnica y movilización de recursos, así como en la creación de capacidades.

Celebramos que el COAG acogiera el Código de conducta voluntario para la reducción de las pérdidas y el desperdicio de alimentos; el Plan de acción relativo a los jóvenes del medio rural; y la Agenda Alimentaria Urbana.

Para concluir, reafirmamos la importancia del Comité de Agricultura para el estudio, el debate y la toma de decisiones estratégicas sobre acciones concretas, coherentes y eficaces que nos acerquen al Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) 2 y los demás objetivos de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

La Argentina se alinea plenamente con la declaración pronunciada por Indonesia en nombre del G77 más China.

En primer lugar, quisiera reconocer el enorme esfuerzo realizado por la Secretaría para que el 27º período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura (COAG 27) se celebrara por primera vez, y de manera muy exitosa, en formato virtual. La Argentina participó activamente en los debates y se congratula de los importantes consensos alcanzados. Eso no hubiera sido posible, seguramente, sin el importantísimo rol de mis amigos, el Embajador de Irán, Mohammad Hossein Emadi, y la Señora Jennifer Fellows de Canadá. Gracias.

Algunos elementos que, a nuestro entender, son los mensajes más importantes del COAG 27. En primer lugar, la Argentina celebra la creación del Subcomité de Ganadería del Comité de Agricultura, y espera que este espacio intergubernamental promueva la discusión de cuestiones que atañen específicamente al sector y permita fortalecer el diálogo, compartir experiencias y abordar estrategias conjuntas para problemas comunes. Como reconoció el Comité, el sector ganadero realiza una importante contribución a los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS): no solo cumple un papel central en los medios de vida de millones de personas, sino que además provee productos, como las carnes rojas, que contienen un aporte importante de nutrientes que contribuyen significativamente a la seguridad alimentaria y la nutrición.

En segundo lugar, la Argentina valora positivamente que el Comité haya destacado el rol de la Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC) y, en particular del Acuerdo sobre la Aplicación de Medidas Sanitarias y Fitosanitarias, así como de las Organizaciones Internacionales de referencia para tal Acuerdo, en lo que se refiere al vínculo entre los flujos comerciales y la preservación de la salud y la vida de plantas, de los animales y de los humanos. Para la Argentina, es central que las medidas que los países adopten para abordar los riesgos derivados de las enfermedades animales se diseñen sobre la base de sólida evidencia científica conforme análisis de riesgo, en línea con las reglas del citado Acuerdo.

Por último, con relación a la elaboración del Código de conducta voluntario para la reducción de las pérdidas y el desperdicio de alimentos, la Argentina aspira a que se inicien las negociaciones de este documento, que consideramos de especial relevancia en especial a la luz de los retos de la erradicación del hambre y la pobreza.

De igual manera, la Argentina está dispuesta a continuar participando activamente en la elaboración del Plan de Acción para la aplicación de la Estrategia de integración de la biodiversidad en los distintos sectores agrícolas. Como recomendó el COAG, estimamos oportuno que el Consejo señale la relevancia de que dicho Plan continúe elaborándose a través de un proceso formal de consultas, con los insumos brindados los comités técnicos, y con la participación de los puntos focales nacionales pertinentes en el ámbito de la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos para la Alimentación y la Agricultura.

Con estos comentarios, alentamos a que el Consejo haga suyo el Informe del 27.º período de sesiones del COAG y las recomendaciones allí formuladas.

Sr. Elias REYES BRAVO (México)

El impacto que una enfermedad exótica, emergente o reemergente puede tener para el sector pecuario es devastador y muchas veces puede representar riesgos a la salud pública, por lo que es indispensable contar con líneas de trabajo bien definidas, que aminoren el riesgo de introducción de estos agentes a nivel nacional y internacional. En ese sentido, valoramos que la prevención de plagas y enfermedades en animales y plantas sea uno de los puntos primordiales sobre los cuales el Comité de Agricultura plantea dirigir los esfuerzos los Miembros, con énfasis en la regionalización como herramienta comercial, económica y sanitaria.

Destaca el Programa mundial de erradicación de la peste de los pequeños rumiantes (PPR) que busca acabar con esta enfermedad en todo el mundo para 2030. Este esfuerzo traerá beneficios al sector alimentario a nivel mundial, favoreciendo a millones de personas. Queremos destacar también que el esfuerzo de prevención de plagas y enfermedades transfronterizas debe incluir también a los organismos acuáticos.

En cuanto al nuevo Plan de acción de la FAO sobre la resistencia a los antimicrobianos (2021-25), proponemos considerar también la producción acuícola y pesquera, debido a que cada año va en aumento la producción de organismos acuáticos, y con ello la aparición de enfermedades de origen infeccioso que favorecen el uso indiscriminado de productos antimicrobianos en las granjas productoras.

En cuanto al párrafo 27 del Informe, es de fundamental importancia que continúen los esfuerzos para sensibilizar a la población, a los veterinarios y empresarios sobre el uso de antimicrobianos, y a los laboratorios de diagnóstico para el fortalecimiento de la vigilancia; se deben considerar campañas de difusión sobre la prevención, buenas prácticas y medidas de bioseguridad, entre otras acciones.

Respecto al establecimiento de un Subcomité de Ganadería del Comité de Agricultura, consideramos que permitirá contar con grupos de expertos que proporcionen información y planes de acción especializados en este importante sector.

En relación con el Código de conducta voluntario para la reducción y pérdida de alimentos, estamos de acuerdo con la postura de que la FAO siga con un enfoque integral, a fin de incluir a todas las partes de la cadena alimentaria.

Expresamos nuestro apoyo a las propuestas para: un Día Internacional de la Sanidad Vegetal como legado clave del Año Internacional de la Sanidad Vegetal, para un Año Internacional de la Palma Datilera dada la contribución de este producto a la seguridad alimentaria, así como nuestro apoyo al Año Internacional de los Pastizales y los Pastores.

Apoyamos los demás temas a los que se refiere el Informe y los que destacan lo relativo a pérdida y desperdicio de alimentos como en terreno rural, la Plataforma Internacional para la Alimentación y la Agricultura Digitales, la Alianza Mundial por el Suelo y biodiversidad.

Con estos comentarios, apoyamos el endoso del Informe del 27.º período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura (COAG).

CHAIRPERSON

At this stage, since I have got a long list of speakers, perhaps I should also remind Members that we need to, as we agreed at the beginning, restrict individual interventions to three minutes, and Group interventions to five minutes. Could I please ask you to kindly be brief in your statements, and keep them focused, so that we can get through our Agenda on time.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Germany is honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

I would like to thank the Chairperson, Ms Jennifer Fellows, who chaired and conducted smoothly Committee on Agriculture (COAG) 27. Additionally, I would like to congratulate Dr Bommakanti Rajender on his election as the next COAG chair.

We welcome the Report on the 27th Session of COAG. We recognise the importance of the livestock sector for livelihoods, food security and nutrition. Thus, we welcome the establishment of the Sub-Committee on Livestock. We would request a strong link to COAG and close cooperation with existing international organisations, platforms and partnerships that deal with livestock issues, especially World Health Organisation (WHO), World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), Global Agenda on Sustainable Livestock (GASL), and the Livestock Environmental and Performance Partnership (LEAP). We also strongly recommend an inclusive governance with all relevant actors and welcome a first session of the Sub-Committee to be held in the first quarter of 2022, subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources.

We welcome FAO's key areas and actions to reduce the burden of Animal and Plant Pest and Diseases

(APPDs) through the Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES) and also support the draft resolution for consolidating the implementation of the Peste des Petits Ruminants Global Eradication Programme (PPR GEP) to achieve the goal of a PPR free world by 2030. We strongly support the promotion of the One Health approach, in cooperation with other relevant organisations such as WHO, OIE, and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Integrated Pest Management (IPM), agroecology and other sustainable innovative approaches.

We highlight the need to progressively eliminate the use and the risk of chemical pesticides as well as to promote ecological alternatives to them. We also call for a prudent and responsible use of antimicrobials and welcome the development of FAO's new action plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in this regard.

We also highly appreciate FAO's work in the field of food security, in particular the new Food Security Strategy. In this regard, we urge FAO to strengthen its cooperation with other relevant entities, primarily with WHO.

We welcome the proposal to declare 12 May as the International Day of Plant Health in order to continue raising awareness on the importance of plant health. This will ensure concrete actions and fruitful co-operation to resolve global problems. As regards the proclamation of International Years, we urge FAO, when proposing International Years, to include within the text of the proposal a comprehensive assessment of the presented proposal against the criteria adopted by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC) and the 38th FAO Conference in 2013 for the proclamation of International Years.

With these comments, we recommend transmitting the 27th COAG Report to the Conference for endorsement.

CHAIRPERSON

Before I give the floor to Australia, I would like to make another comment, as a reminder to Members, that when considering these reports, the Council deals with programme and budgetary matters. All policy issues go directly to the Conference. Kindly, please, try and make a distinction between these two aspects.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

Following others, Australia wishes to extend its congratulations to Ambassador Mohammad Hossein Emadi, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Mrs Jennifer Fellows, Canada, and the Secretariat, for their delivery of a highly successful meeting.

Australia endorses the findings and recommendations of the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG27). We particularly welcomed the focus of COAG 27 on livestock and we reaffirm the importance of the FAO continuing to address livestock issues as an integral part of its work plan moving forward.

While not diminishing the importance of all of the issues addressed, Australia highlights the following three areas, which we consider are of high priority for FAO. Firstly, section B, the need to prevent and manage animal and plant pests and diseases at a global, regional and country level, including risks associated with diseases emerging from wildlife reservoirs. Secondly, section D, the need for enhanced collaboration with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Codex Alimentarius and other organisations on issues such as Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) as a part of the One Health Approach. Finally, section G, the role of food safety towards sustainable and inclusive agricultural and food systems and the need for ongoing recognition on the importance of ongoing sustainable funding for the Food Safety Science Advice Programme and the Codex Alimentarius Secretariat.

In closing, we also wish to highlight our endorsement of the International Day of Plant Health.

Ms Pernilla IVARSSON (Sweden)

I deliver this statement on behalf of the Nordic Countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and my own country Sweden. The European Union (EU) countries, Denmark, Finland and Sweden, align

themselves with the EU statement. The Nordic Countries welcome the Report of the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture and wide range of issues discussed, relating to agriculture, livestock, food safety, nutrition, rural development and natural resource management.

With the impact of the current COVID-19 pandemic on health and food safety systems in mind, the Nordic countries think the rationale for a new food safety strategy is very timely. We call on FAO to collaborate with World Health Organization to ensure that food safety strategies are aligned and mutually supportive, following the One Health approach. In addition, we would like to highlight the need for ongoing sustainable funding for the Food Safety Science Advice Programme and the Codex Alimentarius Secretariat.

The livestock sector and its role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is an issue of utmost importance for many countries and for the possibility to ensure food security and nutrition. In this regard, we particularly highlight the need for a One Health approach, including the prudent and responsible use of antibiotics in animal husbandry. The Nordic countries support the implementation of the FAO Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) 2016-2020, and the proposal for a new FAO Action Plan on AMR 2021-2025. The Nordics have long experience in this important area and have shared experiences and knowledge on numerous occasions. Good animal health and welfare is the basis for a sustainable livestock sector, as healthy animals do not need treatment. As a recent example, we are proud to draw your attention to a joint publication between FAO and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, (SLU) on *Tackling antimicrobial use and resistance in dairy cattle: Lessons learned in Sweden*. We hope it will be useful and inspirational.

Finally, the Nordic countries welcome the proposal to declare the 12 May as the International Day of Plant Health. As a legacy of the International Year of Plant Health, the Day will continue to raise awareness of the important role of plant health in achieving the SDGs.

Sra. Mónica ROBELO RAFFONE (Nicaragua)

Agradecemos a la Secretaría por la presentación del Informe del 27.º Período de Sesiones del Comité de Agricultura (COAG) y nos sumamos a la declaración realizada por Indonesia en nombre del G77 más China.

Sobre el Informe, en particular, queremos referirnos a la propuesta para el establecimiento del Subcomité de Ganadería del Comité de Agricultura. Tomamos nota del Informe de la Reunión Conjunta del Comité del Programa y Comité de Finanzas y respaldamos la propuesta para el establecimiento de dicho Comité, como lo hemos respaldado desde el inicio de su formulación.

Consideramos que ese importante espacio intergubernamental viene a cubrir el vacío que por muchos años gran parte de los Miembros veníamos solicitando. Confiamos que el Subcomité, como instrumento auxiliar y de asesoría, permita poner de relieve todos aquellos asuntos inherentes y prioritarios relacionados al sector ganadero, incluyendo la puesta en práctica de programas y actividades técnicas necesarias para asegurar la contribución de este importante sector al cumplimiento de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible.

Este nuevo Subcomité deberá considerar las buenas prácticas anteriores, incluyendo además las recomendaciones de las comisiones técnicas regionales y prioridades de cada país. Es necesario un esfuerzo de la Administración para canalizar recursos extrapresupuestarios adecuados que garanticen una amplia participación de los Miembros en las actividades del Subcomité, incluyendo las reuniones entre períodos de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura.

Esperamos recibir a través de los órganos competentes actualizaciones periódicas sobre el trabajo, iniciativas y actividades del Subcomité en línea con lo establecido en su mandato y reglamento.

Con estas consideraciones, apoyamos la propuesta para el establecimiento del Subcomité de Ganadería del Comité de Agricultura.

CHAIRPERSON

I would remind, again, that since we had the Asia Group statement, please try and not repeat the arguments given in that statement.

Mr M. Ikhsan SHIDDIEQY (Indonesia)

Indonesia aligns itself with the statements delivered by Her Excellency, the Ambassador of Indonesia on behalf of the Group of 77 & China, and the joint statement by Thailand on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We support the findings and recommendations in the report of the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG). We wish to limit our intervention to the following two points.

First, the livestock sector has contributed quite substantially to the national food security and livelihoods. Hence, Indonesia gives full support to the establishment of a sub-committee on livestock and encourages FAO to continue its initiative to formulate voluntary guidelines to enhance the productivity of small-scale livestock keepers and improve their contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We look forward to further collaborate with FAO and its Members in this regard.

Second, before the COVID-19 pandemic, Indonesia faced significant decrease of youth participation in the agriculture sector for about 10 percent between 2014 and 2018 due to migration to non-agriculture sector and urbanization. The current context of COVID-19 has threatened deeply labor market vulnerabilities as the youth are being hit hard by the crisis in terms of employment. In this regard, we appreciate COAG's endorsement of the Rural Youth Action Plan and we support its implementation.

With these brief comments, Indonesia endorses the Report of the 27th Session of COAG.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to Spain. Spain, you have the floor.

I do not think they are connected, so we will go to the next speaker, Japan.

Mr Naoki HAYASAKA (Japan)

I would like to thank the Secretariat for the preparing of Report of the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture and welcome this report. Japan fully aligns itself with the statement made by Thailand on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. In this regard, we add two short comments.

First, we have a comment on the Food Systems Summit. We would like to share the results of the Food Systems Summit at the subsequent Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit in December 2021 and utilize them for discussions and commitments to resolve nutritional issues of various participating stakeholders.

Second, Japan appreciates FAO's activities on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and hope that FAO will continue to AMR work in close cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) so that there will be no gaps or overlaps between the organizations.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Canada believes the work of the Committee on Agriculture should help to reinforce the importance of FAO's technical and normative work, as well as the importance of sustainable funding for standard setting work such as the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), and Codex, and the need to enhance work on all areas of sustainable agriculture.

Canada would like to reiterate the important role of the IPPC, which plays a critical role in restricting the movement of plant, pests at an international level, to standard setting, promotion of international collaboration, and capacity building. We support a fair, open, and transparent selection process to identify the most qualified candidate to lead the IPPC, uphold its values, and advance its members' interests. As we move towards a 2021 UN Food Systems Summit, it is crucial for indigenous leaders to be at the table, share their holistic approach to food systems, and convey their perspectives at the global, regional, and national levels, on how to bridge these gaps.

Canada is supportive of FAO's efforts in developing a new Food Safety Strategy. Canada is also pleased that the Committee on Agriculture endorsed the creation of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture, to encourage dialogue on challenges, risks and opportunities, to the

digitalization of agriculture, and agri-food, exchange best practices, as well as provide evidence-based policy recommendations on supporting digital technology adoption in the sector in an inclusive manner. Promoting equitable access to this technology will be key to addressing the triple digital divide, and ensure that women and girls in rural communities have access to this technology.

Sr. Gonzalo EIRIZ GERVÁS (España)

Lo que quisiéramos destacar en este punto es lo siguiente. Lo primero es manifestar nuestro apoyo total a la intervención de la presidencia alemana a la Unión Europea en nombre de la Unión Europea y todos sus miembros.

Asimismo, queríamos subrayar, primero, el establecimiento del Subcomité de Ganadería del Comité de Agricultura, habida cuenta del papel especialmente relevante en la producción animal, el suministro de una dieta de alto valor biológico asequible, suficiente y saludable nutricionalmente para el ser humano. Asimismo, decir que la ganadería supone la base de una actividad crucial para la seguridad alimentaria en la conservación de la biodiversidad y el patrimonio genético, así como para el mantenimiento de un medio rural sostenible, económico, social y medioambientalmente contribuyendo a los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible.

Por consecuencia, alentamos a FAO a adoptar las medidas necesarias para reducir la incidencia de las plagas y enfermedades de los animales y las plantas a través del sistema de prevención de emergencias. Y, además, respaldamos el Programa mundial de erradicación de la peste de pequeños rumiantes (PPR) con vistas al objetivo de acabar con esta enfermedad en todo el mundo para el 2030.

La lucha contra la zoonosis, bien de transmisión directa o alimentaria y entre las que se encuentra más del 80% de las enfermedades de la especie humana, hace reforzar el enfoque de “Una salud”, recogido por sólidos criterios científicos. Se ha de reforzar la vigilancia y la cooperación con otras instituciones, tales como la Organización Mundial de Sanidad Animal (OIE), o la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS) y con los gobiernos en la lucha contra determinadas enfermedades, incluidas las emergentes y las resistencias antimicrobianas. En este sentido, alentamos a que se haga un uso prudente y responsable de los antimicrobianos y, por ello, respaldamos la propuesta de un nuevo Plan de acción de FAO (2021-25) en este sentido.

Finalmente, España ha apoyado decididamente la proclamación del Año Internacional de los Pastizales y los Pastores contribuyendo de esta manera a expresar la conciencia ciudadana global sobre la importancia de la ganadería para la correcta alimentación del mundo y, particularmente, la ganadería extensiva como sustento de [XX] y áreas en todo el mundo.

Ms Yiseul KIM (Republic of Korea)

The Republic of Korea fully aligns itself with the statement made by Thailand on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. The Republic of Korea welcomes the Rural Youth Action Plan reviewed by the Committee of Agriculture, as the Republic of Korea is making its efforts to attract young people to rural areas with an ageing population. In addition, the Republic of Korea welcomes the progress in the FAO Strategy of Mainstreaming Biodiversity across agricultural sectors and looks forward to further collaboration between FAO and relevant partners.

In particular, the Republic of Korea, as a Member country of the Global Soil Laboratory Network starting from 2018, welcomes and recognizes an endorsement of the Resolution for international exchange of soil samples for research purposes under the Global Soil Laboratory Network as nationally standardized soil unearthing methods used in this country, including the Republic of Korea, and soil analytic methods endorsed by the FAO Global Soil Partnership are different for carrying out inter-laboratory comparisons. Efforts are needed to maintain and improve data reliability.

At the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture, the Republic of Korea stated the importance of the development of methods to harmonize the soil analytic data, which has resulted from using different soil analysis methods by each country and it caused the Secretariat to put efforts on such issue. In addition, the Rural Development Administration of the Republic of Korea signed a framework arrangement with FAO for the establishment of a cooperation system in agriculture research and development (RND), an extension, in September 2020. Recently, the Rural Development

Administration of the Republic of Korea has been conducting the project titled, *Development of the Soil Loss of Asia, and National Soil Information System*, targeting 13 Asian countries with FAO Global Soil Partnership.

Lastly, the Republic of Korea supports proclamation of the International Day of Plant Health, through FAO's proposal. As you may be well aware, plant health is an important contributor for 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. This year, we have spared no effort in raising the awareness of plant health. In this regard, the designation of the International Day of Plant Health will be a great legacy of the International Year of Plant Health 2020.

Mr Fei HUANG (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China aligns itself with the statement of Asia Group, and Group of 77 and China. China endorses the findings and recommendations in the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Report and supports FAO's continued efforts in addressing hunger and malnutrition, and strengthening digital agriculture, and data capacity development at country level. Further conducting global work on food loss and waste reduction, and providing continuing support here, and incorporating smallholder into the innovation strategy.

We value the contribution of the livestock sector to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and support the establishment of a COAG Sub-Committee on Livestock. China endorses a series of animal and plant disease preventative measures to support Members, and encourages FAO to further leverage its technical expertise to drive international cooperation and strengthen capacity development in long term pest and disease control, reinforcing capacity of the agricultural system in fighting against plant pests. China welcomes the progress made in desert locusts and Global Action on Fall Armyworm.

China endorses the Report of 27th Session of COAG.

Mr Tommie WILLIAMS (United States of America)

The United States of America thanks the Secretariat for its Summary and the Committee on Agriculture for its work on these items. The United States of America endorses innovation, including digitalization in agriculture to increase sustainable production. Empirical evidence shows that innovation to produce more with less inputs, is one of the most powerful approaches for enhancing the three pillars of sustainability – environmental, social, and economic.

We appreciate the Committee underlined the importance of enabling access to enhancing participation in appropriate advisory services for farmers, in order to unleash the full potential of innovation for achieving sustainable agriculture, and lift millions of people out of poverty and food insecurity. We also appreciate FAO's initiative to ensure and strengthen global food security amid the pandemic. We value the vital information on market conditions, and food supply, use of data for decision making, dissemination of policy briefs, and longer-term efforts to support more resilient food systems.

The United States of America notes the recent World Health Assembly Resolution calling for an updating of the World Food Safety Strategy and encourages FAO to collaborate with the World Health Organization (WHO) to ensure that the two organizations' goals for food safety and security are reflected in the development of sound, science-based approaches that will meet the needs of Members. Likewise, we urge FAO to leverage and align its food safety strategies with the work of Codex Alimentarius.

The United States of America reiterates its view that all food safety measures should be based on science, including the principles of risk assessment and sound scientific advice. We also welcome COAG's request to give regular updates to the Programme Committee and Technical Committees, as appropriate, on progress to meet objectives within the Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance.

Regarding the proposed Terms of Reference for the Digital Platform for Food and Agriculture, we look forward to receiving further guidance from the Programme Committee, and the FAO Council in 2021, following completion of FAO's Committee on Fisheries, in early February.

The United States of America supports the International Day of Plant Health. Plant pests are a major agricultural, environmental, and ecological threat. Every year, a significant proportion of global

harvest is lost to plant pests. The establishment of the International Day of Plant Health would be an important step to address future pest risk challenges that may have serious impact on food security, the environment, and the global trade system. The United States of America looks forward to collaborating with others in establishing this UN proclamation.

Mr Mohammed Ahmed ALGHAMDI (Saudi Arabia) (Original Language Arabic)

I would like to thank the Committee for its endeavors, and also commend the Ambassador of Canada for chairing its proceedings so ably.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia supports what has been conveyed to by the representative of the Group of 77 and China. We join our colleagues in supporting the proclamation of an International Year of Date Palm, since that proclamation will strengthen sustainable techniques for harvesting, and for preventing trans-boundary diseases, while also preserving the genetic resources of the date palm. It would also contribute to the establishment of policies and programmes to enhance productivity of the date palm, so that it may contribute even more to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. It would also help in more agriculture and more support for food security, and the eradication of hunger.

We also support the establishment of a Sub-Committee on Livestock, within the context of Committee on Agriculture (COAG), as well as the proclamation of an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, as well as an International Day of Plant Health. We also support the establishment of voluntary guidelines, Voluntary Code of Conduct for Food Loss and Waste Reduction. We hope that all of these proposals will be endorsed in this Report of the last COAG Session.

Mr Yousef JUHAIL (Kuwait)

I would like, with your permission, to give the floor to Iran, please.

CHAIRPERSON

Okay. Iran, you have the floor.

Mr Shahin GHORASHIZADEH (Islamic Republic of Iran) (Observer)

Iran is honored to deliver this statement on behalf of the Near East Regional Group. The Near East group appreciates the Chair and all members of the Committee on Agriculture for the successful Session of Committee on Agriculture (COAG) which held on virtual format from 28 September to 02 October 2020.

On the establishment of livestock sector, at the same time Near East group appreciates COAG for concentrating on livestock contribution for achieving SDGs, we welcome the establishment of Sub-Committee on livestock in accordance to FAO mandate to discuss and build consensus on livestock issues and related priorities including One Health approach, sustainable food system, healthy diet, poverty alleviation, food security and nutrition and improving smallholders livelihood to achieve Agenda 2030. We note FAO on the importance of strengthening cooperation and collaboration with the Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock and other relevant regional and global bodies and initiatives. We encourage FAO to produce a comprehensive, science and evidence-based global assessment of the contribution of livestock to food security, sustainable food systems, nutrition and healthy diets, and to develop a technical document of good practices, based on sound scientific evidence. At the same time, Near East group would like to know more clarification from management about budgetary resource allocation, composition and the start timeline of the sub-committee.

On COVID-19, we appreciate the work of FAO for providing timely data and information, policy analysis and evidence-based recommendations to address the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on food security and nutrition. According to particular concern for the lives, livelihoods and nutritional status of those who are least able to cope with the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, the Near East group recommends FAO to ensure access to food for all considering the relevance of international trade in the context of an open, rules-based, science and evidence based, predictable, non-discriminatory, and fair multi-lateral trade system, consistent with World Trade Organization (WTO) rules.

On the Voluntary Code of Conduct for Food Loss and Waste (FLW) at the same time, we welcome FAO to improve the document, including short supply chains and international trade, we request FAO to prepare a revised document in consultation with Members under the guidance of the COAG Bureau to be submitted to the FAO Council at its next session. We also request FAO to continue providing demand-driven policy and technical support to countries in their Food Loss and Waste reduction efforts, including for the measurement of Food Loss and Waste, considering national and regional contexts.

On Global Programme on Sustainable Dryland Agriculture in collaboration with the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG) in a Changing Climate, at the same time we endorse the Global Programme on Sustainable Dryland Agriculture, we note FAO that the programme should be evidence-based, country-led and country-owned systems approach, encompassing international technical cooperation, in order to ensure sustainable agriculture and sustainable rural development of drylands and climate change mitigation and adaptation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this regard, we request FAO to integrate it into its work and follow the programme through monitoring and evaluation, including under the SDG Monitoring Framework, in partnership with countries with technical experience of sustainable management of dryland agricultural systems and South-South and Triangular Cooperation

On international years and days, the Near East Group supports the proposal for an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, an International Year of Date Palm and an International Day of Plant Health for approval by the 165th Session of the Council and adoption by the 42nd Session of the Conference.

With these comments, Near East Group endorses the report of the 27th session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG).

If you allow me, Chairperson, in my national capacity, I would like to appreciate all the kind words from our esteemed delegates about the [XX] collaboration with this Committee.

Mr John BASERA (Zimbabwe)

Zimbabwe and Uganda have the honour to deliver this Statement on behalf of the Africa Regional Group. We would like to share our appreciation to FAO Management, the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Secretariat and the Chairperson of the Committee for successfully organising the 27th Session of COAG. It was held in a virtual modality, from 28 September to 2 October 2020.

We appreciate the work of the Committee and we welcome its Report with its theme on the contribution of the livestock sector to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Consequently, we welcome the establishment of a Sub-Committee on Livestock and view it as an important viable platform to discuss and build consensus on livestock issues and priorities as well as on the technical and policy programmes and activities needed to optimise the contributions of livestock for poverty alleviation, food security and nutrition, sustainable livelihoods and the realization of the 2030 Agenda, and of course, the Africa 2063 Agenda.

The Africa Region also supports the Committee's discussions on the prevention, anticipation and response to high impact animal and plant diseases and pests and appreciates FAO's work in assisting African Member Countries in addressing the challenges posed to food security with regard to Desert Locusts, through the Desert Locust Emergency Response, and the Fall Armyworm, through the Global Action on Fall Armyworm. These interventions are of critical importance to the Region. We urge the Council to ensure that these issues, especially the Desert Locusts and the Fall Armyworm remain at the heart of the FAO work programme. Being a patriotic Zimbabwean, Mr Chair, allow me to add to the list of the general diseases in Zimbabwe, and FAO played a very, very pivotal role in terms of us trying to contain the scourge caused by the general diseases. Mr Chair, you can appreciate that in Zimbabwe, for example, we lost over 200 000 herd, you can imagine, from a herd of 5.5 million cattle, so that is quite significant. FAO is really assisting us.

The Region also welcomes the Committee's discussions on the global COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on food security and nutrition and appreciates the importance this topic received, particularly with regards to the criticality of maintaining regional and international trade and the centrality of the

2030 Agenda in ensuring that those most impacted by the negative effects of the pandemic are not left behind. The Region highly appreciates FAO's work in this specific regard. Chairperson, it is important for the Council to note that the second wave of COVID-19 has hit Africa even harder than the first wave. COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose significant challenges to the already strained health, food and nutrition security and broad socio-economic conditions in the continent. The growing direct impact of the pandemic is affecting health, in terms of morbidity and mortality, with negative repercussions on other sectors like agriculture which is a major source of food and nutrition. Chairperson, the region's conviction is that research, innovation and modernization would remain an important pillar for agriculture to continue delivering its mandate under the pandemic.

The Africa Regional Group is encouraged by, and endorses the Committee's proposal regarding, the Rural Youth Action Plan. Africa has a youthful demographic, 60 percent of Africa's population is below the age of 25 and could benefit from initiatives that aim to revitalize rural areas and provide sustainable livelihoods for this demographic. We highlight the importance of maintaining the Rural Youth Action Plan as a living document, which can be updated to align with the new FAO objectives and emerging issues, taking again into account the diversity of youth, their needs and their aspirations.

With regard to the importance of enabling access and enhancing participation in appropriate innovations, information and advisory services for smallholders and family farmers, the Region encourages FAO to strengthen its work and provide strategic guidance and knowledge competencies as well as its technical support for Members in order to bridge the gap between information generation and use by smallholders and family farmers as well as other vulnerable groups. Also, by strengthening linkages between research, extension and farmers. That is a very, very critical linkage which we need to, and it has to be a similar linkage. We also envisage the Digital Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture as an important tool in this regard.

The COAG had a loaded Agenda and we have the honour of informing you that the Africa Regional Group participated actively and constructively towards the decisions that were taken by the Committee. The Africa Regional Group, therefore, endorses the findings and recommendations of the Report of the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture as outlined in document *C2021/21*.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Brazil aligns itself with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of Group of 77 China. In our national capacity we would like to thank the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Secretariat, as well as the Chairmanship for the excellent work in conducting us in the heavy Agenda towards a successful conclusion of debates. We believe this session allowed us to make progress in consolidating the importance of livestock on food security, nutrition and biodiversity and also demonstrating that the adoption of the sustainable practices reduce the environment impacts of livestock production. We particularly welcome the request to promote integrated systems in low-carbon livestock. We further appreciate the initiative on producing a science and evidenced-based global assessment of the contribution of livestock to food security, sustainable food systems, nutrition and healthy diets.

The establishment of the Sub-Committee on Livestock is long overdue. We believe the Sub-Committee could house important debates, such as the role of livestock in food security and nutrition and livelihoods, and contributions from livestock to ecosystem service, biodiversity and carbon balance, and integrated landscape approaches. In addition, the Sub-Committee should work to reverse misconceptions that food products of animal origin are not fundamental to healthy development of human beings. This is a very important aspect for us.

On Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), we welcome the balanced approach adopted by COAG 27 whilst noting the need for improvement of the new five-year Action Plan. In line with the Committee's decision, we would like to know the next steps on refining the document based on Members comments and inclusive discussions. Finally, Brazil also appreciates the endorsement of the Global Programme on Sustainable Dryland Agriculture. We plan to strengthen our involvement in this subject through increased participation at the Global Framework of what was discussed in agriculture.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to Italy. We do not seem to be connected.

We will go to the next speaker, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Mr Neil FOURIE (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland fully supports the declaration of an International Day of Plant Health. We would like to join other Members of Council in urging FAO to support its Members to fully implement the One Health approach that we know is fundamental in preventing transboundary pests and disease.

Furthermore, we would like to underline the importance of the Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Action Plan and to welcome it. We would like to ask Management for an update and confirmation on the next steps to meet Council's request for an AMR indicator in the Strategic Results Framework. We can discuss this either under this Item or under Item 10. The Programme Committee Report, which underlines the request made in Council now a year ago.

Finally, we reiterate our request in document *C 2021/21*, the Resolution on Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) is updated to reflect the agreed text from the Committee on Agriculture (COAG). I specifically refer to paragraph 3 on page 21 and ask it to be amended as follows "encourages FAO in close cooperation with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) under the Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADS) agreement and with other partners to establish a mechanism to ensure broad global coordination for implementation of Global Eradication Programme (PPR GEP)."

Sr. Gustavo MOSTAJO OCOLA (Perú)

Queremos reiterar nuestro reconocimiento a la Señora Jennifer Fellows de Canadá, por su destacado liderazgo en conducir el 27.º período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura (COAG 27) y al nuevo presidente del Comité, el Señor Bommakanti Rajender de India. La delegación del Perú destaca y respalda la declaración formulada por Indonesia en nombre del G77 más China.

Con relación al sector ganadero, que contribuye a la seguridad alimentaria y mejorar los medios de vida y, por ende, su contribución con los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) es primordial. Por esta razón apoyamos la propuesta del establecimiento del Subcomité de Ganadería del Comité de Agricultura como foro intergubernamental para abordar cuestiones globales y complejas relacionadas con el sector, optimizar la producción y la sanidad pecuaria sostenible, prestando especial atención a la producción ganadera de pequeña escala, así como asesorar al COAG en las medidas y normativas necesarias.

Apoyamos la propuesta de celebrar el 12 de mayo como Día Internacional de la Sanidad Vegetal el cual permitirá tomar una mayor conciencia de la contribución de la sanidad vegetal a los ODS. En ese sentido, instamos a la FAO a seguir reforzando su importante función normativa y de establecimiento de normas y a dar un mayor soporte a la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria (CIPF) dentro de la Organización. Apoyamos, asimismo, el establecimiento del Año Internacional de los Pastizales y los Pastores y del Año Internacional de la Palma Datilera.

Finalmente, como ha sido expresado por otros Miembros, el Perú reitera la necesidad de que la FAO, con el apoyo de los Estados Miembros desempeñen un papel más activo en la preparación de la Cumbre de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Sistemas Alimentarios de 2021.

Con estas palabras, acogemos el Informe del 27.º período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura.

CHAIRPERSON

That completes the list of Members who wanted to speak. Now I pass on to the Observers.

Mr Luís COELHO-SILVA (Portugal) (Observer)

Portugal aligns itself with the statement by Germany on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. We welcome the establishment of the Sub-Committee on Livestock. We are expecting that the Sub-Committee give relevant contributions to a holistic approach to food systems and to agriculture, including agro-pastoral systems and the Committee on Agriculture umbrella [XX]

Finally, we welcome the development of a new Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance.

M. Jean-Jacques SOULA (Organisation mondiale de la santé animale) (Observateur)

Au nom de l'Organisation mondiale de la santé animale (OIE), je saisis cette occasion de première intervention pour remercier le Directeur général de la FAO d'avoir invité l'OIE à participer à cette 165e session du Conseil.

L'OIE et la FAO entretiennent des relations de partenariat depuis plus de 70 ans, pour le plus grand bénéfice de nos pays membres. Notre présence aujourd'hui constitue un nouveau témoignage de cette excellente collaboration. Elle est porteuse de fructueux échanges à venir sur les enjeux mondiaux de première importance qui nous réunissent.

S'agissant de la 27e session du Comité de l'agriculture, les observations sont les suivantes. À l'invitation de la FAO, l'OIE a participé en septembre dernier à la session du Comité, a pu mesurer la grande qualité des échanges et des conclusions adressées au Conseil et à la Conférence, et remercie sa présidente, Mme Jennifer Fellows (Canada).

L'OIE fait écho aux déclarations des pays membres qui soutiennent le partenariat tripartite FAO-OIE, chargé de répondre aux enjeux mondiaux dans les domaines de la résistance aux antimicrobiens, des zoonoses et de l'approche «Une seule santé», et réaffirme qu'elle demeure pleinement mobilisée pour la réussite de cette démarche commune.

À cet égard, il convient de souligner les conclusions du Comité en faveur de la prévention des maladies animales contagieuses les plus menaçantes: c'est la raison d'être de l'Accord FAO-OIE sur le Cadre mondial pour le contrôle progressif des maladies animales transfrontalières, le GF-TAD. Cet accord est particulièrement important pour coordonner la lutte contre les maladies animales prioritaires telles que la fièvre aphteuse, la peste des petits ruminants ou encore la peste porcine africaine.

Par ailleurs, l'OIE soutient les conclusions du Comité concernant la prise en compte de la faune sauvage et de la protection de la biodiversité comme des facteurs essentiels de l'approche «Une seule santé».

Enfin, l'OIE se félicite de la mise en place d'un sous-comité de l'élevage, ainsi que de l'adoption par le Comité de l'agriculture d'un projet de résolution de la Conférence sur l'éradication de la peste des petits ruminants à l'horizon 2030.

Pour terminer, l'OIE réitère ses remerciements à la FAO et confirme sa pleine disponibilité pour renforcer notre partenariat et contribuer ainsi à améliorer le niveau sanitaire des filières de production animale et réduire le risque zoonotique.

Ms Eudora Hilda QUARTEY KORANTENG (Ghana) (Observer)

On behalf of Ghana, we appreciate and support the Report of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) just submitted and also align ourselves with the statement on behalf of the Africa Regional Group.

We continue FAO's mission to improve food safety and security, and nutrition has been further enunciated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), SDG1 and SDG2. In pursuit of these two SDGs any actions relevant to the successful implementation to reduce hunger and poverty.

We realize we need to have an eye on all areas of sustainable agriculture. Plant health therefore cannot be overlooked and must be encouraged as a necessary input towards the release of the full potential of agricultural policies globally and in each country. In this regard, the importance of plants and plant health cannot be overemphasized. Ghana therefore strongly supports the proposal of the establishment of an International Day of Plant Health as a means of ensuring a means to eradicate plant diseases and pests, which would form the very important background, to ensuring that food security and provision of good nutrition can be sustained.

CHAIRPERSON

That brings us to the end of the list of speakers. I now pass the floor to the Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture. Followed by representatives of the Secretariat to respond to some of the comments from Members.

Mr Bommakanti RAJENDER (Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture)

First of all, I would like to place on record my deep sense of appreciation to Ambassador Mohammad Hossein Emadi for his leadership and Ms Jennifer Fellows of Canada for successfully organizing and conducting the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) 27 meeting. I would also like to appreciate the COAG Secretariat for their support. I would like to thank all the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups and the Members for their support and warm wishes on my election as the Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture 28.

I would like to briefly clarify the questions raised by Members. Regarding the Bureau of the Sub-Committee on Livestock, which will be elected during the first session of the Sub-Committee and as per the Rules of Procedure that the Sub-Committee of Livestock, Rule 1, the Sub-Committee should be open to all Members of the Committee on Agriculture. Rule 2, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons, the Sub-Committee on Livestock shall elect from among its Members a Chairperson and six Vice-Chairpersons, that is the Bureau, each coming from one of the geographic regions: Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Near East, North America and Southwest Pacific.

Regarding the timeline asked by some Members, the Secretariat will be established in the month of December. The web page of the Sub-Committee on Livestock will be created in the month of February 2021. The preparation of the discussion of the provisional agenda for the first session of the Secretariat and the Bureau for COAG will be in the month of April 2021. The logistics for the first meeting of the Sub-Committee on Livestock will be started in the month of June 2021. At first, we are expecting to have the first session of the meeting for the Sub-Committee on Livestock in the month of February 2022. This is the tentative timeline which I am trying to clarify to Members.

Regarding the operation legacy of the COAG Sub-Committee on Livestock, it is a multi-year programme of work which has already been approved by the Programme Committee. This is from a multi-lateral Trust Fund for a period of four years. It means we are going to have two Sub-Committee meetings in the next four years. The project has already been prepared.

We are actively receiving the resources from different Members. Regarding the resources for the timelines for the composition of the Sub-Committee. Now we request Mr Máximo Torero Cullen, Chief Economist, or Ms Maria Helena Semedo, Deputy Director-General to clarify some more on the technical issues.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to the Deputy Director-General, Ms Maria Helena Semedo, you have the floor.

Ms Maria Helena SEMEDO (Deputy Director-General)

Thank you all for the support provided for the Sub-Committee on Livestock. I think the Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) has already replied to the question. I do not believe I need to come in, for the sake of time. However, I just wanted to reply to some questions regarding One Health. I believe that One Health now is high on the public debate and gives us the opportunity to take advantage of this particular moment to raise the profile of One Health and the integration of human, animal and environment together to respond to the challenge we are facing now, and particularly the COVID-19 pandemic.

It was clearly said that we need to raise the profile of One Health, we need to work together. I believe, more and more, FAO, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the World Health Organization (WHO) are working together with United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the launch, two weeks ago, on the high-level experts, the global leaders on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR,) shows the importance we are giving in order to raise awareness regarding the prudent use of antimicrobials. For instance, also what has been said by Sweden, the exchange of best practices among regions, among countries and increase of surveillance are very high on the One Health and the Tripartite agenda. In addition, as it has been said by France several times, it was launched, the High-Level Expert Council, which will bring science to the work of the Tripartite and One Health and it has been reinforced during the discussion today, and how we need to bring science and evidence to the discussion on AMR.

Regarding the AMR Action Plan, as Brazil requested by, what the timeline is and the next step. We received the COAG comments and it has also been requested that it be submitted to the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and has referred the importance of AMR in aquatic life. Being in the Report and recommendations from COFI, they will all be integrated in the new FAO AMR Action Plan 2021-2025, and will be submitted to the Programme Committee and the Council for approval. In the meantime we will be undertaking a global and inclusive consultation with Members, not only through FAO Governing Bodies, but directly with the Members and their focal points. Regarding *Peste des Petits Ruminants* (PPR), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is right. I think it has not been included, but I believe it was a fault from our side. We will be including the remark, I believe we took note, and it will be done. We are working on the new indicator as it has been discussed in the Programme Committee and it will be undertaken – a consultative process with Members. This is what I wanted to share and hope I was able to reply to the questions related to my stream.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to Deputy Director-General, Ms Beth Bechdol. Would you like to make some remarks?

Ms Beth BECHDOL (Deputy Director-General)

I will be very brief around a number of the issues that were touched upon that relate to the Plant Production and Plant Protection area. We do very much appreciate the continued elevation by Members of the importance of addressing a number of different transboundary pests and other related disease activities. Our continued prioritization of efforts around the Fall Armyworm and also Desert Locust controls continues at pace. I believe we are seeing improved reaction responses and monitoring that are coming as a result of that.

I also very much appreciate a number of Members' supportive comments about the International Year of Plant Health, but the other additional international years that are staged to come very soon hereafter. It has been quite a challenge in this pandemic year to be able to successfully execute the International Year of Plant Health, which we know is critically important to many of us and to the fundamentals of supporting plant science and plant products.

We have stayed committed to making sure that we work as best we can in this virtual setting and have also committed to working with partners and stakeholders to extend the International Year of Plant Health into next year to make sure that it can be successfully concluded.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to Deputy Director-General Mr Laurent Thomas.

Mr Laurent THOMAS (Deputy Director-General)

As a follow-up to the intervention that Deputy Director-General, Ms Beth Bechdol, just annotated in the response to the comments that were made by Zimbabwe on the very serious African migratory locust situation for the Southern Africa Region. It seems to be of concern for Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. All of these countries do not have dedicated national locust control units. Around seven million people in the four affected countries are still recovering from the impact of the 2019 drought, and grappling also with the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and could experience further food and nutrition insecurity because of this African migratory locust.

We have been working with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the International Red Cross Locust Control Organization for Central and Southern Africa to support the governments of the affected countries to control the locusts. I am pleased to report that out of the plus USD 4 million that are called for to address the challenge, we have received generous support from different sources from the Central Emergency Revolving Fund of USD 2 million and from the USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Affairs, USD 1.5 million. We mobilized our resources from the Technical Cooperation Programme and from our SFERA funds. With this I can say that so far, the locust population in known breeding sites have been kept under control through a combination of constant monitoring of breeding sites or early warning and early action. We are working on mobilizing all our

technical excellence, and the things we have been doing in Eastern Africa with Desert Locusts. We hope with this continuous effort in partnership with the government building the capacities, we should be able to control the outbreak.

CHAIRPERSON

That brings to an end the discussion on this Item and I can conclude on Item 8.1. My conclusions for Item 8.1 are on the screen.

The Report of the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture 28 September to 2 October 2020.

1. The Council endorsed the recommendations of the Report of the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) on programme and budget matters and in particular:

- a) recommended the 42nd Session of the Conference approve the proposal for the establishment of the Sub-Committee on Livestock and to hold, subject to availability of the extra budgetary resources, the first session of the Sub-Committee during the first quarter of 2022, prior to the 28th Session of COAG;
- b) emphasize the importance of FAO's work to support members in the prevention, anticipation of and response to high-impact animal and plant diseases and pests and recommended submission to the 42nd Session of the Conference, the COAG Draft Resolution the Eradication of Peste des Petits Ruminants by 2030 and set out in appendix and we will put a number to this report;
- c) welcome the progress in the implementation of the FAO Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) 2016-2020 and the proposal for a new FAO Action Plan on AMR 2021-2025. And welcome the Tripartite Collaboration to address AMR and to promote the One Health approach and look forward to regular progress reports;
- d) noted FAO's continued support to Members in developing the sustainable food systems and to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the 2030 agenda and requested FAO provide full support to the preparatory process towards the 2021 UN Food System Summit;
- e) recognise the connection between food safety and food security, encouraged further UN level and multipartner collaboration, taking into account the impact of COVID-19 pandemic and supported the need for ongoing sustainable funding for the Food Safety Advice Programme and the Codex Alimentarius Secretariat;
- f) stressed the importance of the proposed voluntary code of conduct for food losses and waste reduction and look forward to preparation of the revised document in consultation with members under the guidance of the COAG Bureau to be submitted to the 42nd session of the Conference for endorsement;
- g) supported the International Plan for Digital Food and Agriculture, as well as the progress in the development of its terms of reference, which it looked forward to revealing at its 166th Session;
- h) endorsed the Rural Youth Action Plan (RYAP) promoting the revitalization of rural areas as a living document; and,
- i) noted the importance of FAO's work towards enabling smallholders and family farmers to access and participate in appropriate innovation, information and advisory services for sustainable agri-food systems.

2. The Council recalling the criteria outlined in the FAO policy on the proclamation and implementation of international years as adopted by the 144th session of Council in June 2012 and the ECOSOC Resolution 1980/67 regarding international years and anniversaries endorsed the following:

- a) the draft conference resolutions submitted by the 27th session of COAG on the observance by the UN system of an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists in 2026 as set out in the appendix to this Report.
- b) the draft conference resolution submitted by the 27th Session of COAG on the observance by the UN system of an International Day of Plant Health on 12th May every year as set out in the appendix to this report and C, the draft Conference Resolution submitted by the 27th session of

COAG on the observance by the UN system of an International Year on Date Palm in 2027 as set out in the appendix to this Report.

3. The Council requested that the relevant draft resolutions provide that financing of the international years and days will be covered by extra budgetary contributions including those from the private sector in line with the standing FAO policy and that they be submitted to the 42nd session of the FAO conference for adoption.

That concludes the list of my conclusions. I think since it is quite a few paragraphs, I would suggest that we go paragraph by paragraph in adopting. I have a request from the United States of America for the floor.

We will go paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraph 1.

Subparagraph (a). I see no request for the floor.

Subparagraph (b).

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Por un tema técnico no pude levantar la mano en el subpárrafo (a). Quería saber si en realidad la palabra clave allí es “*approve*” o es “*endorse*”. Me parece que es más “*endorse*” que “*approve*”.

CHAIRPERSON

Okay, Argentina, that is the word used I believe in the report of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG). Therefore, we use the word, ‘endorsed’.

We can go to subparagraph (b).

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

In subparagraph (b) just in the line “the order of prevention and anticipation and response”. We propose to start with, “support Members in anticipation”, first and then, “prevention”, and after that, “response”.

CHAIRPERSON

With that we can go to subparagraph (c).

Ms Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Just before we go to subparagraph (c), we are not going to ask the language to reflect the text change that we had requested on the Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) reservation, however it is our clear understanding that this text change will be taken on board, and therefore we do not need to refer to it in subparagraph (c). I would just like to make that very clear.

Now when it comes to subparagraph (c) I would like to suggest some amendments to the end of the paragraph. And just before I suggest the amendments, I will explain my rationale. We have, of course, on many occasions pushed for more transparency about the work of the Tripartite on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). At the end of this subparagraph, I would like to include, “looked forward” to be changed to “requested” “regular progress reports on the FAO Action Plan and on Tripartite Collaboration.”

Colleagues will remember that of course we made this point in the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committee as well. I also would like to just refer to Deputy Director-General, Ms Maria Helena Semedo’s very welcome reassurance that FAO management are indeed working on a proposal for AMR Indicators in the Strategic Results Framework, and that is very welcome and I would just like to ask advice on whether we should reflect that in the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) report or in the report on the Programme Committee or on our discussion of the Programme Committee report. I don’t mind where we refer to it, but I would like it to be referred to either here or under Item 10.

Mr Naoki HAYASAKA (Japan)

We have a small suggestion, at the end of the sentence after “Tripartite Collaboration”, we want to add, “without gaps or overlaps.” That is all.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Concerning the proposal coming from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, I guess there is a little bit of confusion, we are requesting a regular progress report on FAO’s Action Plan. However which Action Plan? Because we have already mentioned two action plans in the beginning. In addition, from what we understand from a very clear explanation coming from the Deputy Director-General, Ms Maria Helena Semedo, for which we thank her very much, we do not have a plan yet. Therefore, the proposal does not help much.

Ms Terri SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Thank you to my colleague from Brazil for giving me the opportunity to clarify my point a little bit further. This paragraph refers to the FAO Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) 2021-25, and that is what I am referring to when we say, on the FAO Action Plan and when I referred to Tripartite Collaboration. I am referring really to the Tripartite.

CHAIRPERSON

We have lost you, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

We will now go to Mexico and can come back to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland once connected.

Sr. José Luis DELGADO CRESPO (México)

En este párrafo quisiéramos explicitar que la alianza tripartita se refiere a FAO, a la Organización Mundial de Sanidad Animal (OIE) y Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS). Esto para facilitar la lectura de cualquier persona ajena a la reunión.

Ms Terri SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I think when I lost my connection I was talking about the Tripartite Collaboration, and there what I am referring to is the Joint Tripartite Workplan, which we have not seen yet, but we would very much like oversight of. We have mentioned that and indeed I think the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committee completely shared that. [XX] That is what I am referring to with my addition at the end of the subparagraph. The point is, I want progress reports both on the FAO Action Plan and on the Tripartite work. I do not particularly mind how we phrase that, but those are the two prongs.

CHAIRPERSON

With these amendments, we go to subparagraph (d).

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

I would propose at the end of the subparagraph to add, after UN Food Systems Summit, to add the following: include a comma after “food system,”, and include the “Pre-Summit to be held in Italy”.

CHAIRPERSON

We can go now to subparagraph (e).

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Volviendo al subpárrafo (b), subpárrafo (d), me parece que hay que separar dos cuestiones. Una cosa es el continuo soporte técnico a los Miembros de la FAO en términos de los sistemas de desarrollo sustentable o sostenible, y otra cosa, por lo cual yo en la palabra agenda, dejaría como primer subpárrafo, y un segundo subpárrafo que sería un nuevo (e), podría “*requesting FAO*” etcétera con la sugerencia de mi estimada colega de Italia. Ahora, cuando solamente agregaría en el subpárrafo (e) nuevo, “*full technical support.*”, falta, “*Technical support.*”

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

Chairperson, I am sorry, with your indulgence, I wish to come back to subparagraph (a), but it is up to you. We can come back it after we have finalized this one. If that is possible, then there is one dimension that I think is missing in this, and it was part of the decision of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), the issue of revisiting the funding arrangement. If we can put back that idea there the Committee agreed to revisit. The Council agreed with the Committee recommendation to revisit, in subsequent COAG sessions, the following arrangement and with a view to explore other funding options. I will come back to the new subparagraph (f) later on, but for now that is it.

CHAIRPERSON

Before I go back to subparagraph (d), is subparagraph (a) okay with Members with this amendment? Germany, did you want to speak on subparagraph (a) or subparagraph (d)?

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Actually, I would like to speak about subparagraph (e), but in response, or following up on the suggestion of the distinguished colleague from Cameroon, where is this subparagraph or this language found specifically, just, to double-check? Could you please indicate that?

CHAIRPERSON

I am told it is paragraph 22 of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Report.

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

Paragraph 22 of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Report.

CHAIRPERSON

Germany, is it okay with you?

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Sorry, Chairperson, I do not know whether you heard me. I asked to get clarification where the language of Ambassador MOUNGUI MEDI can be found. In the report, I only see under paragraph 14 subparagraph (f) “called for adequate external budgetary support for sessions of the Sub-Committee”.

CHAIRPERSON

I am told it is paragraph 22.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Okay, thank you very much. May I go back now to subparagraph (e)?

CHAIRPERSON

Well, no. First, we have to complete subparagraph (d). I had a request from Italy. Italy do you still want to speak? No.

Okay, Germany let us go to (e) then.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Could we scroll down? Right. Coming back to the suggestion of the esteemed colleague from Argentina, Ambassador Carlos Bernardo Cherniak, to include “technical.” I do not understand really why this was suggested because my understanding of “technical” is more in a logistical sense. However, of course we need and expect FAO to provide full support in every aspect. Let us not forget that FAO is the anchoring UN Agency in Action Track 1. It is the centre of excellence regarding food systems. Therefore, I would not speak here of technical and actually I would not even speak of technical and other. I would speak of full support. That is what is needed and that comprises everything.

Therefore, I would suggest that we delete “technical,” unless Ambassador Cheniak can perhaps explain a little bit what the value added of this term is?

CHAIRPERSON

Perhaps we can clarify this before we move to the other two speakers. Argentina, could you react to what Germany has said?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Le agradezco mucho a mi colega de Alemania que me dio la posibilidad de poder explicar mi *rationale* sobre este tema. En varias de las intervenciones, y no solo mías, hemos expresado que la FAO, como los organismos con sede en Roma (OSR) no son los organizadores de la Cumbre, sino que prestan apoyo.

El apoyo puede ser técnico-logístico, pero para que haya un apoyo político, en el sentido amplio del término, deberían estar involucrados los Miembros en el proceso. Y, la realidad, es que los Miembros no están involucrados en el proceso general porque, como ya hemos planteado, incluso en la designación de los responsables de los *Action tracks*, en algunos de ellos, claramente los Miembros no han sido consultados y no hemos participado.

Por lo tanto, creo que no correspondería hablar de un *full support* porque me parece que deberíamos limitarlo a lo que realmente puede darse al día de hoy. Si el día de mañana cambia el escenario y los Miembros son parte directa involucrada en el proceso, perfecto. Hoy, lo que podemos decir es que promovemos un apoyo técnico-logístico, pero un apoyo total que incluya un apoyo de carácter político, así, amplio, general, no me parece si los Miembros no estamos involucrados.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to Canada. Is it on this subparagraph?

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

No, I wanted to come back to subparagraph (a) regarding the suggestion made by Cameroon and the language in paragraph 22. I would agree with recommendation 2, and I would add “consider revisiting” because the language said that the funding arrangement “could be revisited” and not “will be revisited.”

On subparagraph (e), maybe we could talk about “provide technical expertise and support”.

Ms Yael RUBINSTEIN (Israel)

When I asked for the floor, my German colleague mentioned the points that I wanted to mention. I think it needs to emphasize that we would like FAO to give full support, talking about subparagraph (e). I think we can add “including technical support.” In “why we need FAO to provide full support, including technical expertise.” That could be good.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Thanks to Ambassador Carlos Bernardo Cherniak for his explanation. In line with my Israeli colleague, I really would not agree to just limit FAO’s role or its support to a technical dimension. This would mean minimizing the role of FAO in a way that is unacceptable to us. It is actually also in contradiction to the perspective of the United Nations Secretary-General who sees this Summit as the catalyst for achieving the Agenda 2030.

He speaks again and again of the centrality of food systems for achieving Agenda 2030 and reiterates the importance and indispensable role of FAO in preparing and supporting the preparation of this Summit. Therefore, if that could be a compromise, I would be ready to support “including technical expertise,” but “full support” is for us a red line that may not be minimized.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

I agree with my German colleague because I think that “full support” includes technical and political expertise. We do not have to limit, and I think the sentence towards the beginning is fine without any specification. I understand that it is not perfect – the organization of the preparatory process of the Summit – and that is why we have to be present as FAO and Rome-based Agencies to stress that we are giving the best support for this organization. I think that “full support” could cover all our feelings.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Nosotros estamos convencidos de que nuestra racionalidad expresada refleja la realidad del proceso. Una cosa es lo que nos gustaría que pasara y otra cosa es la realidad.

Entonces, lo único que yo podría aceptar como una fórmula de compromiso es plantear “To request FAO to continue supporting”, Y excluir todo lo demás, porque si ponemos “full support” también estamos planteando un apoyo financiero y esto implicaría toda una discusión en la cual, me parece, no debería ser este el lugar para hacerla. Por lo tanto, de esta manera, no excluyo ninguna de las expectativas de mis colegas, tampoco incluyo lo que a mí me gustaría incluir en el párrafo. Propongo esta solución que me parece no afecta a nadie y así no entramos en un debate complejo en este momento.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

I asked for the floor, in fact, to say that we have the same view concerning this Summit as Argentina and some other countries.

We recognize the intentions of the United Nations Secretary-General when starting the process. On the other hand, as the Argentinian Ambassador mentioned, we have to work with reality, and the Action Track was implemented without any consultations with Members. This is to be realistic.

Concerning the text, I suppose the compromise proposal from Argentina would satisfy us.

Sr. Gustavo MOSTAJO OCOLA (Perú)

Apreciamos los comentarios que hizo el embajador de Argentina y concordamos plenamente con la necesidad de que tanto las organizaciones como los países deben ser parte de la organización de la Cumbre de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Sistemas Alimentarios de 2021.

En ese sentido, creo yo que, en este párrafo en particular podríamos resaltar o destacar la importancia del papel que tiene la FAO. Podríamos iniciar ese subpárrafo (e) diciendo que, “resaltamos la importancia del papel de la FAO en la preparación de la Cumbre y solicitamos continuar apoyando el proceso de preparación hacia su realización.”

Pero también sería importante si podemos resaltar allí también la necesidad de la participación de los Estados Miembros en la organización de esta Cumbre.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

I do not understand the last sentence just mentioned because I think we are complicating the subparagraph. I raised my hand to support what our Argentinian colleague said. For us, it is fine, “requested FAO continue in supporting.”

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

As mentioned, for us it is important that the role of FAO in supporting the preparatory process is in no way limited. Thanks to the suggestion of the Argentinian colleague, that is now ensured.

In addition, I have no problem with underscoring the role of FAO in the preparation of the process. The suggestion of my Mexican colleague would also be acceptable to us. Thank you very much for these constructive suggestions.

CHAIRPERSON

With that we can move to subparagraph (f).

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Para apoyar la última propuesta manifestada por Alemania que recoge la propuesta de Argentina.

CHAIRPERSON

The United States of America, I believe this is on subparagraph (f).

Mr Tommie Williams (United States of America)

We have an addition to the following subparagraph. We will come back on it.

CHAIRPERSON

Subparagraph (f)? If there are no comments on (f), we move to subparagraph (g). United States of America, did you want to speak on subparagraph (g)?

Mr Tommie Williams (United States of America)

We want to speak on subparagraph (h).

CHAIRPERSON

We will wait then. I give the floor to Peru, followed by Cameroon.

Sr. Gustavo MOSTAJO OCOLA (Perú)

Con relación al subpárrafo (f), plantearíamos también la necesidad de incorporar un subpárrafo (g), a continuación, porque si bien se destaca la importancia de dar el apoyo a la Secretaría del Codex Alimentarius, nosotros hicimos mención que de igual manera se debe reconocer la importancia no solamente en el tema de inocuidad o seguridad alimentaria, sino que debemos reconocer también la importancia de la sanidad vegetal para salvaguardar la seguridad alimentaria y contribuir al logro de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS).

Por ello, deberíamos recalcar allí la necesidad de brindar un mayor soporte a la Secretaría en la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria (CIPF). No sé si podría ser otro subpárrafo, uno adicional. Podría ser después del (f), continuando con un (g) exclusivamente para el tema de sanidad vegetal.

Podría iniciar eso, diciendo, si me permiten. “Reconoció la importancia de la sanidad vegetal para salvaguardar la seguridad alimentaria y contribuir al logro de los ODS, y resaltó la necesidad de dar un mayor soporte a la Secretaría de la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria.”

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

I wish to come back to subparagraph (f).

“Recognizing the connection between food safety”, I think it is too vague. I would rather suggest that we change the connection between the wording “recognize that food safety is a key dimension of food security”, because we know what the definition of food security is. “Recognize that food safety is a key dimension of food security”, that is the suggestion that I wanted to make.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Valoro mucho los aportes de mi colega de Perú y mi colega de Camerún. Quisiera hacer dos sugerencias. Una, siempre en el subpárrafo (f). Luego, sobre la propuesta de Camerún que es, “a key dimension for,” en lugar de “of.” Me parece que es más riguroso. Y la otra cuestión, luego de “funding”. En la tercera línea del subpárrafo (f).

“Sustainable funding, including extra budgetary contributions”. La racionalidad de esta sugerencia es porque eso le va a dar mayor sustentabilidad porque estamos hablando de contribuciones que son plurianuales y eso permite una planificación en el tiempo. Esto tiene una lógica para que, justamente, le dé mayor sustentabilidad, mayor respaldo a lo que estamos diciendo.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

I want to support the subparagraph (g) as suggested by my distinguished Peruvian colleague. I would like to suggest after “recognized the importance”, to put “raising awareness on plant health as a key to safeguard”. I do not know if it is fine, but I think this is the objective. “Raising awareness of plant health is a key tool”, after “plant health, is a key tool to safeguard”.

CHAIRPERSON

With these amendments, could we move on to subparagraph (h)?

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I would like to come back to subparagraph (f) and the addition made by our respective and distinguished colleague, Ambassador from Argentina.

I understand his point, but experience has shown that the extrabudgetary contributions were not successful in ensuring sustainable funding. I feel that with the lessons learnt from the COVID-19 and the new Strategic Framework and the increased importance in food safety and standard-setting work, that this is not necessarily the message that we want to send regarding adequate sustainable funding. Therefore, based on the language of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), our preference would be to keep it to ongoing sustainable funding without the extrabudgetary contributions language.

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

For subparagraph (h), this is a submission from us.

CHAIRPERSON

No, let us wait because it seems (g) is not agreed yet.

Argentina, do you have a comment on what Canada just suggested?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Gracias a mi colega de Canadá que me permite clarificar nuestra propuesta. Hay diversos tipos de contribuciones extrapresupuestarias. Estamos haciendo referencia a las plurianuales. Quizás deberíamos incluir la palabra “plurianual” para especificar qué tipo de extra contribución estamos mencionando. Quizás con eso podemos saldar la discusión.

CHAIRPERSON

May I go back to Canada? Is this wording okay for you, Canada?

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I thank the Ambassador of Argentina for his clarification. Perhaps, as a compromise, we could have “including multi-year contributions”. Of course, it includes extrabudgetary, but the point is to envisage contributions that are multi-year.

CHAIRPERSON

With this revised wording, we can move forward then.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Sorry for coming back but I have a remark with regard to the suggestion of our colleague Mr MOUNGUI Medi.

I think we have to change this word because there is an official definition of key dimensions for food security and these are definitions from the World Health Organization (WHO). Key dimensions of food security are availability, access, utilization and stability. Therefore, food safety is not a key dimension, it is of key importance. Therefore, my suggestion would be saying “recognize that food safety is of key importance for food security” and do not use the word “key dimension”.

CHAIRPERSON

Cameroon, what is your reaction to this suggestion?

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

Food safety is part of the dimension, it is the fourth that was added, after the three, to the best of my knowledge. Therefore, I continue to believe that it is a dimension of food security. Since the definition is clear enough. It is not only accessibility, affordability and availability. It should be safety. Therefore, that is the additional one that we did not think we are using.

I do not know, probably we might go back. I did not know that it would come, but I will search. If you permit, we will come back to you. I am always open if I am wrong somewhere, but I will come back to you later on if I have to change the word “dimension”. However, I think dimension is what we have to

do here. It is a key dimension of food security. So, please, leave the words in the meantime. Give me a few minutes to check and I will come back to you. Please leave the word “dimension” there.

CHAIRPERSON

Okay, Cameroon. My suggestion is we hold this subparagraph and move on because getting stuck on a particular subparagraph takes up time. We will leave this subparagraph in abeyance. I believe (g) has already been agreed.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Mr Chairperson, just one quick remark, if you allow. We do not have to argue about this because it is in FAO studies. I refer to an FAO study, An Introduction to Basic Concepts of Food Security, where the four main dimensions of food security are identified and explicitly spelled out. My dear colleague, Mr Medi, perhaps you could look up this FAO publication and then there is no harm done if we speak of food safety is of key importance for food security and do not use the word “dimension”. That is, indeed, wrong in this context.

CHAIRPERSON

We will come back. Let Cameroon check. We will come back to this subparagraph (g) I believe we have agreed. We move on to (h).

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

I really wanted to make an intervention on subparagraph (g), if I may.

CHAIRPERSON

We will go paragraph by paragraph. United States of America, if you could kindly raise your flag when we reach subparagraph (j). Now we are on subparagraph (h).

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

I mean subparagraph (g), as in good, the subparagraph on plant health. I would like to insert a small phrase in parallel about sustainable funding and if we could, right after the words “the need for greater support”, insert “and ongoing sustainable funding”. Yes, exactly as it is shown there and that puts it in parallel with the two important standard-setting bodies, as we did in subparagraph (f).

CHAIRPERSON

With this amendment, do we take it that we agree on subparagraph (g)? Cameroon, did you want to take the floor on the previous subparagraph or this one?

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

It is on (h). So, if we are not yet on (h), I will come back to (h).

CHAIRPERSON

Okay, we wait then. Argentina, what about you? Are you for this subparagraph or the later one?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

No, este párrafo. Para ser coherentes, lo mismo que dijimos para el tema del subpárrafo (f), deberíamos incluirlo en el subpárrafo (g) con la sugerencia de mi estimado delegado de los Estados Unidos de America. Es decir, “including multi-year contributions” que es una solución de compromiso muy positiva de parte de mi colega canadiense.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. So, can we move on to subparagraph (h)?

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

I have a different way of looking at this. My suggestion is to start with “stressed the importance of...” Strike out “the proposed”. Okay, “stressed the importance of the Voluntary Code of Conduct for food loss and waste (FLW) reduction. Then we add, after that, “welcomed the draft proposal of the

voluntary code, endorsed the process outlined in the...” Or the “process proposed by COAG to revise it in consultation with all Members and looked forward to its final approval under the guidance of the COAG Bureau by the 42nd Session of the Conference”. I think it gives a clearer picture of what was decided by COAG.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

La verdad que, en este caso, lo lamento porque estábamos coincidiendo casi siempre con mi estimado amigo de Camerún, el Señor Médi MOUNGUI, pero no en esta ocasión. No coincidimos ya que el punto central es que este Código Voluntario de Conducta todavía no se ha discutido, es decir que no está aprobado. Por lo tanto, no me parece que haya que cambiar el texto propuesto por la Secretaría.

A mí me parece que ustedes hicieron, Presidente, un gran trabajo de hacer una muy buena síntesis de un punto que refleja el real estado de la situación. Por lo tanto, yo creo que seguramente el optimismo de mi amigo de Camerún, el Señor MOUNGUI Médi, lo entiendo, pero no lo comparto en este caso y prefiero mantener la redacción original, la que propuso la Secretaría que refleja exactamente el estado de situación, donde no prejuzga ni permite entrar en un debate que nos gustaría evitar en este momento.

CHAIRPERSON

Cameroon, could I have your view to the intervention from Argentina?

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

I did not think that my suggestion will bring any difficulties to Members for understanding, because when you say you propose a voluntary code of conduct, my understanding is that it is not yet a document, it is the idea.

When I said I propose “stressed the importance of the voluntary code of conduct”, that is what it really is, not the proposed voluntary code of conduct. We need a code of conduct for food loss and waste. It is accepted. That is the principle. It is not a proposal. It is already something which is accepted. We need a voluntary code of conduct, it is agreed.

Now we have received the first draft of the proposed code of conduct, which we welcome, it has not yet been finalized but it was discussed. And then we endorsed now the process by which all the amendments that have been proposed under the guidance of the Bureau should go to the Conference for approval. That is the process.

So, probably we have a different understanding with Argentina. Probably he has taken off some element. So, probably I was not really clear with my suggestion because I thought it would not bring any. I believe that it is the best way to look at it, “stressed the importance of”. If you want, you can say “of a voluntary code of conduct”, because we know that this is a decision that has been taken. We need a voluntary code of conduct. I do not know whether the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) approved it, I cannot recall exactly, but it was already a decision taken.

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, let me put up the text of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Report. That will probably facilitate the approval. Otherwise, we have got two opposing texts. The COAG text is before you now.

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

I have just summarized what is there. We welcome the proposed voluntary code of conduct. That is what the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) says. We have not stressed the importance of the proposed, we are stressing the importance of a voluntary code of conduct. It is important for us.

We welcome the document that was already prepared, and we approve the process as it was proposed. That is all. It is a summary of the two in yellow that is up there. If we remove the idea of the proposed, because COAG did not mention to stress the importance of the proposed voluntary code of conduct. It welcomed the proposed “voluntary...”, that is what I was saying.

CHAIRPERSON

Argentina. We now have the wording of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) there.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Agradezco las explicaciones de mi amigo de Camerún, el Señor Médi MOUNGUI. Creo que, de alguna manera, si tuviéramos que tratar de buscar una salida para solucionar esto, para no entrar en una discusión porque de verdad me cuesta y tendría que dedicarle tiempo, tendríamos que dejar y seguir con otros. Yo aceptaría la solución sugerida por usted, respetar el lenguaje del Comité de Agricultura, que refleja en gran parte la racionalidad planteada por mi amigo de Camerún, el Señor Médi MOUNGUI, pero lo único que pido es que, todo el texto esté en el mismo párrafo, tanto la parte del objetivo como del proceso. O sea que, el texto del Comité de Agricultura esté todo en el mismo texto para mostrar el objetivo con el estado del proceso. Esa es mi sugerencia. Si esto le parece razonable a mi colega de Camerún, estamos bien. Si no, yo lo dejaría para poder darme más tiempo a proponer otra salida de compromiso.

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

I am a little bit worried here because I thought it is a statement of fact.

CHAIRPERSON

Sorry, Cameroon. I would like to put this subparagraph in abeyance, as Argentina suggested. Let us have a little more time and we go to finish the following subparagraphs. Otherwise, we will be stuck, it will become time to break. Let us go to subparagraph (i) and we will come back to that subparagraph plus a previous one.

Subparagraph (i). Italy, did you want to speak on this subparagraph?

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

No, sorry, Chairperson. Indeed, I would like to propose a compromise wording for the subparagraph (h), if you allow me just a few words. I would like the beginning of (h), “stressed the importance of achieving the SDG 12.3 and recognized the need for voluntary...”. I do not know if it could be acceptable.

CHAIRPERSON

I think I would prefer to come back to this subparagraph.

May I ask first the United States of America, Brazil and then Egypt, were they going to comment on subparagraph (h) or the subsequent subparagraphs? Because if it is subparagraph (h), we will have to wait.

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

I wanted to comment on the next paragraph but also provide an insertion of a new subparagraph in between. So, when you are ready, I will come back.

CHAIRPERSON

Brazil, you wanted to say something on this subparagraph or subsequent ones?

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

It was on subparagraph (h) but if you allow me, just to remind, according to the text we have given an extra mandate to the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Bureau. From what we read in COAG, gave the mandate to the Bureau extended to the next Council, which is this one, and in the text, we are discussing, we are extending the mandate under the guidance of the Bureau to the next Conference, just to explain that.

CHAIRPERSON

Egypt, is it this subparagraph?

Mr Haitham ABEDLHADY (Egypt)

I totally agree and support what has been said by the Ambassador of Brazil regarding we are giving more authority for the Bureau of COAG. The guidance of the Bureau of COAG will be only under the consultation with Members, not approving this. Therefore, please, can we go back to your first proposal? I think this is the way to move forward. We support your initial proposal.

CHAIRPERSON

We will come back to this subparagraph. Can we move on to the following subparagraphs?
Subparagraph (i).

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

I would like to, on subparagraph (i) now with the Digital Platform, make additions or amendments with two paragraphs before this to make it actually a collection of three paragraphs on the Digital Platform. So, to make this maybe a little easier, I would like to say could we put on the screen the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) text which is in paragraph 66 i) and ii), because that is what I would like to introduce, the text or the points of those paragraphs into this, proposed as two additional subparagraphs.

So, I want to carry forward the subparagraph (i) in its entirety. This was a key point that is made in several Technical Committees and we would like to continue emphasis on it. So, it would be “requested FAO to ensure” and then it would continue with all the text in (i).

Second would be then to carry forward ii) in “requesting the FAO to include in the terms of reference” and then it would continue. Both of these were stressed and agreed by Members and we think they are fairly important to also reflect in this draft conclusion as well. As I see what is on the screen now, marked out in the red text, that is exactly what we wanted to introduce then.

Following in the subparagraph which is changed to the letter (k), there is an amendment in there too that I would like to insert after the words “looked forward to continuing developing and refining the terms of reference for the platform for further” and then it would change to “review at its 166th Session”. What we need to do is get the terms of reference in there between the word further and review to specifically reference that it is the terms of reference. Thank you.

Just looking at the three subparagraphs, I think appropriately the Secretariat has made the amendments to make sure it is specific to the platform.

With that, we look forward to continuing discussing this new text that we have presented.

CHAIRPERSON

Can I ask whether, with these amendments, we can go ahead and agree to the text in red of the two subparagraphs marked (i) and (j) and then the following one marked (k)?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Estuve escuchando muy atentamente las propuestas de mi colega de los Estados Unidos de America y recordé que tenemos también estos temas en el Comité Forestal (COFO), el cual volveremos a discutirlo de la misma manera. Me parece que sería una actitud razonable y de economía procesal tratar de llevar todo esto directamente al tema 10, que es el Informe del Comité del Programa. Entonces, allí nos concentramos a discutir todas estas cuestiones vinculadas a la plataforma y podemos analizar con detalle las sugerencias de mi estimado colega de Estados Unidos de America.

Pero me parece que es una sugerencia que no hace un análisis sobre el contenido, sino que apunta a una mejora en el procedimiento. Así que, mi sugerencia es que todo lo que ha sugerido como cambio del texto original el delegado de Estados Unidos de America, pase a ser discutido en el tema 10, relativo al Informe del Comité del Programa. Y con eso evitamos tener que repetir estas discusiones en tres oportunidades.

CHAIRPERSON

I am just being told that the Agenda foresees that this Item be discussed under this Agenda Item and not under Item 10. I think we will have to go along with whatever the wording would be under this Agenda Item.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I would like to thank my distinguished delegate from the United States of America for bringing these proposals. I totally agree somehow with what has been said by Ambassador of Argentina. I do not, obviously, oppose this suggestion but I feel that every delegate has one idea, one priority, so he is bringing a lot of wordings and putting it in the Report, and I think it is not constructive to put three paragraphs on just this platform. It is very confusing for us and this is not the way to move forward. This is what I want to stress.

CHAIRPERSON

I have to correct what I said before in reply to the Ambassador from Argentina. When I said that the Timetable suggests that this Item has to be discussed here and not under Item 10, the error we made was that that was the Joint Meeting Report.

I am told that, if Members want, it can be discussed under the Programme Committee's Report. That is Item 10. It is the Programme Committee which is Item 10.

If Members wish, this could be discussed there. What would be the wish of Members? Here I would like to have the reaction of the United States of America because they have the proposals of this amendment. Should we take this issue up when we discuss Item 10?

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

I appreciate the two interventions made by my distinguished colleagues from Argentina and Egypt and reflecting on that, I think that we can also show some flexibility in terms of what Argentina has proposed in terms of not being too repetitive here as it also relates to the Programme Committee. I believe that similar language exists in the Programme Committee report as well. We also had it in the Committee on Forestry, as mentioned by Argentina, too.

I think we can also expect that in the Committee on Fisheries, there could be a result of some text. We do not know what that text would specifically be but that is scheduled to be on the agenda there, as requested by Members from earlier in the year. I think with that we could go along with flexibility, if the need is to move this text and include it in the Programme Committee section. I think it was mentioned as number 10 that may be forthcoming later. We would be happy to show flexibility there.

In regard to Egypt's proposal to maybe get to a point that there are many subparagraphs here for efficiency, I do not know, really, what to do with that. I listened carefully yesterday to some of the language suggested in earlier Agenda Items and found that there was certainly repetition being made from Technical Committee reports carried forward almost in the entirety in the text. I think we have established an earlier precedent for this.

Now, for efficiency I think we can look at if there is a proposal maybe to somehow combine. I think we could consider that but at the moment I certainly do not have any text. I think this is clear by discussion of Member States at this point and we feel very strongly that there should be continuation of these three points being made as a result of the Council discussion. I will end there.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, United States of America, for your flexibility. I think my colleagues have said the text, which was proposed, and we will take it up under Item 10, which is the Programme Committee.

With that may we move forward? Before we move to paragraph 2, we need to deal with new subparagraphs (i) and (j). Subparagraph (i) is "endorsed the Rural Youth Action Plan".

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

I am sorry to come back again, but I did have an important point on the digital platform subparagraphs. It is more of a technical nature and I just wanted to shed light on the need for some clarity because actually in the Programme Committee proceedings, I am reminded that the United States of America is not a member of the Programme Committee.

I wanted to raise this at this point, in case there was any technical matter there because we are not a direct Member. What that might mean for us, introducing this text in that section, but I do think the proposal came from Argentina.

I wanted to just come back on that for a moment to make sure that we are following the appropriate roles that we have as Members of various Committees. Can we get clarity on that?

CHAIRPERSON

Before I give the floor to Argentina, I would just like to say that as a Member of the Council under that Item, you can make any proposal. You do not have to be a member of the Programme Committee.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Permítame agradecerle muchísimo a mi estimado amigo, el Señor Wendell Dennis de los Estados Unidos de America por su demostración de flexibilidad y, reitero, no estamos haciendo ninguna crítica al contenido sino una cuestión de procedimiento.

Permítame ir sobre el subpárrafo (i). Voy a proponer nuevo texto. Voy a leer en inglés a velocidad de dictado. “

Acknowledge the importance of the proposed rural youth action plan for the revitalization of rural areas and, recognizing its crosscutting nature”, requested it to be reviewed by the Programme Committee in the next. Primero, el párrafo 56 del Informe del Comité de Agricultura (COAG) endosa el plan de acción relativo a la juventud rural en el entendimiento de que se trata de un documento vivo y recomendó que esa misma versión fuera revisada por el Comité del Programa en su siguiente sesión, y también en otras, si ello fuera necesario. El Comité del Programa no revisó el documento en su 129.º período de sesiones (9-13 de noviembre de 2020). La agenda fue muy ajustada. Habían muchos temas, pero entendemos que el documento debe ser revisado por el Comité del Programa.

Es así porque la juventud rural, que es un tema muy importante, no atañe únicamente al COAG. Es un Plan de acción que no se limitaría al ámbito de acción del COAG, sino a todo el programa de la FAO. Entonces, debe ser visto por el Comité del Programa antes de ser endosado por el Consejo. Esta es la racionalidad detrás del tema. No puedo dar más argumentos, pero este el procedimiento que se suele cumplir para otros planes de acciones de carácter transversal como el caso del Plan de acción de biodiversidad o el Plan de acción sobre resistencia antimicrobiana (RAM).

Yo creo que con estos elementos puedo haber defendido la explicación de mi propuesta.

CHAIRPERSON

If subparagraph (i) with those amendments is fine with Members we move to subparagraph (j). I see no requests for the floor.

We can move to paragraph 2 subparagraph (a), (b), and (c).

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

If I may, I did have a minor amendment in subparagraph (j) there and apologize if I was slow to raise my hand.

In looking at subparagraph (j), the word “appropriate” before “innovation” calls into question in terms of how, who and what determines appropriate innovation and so I would like to suggest, in the absence of having any definitional terms on that, to delete the word “appropriate” and then just to leave it so it would say “participate in innovation, information and advisory services”. That will reflect then more the farmers’ ability to really take on their own decision about how and when they participate in these forms of innovation, information and services.

CHAIRPERSON

I see no reaction to that, so we can move to paragraph 2 subparagraphs (a), (b), and (c). I see no requests for the floor.

We can move to paragraph 3.

Mr Heiner THOFERN (Germany)

No, it is still on 2. Sorry, I tried to raise my hand. I am fine with the text as it stands. However, we would like to insert, after (c), further text. Let us see how we can accommodate that. I will read it out. “The Council urged FAO, when proposing International Years, to include within the text of the proposal the comprehensive assessment of the presented proposal against the criteria adopted by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the 38th Session of the FAO Conference in 2013 for the proclamation of International Years”.

We made this point and, as we had several times stated, we should all avoid an inflation of International Days and Years. There are these criteria of UN ECOSOC and the Conference, so a comprehensive assessment should be done against these criteria, so possible impact, etc., and this should be included in the proposal so that Members can take informed decisions on this.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

Mr Chairperson, I am now on 4. I do not know whether I want to finish with the 3 that was proposed by Germany first.

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, okay. So, you are on 4?

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

Yes, please. I just want to add, after “private sector in line with standard policy”, “giving due consideration to the new Strategy for Engagement with the Private Sector”.

CHAIRPERSON

With these two, new paragraph 3 and the amendment to paragraph 4, could we agree to move forward? We still have two paragraphs to decide on.

Cameroon, you were supposed to come back on paragraph 1, I think.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

Yes, Chairperson. I just want to, for the benefit of everybody, read the definition of food security so that we are all on the same page, if that is the case.

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, okay, go ahead.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

They say that it is “a situation that exists when all people at all times have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for a healthy life”. Definitely the safe dimension is here.

I was a little confused anyway, if we want to keep “importance”, I am fine, but let us be consistent with what was decided before, and has been lengthily discussed, the dimensions of food security.

I am comfortable with “dimension” but if the rest say, okay, “key importance”, I do not mind, but I do not see what the key element of the word “importance” is here, where it comes from. I have never seen that in any definition of food security. In food security we have the dimension that is technically outlined, but not importance.

Anyway, thank you. I am in your hands, Mr Chairperson, but I continue to believe that “dimension” is the best word.

Mr Heiner THOFERN (Germany)

I think we all agree on the concept here. The only thing is the definition that was read out, fine, but, on the other hand, when we talk about dimension, this is where FAO has a clear terminology. When it comes to dimensions of food security, and these are availability, access, utilization and stability. Just to be precise, when we use dimension and when we refer to another definition here, we all agree.

Maybe we leave it as it is now and we can also get some advice from the FAO Management and the Drafting Committee to fix this, but there is no divergence of use on the importance of food safety. It was said time and again there is no food security without food safety. We all agree. It is just to realign, to not to mix concepts here. What I was referring to, that is in many key publications of FAO; the four dimensions, the ones that I listed.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Los escucho a mi amigo, el Señor MOUNGUI Medi de Camerún y al delegado de Alemania y no veo diferencias conceptuales tan importantes. Por lo tanto, quizás lo que podría ser una buena solución de compromiso es poner, “put safety is key for food security”.

Sin aditamentos, sin calificativos. Y si colocamos eso, yo creo que refleja claramente la importancia de las diferentes posturas que aquí se dieron y con eso podemos salir y destrabar esta discusión. Si hay consenso de parte de mis queridos colegas, por allí pudimos destrabarlo.

Mr Heiner THOFERN (Germany)

Thank you very much to the distinguished Ambassador from Argentina. That would be fine with me.

CHAIRPERSON

Cameroon, I suppose it is fine with you too?

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

Well, if we are creating awareness in the multilateral system, because I am not sure that in the definition of food security what was added here is part of it. It is a new wording we are creating. In a way here to create new words which have not been negotiated before, I do not think so.

When we talk of part of whatever, they are found nowhere in the definition of food security. I am sorry but we have talked either the dimension of food security. That is it. Anyway, I prefer that it goes to the Drafting Committee so that they agree there.

CHAIRPERSON

Well, let us refer to the Drafting Committee and they can find an appropriate wording.

Subparagraph (h) was another one which we had said we will come back to and there the COAG Report's wording is on the screen. Should we also refer this to the Drafting Committee since we need to move forward. We are stuck.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

Thank you, Chairperson, and as a member of the Drafting Committee, I think it is not appropriate to leave this important subparagraph to the Drafting Committee to consider. We would propose to finalize the wording of this subparagraph.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Estoy absolutamente de acuerdo con el delegado, Señor Haitham Abdelhady, de Egipto. No llevemos problemas de discusión al Comité de Redacción porque es aquí donde los tenemos que saldar y hemos hecho un gran esfuerzo con mi equipo para tratar de buscar una alternativa superadora a toda esta discusión y no le hemos encontrado una mejor propuesta que la sugerida por Egipto, que es volver a la redacción original propuesta por la Secretaría. Por lo tanto, creo que la mejor solución es dejar como estaba el párrafo y eso nos permitiría de avanzar si tenemos consenso.

Mr Mario ARVELO (Dominican Republic)

Just to subscribe to what has been said by Egypt and Argentina on this Item and may it apply to everything else; the Drafting Committee, to which my country belongs, we cannot turn the Drafting Committee into another Plenary.

CHAIRPERSON

I will have the original text put back there which I read out as part of my conclusions.

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

They have removed the wording of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG). It was hotly negotiated in the COAG. If we want to address this issue, it is better to revert to the wording of COAG because it was very hotly addressed there. Therefore, we prefer the wording of COAG with the two subparagraphs.

CHAIRPERSON

Could we put it in yellow?

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

I did not want to comment on this subparagraph regarding food loss and waste reduction. I do want to comment, though, on what shows on the screen, on the Digital Platform, when the time comes before we close on this document in this particular session. If I may then, if you would come back to me in a moment, when it is resolved.

CHAIRPERSON

Has there been agreement that we take the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) wording which has been negotiated and agreed?

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

If we were to get into the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) wording, definitely we should adapt it to the Council. Everywhere we say the Committee, we speak of the Council.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Me parece un párrafo muy largo. Creo que estaba muy bien la síntesis que usted hizo como propuesta original. No sé si la sugerencia de volver al párrafo original fue hecha por Egipto, nosotros la respaldamos. Me gustaría que consulte, Presidente, también con Egipto porque nosotros quedamos respaldando de volver al punto original, a la propuesta original. No quiero avanzar en aceptar este texto cuando yo acepté respaldar una línea de pensamiento que era mantener el texto original sugerido por la Secretaría.

CHAIRPERSON

Both the texts are on the screen now, the text of my original summary conclusion and the text of Committee on Agriculture (COAG).

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

Thank you, Chairperson, and thanks also to Ambassador of Argentina for asking us to comment on this. Our understanding is that this is a Report of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG). We already endorse all that has been contained in the Report of COAG.

This is the first paragraph we always put in all the reports of the Technical Committees or even the Council Committees. We are endorsing all the conclusions of the Report of COAG. We support your proposal, Chairperson, because it is concise and clear for us. However, we do not have any objection with what has been said in the Report of the COAG that already has been endorsed by the Council in the first paragraph of your conclusions.

CHAIRPERSON

Cameroon, could I ask whether you can go along with the wording in my conclusions? Considering what Egypt has just said, that the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Report, the Council endorses as well, like it does with other Committees. Hence, this text of COAG is in the COAG Report which has been endorsed in an earlier paragraph of this Council. My wording is a summary version of the discussions and also taking into account the Report of COAG. Can I ask you to show some flexibility so that we can conclude on this Item?

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

I think when you say show some flexibility, I always show it. The big issue here is that my initial proposal is no longer on the screen, so I had to revert to an alternative proposal, which we feel that is the best. If my initial proposal was still on the screen, I would have said we can. Since it was not written when I was reading it, I cannot repeat exactly what I said before, so that we can rewrite it on the screen.

Now, you are asking me, Mr Chairperson, to be flexible with your proposal. What you said is obvious. We do not need the other Report, but we still came back to specific issues. Therefore, it does not change the way we are proceeding at all. I believe that because Cameroon has always been respectful to all Members and we do not stick to what we believe is the right thing, absolutely, we want to move forward and because it is your request, Mr Chairperson, we can go along.

Nevertheless, this is something that I say, and it should be understood clearly, everybody should try to show the same flexibility as we are moving on. I endorse what you said, Mr Chairperson, and let us move on.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Cameroon, for showing this flexible approach so that we can reach a consensus and move forward because we are really behind in our schedule.

Item 8.1 is adopted.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

Before I adjourn, we are already at 13:00 hours, I am pleased to announce that we have received a nomination for the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee of the 165th Session of the Council.

Item 2. Election of three Vice-Chairpersons, and Designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee (*continued*)

Point 2. Élection des trois vice-présidents et nomination du Président et des membres du Comité de rédaction (*suite*)

Tema 2. Elección de los tres Vicepresidentes y designación del Presidente y los miembros del Comité de Redacción (*continuación*)

CHAIRPERSON

Therefore, I reopen Item 2, *Election of three Vice- Chairpersons of the Council and Designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee*.

The nomination of the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee is Ms Kelli Ketover of the United States of America. If there are no objections, I wish to congratulate the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee on her nomination.

United States of America, I will give you the floor. I just remembered that you had a point. Let me finish this and I will go back to you. I see no objection to this. It is so decided that the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee would be Ms Kelli Ketover from the United States of America.

Then the next Item - *Any Other Matters*, there is a statement to Council on behalf of the Staff Bodies. I would like to suggest that when we come back at 14:30 hours we start with this Item of the Statement of the Staff Representative Bodies and the Director-General will be also joining us for this.

With that I give the floor to the United States of America. I had promised that we would go back to you. You had a suggestion on one of the subparagraphs. Can we put the text back on the screen?

Item 8. Technical Committees

Point 8. Comités techniques

Tema 8. Comités técnicos

Item 8.1 Report of the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (28 September-2 October 2020) (continued)

Point 8.1 Rapport de la vingt-septième session du Comité de l'agriculture (28 septembre-2 octobre 2020) (suite)

Tema 8.1 Informe del 27.º período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura (28 de septiembre – 2 de octubre de 2020) (continuación)

(C 2021/21)

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

I just want to go down to the section. I believe it was around subparagraph (i) or (k). What I would like to ask for is to carry the notations that we introduced these subparagraphs in the current document.

I know we have an understanding that we are showing flexibility, that when the Programme Committee comes up, but should that not be resolved, I would like to preserve in brackets with a note to be considered by the Programme Committee. If we cannot get resolution of this issue in the Programme Committee, then I must ask for us to come back to reflect it in the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) section. I do not think we need to discuss it any further. It is just about the notation that you currently have in the document is what I am suggesting, if we need to return.

CHAIRPERSON

United States of America, we have put the notation, as you requested.

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

I trust that in the primary document, that this notation would also be carried.

CHAIRPERSON

Now, before we adjourn, I would like to say that, as I have repeated before, we are behind our Agenda. We have got quite a few items outstanding which have to be finished today. We cannot go to tomorrow morning's session because then all the documents have to be translated for the meeting of the Drafting Committee in the afternoon.

I would like to announce that today there will be three Sessions in the afternoon. We will be carrying on after 17:30 hours with a Session and then a further Session. We have to complete our Agenda today.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

The reason why I asked the floor is to seek your guidance about a timeframe for our afternoon sessions. It is clear now that we will have three Sessions in the afternoon. Furthermore, also a comment on the wording that has been suggested by our distinguished Delegate from the United States of America regarding the Digital Platform for Food and Agriculture. To be consistent with our understanding, I urge the United States of America to work on the wording, to make it more concise and briefer.

CHAIRPERSON

We will reconvene at 14:30 hours. The Meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 13:13 hours

La séance est levée à 13 h 13

Se levanta la sesión a las 13.13

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-Fifth Session Cent soixante-cinquième session 165.º período de sesiones
Virtual Meeting, 30 November - 4 December 2020 Réunion Virtuelle, 30 novembre - 4 décembre 2020 Reunión Virtual, 30 de noviembre - 4 de diciembre de 2020
SIXTH PLENARY SESSION SIXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEXTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
2 December 2020

The Sixth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14:35 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La sixième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 35
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la sexta sesión plenaria a las 14.35
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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las correcciones a: Verbatim-Team@fao.org

Item 21. Any Other Matters**Point 21. Questions diverses****Tema 21. Asuntos varios*****Item 21.1 Statement by a Representative of the FAO Staff Bodies******Point 21.1 Déclaration d'un représentant des associations du personnel de la FAO******Tema 21.1 Declaración de un representante de los órganos de representación del personal de la FAO*****CHAIRPERSON**

We can take up Item 21.1 under *Any Other Matters*, which is *Statement by a Representative of the FAO Staff Bodies*.

As you see, the Director-General is with us. I would like to welcome the Director-General and I now invite Mr Jakob Skoet, the President of the Association of Professional Staff in FAO, to deliver the statement.

Mr Jakob SKOET (President of the Association of Professionals in FAO)

Independent Chairperson of the Council, Director-General, Secretary-General of the Conference, distinguished delegates, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, the staff representative bodies are grateful for once again having the opportunity to speak before the Council. As always it is an honour for us to be able to share with you the perceptions and concerns of the staff we represent.

A year ago, when we addressed you, the Director-General was still new to FAO and we were full of hope and expectations. The world was quite a different place in those last days before the pandemic was declared. Little did we know how much things would change. We would like to recognize the leadership of the Director-General in this most recent period. We also respectfully acknowledge the Crisis Management Team for its efforts to keep FAO employees around the world safe while at the same time facilitating the ability to deliver on the Organization's mandate under exceptionally challenging circumstances.

We also consider it essential to recognize the massive efforts made by all the employees of this Organization. Employees of all types, in all locations to adapt, to mitigate and to carry on working under the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that FAO's essential work of fighting hunger, malnutrition and poverty carries on unabated while at the same time managing their own complex personal and family matters and minimize the risk of infection.

When we last addressed the Council in July, we were pleased to report a continuation in the positive trend in relations between Management and the Staff Representative Bodies, the new spirit of cooperation and dialogue in the Staff Management Consultative Committee and the arrival of a new Director of Human Resources. Since then, we also note with satisfaction the arrival of the new Ethics Officer, Mrs Monde Magolo, and later of the new Ombudsman, Mrs Katya Melliush. We believe that the separation of these two functions and the appointment of two highly qualified officers can contribute greatly to an improved work environment at FAO.

We also recognize that ongoing work to address the issues identified in the Employee Satisfaction Survey and the leadership of the Deputy Director-General, Ms Beth Bechdol. We also note with appreciation the efficient work of the Human Resources division to redeploy those staff members who were impacted by the Adjustments of the Programme of Work and Budget approved at the last Council.

The Staff Representative Bodies and Management have continued to work closely together to ensure that the wellbeing, health and safety of employees in Decentralized Offices, as well as in headquarters, have been ensured and we appreciate the concern of the Director-General for employees throughout this period.

While this year has been dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic and all priorities have, out of necessity, been reshuffled, it is now clear that COVID-19 is and will be with us for some time still. Once the pandemic does ease, we will be living in a very different world. The way the world works

will not go back to what it was before. It is therefore essential that we move on from crisis management into adapting to this new normal in a way that allows the Organization and its employees to thrive and where safety, flexibility and trust are the core principles underpinning policies. In essence, we need Management to ensure that Organizations' employees are empowered to deliver.

Concrete changes to improve conditions of service and staff wellbeing are critical and must be delivered in a timely manner. We welcome the initiative of the new Director of Human Resources (CSH) and with colleagues in CSH to develop a comprehensive Human Resources (HR) strategic plan that puts people first and embraces the need for a diversified and inclusive workforce where everyone can thrive. We believe this is the first time in FAO that such a comprehensive strategy to improve HR policies has been developed.

We note with satisfaction that key priorities for the next three to six months include the development of streamlined recruitment policies that provide opportunities for career growth, the institutionalization of flexible working arrangements and the development of a job growth policy. We look forward to engaging in continued and constructive consultations with Management on the implementation of this plan.

We also look forward to engaging closely in the process of elaborating proposals based on the findings of the Employee Satisfaction Survey, where issues such as career stagnation, harassment and fear of retaliation came up as strong concerns for staff. Strong ethics and fairness in the application of policies is an absolute requirement.

While we look forward to the development of policies that will improve the work/life balance of employees in the best interest of both staff and the Organization, right now everyone is struggling to perform with the COVID-19 pandemic. This requires immediate solutions to the current situation. Flexible working arrangements also permitting staff to work away from their duty station must allow staff to meet the obligations both to the Organization and to their extended families today. This will enable employees to do their best for the Organization.

In the current situation it is not necessary to require staff in Rome, or any other duty station around the world, where they cannot access the office or interact with colleagues and at the same time deprive them of potential extended family support for childcare, health and other matters. There is no need for concern about productivity. To the contrary, staff had maintained, if not enhanced, their productivity during these challenging times, a fact the Director-General has publicly recognized, for which we thank him, and which is not sufficiently reflected in current Management guidelines or practices.

We stand ready now to work with Management both on these short-term issues and on the long-term policy reforms needed to deliver on the promise of change that had raised the hopes of so many FAO employees. Concrete progress would be important to keep this positive spirit of optimism alive.

We look forward to addressing you in the future at a time when we can report real and positive progress.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Mr Jacob Skoet, President of the Association of Professionals in FAO, for your informative statement.

Item 8. Technical Committees

Point 8. Comités techniques

Tema 8. Comités técnicos

Item 8.2 Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry (5-9 October 2020)

Point 8.2 Rapport de la vingt-cinquième session du Comité des forêts (5-9 octobre 2020)

Tema 8.2 Informe del 25.º período de sesiones del Comité Forestal (5-9 de octubre de 2020)

(C 2021/24)

CHAIRPERSON

Now we can move to Item 8.2 of our Agenda. We have a long Agenda still to go. Item 8.2 is the *Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry*, which was held 5-9 October 2020. The document before Council is *C 2021/24*. The introduction by the Chairperson of the Committee on Forestry, Mr León Jorge Castaños, has been circulated to you.

Introduction to Item 8.2 - Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry (5 – 9 October 2020)

Mr León Jorge Castaños, Chairperson of the Committee on Forestry

The 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO25) was held from 5 to 9 October 2020 under the theme ‘Forests and the SDG Decade of Action: solutions for climate change, biodiversity and people’. It discussed the contributions that the forest sector can make to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Decade of Action as well as to recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, including on solutions for climate change, biodiversity and people.

Due to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, the Session was convened virtually and was attended by over 730 delegates from 112 countries and one Member Organization, as well as 18 UN agencies and observers.

The Report of the 25th Session of COFO is submitted to the Council in document *C 2021/24*.

COFO 25 had 14 items on its Agenda. The Agenda was developed on the basis of recommendations of the six Regional Forestry Commissions, the outcome of coordination with FAO Technical Committees. It included the biennial theme for 2020-21 and the requests of the 164th Council to Technical Committees.

The main Agenda items reviewed reports on the World’s Forests in 2020 and examined a range of key global issues: climate change, biodiversity, health and the impacts of COVID-19 and how to respond. It discussed food systems transformation in relation to forests including halting deforestation and sustainable use, the UN Decades on Family Farming and Ecosystem Restoration and the role of forests in nutrition. COFO25 also discussed relations with Statutory Bodies, progress in implementation including FAO’s work in the context of the UN Strategic Plan on Forests, the World Forestry Congress (WFC) 2021, and FAO’s strategic directions, including forestry in the revised Strategic Framework.

With regard to reports on the World’s Forests, the Committee welcomed the related “State of the World’s Forests 2020 and the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) 2020. On the latter, COFO requested FAO to continue producing a global Forest Resources Assessment report every five years, to develop a flexible FRA process that allows Members’ voluntary update of key indicators, to further develop guidance and tools for consistent reporting, analyse restoration-related indicators, and further develop and analyse uptake of global core set indicators; and to promote new technologies and digital innovation.

On the agenda item on forests and biodiversity, the Committee noted progress made in implementing the FAO Strategy related to biodiversity and reviewed the draft Action Plan. It recommended a consultation process to finalize the draft Action plan and requested FAO to strengthen forestry in mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors. It requested FAO to conduct a review of biodiversity mainstreaming in forestry, share good practices, and report progress at COFO 26. It requested FAO to strengthen the promotion of sustainable management of wildlife along the whole wild meat value chain and the adoption of measures to better prevent zoonotic disease risk, including through the One Health approach, and to consider an initiative to mainstream biodiversity in food systems.

With regard to forests and climate change the Committee noted the need to intensify actions to halt deforestation and forest degradation and to enhance FAO’s work on afforestation, reforestation and forest restoration at all levels. It requested FAO to assist Members upon request on the multiple related issues and strengthen collaboration with the private sector and facilitate dialogue aimed at mobilizing climate finance for forests and enhancing the role of the private sector in efforts to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation while contributing to jobs and livelihoods. It also requested FAO

to increase understanding of impacts of deforestation and climate change, including on the risk of zoonotic diseases and strengthen plant health related standard setting activities.

On the Agenda item related to transforming agriculture and food systems: halting deforestation and promoting sustainable production and consumption, the Committee requested FAO to integrate forestry in FAO's work on food systems, promoting synergies and addressing trade-offs between forestry and agriculture in initiatives and projects, including in contexts of Hand-in-Hand initiative and COVID-19 recovery measures. It requested FAO to enhance FAO's cross-sectoral work on afforestation, reforestation and forest restoration, contributing to the UN System-wide efforts on "Turning the tide on deforestation" and take into account forest-related issues in the preparation of the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit. It further requested FAO to engage with stakeholders and initiatives aiming at halting deforestation and promoting legal and sustainable value chains of forests and agricultural products and food systems as well as to strengthen coordination between COFO and COAG.

The Committee commended FAO on co-leading two UN Decades, on Family Farming and Ecosystem Restoration and requested FAO to ensure close coordination between these, to ensure adequate recognition of FAO's vital role in ecosystem restoration and to increase engagement of the private sector, and to scale up its related support through the Forest and Farm Facility.

The Committee addressed Members on the above agenda items, inviting them *inter alia* to:

- strengthen the mainstreaming of biodiversity, conservation and sustainable use in the forest sector and to submit country reports for the upcoming State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources;
- consider ways to strengthen the role of forests and the use of wood in their climate actions, including in Nationally determined contributions as well as to strengthen management systems to address issues such as forest fire, disaster risk, pests and diseases that may be exacerbated by climate change;
- promote policy coordination and align public incentives to halt deforestation, in accordance with their national legislation, and foster sustainable food systems, production and consumption;
- support the implementation of the UN Decades of Family Farming and on Ecosystem Restoration;
- integrate priorities in forestry in post COVID-19 recovery and support.

The Committee took note of the decisions and recommendations of FAO bodies of interest to COFO and requested FAO to review the result and effect of the structural changes (Annex I to CL164/3) on FAO's activities in forestry for COFO 26, emphasizing the need for forestry issues to remain visible and capacity of FAO in forestry to remain strong and effective in light of these changes.

The Committee reviewed the Terms of Reference of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture and requested FAO to include issues related to the use of digital technology in land use planning, land use change and forestry, taking into account their impacts.

COFO welcomed the reports on progress on activities of FAO's major programmes in forestry as well as in the context of the forestry statutory bodies. It requested FAO to enhance cross-sectoral work, encouraging stronger linkages between programmes and main projects and to continue and strengthen leadership of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests in the context of the UN Strategic Plan on Forests.

On the dialogue with Statutory Bodies, COFO stressed the importance of Regional Forestry Commissions and requested FAO to consult with these to help facilitate policy dialogue and technical exchanges. It also invited FAO to explore ways to further linking the work of Statutory Bodies to its work.

The Committee took note of the draft Vision and Strategy for FAO's Work in Nutrition and provided guidance on the Strategy from the perspective of forestry.

COFO reviewed and adopted the Multi-Year Programme of Work 2020-2023, noting the need to adjust to new realities in a post-COVID-19 world, and to strengthen FAOs work on forests to achieve the SDGs.

COFO welcomed the report on preparations for the XV World Forestry Congress (WFC) and requested FAO to align the WFC discussions with COVID-19 and SDG agendas and report outcomes at COFO26.

On FAO's work in forestry under the reviewed Strategic Framework, COFO welcomed accomplishments and requested FAO to continue its priority to normative and technical work and put emphasis on data, supporting Members on halting deforestation, restoring forest ecosystems and promoting the conservation and sustainable use of forest resources. It requested FAO to ensure that FAO's new strategic framework adequately reflects forestry issues and FAO's leading role on forest matters in the UN system.

The Committee adopted the report of COFO 25 by consensus. The above summarizes some of the main outcomes of the COFO 25 report as contained in Council document *C 2021/24*.

CHAIRPERSON

I open the floor for Members for the discussion of this Item.

Ms Wajiha QAZIZADAH (Afghanistan)

Afghanistan is honored to deliver this statement on behalf of the Near East Group. The Near East Group appreciates the FAO Management, Committee on Forestry (COFO) Secretariat and all the Members for successfully organizing the 25th Session of COFO on a virtual format from 5-9 October 2020.

Chairperson, the Report of the 25th Session of the COFO is brief and focused. In endorsing the report, the Near East Group wishes to underline the following points. The Near East Group welcomes the main themes of COFO 25 on Forests, Biodiversity and People. We also welcome the launch of the State of the World's Forests 2020 jointly prepared by FAO and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and congratulate FAO on the publication of State of the World's Forests (SOFO) 2020 as the first fully digital FAO flagship Report.

The Near East group supports the Committee's discussion on COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on farmers, forest ecosystem and communities. We appreciate FAO's continued support to Members in developing innovative forest related approaches into more sustainable food system to accelerate progress towards the achievement of 2030 Agenda.

The Near East Group endorses the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2020-2030 and noted the need to adjust to new realities in a post COVID-19 world and to address its mid- and long-term impacts.

The Near East group encourages FAO to strengthen further the international standard setting activities and enhance visibility of the work of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and Codex Alimentarius. We also recommend FAO to ensure that FAO's new Strategic Framework gives adequate recognition to FAO's vital role in ecosystem restoration and productive ecosystems and strengthen synergies with regional and global initiatives, reflects the importance of forests, the need for cross-sectoral work within the Organization and FAO's leading role on forest matters in the UN System.

The Near East group encourages FAO to continue supporting the work of the major programmes in forestry and stronger linkages between these programmes and main projects led by FAO. We urge FAO to continue supporting the implementation of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 (UNSPF), including promoting knowledge on the role of sustainable forest management in sustainable development.

The Near East group recommends FAO to strengthen contributions from the forest sector to the improvement of food systems and stepping up action on halting deforestation and emphasizes to integrate forestry in FAO's work on food systems. We encourage FAO to strengthen collaboration with the private sector and facilitate dialogue to share knowledge and lessons learned and enhancing the role of the private sector in efforts to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation while contributing to job creation, livelihood resilience and poverty reduction. The Near East group recommends FAO to ensure the sufficient allocation of resources to the FRA Programme by maintaining FAO's regular budget and seek to increase voluntary multi-year extra-budgetary resources from donor countries.

Chairperson, with these comments the Near East group approves the *Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry*.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Afghanistan. for your statement on behalf of the Near-East. I am sure there will be further statements for other Regional Groups. If I could just repeat my reminder that once the Regional Group statement is made and when individual Members take the floor, please do not repeat the same arguments. This would be beneficial for us in terms of time because we have got a lengthy Agenda to finish today.

Sra. Patricia RODRIGUEZ (República Dominicana)

Acompañamos todas las conclusiones y recomendaciones del 25.º período de sesiones del Comité Forestal (COFO). Subrayamos los elementos del informe. Damos la bienvenida a la publicación insignia de la FAO en materia de bosques, El Estado de los Bosques del Mundo (SOFO 2020), y vemos con satisfacción que se incorporara un enfoque especial sobre la pérdida de biodiversidad forestal.

Como pequeño estado insular en desarrollo y el país con mayor concentración de zonas boscosas del Caribe, tenemos muy presente la importancia de contar con conocimientos técnicos y capacidades que garanticen una gestión cada vez más sostenible y resiliente de los recursos forestales y de los ecosistemas; sobre todo, en el contexto del cambio climático y los desastres naturales. Estos son criterios válidos para Estados miembros de todas las regiones.

Subrayamos también la necesidad de incorporar enfoques transformadores de la agricultura y los sistemas alimentarios para detener la deforestación y, al mismo tiempo, promover la producción y el consumo sostenible de productos forestales. Celebramos el mandato de la plataforma internacional para la alimentación y la agricultura digitales y reafirmamos nuestro aprecio por el COFO, un órgano rector de crucial importancia no solo para el mandato de la FAO, en general, también en particular el Comité Forestal es un foro crucial para debatir buenas prácticas y acordar acciones concretas en el marco de la crisis climática.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

We are happy to endorse the *Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry* and the recommendations therein.

Committee on Forestry (COFO) rightly highlighted the important contribution of forests in a wide range of areas related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this respect we welcome FAO's long-term commitment to sustainable forest management, to promoting its implementation globally and to regularly monitoring, assessing and reporting on the state of global forests. We wish to stress that FAO's capacity in forestry needs to remain strong and effective in order for the Organization to maintain its leading role on forest matters in the UN system, including with regards to the implementation of the UN Strategic Plan on Forests.

We are generally satisfied with the conclusions of COFO on the important contribution of forests and sustainable forest management to several Sustainable Development Goals, including to food security, and to preserving global biodiversity as well as to mitigating climate change.

More specifically, we wish to underline the importance of the Organization's work on biodiversity mainstreaming and its active involvement in any intergovernmental multilateral deliberations or negotiations within the UN system that addresses or seeks to define nature-based solutions. It is essential to integrate sustainable forest management into these processes and discussions.

We also reiterate the important role of forests, trees and agroforestry in contributing to healthy diets and preventing all forms of malnutrition.

In our view, even clearer recommendations in relation to the sustainable and deforestation-free agricultural production on which our food systems should be based would have been desirable. We specifically welcome COFO's request for improved cross-sectoral work on these important themes, including within the Organization and with Committee on Agriculture (COAG).

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

La Argentina ha tenido una participación activa en el 25.º período de sesiones del Comité Forestal (COFO 25) en octubre de 2020 y estamos muy satisfechos, tanto con el debate como con las conclusiones alcanzadas, y que se reflejan en el documento puesto a consideración de este Consejo. Asimismo, reconocemos las circunstancias extraordinarias en las que se llevó a cabo la sesión de COFO y el esfuerzo realizado por la Secretaría del Comité y los funcionarios de la FAO para el desarrollo de la reunión.

A nuestro entender, COFO 25 posee mejores mensajes, muy claros para la FAO y para sus Miembros. Primero, los bosques tienen un rol transversal y crucial ya que no solo desempeñan funciones ambientales y ecosistémicas, sino también contribuyen a la seguridad alimentaria, a la nutrición y para el logro de sistemas alimentarios sostenibles en sus tres dimensiones, ambiental, social y económica.

Segundo, la silvicultura debe ser un elemento integral en los sistemas agrícolas y alimentarios sostenibles, de allí la importancia de que cuestiones interrelacionadas entre la agricultura y los bosques sean presentados en el Comité de Agricultura (COAG) y en COFO y que el nuevo Marco estratégico de la FAO refleje la importancia de las cuestiones forestales y de la necesidad de trabajar de manera intersectorial y con diferentes asociados.

Tercero, aumentar la producción de alimentos y la seguridad alimentaria sin reducir la superficie forestal sigue siendo un desafío en el mundo como lo refleja la evaluación de los recursos forestales mundiales 2020. Sin embargo, COFO 25 reconoció que existen muchas soluciones equilibradas posibles para tal desafío desde diferentes enfoques de sistemas alimentarios teniendo en cuenta las diferentes capacidades, prioridades y realidades de cada sector y país. Por lo tanto, insistimos en la premisa que la agricultura y la ganadería no necesariamente tienen que contraponerse a los bosques como se afirma en el Estado de los Bosques del Mundo (SOFO) 2020.

La deforestación es el resultado de un modelo de desarrollo que puede ser evitado a través de prácticas que complementan las actividades agrícolas con el cuidado de los bosques. Existe sobrada evidencia sobre el aporte positivo que la innovación tecnológica puede ofrecer a la producción agrícola y ganadera y así favorecer la complementación entre este sector y los bosques. Ejemplo de ello es el manejo de bosques con ganadería integrada y los distintos sistemas agroforestales y silvopastoriles que se realizan en nuestro país.

Por último, teniendo en cuenta el rol de la FAO en materia de bosque dentro del sistema de las Naciones Unidas, una cuestión evidente durante el desarrollo del COFO 25 fue la necesidad de un mayor involucramiento de las representaciones de los miembros en los procesos y productos conducidos por el Departamento Forestal y la Secretaría del COFO a fin de mejorar la vinculación, la interrelación y la coordinación con procesos de negociación en curso y la incorporación de términos y conceptos acordados por los miembros.

Por ello, consideramos necesario que la FAO siga promoviendo la participación más activa de las representaciones permanentes en las labores de la FAO en materia de bosques, como también alentamos a nuestros colegas de las representaciones aquí en Roma a comprometerse aún más con las labores de este sector esencial para el mandato de la FAO como para la consecución de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible.

Con estos comentarios, alentamos que el Consejo haga suyo el Informe del 25º período de sesiones del Comité Forestal y las recomendaciones allí formuladas.

Ms Nathalie CASSIERS (Belgium)

Belgium thanks FAO for this Agenda Item. Belgium is fully in line with the statement previously delivered by Germany on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its Member States.

We would like to add some specific element from our perspective. First, we support the proposal for a more intensified collaboration between the Committee on Forestry (COFO) and the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) in order to enhance synergies and increase common understanding of some pressing issues that the world is facing, like the on-going deforestation, forest degradation, loss of ecosystem services and loss of biodiversity in general. Changes in land use are essential to tackle these challenges, and in this context, we feel that FAO can play an important role in bringing its agriculture and forest communities closer together by working on streamlining models for more sustainable and integrated land use planning and management.

FAO should furthermore enhance its cross-sectoral work to address impacts of certain agriculture production systems and related food systems on forests; and promote ongoing practices that harmonize agricultural activities with the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of forests and maintaining ecosystem services. Agriculture and forestry can synergistically support sustainable development. In addition, forests and sustainable forest management play an important role in building climate change resilience and in climate change mitigation and adaptation, and in supporting the socio-economic and overall recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

FAO should strengthen the promotion of sustainable management of wildlife along the whole value chain and the adoption of measures to better prevent zoonotic disease risk, including through the One Health approach.

Lastly, we appreciated the efforts of the FAO to make the work of the COFO more transparent, but we regret to see that during this session, valuable time allocated to the Agenda Items had to be reserved for negotiating the report of the session in Plenary. By doing so, the transparency of the reporting from this Committee increased indeed, but at the expense of specific added value of COFO Sessions which lies in the broad technical exchange of information and experiences. We would like to request FAO to explore how a more balanced format for the COFO sessions to be developed in the future.

Mr Naoki HAYASAKA (Japan)

Japan welcomes the *Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO)*. In this regard, Japan has some comments.

In recent years, COFO has mostly focused on the circumstances surrounding forests such as biodiversity in the forest and in other areas. We understand the importance of these topics to promote the sustainable forest management. Having said that, discussions on forests themselves and on the forest industry for a stable supply of food are also important for sustainable forest management.

Therefore, we expect FAO, as a specialized Agency of the United Nations in the field of forests and forestry, to take a lead in international efforts with balanced discussions between the future direction of forests and forestry and the circumstances surrounding forests such as food and agriculture.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

En lo relativo al Informe del 25º período de sesiones del Comité Forestal (COFO 25) quisiéramos destacar lo siguiente. En primer lugar, manifestar nuestro total apoyo a la intervención de la presidencia alemana actual de la Unión Europea y de sus 27 Estados miembros. En segundo lugar, quisiera destacar el hecho de que apoyamos el Informe del COFO en su 25.º período de sesiones, así como sus recomendaciones, de las que subrayamos con gran interés las siguientes.

Uno, los bosques gestionados sosteniblemente tienen una contribución muy importante para los objetivos de desarrollo sostenible, especialmente en lo que se refiere a la seguridad alimentaria, la conservación de la biodiversidad, así como la mitigación y lucha contra el cambio climático. Dos, los

bosques también contribuyen en la lucha común que mantenemos para conseguir dietas más sanas y para prevenir todas las formas de malnutrición.

Por último, quisiéramos apoyar la petición del COFO de tener en cuenta aquellas cuestiones relacionadas con los bosques en la preparación de la Cumbre de las Naciones Unidas sobre sistemas alimentarios de 2021. A su vez, manifestamos nuestro apoyo a la mejora del trabajo intersectorial dentro de la Organización, lo que vemos como una oportunidad para colaborar con el Comité de Agricultura y de este modo invertir la tendencia de la deforestación.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Canada is generally satisfied with the outcome from the Committee on Forestry (COFO) under challenging circumstances and we thank FAO for its leadership role. We are particularly pleased with the decision to keep the global forest resources assessment (FRA) on a five-year reporting cycle with a yearly reporting on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 15.

With respect to the issue of halting deforestation and promoting sustainable consumption and production, which focuses largely on deforestation-free agricultural supply chains in the FAO context, Canada feels that FAO could be doing more to bring land sectors together to combat deforestation at scale. We know based on scientific research that the main drivers of deforestation lie largely outside the forest sector, with agriculture being the biggest driver globally. COFO had lively discussions on the topics of sustainable supply chains, deforestation and forest degradation and sustainable food systems. However, forests were entirely absent from the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) meeting which took place the week prior to COFO, where sustainable food systems were also on the agenda.

It is our view that we will not make significant progress on deforestation if the agriculture sector is not fully engaged in the discussions, planning and implementation of sustainable forest management strategies and approaches at the landscape scale and we urge FAO to better align future Technical Committee meetings. We urge FAO as well to bring forest issues to the attention of COAG and continue to break down silos so that we can realize multiple SDGs during this Decade of Action.

Ms Ji Hye MOON (Republic of Korea)

On behalf of the Republic of Korea, this delegation would like to thank the FAO Secretariat for making possible the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was the first such opportunity for the Committee to conclude successfully in support of Members.

Representing the Republic of Korea, Professor Shin Wonsup chaired the Committee and the Secretary-General Ko Ki-yeon of the 15th World Forestry Congress (WFC) Secretariat provided updates on the organisation of the 15th WFC in Seoul to Members.

It is also worth noting that in the discussion of Agenda Item 6, *Forests, Nature-based Solutions for Climate Change*, many countries shared the view that reforestation and sustainable forest management are vital to addressing climate change and emphasized the importance of FAO's active role in implementing concrete actions.

The Republic of Korea, as a host country, will do its best to open up another meaningful opportunity at the 15th WFC to bring together the international community for concerted actions. Korea and the FAO have worked closely together to organize the Congress, holding regular meetings and consultations since early this year. One outcome is the final draft of the official programme published on the official website of the 15th WFC. More information will be forthcoming when we make progress in putting together other parts of the Congress.

We, as the host country of the 15th World Forest Congress, are looking at various options, in close consultation with FAO, with the priority being to ensure the safety of participants from across the world.

In conclusion, this delegation would like to ask Members for continuous support and participation and look forward to continuing discussion of main agenda items of the Committee on Forestry (COFO) 25 in the 15th World Forest Congress.

CHAIRPERSON

That brings to an end my list of Members. Now I go to Observers. Eritrea, you have the floor.

Mr Asmerom KIDANE TECLEGHIORGHIS (Eritrea) (Observer)

Eritrea and Kenya present a statement on Agenda Item 8.2, *C 2021/24* on behalf of the African Regional Group. Therefore, Eritrea has the pleasure to deliver the statement on the *Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry*.

First and foremost, the African Regional Group appreciates the Director-General Dr Qu Dongyu for the interactive involvement and for the successful work he has already accomplished. We would like also to appreciate FAO, the Secretariat and the Independent Chairperson of the Council for organizing the 165th Session of the Council.

Our Regional Group welcomes the preparation of the document *C 2021/24*. It is a comprehensive document and provides information on the role of forests and sustainable forest management in building climate change resilience, on the importance of climate change mitigation and in supporting the socio-economic livelihoods. Hence, it is pertinent to intensify actions at all levels, and halt deforestation, forest degradation across all forest ecosystems.

The document highlights clearly the contributions of the forest sector on improvement of food systems on actions to halt deforestation, and the role of FAO's cross-sectoral work on reforestation and forest restoration in achieving Sustainable Development Goals. To that extent, the importance of the Regional Forestry Commissions and the role of forests, trees, agro-forestry and other innovative forest-related approaches are also well addressed. Therefore, we appreciate FAO to help the Regional Forestry Commissions to facilitate their policy and technical capacity. Members have also to consider to strengthen the role of forests and the use of wood in their climate adaptation, and mitigation actions, as appropriate, according to their national priorities and capacities, to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation to promote forest restoration and sustainable management.

The African Regional Group calls on FAO to give more attention and use its experts to support Member countries in enhancing capacity to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation as part of their climate actions to implement as appropriately. We also recognize FAO's continued support to members in developing sustainable food systems to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

The African Regional Group endorses the document and requests FAO to strengthen forestry in mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors and enhance biodiversity mainstreaming in forestry and share good practices on solutions that balance conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity, to strengthen the promotion of sustainable management of wildlife and contribute to biodiversity and food systems.

CHAIRPERSON

I have no more requests for the floor. I now invite the Chairperson of the Committee on Forestry (COFO) and subsequently the Secretariat to respond to the issues raised during the discussions. Chairperson of COFO, you have the floor.

Sr. León Jorge CASTAÑOS (Presidente del Comité Forestal)

Quisiera expresar mi agradecimiento por participar en la Sesión del Consejo de la FAO en los Informes de los comités técnicos he estado atento a todo el desarrollo de los trabajos del Comité de Agricultura (COAG). Estoy convencido de que la vinculación y la sinergia entre el Comité Forestal (COFO) y COAG debe impulsarse. Deseo expresar un sincero agradecimiento al

Sr. Doctor Won Sop Shin de la República de Corea que estuvo al frente de la presidencia del COFO durante su 25º período de sesiones, y a la Sra. Doctora Christine Farcy de Bélgica, quien empezó y ayudó en la conducción.

Reconocimiento también a la Secretaría del COFO por la preparación, organización y consolidación llevada a cabo de manera virtual y, sobre todo, a los delegados y observadores. Fui testigo del debate de sus aportaciones y como consecuencia un Informe que ahora se está reconociendo y aceptando.

En la sesión de COFO surgió marcadamente el interés de intensificar las medidas para frenar la deforestación y degradación de los bosques, pero también para impulsar la producción forestal y transitar hacia un trabajo transversal, intersectorial coordinado de lo forestal con lo agropecuario, lo agrario, el ordenamiento territorial, lo hídrico, los servicios ambientales y la salud humana. Son tiempos, considero, de acompañamiento y de la mano con los pueblos originarios y poblaciones en el campo. Es tiempo de subir escalones en la lucha contra el cambio climático y en la prevención y combate de los incendios forestales. Australia en 2019 y California, el oeste de los Estados Unidos de América, en 2020, lo ejemplifican.

Pero también dar pasos en la conservación de la biodiversidad, en bajar las tasas de deforestación neta y en recuperar mucho de lo perdido por la pandemia del COVID-19 y de vivir con ella. Reconozco las intervenciones de Afganistán, Alemania, Argentina, Bélgica, Canadá, España, Japón, República Dominicana, República de Corea, de nuestros observadores de Eritrea y Kenia que, en alguna forma, respaldan los resultados del COFO 25.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to the Deputy Director-General, Ms Maria Helena Semedo.

Ms Maria Helena SEMEDO (Deputy Director-General)

Thank you to the Committee on Forestry (COFO). I would like to start by thanking all the Members for their support during the COFO meeting and today during the Council meeting on the reporting coming from the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry.

I believe, and it has been said, that it was a very positive meeting with some issues, mainly due to the virtual setting of the sessions. This brings us to send our appreciation to the Chairperson of the 25th COFO, Dr Wonsup Shin and also to the Vice-Chair, Dr Christine Farsi. They have to share the Chairpersonship of COFO because one was in Korea and could only chair the morning meetings and Dr Farsi the afternoon meetings. It was not easy, but I think we are able to move forward thanks to the support and understanding of all Members of COFO. I believe I should bring this to the attention of the Council.

Going back to the comments today, I think there more positive comments guiding the work of FAO on the forestry area and how we can enhance better the work we do through more cross-cutting work with Committee on Agriculture (COAG) and other Technical Committees. I would say also the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), but particularly with COAG, how we should align and have a more integrated approach to agriculture and forests. I think we took note, and we will be better prepared for the next meetings.

It also has been said, the importance for us to have a cross-sectoral and integrated approach, bringing biodiversity and ecosystem approach and biodiversity mainstreaming through forests, agriculture and aquatic resources together.

The question of how we can include forests in the UN Food Systems Summit 2021, is also important and how we can integrate forests and trees in building back better and the Response and Recovery Programme from FAO and also to address the One Health approach is also important and we will be taking it into consideration in implementing the COFO recommendations and also our forestry plan.

Just one main comment, we are preparing the next biodiversity Community of Practice (CoP) and for sure we will take to the biodiversity CoP all the recommendations coming from COFO and also in the biodiversity action plan will be integrating your recommendations.

Chairperson, Excellencies, thank you for your support. Just before finishing, one question coming from Japan. The role of the private sector in efforts to address the driver of deforestation and forest degradation will also be one of our priorities and also how we can bring the private sector to the Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-Based Industries. This is how we will be working and cooperating with the private sector in this really important sector of forests.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, this brings us to the end of our discussions on this Item. Now my conclusions on this Item, Item 8.2, are as follows.

Item 8.2: *Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry, 5-9 October 2020.*

1. The Council endorsed the recommendations contained in the Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO) on programme and budget matters and in particular:
 - a) Requested FAO to continue producing a Global Forest Resources Assessment Report every five years, while developing in consultation with Members and partners a flexible Forest Resources Assessment reporting process that allows voluntary updates of key Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators.
 - b) Welcomed accomplishments of FAO's work in forestry under the reviewed Strategic Framework and requested FAO to continue to prioritize normative and technical work and put emphasis on data.
 - c) Noted progress made in implementing the FAO Strategy for Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors, acknowledging that Members may submit further comments in writing as inputs to the document and recommended that an open, transparent and Member-led consultation process be convened to finalize the draft action plan to implement the strategy, including inputs from all Technical Committees, as well as the group of national focal points for Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA).
 - d) Requested FAO to:
 - i. Conduct a review of biodiversity mainstreaming in forestry and promoting to sustainable management of wildlife along the whole wild meat value chain and the adoption of measures to better prevent zoonotic disease risk, including through the One Health approach; and
 - ii. Consider an initiative to mainstream biodiversity in food systems in consultation with Members.
 - e) Noted the importance for FAO to support Members, upon request, to increase capacity to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation as part of their climate actions, strengthen its collaboration with the private sector, aiming at mobilizing climate finance for forests and strengthen further the international standard-setting activities and enhance visibility of the work of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and Codex Alimentarius (CODEX).
 - f) Requested FAO to integrate forestry in its work on food systems, including through COVID-19 pandemic recovery measures and in its Hand-in-Hand Initiative.
 - g) Requested strengthening coordination between COFO and the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) on cross-sectoral matters and recommended that in the future any papers dealing with inter-related issues between agriculture and forests be presented to both COFO and COAG.
 - h) Requested inclusion of issues related to the use of digital technology in land use planning, land use change and forestry in the terms of reference of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture by the Committee on Forestry; and
 - i) Requested FAO to align the World Forestry Congress (WFC) discussions with COVID-19 and the SDG Agenda.

That is the end of the list of my conclusions and I now open the floor to Members. I would suggest that we proceed in a more orderly fashion and go paragraph by paragraph.

I will take paragraph 1.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I would like to suggest two introductory subparagraphs under 1. That would be a new subparagraph (a). "The Council endorsed the recommendations and in particular reiterated the important

contribution of forests and sustainable forest management to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including food security, sustainable food systems and healthy diets, as well as to preserving global biodiversity.”

That is subparagraph (a) and it would be followed by a subparagraph (b), “welcomed in particular the Committee on Forestry’s (COFO) request for improved crosscutting and inter-sectoral work and stressed in this context the need for FAO to maintain strong technical capacity in the forestry field.” This is subparagraph (b) and coming back to subparagraph (a), I forgot one term after, “preserving global diversity.” It would be continued by, “and to mitigating climate change.”

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Quisiera proponer después del subpárrafo (a), como nuevo subpárrafo (b), antes del (b) propuesto o sugerido por mi colega de Alemania, lo siguiente. Paso a redactar en inglés a velocidad de dictado. *“showcase and promote ongoing practices that harmonize agriculture activities with the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of forests, avoiding deforestation and in maintaining ecosystem services, as agriculture and forestry can synergistically support sustainable development.”* Al principio, antes de “showcase”, le pido por favor que diga *“requested FAO to showcase.”*

CHAIRPERSON

With these amendments shown in red could we move to subparagraph (d)?

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

Before we move on, will we be able to come back to these three subparagraphs introduced by distinguished colleagues of Argentina and the European Union? I do have minor amendments, but I do not know if you are going to return to those to then allow amendments of what they just introduced. Could you please provide clarity on that?

CHAIRPERSON

No, before I move to subparagraph (d), we want to agree on paragraph 1, subparagraphs (a), (b), (c). If you have comments on them, please make them now.

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

Simply in subparagraph (a) I appreciate the addition by the European Union, the distinguished colleague from Germany there. The question arose in my mind when we talk about preserving global biodiversity and so I think there is biodiversity preservation that takes place also at the local, the regional and national levels. I think it would be improved if we could just remove the word “global” and just say “preserving biodiversity” and then that would be “at all levels, from local all the way up to global”. That would be my amendment on subparagraph (a).

If I may go to subparagraph (b), the excellent addition from Argentina, I am struggling in my mind if harmonizing the activities is the best in its ongoing practices. There I was thinking of, maybe before we take words away, maybe we will mark up additional words that I am thinking of there. We will put brackets around “ongoing” because I think we want to promote new practices as well. I think that would improve it.

What I am thinking here is that it should be promoting complementary practices. Maybe we delete “ongoing” and put in the word “complementary”. After “practices” it would be “between” and then it would be taking away “that harmonize.” Deleting “that harmonize.”

I will read this back again. In my mind it is about showcasing and promoting complementary practices between agriculture activities and then with the list and it continues, is what I was thinking the improvement could be, to add more clarity and scope that it would include new practices as well as showing that it is more than harmonizing, there could be complementary practices as well between the two and particularly agro-forestry that I am reminded that I hear many Members say is important. I am thinking in particular of my Brazilian colleagues who really have some very good demonstrations of how agro-forestry can be brought together there.

I do not have any amendments for subparagraph (c) at this time.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Muchísimas gracias al estimado representante de los Estados Unidos de América. En realidad, el subpárrafo para poder reflejar nuestra racionalidad, yo agregaría, “*promote existing complementary practices*” porque nosotros queremos visibilizar ya la existencia de algunas de estas prácticas complementarias. Creo que eso fortalece el párrafo y no contradice el enriquecimiento que ha hecho mi estimado colega de los Estados Unidos de América.

Con respecto al romanito A, también agradezco al embajador de Alemania esa propuesta. Me parece bien, lo único es que, en la última parte del subpárrafo, donde dice, “*and to mitigating climate change*” la idea es “*to mitigation and and/or adaptation to climate change*.” Eso sería el agregado. Repito, “*to mitigation and/or adaptation to climate change*.” Quiero ver cómo queda redactado pero la idea es que tanto la mitigación como la adaptación al cambio climático estén en ese subpárrafo. Espero que sea clara la lógica de la propuesta.

CHAIRPERSON

Members, with these amendments, shown in red and becoming subparagraphs (a), (b) and (c), can we go forward accepting this? Are they acceptable to Members? I see no requests for the floor.

We can move to subparagraph (d). I see no request from the floor.

We move to subparagraph (e). I see no requests.

We move to subparagraph (f).

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

On subparagraph (e), “welcomed the accomplishment of FAO work in forestry under the reviewed Strategic Framework and requested to continue to prioritize normative and technical work.” On that I would suggest that we put, “because we are developing a new Strategic Framework.” We should look into the future considering the new Strategic Framework that we are developing and put emphasis on data under the new Strategic Framework 2022-2031.

CHAIRPERSON

I assume this does not give any difficulty to anybody.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Bienvenida la sugerencia de mi estimado colega de Camerún, inmediatamente ese romanito, a ese párrafo, quiero sugerir el siguiente párrafo. Voy a leer en inglés a velocidad de dictado. “*Request FAO to identify new technologies and digital innovation for data collection, sustainable management and use, as well as on forest products*”.

CHAIRPERSON

These two amendments, one to subparagraph (e) by Cameroon and then a new subparagraph (f), both shown in red. United States of America?

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

Listening to my distinguished colleague from Argentina and the introduction now of subparagraph (f), it leaves me reading the “sustainable management and use” but it does not define. I think he is referring to data collection or is it referring to the technologies and innovation? When we talk about sustainable management, I think that to me means forestry management in the context of this report.

I think there is something missing there, and I am wondering if it should be sustainable forestry management. I would then go on further to say, “and use, including genetic resources,” and then it seems that it is getting at how you manage the forest, how you use the genetic resources and then it also then extends all the way to the forest products. I think that is more of a continuum of what I would be looking for in terms of, as we identify new technologies and innovations. I offer that for consideration.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

La sugerencia de la mejor redacción, me parece correcta, hablar de “*sustainable forest management*”, pero la relación entre “*digital innovation and genetic resources*” es un debate que no está saldado. No me gustaría incluir “*genetic resources*” en este contexto porque sería abrir un debate que no me parece que sería en este momento pertinente, por eso yo acepto la sugerencia del delegado de Estados Unidos de América.

Pero, los debates sobre la información digital, sobre consecuencias en el tema de los recursos genéticos es un tema complejo para discutir ahora y no creo que sea el momento. Yo, lo único que quería era visibilizar el tema de las nuevas tecnologías y la innovación digital para la búsqueda de datos. Y creo que la redacción aportada por el delegado de Estados Unidos de América me parece apropiada, pero sin el párrafo que generaría una polémica en algo que no está saldado.

CHAIRPERSON

United States of America, would you have a comment on that?

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

In the interest of time and not opening up lengthy debates, I think we will go ahead and show flexibility in this case to my good colleague from Argentina. I think we also have, in subparagraph (g) coming up, I think it actually gets into that space a little bit when you get into the work of the Commission and the ongoing work to look at genetic resources specifically and genome typing. I am comfortable with removal of the words I suggested at this point.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, United States of America. I take it that with these amendments we can now move to subparagraph (g)? I see no requests for the floor.

We can move to subparagraphs (h) I see no request for the floor.

We move to subparagraph (i).

We can move to subparagraph (j). I see no request for the floor.

We move to the next paragraph, (k).

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I have a suggestion to add on at subparagraph (j). Could you scroll up a little bit? Not a new paragraph, but to follow up on the subparagraph (j). It reads, “requested FAO to integrate forestry in its work on food systems, including through COVID-19 pandemic recovery measures and its Hand-in-Hand Initiative, and underlined, in general, the importance of FAO’s participation in related multilateral mechanisms and processes.”

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Celebro la sugerencia de mi estimado colega de Alemania y en ese mismo subpárrafo, haría algunas modificaciones pequeñas. En la primera línea, donde dice “*including*”, agregaría, “*but not limited to.*” O sea, “*but not limited.*” Correcto. Y después, el párrafo tercero. Sigamos con la línea tres de ese mismo subpárrafo, en lugar de “*related to inter-governmental multilateral mechanisms*”.

Porque no es cualquier mecanismo multilateral sino intergovernmental. Y con esto estamos de acuerdo con la sugerencia.

CHAIRPERSON

I take it with these amendments to subparagraph (j).

We can move forward to subparagraph (k). I see no requests for the floor.

We move to subparagraph (l). I see no request.

We can move to subparagraph (m).

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

This is just to summarize everything because I have the impression that from the Chapeau there are some inconsistencies. Can we scroll up from the very beginning so that we harmonize everything? What I read, there, is that on programme and budget matters. I do not know whether it is in relation to, even the word there is under the World Forestry Congress. Is it on programme and budget matters and so on? Do we need to add that, “on programme and budget matters?” I do not know if everything listed there was examined under programme and budget matters.

CHAIRPERSON

Cameroon, you have a point. What we can do is delete “in particular”. Then it seems the Council has discussed the programme and budget matters, and some of the others. When we delete “in particular” it becomes that it deals with two issues, as it was. Cameroon, does that address your point?

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

No, because what is listed there is a subset of one. If that is how we operate. I am a little bit confused because programme and budget matters, you have the preparation of the 5th Forest Congress, you have many other items, the Multi-year Programme of Work is listed there. The Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) and so on. All these things were not necessarily discussed.

If I may, because I do not want us to be blocked for such a thing. I would propose that we “endorse the recommendations contained in the Report of the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry and in particular,” then we move on because it is too narrow to insert programme and budgetary matters. What I want to suggest is to strike out “on programme and budget matters,” because that was not the only item on the agenda.

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

Listening to the issue that my distinguished colleague from Cameroon raised, I think we were thinking similarly there, and it looks like that is subsequently fixed by the deletion now in the chapeau.

The other part that I wanted to recall and check, and particularly check with the Secretariat, is that it seems that we have many different paragraph items here, some begin with action verbs like “reiterated” and then in the next it follows “request” and then goes back to “welcomed.” I think there has been a practice where the requests all are bunched together under a chapeau and the other notations and considerations in the discussion were actually listed separately.

I wanted to raise this because the Drafting Committee would fix that if we did not intervene now on that. That is the clarity I would just like to ask at this point, if all the paragraphs starting with the verb requested should be grouped together in the document.

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, perhaps the Drafting Committee could look at this. You have a point that these similar verbs should perhaps be following each other. Could we leave it to the Drafting Committee?

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

I would be happy to leave it to the Drafting Committee at this point. I have no problem with that and am comfortable with it, as long as the other Members are.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Estoy de acuerdo, Presidente, con su sugerencia.

Sr. Mario ARVELO (República Dominicana)

Nosotros también, como acaba de decir el embajador de Argentina, estamos de acuerdo con su sugerencia. Este es un aspecto que puede perfectamente ser tratado en el Comité de Redacción. Ahora bien, nosotros como miembros del Comité de Redacción, como Miembros del Consejo y como Estados Miembros, le queremos solicitar, Presidente, que usted pueda de manera administrativa instruir al Secretariado que trabaja con usted. Nosotros conocemos muy bien al Secretario General de la Conferencia y del Consejo, el Sr. Rakesh Muthoo, quien es un gran conocedor de la gramática, del lenguaje, todo esto, y que tiene también un excelente equipo en su entorno.

En concreto, que usted pueda, si así lo considera oportuno, no solo en este punto sino en otros puntos en los cuales usted ha concluido diciendo que podría, en efecto, no tratarse de una cuestión política sino más bien una cuestión de redacción; y como iría al Comité de Redacción, para que el Secretariado pueda tener lista una propuesta de redacción; con el objetivo de contar con una formulación que permita a los miembros del Comité cuando lleguen a su primera reunión, no iniciar desde cero. Es decir, que no entren al punto en el que estamos ahora, si no que puedan ver una o dos opciones alternativas, para que siempre de manera gramatical, se pueda transmitir la decisión política que estaríamos tomando nosotros en el Consejo sobre las cuestiones de sustancia.

CHAIRPERSON

I think the Secretariat will be able to do that. With that, I have a request from Malaysia.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO (Malaysia) (Observer)

If you can scroll down towards the end of the conclusion - just a quick clarification - I remember the colleague from Argentina and also Germany brought up the issue of the inter-governmental mechanisms. Just to clarify, are you referring this to inter-governmental within the country or are you talking about multilateral systems?

CHAIRPERSON

It is not within? I believe it is multilateral.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO (Malaysia) (Observer)

I see, okay. The definition of an inter-governmental mechanism in your understanding is multilateral?

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

I have something that I cannot see very well in your summary and I do not know where to put it. I think it should be somewhere in the beginning; "encouraged FAO to support local communities under specific forests in the sustainable management of forestry." We have those communities that live in that forest and so there should be a specific way to address their concerns.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Could you please scroll down the text? I guess we have to make it clear that an inter-governmental discussion could be multilateral, but not only multilateral. It could be a meeting of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It is a multilateral meeting and not what we intend here. I would prefer to keep "inter-governmental mechanism."

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

Thank you, Chairperson, for coming back on this. We had not previously spoken about the multilateral or the inter-governmental mechanisms, but in looking a moment while listening, I think that this has to be carefully considered. I think what Brazil just intervened on is sounding familiar to us because I believe there are inter-governmental mechanisms that the United Nations, and particularly the Forum on Forests, recognizes. Some are inter-governmental, it is the way they are labelled, so I presume there is government membership in those mechanisms and if that is true then we should be able to find a way.

The example that I think could be familiar with many is the International Tropical Timber Organization or you could have another example found in the Central African Forest Commission, which maybe some of our African colleagues are familiar with. I would like to see if we can settle on this quickly.

I think for the United States of America we think that it probably is a little bit more than multilateral, which may take a unique meaning to be parallel with the United Nations. We do believe there is other inter-governmental mechanisms where members are involved and where they are particularly interlinking. I think that goes back to the earlier discussions that we followed through this. I think we have a preference for inter-governmental mechanisms at this point from the United States of America, but we can remain flexible as well.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Quiero decirle que, como fuimos rápido, yo no vi que se había cancelado, borrado, la palabra multilateral también. Yo no veía la necesidad de eliminar la palabra multilateral sino que quería que quedara “*intergovernmental*”.

Quizás hasta para completar la frase, por supuesto, haciendo una redacción correcta podríamos poner al final de “*processes*”, “*within the United Nations System*” que creo que es el *wording* que se utilizó en el report del Comité Forestal (COFO), así como está. Quería ver si de esta manera podíamos estar de acuerdo. Pero, repito, después de “*intergovernmental*”, yo pondría, para poder reflejar las inquietudes de los demás colegas que hablaron de “*multilateral mechanisms*,” pero sin remover “*intergovernmental*”.

No, pero está puesto. No lo pusieron. No, pero, Presidente, no está incluido. Perdón, no sé si es un tema de traducción. Después de “*intergovernmental*”, debería estar la palabra multilateral. “*in intergovernmental multilateral mechanism within the United Nations System.*” Porque eso refleja lo que mis estimados colegas plantearon y también lo que nosotros hemos planteado.

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

I fully appreciate the colleague from Argentina. I do not think for the United States of America that we are calling for deletion of multilateral, but I do think we need to have a clarification here that rather than within the United Nations System that may be rather limiting, because I read out earlier in my intervention that there are inter-governmental mechanisms that the United Nations recognizes.

Therefore, I think we might want to consider if we could put in the text, “participation in an inter-governmental, multilateral mechanisms, recognized within the United Nations System.” I think that then clarifies that we are talking about a range of groups where we can find evidence that they are part of the system through the recognition, but not being a United Nations specialized Agency. I think that is the key point I want to make.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Just to support the suggestion of my esteemed American colleague. It is actually the point I wanted also to make.

CHAIRPERSON

With this, I think we have completed this Item and Members have come to an agreement on the conclusions. Brazil, do you want the floor?

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Yes, just for a general reflection. This is not regarding the text that we just discussed; we do not have any problem. I would like just to propose a reflection to the Members of the Council regarding our last experience with the Committee on Forestry (COFO). It is not an easy idea, but I would like to propose that we start considering adopting the same mechanism we use for the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) because the idea of having chairpersons coming from the Regional Conferences for forests proved to be a little bit difficult to work with. Most of them do not have the necessary experience, do not know the procedures, are not accustomed to our way of discussing and treating subjects. Therefore, as a reflection, maybe we should start informally discussing the idea of adopting the same structure for COFO as in COAG.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Quería decir que en mi intervención justamente apunté a lo mismo que planteó mi colega, el embajador de Brasil. Por un lado reconocíamos el excelente trabajo de la Secretaría y todo el esfuerzo en un contexto muy difícil, muy complicado, del cual somos todos conscientes, pero creo que el concepto de “*learning by doing*”, lecciones aprendidas, nos permite ir hacia el lado de la sugerencia planteada por el embajador de Brasil hacia el futuro.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

I very much appreciate what Brazil just said, and I believe that if it is just said like that, it will not have any effect. What we are suggesting is to add something at the tail end of our Report, mentioning something like “instructed the Committee on Forestry.” If we can go back to it, we want to add that because if not, it is lost in the discussion. “Instructed the Committee on Forestry to initiate a discussion on how to elect its Bureau.” Something like that. Whether “instructed” is too strong, it is up to the Members to revisit it.

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

I appreciate the reflections of Brazil actually raised and Argentina spoke about and Cameroon. In hearing this, just to be brief, for the first time I attended the Committee on Forestry this October.

I was struck by the reflection that we had many experts on forestry, but we did not have nearly as great a population of people that are very experienced in the other Governing Bodies of the FAO and I wanted to weigh in on this to say that the preference that we would look for is to keep this informal in the form of consultation about the concept before we start writing instructions in the Council Report, as suggested by my distinguished colleague from Cameroon.

I think it would be premature to include a statement reviewing the mechanisms, when we are trying to figure out what the problem is. I am not sure we all have the same understanding of the problem that might exist that is stemming from the leadership of the Committee on Forestry among the Members there.

I think we would not be comfortable with adding that last line now. It is noted as number two, but I do think we can keep alive the discussion among Members and try to maybe look for future consultation in some form appropriate where our Committee on Forestry colleagues can join and be present for this as it impacts their affairs.

CHAIRPERSON

I have a request from the FAO Legal Counsel. Perhaps some clarification from the Legal Counsel may facilitate and help our discussions. Ms Donata Rugarabamu, you have the floor.

Ms Donata Mary RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

I wanted just to draw attention to the relationship of the Committee on Forestry (COFO) and the Council. As you will recall, COFO reports to the Conference, and to the Conference through the Council only on matters having programmatic and budgetary implications. I think in the context of providing an instruction, that is an important matter to bear in mind.

I would also note that the General Rules of the Organization, specifically Rule XXXI, provides in paragraph 9, “the Committee shall elect its own Chairperson from among its Members. It may adopt and amend its own rules of procedure, which shall be consistent with the Constitution and the General Rules of the Organization.” Along similar lines, the COFO Rules of Procedure establish that it may set its own Rules of Procedure and it also sets out the processes *vis-a-vis* Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons.

Therefore, I would recommend that any such wording be directed more as a recommendation to the Conference, that it may wish to encourage COFO. I am not sure that it falls within the mandate of the Council to be setting the procedures to be followed by COFO, in this regard.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

I heard what our colleague from the United States of America said and the intervention of the Legal Counsel. We are comfortable with that, but if we have to pass through a message to the Conference to that effect there should be something drafted because we know perfectly that the Committee on Forestry (COFO) prepares its Rules of Procedures.

If we want to send a message to the Conference that it could be important to revisit or to review, recommend that the Conference request COFO to review the Rules of Procedure concerning the mechanism of election of its Bureau, I think we are fine with that. It is not said that if it goes there it will come and we will want it, but at least COFO should be aware that Members are ready to take up this job.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I see the point that our esteemed colleague from Cameroon is making, but I think that the interventions of our distinguished American colleague, as well as the assessment of the Legal Counsel, are indeed very convincing and both question the competence of the Council and the maturity for such a recommendation.

I would agree with my American colleague that we should, for these reasons, delete this suggestion at this point and continue considering how best that could be addressed in the future. I think it would be premature to make such a recommendation at this point.

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

Listening carefully again to the appeal that my distinguished colleague from Cameroon is making, I do not want to diminish the value of what started with Brazil's reflection, but I think that it is too premature to go forward with a recommendation such as I see drafted on the screen. I do not think that would be acceptable to my delegation.

I do think that the Committee on Forestry (COFO) has a mechanism that this could be raised by members of the Bureau as the next point that would be the relevant entry point for this that would not cast any shadow of doubt in terms of competences, as noted by the German colleague representing the European Union Members.

I think that we are just not comfortable. In light of time, I am not sure that we have sufficient time to continue, nor the relevant experts in this conversation to discuss this. I am very much not persuaded to add text in the conclusions of the report. It was not discussed in the plenary session during the Council. We only got to this point that this was raised. For many reasons, it is just too premature to put text into.

Ms Pernilla IVARSSON (Sweden)

I would just like to add my voice to that of Germany and the United States of America. Sweden would not be comfortable with adding this to the Report at this time. We can agree that we continue discussing it, but in the relevant *fora*. I do not think this is here.

CHAIRPERSON

Cameroon, can we, in the interest of moving forward?

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

I withdraw everything.

CHAIRPERSON

This brings to an end Item 8.2.

Item 9. Report of the Joint Meeting of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee and 183rd Session of the Finance Committee (November 2020)**Point 9. Rapport de la Réunion conjointe du Comité du Programme (cent vingt-neuvième session) et du Comité financier (cent quatre-vingt-troisième session) (novembre 2020)****Tema 9. Informe de la reunión conjunta del Comité del Programa en su 129.º período de sesiones y el Comité de Finanzas en su 183.º período de sesiones (noviembre de 2020)**

(CL 165/9; CL 165/18; CL 165/INF/6)

CHAIRPERSON

We can move on to Item 9, which is the *Report of the Joint Meeting of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee and the 183rd Session of the Finance Committee*. The relevant documents are CL 165/9 and CL 165/INF/6 Rev.1. The Joint Meeting addressed items on the Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and an Outline of the Medium Term Plan 2022-25, FAO's new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement and FAO's response to COVID-19: Building to transform.

However, the Council has considered these issues under the relevant stand-alone Items 3, 4 and 5 and they will therefore not be discussed under this Item. The introduction by the Chairperson of the Programme Committee, Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen, has been circulated to you.

Item 9: Report of the Joint Meeting of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee and the 183rd Session of the Finance Committee (9 and 13 November 2020)

Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen, Chairperson of the Joint Meeting of the 129th Session of the Programme and the 183rd Session of the Finance Committee

The Joint Meeting of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee and the 183rd Session of the Finance Committee (JM) was held on 9 November 2020 and the Report was adopted on 13 November and is submitted to the Council in document *CL 165/9*.

The Joint Meeting had ten items on its agenda, including two items for information. The session was conducted in a virtual way on an exceptional basis due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with focused and constructive inputs from its Members.

The Joint Meeting had substantive and insightful discussions on the Outline of the Strategic Framework (2022-31) and Outline of the Medium Term Plan 2022-25 as well as on the new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement. Members commended the inclusive and transparent consultation processes on these two matters with Members as well as with other stakeholders to date. Members endorsed the overall approach for the development of the Strategic Framework, and recommended the Strategy for Private Sector Engagement, taking into account the agreed comments and suggestions of Members, be adopted at the 165th Session of the Council.

The Joint Meeting appreciated the Organization's ongoing efforts towards responding to COVID-19 and acknowledged the progress made. On the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), the Joint Meeting encouraged the Organization to pursue its efforts to re-imagine the TCP with the aim of improving the leverage of TCP as a catalytic fund in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Joint Meeting also reviewed and discussed the use of unspent balances of biennial appropriations. On the Establishment of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Sub-Committee on Livestock, the Joint Meeting endorsed this proposal and recommended its adoption at the Council.

The Members were also informed of the progress on the Rome-based Agencies collaboration and the Annual Report on Corporate Policy, Processes and Measures on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Authority Abuse, including results of the staff satisfaction survey.

CHAIRPERSON

I open the floor to Members for their comments. The floor is open.

Mr Toru HISAZOME (Japan)

Japan has the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

The Asia Regional Group commends the Programme Committee's Chairperson for their excellent leadership in conducting the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees considering the limitation of the virtual format. We would like to thank the Chairpersons and Members of both Committees for their hard work to reach to a consensus. The Asia Group appreciates the work of the Secretariat to provide all necessary information as requested by the Joint Meeting. Having said that, we would like to highlight the following points.

With regard to the Update on the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), the Asia Group recognizes the importance of TCP appropriations and the effort to improve transparency of TCP implementation. We note the decline in TCP expenditure rate due to project slowdowns amidst the COVID-19 situation, however, emphasize to re-programme the savings quickly to ensure full utilization, maintaining quality and necessity.

The Asia Group echoes its voice with the Joint Meeting to acknowledge the special needs of the TCP to low income, conflict affected and food deficit countries, and above all, the needs of all developing countries affected by COVID-19. We would like to support the views of the Joint Meeting recalling the discussion that took place during the 164th Session of the FAO Council to revisit the criteria of

resource allocation on the ground taking into consideration specific needs of each region and country's utilization capacity.

The Asia Group supports the review of the percentage distribution of TCP in the next meetings and welcomes the delegation of authority to Decentralized Offices in order to avoid the bureaucracy and efficient use of time.

The Asia Group welcomes the views of the Joint Meeting to support the work of the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) with the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Group, the Chairpersons of the Finance Committee (FC), Programme Committee (PC), and Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM), to develop the proposals for the Council on the Working Methods of the Conference. We support the five proposals stipulated in the Report of the Joint Meeting, paragraph 12 (b) (i-v).

On the use of the unspent balance of biennial appropriation, the Asia Group endorses the views expressed by the Joint Meeting, the need to adhere to Financial Regulation 4.2 and concurred with the CCLM that the Conference has the authority to make exceptions following a clear, well-defined and transparent process. We noted the procedure endorsed by CCLM in October 2019 for a derogation of the Financial Regulations authorizing the use of the unspent balance and at the same time recommend that the Council advise the Conference to suspend Financial Regulations only in exceptional cases.

With these comments, the Asia Group endorses the Report of the Joint Meeting.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. With regard to the Working Methods of the Conference we would like to emphasise the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committee's request that the informal consultations of the Independent Chairperson of the Council on the Code of Conduct for the election of the Director-General be expeditiously concluded in order to allow the FAO Conference to take a decision on the issue at its 42nd Session in 2021. It is of utmost importance that such a Code of Conduct is in force when the next election of the Director-General take place.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been working for more than half a year now in a virtual setting. We have had Regional Conferences, the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Forestry in this format and this is our second virtual Council session. Given the likelihood that the Conference will also be held in a virtual setting, we believe there is now a need to assess our adjusted methods of operation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In general, we appreciate the way in which FAO hosts the virtual sessions. We are also pleased with FAO's efforts to ensure the operability of the Governing Bodies despite the COVID-19 pandemic. We would nonetheless see scope for further improvement, in particular, to ensure a smooth conduct of the Conference next summer. Therefore, we would like to share our experience and some suggestions to help further develop best practices for the preparation of virtual meetings.

Virtual sessions tend to take more time than physical ones and the additional time needed for each agenda item can be significant. While we appreciate and support the use of the written correspondence procedure for part of the Agenda items, to increase the effectiveness of virtual sessions, we consider that the number of Agenda items should be better aligned with the constraints of the virtual setting. In addition, since the preparatory work within the Regional Groups and at national level also needs to be done virtually, and therefore takes more time, the timely provision of reference documents by FAO is more important than ever. This is all the more critical for Agenda items under the written correspondence procedure, which requires Members to provide their statements well in advance of the actual session. Failing this, Members would not be able to submit their positions in writing and would have to raise their points in plenary, consuming even more of the scarce time available.

Our final comments concern the last session of the Joint Meeting. We fully share the Joint Meeting's view on the need to adhere to Financial Regulations, in particular Financial Regulation 4.2. Therefore, we strongly support the recommendation on the use of unspent balances of biennial appropriations, namely that the Council advises the Conference to suspend Financial Regulations only in exceptional cases.

Sr. Benito JIMÉNEZ SAUMA (México)

En relación a la Reunión Conjunta, quisiera hacer algunos comentarios sobre el Programa de Cooperación Técnica (PCT) y los saldos no utilizados. Para muchos países, el PCT es una herramienta para responder de manera rápida y de corto plazo a problemas concretos, poniendo la pericia de la FAO a disposición de los Miembros. Como se expuso en la Reunión Conjunta, el PCT se debe perfeccionar y una de las cuestiones pendientes es la unificación de criterios de asignación de recursos más allá de los ingresos per cápita. Se deben utilizar criterios multidimensionales, tomar en cuenta las necesidades regionales y tener más claridad sobre cómo se gestionan las aprobaciones de recursos.

Debemos ver al PCT como una herramienta estratégica de la FAO para el desarrollo, una herramienta muy concreta para cumplir la misión de la Organización que catalice las actividades de la FAO. En este sentido, apoyamos los trabajos que la Administración planea llevar a cabo respecto al PCT, y quedamos a la espera de las propuestas para hacerlo más efectivo y consolidarlo como una herramienta para el desarrollo.

Respecto a los saldos no utilizados, apoyamos lo acordado en la Reunión Conjunta. El uso de los saldos no utilizados debe apegarse al Reglamento Financiero y el Consejo debe sugerir a la Conferencia suspender la aplicación de los artículos de dicho Reglamento Financiero solo en casos excepcionales. Y aquí debemos ser estrictos para que los casos excepcionales sean eso, excepciones. Y que la excepción no se convierta en práctica como sucedió hace algunos, hecho que inició el debate sobre el uso de los saldos no utilizados.

Con esos comentarios, endosamos el informe de la Reunión conjunta del Comité del Programa en su 129.º período de sesiones y el Comité de Finanzas en su 183.º período de sesiones.

Sra. Liudmila KUZMICHEVA (República Dominicana)

Como otras delegaciones, siempre seguimos con mucha atención los debates de la Reunión Conjunta. Apreciamos y valoramos las dimensiones de utilidad y facilidad de acceder a las conclusiones de la Reunión conjunta para cristalizar consensos en el Consejo. Es oportuno recordar que los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas, así como la Reunión conjunta de ambos, son instancias auxiliares del Consejo. Más de la mitad de los Miembros del Consejo no pertenecen a ninguno de esos dos órganos subsidiarios y quienes no somos Miembros de número participamos en ellos de modo pasivo, como Observadores silentes.

Cabe recordar, también, aquí y ahora, que el Consejo es un órgano de superior jerarquía jurídica y más alto rango político que sus Comités auxiliares. El Consejo goza de una más amplia autoridad legal y una mayor legitimidad democrática porque lo integra un número más extenso de Miembros elegidos por la Conferencia de la FAO. La Reunión conjunta reporta al Consejo, el Consejo reporta al órgano supremo de la Organización. En consecuencia y conclusión, lo ideal sería que en futuras sesiones del Consejo, asumamos la plena responsabilidad de alcanzar consensos que reflejen las discusiones en este órgano. Aunque en ocasiones excepcionales nos veamos obligados a acudir a las soluciones encontradas en la Reunión Conjunta.

Ms Jennifer HARRIGH (United States of America)

The United States of America welcomes the recommendations of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees. We appreciate the Report's emphasis on the scientific-and evidence-based normative work of FAO, the central role of all forms of innovation, and the importance of digitalization. We particularly value the constructive discussion on FAO's new Strategy of Engagement with the Private Sector and we very much look forward to the Strategy's Action Plan implementation.

Mr Fei HUANG (China) (Original Language Chinese)

We agree with the opinion of the Asia Regional Group. The Programme and Finance Committees discussed a number of important issues and China agreed to adopt the Report.

The Technical Committee Programme (TCP) project has continued to play an important role in improving the agricultural development capacity of developing countries and promoting the

transformation of food systems, as well as improving the level of food security, therefore, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We hope that FAO will strengthen the overall management of the project funds in the administration and implementation of the TCP and complete all projects with equal quality and quantity; plan new uses of the surplus funds, appropriately adjust project allocation criteria to effectively improve local agriculture based on the actual needs and capacity of developing countries; and enhance efficiency, raise more resources and leverage more funds and materials to provide increased support to developing countries.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I would like to start off by thanking my colleagues for our discussions in the Joint Meeting last month. As others have said, we have already discussed a lot of the Joint Meeting Agenda Items so far this week, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland endorses the Joint Meeting recommendations.

I would like to take this opportunity to focus on the Joint Meeting recommendations on the Technical Committee Programme (TCP), on FAO's efforts to prevent and respond to harassment, sexual harassment and authority abuse, and on the FAO/World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)/World Health Organization (WHO) Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding.

Firstly, on the TCP, we welcome Management's commitment to improve transparency, communication and reporting on the TCP, and we welcome the commitment to reimagine the TCP. We are looking forward to the information that Council has requested on project allocation criteria and on the consultation process that the Joint Meeting requested in subparagraph 10. (g) of the Joint Meeting Report. We urge Council to endorse these requests in our conclusions this week. We look forward to discussing the evaluation of the TCP under Item 10, *Report of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee*, so we will not refer to that here.

Secondly, I would like to very much welcome the inclusion of the Item on FAO's Action Plan to prevent harassment, sexual harassment and authority abuse in the Council Agenda this week. As Members have requested previously, we look forward to considering progress with these action plans in at least one Council session each year, and we would like to highlight the importance of Management's commitment to participating in the United Nations Clear Check database by the end of this year. We hope that Council can reflect this in our conclusions this week as well.

Finally, I would like to reiterate our strong support to the importance of FAO's focus on the One Health approach as mentioned by many other colleagues throughout this week. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the Joint Meeting request for more information on FAO's work under the FAO/OIE/WHO Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding and our request for oversight of that work as well.

Mr Yousef JUHAIL (Kuwait)

I would request to give the floor to Sudan to speak on behalf of the Near East Regional Group.

CHAIRPERSON

Sudan, you have the floor.

Mr Sid Ahmed M. Alamain Hamid ALAMAIN (Sudan) (Observer)

Sudan has the pleasure to deliver this statement on behalf of the Near East Group and we would like to highlight the following. The Near East Group expresses its appreciation to Management for exploring new ways of reporting and sharing information on Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP). The Near East Group believes that the evaluation of the TCP comes at a crucial moment while the implementation is facing increasing challenges to fulfil its targets at a tough time of the COVID-19 pandemic and escalating conflicts, which is getting worse by the negative impacts of climate change.

The Evaluation and Audit Report on TCP acknowledged many examples for successful TCP uses and best practices. Based on those examples it has also built recommendations from which we encourage the Management to emphasizing and build on them. The Group would like also to call the attention on

the importance of ensuring full utilization of the TCP. As we are anticipating the review of the percentage of the TCP, the evaluation report already realizes that TCP needs to be modernized and repositioned to ensure that more TCP projects have catalytic and sustainable effects. Moreover, the Group adheres to the Report's request that the TCP should remain country-focused, and demand-driven to ensure tangible benefits for Members.

With regard to sexual harassment, the Near East Group acknowledges the engagement of FAO's senior staff throughout the process of preventing sexual harassment and take into consideration the Staff Representatives Body. This is a step in the right direction and conforms with the wishes of the Membership. We recognize the Management commitment, by conducting a survey to employees that highlights the Director-General's leadership in combating abusive behaviour in all its forms and we note FAO's dedication to ensure a safe and respectful workplace environment in order to promptly change conduct across a large, devolved, and dispersed Organization. The Near East Group believes that the Management will take stock of the overall results and outcomes of the Employee Satisfaction Survey in particular addressing the reporting line. We also believe that FAO should provide full support to those who are subject to Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Abuse of Power specifically those who reported their cases.

Regarding the establishment of the Sub-Committee on Livestock, we cannot agree more that livestock is vital for our region in achieving food security and maintaining livelihoods. Therefore, we reaffirm the role of Sub-Committee, which should be well considered wherever adequate extra-resources will be available.

With these comments, the Near East Group endorses the recommendations of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committee.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

En lo relativo al informe de la reunión conjunta del Comité del Programa en su 129.º período de sesiones y el Comité de Finanzas en su 183.º período de sesiones, queríamos destacar los siguientes aspectos. En primer lugar, manifestar nuestro total apoyo a la intervención de la Presidencia alemana actual de la Unión Europea y de sus Estados miembros. En este sentido, reiteramos la necesidad de respetar el Reglamento Financiero, en particular, su artículo 4.2 en consonancia con lo manifestado en el Informe de la reunión conjunta.

Además de ello, quisiéramos hacer hincapié en otros dos aspectos. En primer lugar, en relación con la preparación de los documentos de trabajo facilitados a los Miembros, es necesario respetar escrupulosamente los principios del multilingüismo en el sistema de las Naciones Unidas. Lo que implica la discusión de todos los documentos en las seis versiones lingüísticas de Naciones Unidas con antelación suficiente para su estudio en profundidad.

En segundo lugar, en cuanto al sistema de trabajo a distancia impuesto necesariamente por las medidas de prevención de la difusión de la pandemia por COVID-19, instamos a FAO a que, dentro del estricto cumplimiento de estas medidas, en lo posible, y siendo consciente de las condiciones y condicionantes actuales, vayamos avanzando progresivamente hacia un modelo de trabajo cuanto menos híbrido, respetando cuantas medidas sean necesarias para ello, pero tratando de recuperar este modelo de trabajo que es, a todas luces, más eficaz.

M. Mohammed Cherif DIALLO (Guinée)

La Guinée et le Niger ont l'honneur de faire la présente déclaration au nom du Groupe régional Afrique, sur le thème de l'ordre du jour intitulé «Rapport de la Réunion conjointe de la 129e session du Comité du Programme et de la 183e session du Comité financier».

Nous félicitons le Secrétariat pour l'élaboration du rapport CL165/9 et des documents annexes y afférents.

De manière globale, nous accueillons favorablement les conclusions et recommandations faites à la Réunion conjointe sur les sept principaux points du rapport.

Le Groupe Afrique salue le processus inclusif dans l'élaboration du Cadre stratégique et du Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025, qui a tenu compte de l'évolution des défis mondiaux et des impératifs des

objectifs de développement durable. Nous souhaitons que la prochaine version du Cadre stratégique prévoie une analyse plus approfondie du modèle de fonctionnement de la FAO, de ses différentes sources de financement et de la manière dont les informations en la matière sont communiquées.

À propos de la nouvelle stratégie de la FAO relative à la participation du secteur privé, le Groupe africain se félicite de la nature constructive des discussions et de la disponibilité de la Direction à prendre en compte les préoccupations des Membres.

Nous partageons l'idée selon laquelle la nouvelle stratégie doit mettre l'accent sur la garantie d'un engagement avec un éventail équilibré, large et géographiquement diversifié d'acteurs du secteur privé, en privilégiant les micro, petites et moyennes entreprises tant dans le cadre du groupe consultatif du secteur informel proposé que pour les engagements opérationnels.

Nous apprécions que l'importance d'une action adaptée et d'un renforcement des capacités, en particulier dans les bureaux décentralisés, soit soulignée.

Nous accueillons favorablement le changement de nom du domaine prioritaire pour les partenariats, qui ne serait plus «Élimination de la pauvreté rurale», mais «Promotion du développement rural et élimination de la pauvreté rurale».

Nous nous félicitons de l'instauration de rapports aiguillés sur l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre de la Stratégie et des partenariats par l'intermédiaire du Comité du Programme, comme le prévoit la Stratégie, et demandons une évaluation approfondie de la première année de mise en œuvre.

Enfin, nous nous félicitons de l'engagement de la Direction à accroître la transparence et souscrivons à la nécessité que tous les documents des partenariats, y compris leur protocole d'accord, lettres d'intention ou d'autres formes d'accord, soient accessibles par le biais du portail «Connect».

Concernant le sous-comité de l'élevage, le Groupe Afrique se félicite de sa création et de la prise en compte de la mission «Une seule santé».

Pour ce qui est des informations actualisées sur le Programme de coopération technique, nous saluons les efforts accomplis afin d'améliorer la transparence, la communication et l'établissement du rapport sur la mise en œuvre du Programme de coopération technique.

Enfin, sur l'action menée pour faire face à la covid-19, le Groupe Afrique prend acte des actions accomplies par la FAO dans la lutte contre la covid-19 et se félicite des résultats obtenus dans plusieurs domaines pour atténuer les effets négatifs de la pandémie.

Nous encourageons l'Organisation à renforcer ces mesures pour aider les pays à mieux se relever.

Avec ces commentaires, Monsieur le Président, nous recommandons l'adoption du Rapport par le Conseil.

Mr Caka Alverdi AWAL (Indonesia)

Indonesia aligns itself to the statement of the Asia Regional Group delivered by Japan. On the update on the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), we appreciate the efforts FAO made to improve transparency, communication and reporting on TCP implementation. While noting the decline in the expenditure rate as resulted from COVID-19 pandemic, we underline the importance of ensuring full utilization of TCP resources as well as achieving the target of 100 percent delivery of TCP projects against the 2018-19 appropriation by the end of 2021. We look forward to FAO beginning a strategic exercise, in consultation with Members, with the aim to refine the criteria of resource allocation beyond the traditional one of per capita income and taking into account the specific needs of each region and countries.

On the proposal for the establishment of the Sub-Committee on Livestock, we fully support the decision of Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committee for the endorsement of the Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee should be established as an intergovernmental forum with the mandate to discuss and build consensus on issues and priorities related to the livestock sector and advise the Committee of Agriculture (COAG). It also provides the Council and the Conference on technical and policy programmes and activities required to optimize the contribution of the livestock sector to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

On the *Progress Report on Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) Collaboration*, we welcomed the update provided on the ongoing collaboration at all levels and the impacts on the ground. Furthermore, we request FAO to finalize the feasibility study of integration of administrative functions and common specialized expertise, as it has been asked previously as a time-bound request.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

We also realize that a lot of the priority items have been discussed in earlier sessions of the Council, however, we wish to take the floor to express our satisfaction for the discussions of the Joint Meeting which highlighted the importance of FAO's normative and standard setting work and that these issues will feature prominently in the new Strategic Framework.

The value attributed to this area of work was quite prominent including in Council discussions to date, and we believe that the logical next steps would be that resource allocations within the regular Programme of Work and Budget be prioritized in these areas of work.

We would like to focus our intervention on two points. We appreciate the informative evaluation on the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) and we welcome Management's internal consultations to reimagine the TCP in order to leverage its catalytic multiplier and sustainable effects in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the new Strategic Framework.

Like the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and others, we look forward to more information on the criteria for resource allocation, which is an outstanding Council request, and the next steps in this regard. We also underline the importance of ensuring full utilization of resources.

Finally, we welcome updates on FAO's efforts to prevent and respond to harassment, sexual harassment and authority abuse, and appreciate confirmation from Management that FAO will participate in the United Nations Clear Check database by the end of the year.

CHAIRPERSON

Kuwait, would you like the floor again?

Mr Yousef JUHAIL (Kuwait) (Original Language Arabic)

Allow me to make reference to Sudan's statement on behalf of the Near East Regional Group. In addition to what Canada has just said regarding the prevention of harassment, sexual harassment and authority abuse, I would like to highlight this issue, request FAO to adopt the relevant measures and to use the different Units and Divisions to work towards preventing harassment, sexual harassment and authority abuse, not only at Headquarters, but also at regional and sub-regional level and in Decentralized Offices. We believe that FAO should take the necessary measures, and the Office of the Inspector-General (OIG) should conduct investigations on complaints and take them very seriously.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to Observers because the list of Members is completed.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO (Malaysia) (Observer)

Malaysia aligns itself with the Asia Regional Group statement delivered by Japan. Malaysia reiterates the importance of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) appropriations and the efforts to enhance transparency around TCP implementation.

We recognize the decrease in TCP expenditure rate due to the projected slowdown amidst the COVID-19 situation, and that a saving will be reprogrammed to ensure full utilization. Hence, we request FAO to refine resource allocation, take into consideration specific needs of each region and evaluate the percentage distribution of TCP among regions.

Malaysia also appreciates the informal consultation between the Independent Chairperson of the Council, the Chairpersons of the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee, and the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of Regional Groups. We support the need to introduce a voluntary option for delegations to deliver keynote statements under the general debate of the Conference in digital form.

With regard to the use of unspent balance of biennial appropriations, Malaysia reiterates the importance to adhere to Financial Regulation 4.2 and concur with the review of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) that the Conference has the authority to make exemptions, nevertheless, it be according to a clear and transparent process.

CHAIRPERSON

That brings us to the end of our list of speakers. I now invite the Chairpersons of the Programme and Finance Committees and subsequently the Secretariat. First the Chairperson of the Programme Committee, you have the floor.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of the Programme Committee)

It is great to see you even at the end of your afternoon still smiling. That is very important for a positive atmosphere in the meeting. With that, I really would like to thank all Members of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees for their extremely hard work during the Session, as we had a very heavy Agenda and in a very constructive atmosphere, we discussed all the Agenda items in one day, with an evening session, and concluded the end of the week with consensus on all of the items.

Many of the Joint Meeting Items are being addressed as separate Items during this Council, however, with the Report that is in front of you, we could highlight matters which were discussed, and which are very important, not only for the future of FAO, but certainly for action on the ground, especially for countries who need it the most. Among those matters is the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP).

In addition to the normative work, this is an essential programme of FAO for the work at country level. All Members of the Joint Meeting clearly underlined the importance of the TCP. Elements already raised in the discussion this afternoon were: transparency, the full utilization of the TCP, the strategic exercise which is needed and the decentralization of authority. To reiterate, the important work being done under the TCP is crucial for the work of FAO.

Another important Item is the unspent balance. We had an intense discussion on how to deal with the unspent balance. This Item has reoccurred again and again. As highlighted in the statements of several Members, there is a clear recommendation of the Joint Meeting that the Council should advise the Conference to suspend Financial Regulations only in exceptional cases.

The Sub-Committee on Livestock, although not discussed fully this time, was an important issue and the Joint Meeting clearly underlined the need to endorse the proposal for the establishment of the Sub-Committee to underline and address the important work that is being done and should be done by FAO in this field.

Lastly, it is important that we also highlight the work which is being done in the prevention of harassment, sexual harassment and authority abuse. It is addressed as an Item on all the Agendas of the Rome-based Agencies, including the United Nations in New York. There is a clear need that we implement a zero-tolerance policy throughout the United Nations, as highlighted in the Annual Report, and it is important that we keep this Agenda Item on all of our meetings of the Joint Meeting and of the Council.

A lot of work has been done in a very good spirit and I am very glad that the Members of the Council are willing to adopt the recommendations of this Report.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Chairperson of the Finance Committee.

Sra. Imelda SMOLCIC (Presidente del Comité de Finanzas)

Con respecto a la Reunión Conjunta, creo que el Presidente del Comité de Programa y de la Reunión conjunta ha expresado todo lo ocurrido y el funcionamiento de la Reunión conjunta y no tengo mucho más para agregar. Así que me uno a sus palabras y no le quito más tiempo.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the Deputy Director-General, Mr Laurent Thomas.

M. Laurent THOMAS (Directeur général adjoint)

Je vais commenter très brièvement sur les points qui ont été soulevés en ce qui concerne la gouvernance digitale, ainsi que les défis du harcèlement sexuel, harcèlement, abus d'autorité et exploitation sexuelle.

En ce qui concerne la gouvernance digitale, nous avons bien écouté la proposition de l'Union européenne, émise par l'Allemagne, et nous sommes très intéressés à poursuivre le dialogue sur la gouvernance de façon informelle, pour améliorer le système digital de gouvernance pour le futur.

Nous avons apporté des améliorations, je pense que cela fonctionne assez bien. Il reste de petits problèmes liés au fonctionnement d'internet, mais dans son ensemble, la plateforme Zoom, avec accès aux six langues officielles de l'Organisation, nous permet de bien fonctionner.

Je pense aussi que le recours au système de correspondance écrite permet de rendre plus efficaces les débats et de vous concentrer sur les points pour lesquels il y a besoin de plus de discussion. Mais nous poursuivons cette discussion qui couvrira aussi la question du multilinguisme, qui je pense, sera soulevée à nouveau dans le cadre du point de l'ordre du jour du rapport du Comité du Programme.

En ce qui concerne le harcèlement sexuel, l'abus d'autorité et l'exploitation sexuelle, je peux vous assurer encore une fois que les signaux de la Direction de la FAO sont sans ambiguïté. Nous appliquerons avec fermeté la tolérance zéro dans ce domaine. Je peux vous dire que le groupe de travail que je préside, qui est composé des unités impliquées dans cette question, en particulier le Fonctionnaire chargé des questions de déontologie, le Médiateur, l'Inspecteur général, la Directrice des ressources humaines, travaillons sur des actions bien précises pour améliorer la réponse de l'Organisation dans ce domaine.

Il y a beaucoup de travail à faire, un travail sur la culture et comme l'a mentionné le délégué du Koweït, ce travail ne concerne pas que le Siège mais les activités de l'Organisation sur tous les lieux d'affectation, qu'il s'agisse d'activités financées par le Programme ordinaire ou par des projets. Et cela concerne également les partenariats.

Nous sommes donc très activement engagés là-dessus et réalisons beaucoup de travail de formation, que nous allons poursuivre au cours de l'année 2021. Nous serons heureux de faire le point à ce sujet lors d'une prochaine session du Conseil, comme l'a proposé la représentante britannique.

CHAIRPERSON

This brings us to the end of discussions on this Item. I will now read out my conclusions. We will put them on the screen.

Item 9, Report of the Joint Meeting of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee and 183rd Session of the Finance Committee, 9-13 November 2020.

1. The Council approved the Report of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees and in particular;
 - a) welcomed the efforts made to improve transparency, communication, efficient use of resources and reporting on Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) implementation, encouraged follow-up on the TCP evaluation and improvement to leverage the TCP as a catalytic fund in alignment with SDGs and requested a strategic exercise in consultation with Members, aimed at refining and potentially unifying the criteria of resource allocation, taking into account region specific needs;
 - b) noted the information addressing technical and policy aspects of the use of unspent balances of biennial appropriations, concurred with the need to adhere to financial regulations of the Organization and recommended that the Conference suspend financial regulations only in exceptional cases;
 - c) requested that the informal consultation of the Independent Chairperson of the Council on the Code of Conduct for the election of the Director-General be expeditiously concluded in order to allow the FAO Conference at its 42nd Session in 2021 to take a decision on the issue.

- d) welcomed the updates and information provided in the Annual Report on Corporate Policy Processes and Measures on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Authority Abuse, and the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PSH) Action Plans for 2021; the use of SEA surveys and confirmation from Management that FAO will participate in the UN Clear Check database by the end of 2020.
- e) commended the Secretariat on the innovation in procedures, technology and language services introduced in 2020, which ensured the integrity of governance during the year afflicted by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and looked forward to adjustment of remote working methods commensurate with the dynamic evolution of the pandemic conditions in 2021, including potentially by use of hybrid methods of work; and
- f) stressed the importance of provisional documents for the meetings of the Governing Bodies in due time, in all languages.

That is the end of my conclusions and I would suggest we follow the practice which we have been doing and we go subparagraph by subparagraph. I open the floor for Members. We take paragraph one.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I wish to add text after, “Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) as a catalyst fund in alignment with SDGs.” I would like to propose “and to attract additional extrabudgetary funding.” This is the same wording that was in the Report of the Joint Meeting in subparagraph (e).

CHAIRPERSON

Subparagraph (a)?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

En el mismo subpárrafo (a), luego de la palabra “aimed at”, voy a dictar en inglés a velocidad de dictado. [XX] No, repito. Luego de “aimed at”, en la línea anterior a la antepenúltima, “aimed at”, “before refining”. Ahí está. “reviewing the percentage of distribution of TCP among regions, as well as...” Y ahí queda tal cual el párrafo está. Por cualquier cosa, esto fue acordado en el subpárrafo 17 (h) de la reunión conjunta. Simplemente lo estamos sacando en este momento porque nos parece pertinente en el contexto de párrafo.

CHAIRPERSON

Before I give the floor to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, I just want to provide some information, which I should have done before we opened the floor here. In Item 3, which is *Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and Outline of the Medium-Term Plan 2022-25* has been taken, so it would be reflected in the Report under that Item. Similarly, Item 4 would reflect FAO’s new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement.

Similarly, Item 5 reflects FAO’s response to COVID-19 and similarly Item 14, *Working Methods of the Conference*, will be reflected under that item and Item 8.1, which is the proposal for the establishment of Sub-Committee on Livestock was discussed there and it will be there, and Item 13, *Progress Report on Rome-based Agencies Collaboration* would be reflected under that Item and not under this section. This is just to provide you with this information.

Now I can give the floor to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I have three separate comments to make on this subparagraph, however, before we spend a lot of time negotiating our conclusions on the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), I wonder if the simplest approach would be to endorse or underline all of the recommendations that the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees made on the TCP. That might be the simplest way forward and I would welcome feedback on that. If that is not the case, then I would like to make three separate additions to this subparagraph.

Shall I do that now, or shall we wait and perhaps get feedback on my first option?

CHAIRPERSON

I am going to request a reaction of Members to your suggestion because that would be the easiest, if Members agreed with that then we would save time going forward. Would Members agree with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland's suggestion of having this opening statement and then that would take care of everything which the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees said and which some of the things are being reproduced in this paragraph. Just having that would save us time, rather than negotiating the particular wording, etcetera.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Yo no estoy en desacuerdo con la sugerencia de mi estimada colega del Reino Unido de la Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte, lo único que, en todo caso, quizá sería bueno poner dos párrafos, uno en términos más generales y otro poner visibilidad sobre los puntos que han sido resumidos de muy buena manera por parte de la Secretaría. A mí me parece que podemos perfectamente estar de acuerdo con la sugerencia de la embajadora. Y, por otro lado, en un segundo párrafo, en un subpárrafo (b), colocar la parte más específica que fue mencionada y creo que de esa manera podemos estar de acuerdo juntos, tanto lo que mencionó la embajadora del Reino Unido de la Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte como lo que la Secretaría propuso.

CHAIRPERSON

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, would that be agreeable?

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I am flexible; however, we will end up spending a lot of time negotiating on subparagraph (b) then, and indeed I do have some comments that I would like to add in.

Sr. Benito JIMÉNEZ SAUMA (México)

Es un poco complicado porque, si bien la idea de hacer la referencia al Informe de la reunión conjunta, llamaría la atención que se haga una referencia muy breve al Programa de Cooperación Técnica (PCT), mientras que otros temas que ya están reflejados en la reunión conjunta se desglosarían más y, realmente, muchas de las cosas que se mencionan sobre los otros temas también ya están contempladas en el Informe de la reunión conjunta y por lo que veo, creo que no agregan muchas cosas más.

Entonces, quizá lo que podríamos hacer es lo que propuso la Argentina de tener un párrafo basado en lo que mencionó el Reino Unido de la Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte. Quizá habría que hacer la mención específica al párrafo 10 del Informe de la reunión conjunta y en un segundo párrafo agregando en particular tales temas, y creo que la propuesta original de la Secretaría cubría bastante bien muchas de las preocupaciones que se señalaron en la discusión de hace un rato.

CHAIRPERSON

We will have two subparagraphs, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, so let us have your suggestions on subparagraph (b).

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

My first suggestion is in the first line of subparagraph (b) "efficient use", I would like to replace that with "effective". Then I would like to move down to the addition provided by Argentina "aimed at reviewing the percentages of distribution of Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) among regions", The Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees did conclude on that point, however, that was not the sole point of the strategic exercise. In fact, my understanding of the purpose of the strategic exercise is for Members to feed into the reimagining of the TCP and I would like to see some language about the reimagining of the TCP, because this is not just about reviewing allocation, it is also about completely reimagining the TCP. When we come to the evaluation under the next Agenda Item, we will see why that is so important.

Where it says, “Requested strategic exercise in consultation with Members aimed at” I would suggest “reimagining the TCP and including a review of the percentages”. That would be my second suggestion.

I would also like to include the point that we made during the Joint Meeting, as mentioned again by the European Union, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Canada, the Council did request information on the project allocation criteria that are used and it was not provided, and the Joint Meeting did indeed reiterate this request. I would hope that the Council could reiterate the request as well. Perhaps, before “and requested” we could add “and reiterated Council’s request for information on project resource allocation criteria”.

CHAIRPERSON

Is that it, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, or have you got some other suggestions as well?

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

No, that is it from me, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

I think at this stage, like I mentioned in the morning, we are going to have two more Sessions and the idea is to break now and reconvene at 18:00 hours. Then we have one Session and then another Session.

If we carry on now, it may happen, what happened during our first Session where we went well beyond 12:30 hours, when we should have adjourned, and that creates some other logistic and administrative problems.

What I suggest is we adjourn now, reconvene at 18:00 hours. and we take this Item forward. The meeting is adjourned.

The meeting was suspended from 17:34 to 18:00 hours

La séance est suspendue de 17 h 34 à 18 h 00

Se suspende la sesión de las 17.34 a las 18.00

CHAIRPERSON

Receiving comments on the conclusions, we will put the conclusions back on the screen.

Subparagraph (e) has been reformatted, taking into account the comments which were already made by various Members before we adjourned. Therefore, we can have a look at them now to see whether perhaps they are more acceptable, worded in this fashion, and broken down.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

The first thing is that we want to divide small subparagraph (e) into two parts, the first reimagining the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) and we end it there. That is the first part. That is “requested a strategic decision in consultation with Members aimed at reimagining the TCP”. The change that we intend to bring here is in relation to what was discussed in the Joint Meeting is “noting the need, not including... noting the need to review the percentage of distribution of TCP among regions”. I think that does justice to what was discussed at the Joint Meeting.

Mr Mario ARVELO (Dominican Republic)

During the break, I had a very interesting conversation with our Argentinian colleague, Ambassador Carlos Bernardo Cherniak. He has some good ideas, and I would like to hear those out in the open and then I will take the floor afterwards.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

La verdad es que les agradezco mucho la buena disponibilidad de haber reorganizado los párrafos con la intención de intentar buscar un acuerdo, pero claramente yo estaba pensando en una propuesta en base a lo que estaba en el programa. Yo voy a avanzar de todas maneras con lo que pensaba expresar.

En primer lugar, tengo tres aspectos para explicar. El primero, el concepto de “reimagining” adoptado en la Reunión Conjunta no fue en el contexto planteado por el Reino Unido de la Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte en su propuesta de texto. Fuera de ese contexto, reimaginar o “reimagining” el Programa de Cooperación Técnica (TCP) puede ser interpretado como una reforma amplia. Por lo tanto, propongo reformular el subpárrafo (c) copiando el párrafo 10 (e) de la Reunión Conjunta. Es decir, no creo que sea necesario que lo dicte, pero lo voy a leer igual. Entre comillas. Repito, párrafo 10(e) de la Reunión Conjunta.

Es decir, “encouraged the Organization to pursue”. Estoy hablando. Perdón, repito. Propongo reformular el subpárrafo (c) que tengo en la pantalla.

Subparagraph (c), which is on the screen, “encouraged the Organization to pursue its efforts to reimagine the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) in the context of the follow-up to the TCP evaluation, an audit with the aim of improving the leverage of TCP as a catalytic fund in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to attract additional extra budgetary funding”.

Requested the review of the percentages of distribution of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) among regions.

En segundo lugar, lo que está en amarillo debería ahora desaparecer. Perfecto. Sigamos con mi razonamiento, Presidente. En segundo lugar, la propuesta argentina que se desprende de las conclusiones de la Reunión Conjunta del Comité de Programa y lo expresado por varios Miembros de este Consejo es, concretamente, “revisar los porcentajes de distribución del Programa de Cooperación Técnica (TCP) entre regiones.” Esto también fue solicitado por la Conferencia Regional de América Latina y el Caribe. Y esto, además, Presidente, es un mandato de la Conferencia de la FAO de 2008, párrafo 35 C 2008/REP, medida 3.23. Por lo tanto, esta revisión debe ser independiente de cualquier otro proceso de revisión.

Por lo tanto, propongo un párrafo separado que lea en inglés. Y voy a hacerlo a velocidad de dictado. Luego, como subpárrafo (d) o como subpárrafo (e). Podría ser, el subpárrafo (e) después del subpárrafo (d) que está en pantalla. Puede ser subpárrafo (d) o subpárrafo (e), es lo mismo. No me preocupa el orden. Subpárrafo (e), perfecto. “Requested a strategic exercise, in consultation with Members, and refining and potentially...”.

Luego, un subpárrafo (f) que diga, en inglés a velocidad de dictado. O sea, tal cual como está en la última parte del subpárrafo (g) que está en pantalla. Exacto. “Refining and potentially unifying”. Exacto.

Por último, el actual subpárrafo (g), que está en la pantalla debería ser cancelado. Le pido por favor que lo ponga entre paréntesis. Nosotros sugerimos cancelarlo.

Por último, el actual subpárrafo (d), que fue propuesto por el Reino Unido de la Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte, lo considero redundante porque se repite con el actual subpárrafo (f). Por lo que, salvo que tenga algún valor agregado que yo no lo capto, pero quizás Sra. Marie-Therese Sarch nos pueda ayudar, propongo eliminarlo. O sea, eliminar el actual subpárrafo (d).

Una última cosa. El subpárrafo (g) se repite con el subpárrafo (e) y el subpárrafo (f), de alguna manera.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I can see that my colleague from Argentina has used a lot of the language that we used in the Joint Meeting Report and I would urge colleagues to just stick with subparagraph (a). I really think it is important. I do not think we can pick and choose the bits that we liked. If my colleague from Argentina wants to refer to the points, then I think we should use the entire subparagraphs from the Joint Meeting Report, not just to pick and choose the bits that we like the best. Therefore, I might stop there and see if we can perhaps agree to focus on subparagraph (a). If we cannot, then I will go through and pick out the relevant subparagraphs from the Joint Meeting Report that I would like to see used instead.

Sr. Mario ARVELO (República Dominicana)

En efecto, la intervención del embajador de Argentina resultó muy útil. Nosotros, como Consejo, es la opinión de mi Delegación, debemos tener miras, debemos tener una visión más amplia que de la Reunión Conjunta hasta el día de hoy porque hay veces que no sé si lo que estamos haciendo en el Consejo, en algunos momentos, es un Comité de Redacción y de “copiar y pegar” y de referenciar lo que sucede en el Comité del Programa, en el Comité de Finanzas, en la Reunión Conjunta.

Vamos a tener, Presidente, de alguna manera reclutar a todos los Membros del Consejo que participemos como Observadores allí en los Comités del Programa, Finanzas y Reunión Conjunta. Luego nos pasemos la semana subsiguiente estudiando con un profesor, lectura comprensiva para aprendernos de memoria todo el lenguaje. Hay que ver un poco más allá. ¿De dónde viene todo esto? Hay que hacer un poco de historia, Presidente, rápidamente. El Programa de Cooperación Técnica (PCT) se instauró en 1976 y fue revisado por primera vez en 1987. De esa primera revisión salió, usted se recuerda perfectamente, los Planes a plazo medio y la fijación de prioridades. En 2005, hubo una evaluación temática específica sobre el Programa de Cooperación Técnica y en 2007 vino la Evaluación Externa Independiente, que fue una iniciativa de Reino Unido de la Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte, el embajador Anthony Beattie, que en paz descanse, falleció hace algunos años.

Entonces, todas esas revisiones del PCT, ¿qué decían? Usted lo recuerda bien, Presidente, porque usted era Subdirector General y manejó todos estos documentos. El PCT es, justamente, un programa que da valor y utiliza las ventajas comparativas de la FAO, que es clave para promover la descentralización, que las discusiones sobre la falsa dicotomía de trabajo normativo y trabajo operacional quedaban destruidas por los hallazgos de los evaluadores cuando se daban cuenta de que justamente es el Programa de Cooperación Técnica el que traduce lo normativo en operacional. Y, la conclusión de todos los estudios que se han hecho es que el PCT debe continuar siendo un programa impulsado por la demanda.

Entonces, un programa flexible donde la autoridad se debe delegar al representante regional y a la Red Descentralizada en general, siempre sometido, por supuesto, a ser auditado *ex post* y a ser evaluado.

Dicho todo eso, Presidente, cuando fuimos a la pausa teníamos una sopa de letras que realmente me resultaba muy difícil desentrañar y entender. Tuve que consultar con algunos colegas en la pausa y, ahí encuentro que, en la consulta con el embajador de Argentina se presentan estos elementos que le dan claridad, le dan alcance no a lo que se debatió en el análisis de las evaluaciones de hace 40 años, de hace 30 o 20 años. O lo que se debatió en la Reunión Conjunta, sino lo que se debatió aquí en el Consejo, en el 165.º período de sesiones.

El Programa de Cooperación Técnica (PCT), como dicen todos los estudios, es la espina dorsal de esta Organización. La FAO existe porque existe el PCT y con la desaparición de éste o el debilitamiento de éste desaparece también la FAO. Entonces, nos parece que lo que plantea el embajador de Argentina tiene mucho sentido y estaríamos en disposición, a pesar de que todavía está todo esto largo, pero, lo que vemos en pantalla nos parece que es un salto adelante y, como usted, querría escuchar lo que dicen otros colegas, pero no queremos que se complique esta situación y vamos a estar aquí para defender y proteger el PCT cueste lo que cueste.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Thanking my esteemed colleague from the Dominican Republic too for giving us the historical and other background of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), and especially for the reason he mentioned in his last sentence, that we should not get bogged down in difficult discussions. I really would like to support the suggestion of our British colleague and just either leave it with subparagraph (a), endorse the Joint Meetings, observations, and recommendations on the TCP or to use the whole subparagraph of the Joint Statement on Technical Cooperation Programme. I think that would save us a lot of time and, looking at the watch, I think time management and time efficiency is now also a priority. Therefore, I would support the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Mr Mounqui MEDI (Cameroon)

The first thing I have to apply is that we are discussing the Report of the Joint Meeting, we are not discussing any other Report. When we come to those discussions, then we might bring issues that

relate to those Reports. Here we are discussing the Joint Meeting Report, and the Joint Meeting Report was clear enough in that sense on this discussion on the Technical Cooperation Programme. At the discussion, I followed systematically the Joint Meeting, and I knew what was said, and the conclusions in the Report to reflect what was discussed. That is the first thing.

The second thing is that I listened also to all the statements today, so some of the issues that we are bringing here were not mentioned in those statements. What I would really encourage us is that to avoid long... Because we are not agreed here, and you know me perfectly that my intention is always to bring issues that will not divide the Council.

Let us work not to divide the Council at this point, because we never agreed on some of the additions there. Many people will not agree. To keep it open to any other discussion later on, I will also go with the suggestion by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, that we have only one subparagraph, recommending the endorsement of the Report of the Joint Meeting on the Technical Cooperation Programme Item. This is what I would suggest so that we do not really get bogged down to endless discussions. I can assure you if we go there, we will never agree today. Therefore, I will go along with the suggestion of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It was a very clever suggestion, a wise one, I presume, and then we can go along with it.

CHAIRPERSON

I agree that the discussion and agreement on this issue would not be an easy one. Referring to the Dominican Republic's comment about the history and then suggest the saying perhaps. I also know the history. I was there when the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) was established and you do not know how long it took to agree on the establishment of the TCP. It was a fight to the bitter end. It is a very sensitive issue, and I would go along with the suggestion if there is agreement on various issues on the Joint Meeting Report.

Therefore, why do we hesitate to say the Council endorses the Joint Meeting's observations and recommendations on the Technical Cooperation Programme? All these points are stated in the Joint Meeting Report. What is our point of disagreement in going along that route so that we can agree and move forward? If we start negotiating on these, I tend to agree with my colleague from Cameroon, we will be stuck on this item or these few paragraphs for the rest of the Session.

Apart from any other comments that you have, please address this issue as well. If you feel paragraph 1 needs to be expanded in a little way, let us have that but, for me endorsing the Report of the Joint Meeting, and the Joint Meeting is a meeting which is supposed to assist the Council to facilitate its work. The Joint Meeting Report has been agreed, there was consensus on it, and it is a report, really, which was the Finance Committee and Programme Committee getting together to discuss this. I give the floor to Mexico.

Sr. Benito JIMÉNEZ SAUMA (México)

El Programa de Cooperación Técnica (PCT), como todos sabemos, siempre levanta pasiones en todos nosotros y creo que está bien. Es un tema que nos importa. La verdad es que durante la pausa había pensado algunos cambios que van en línea con lo propuesto por Argentina y estoy de acuerdo con ello.

Sin embargo, respondiendo a su pregunta, la cuestión aquí es que, si ponemos solo lo que está en el subpárrafo (a) actualmente, habría que hacer lo mismo con el resto de los otros temas para equilibrar esta resolución, y si vamos por esa ruta, pues, lo podemos hacer fácilmente.

Es decir, ir por la propuesta del Reino Unido de Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte de simplificar y simplemente endosar las recomendaciones de la Reunión Conjunta sobre el Programa de Cooperación Técnica (PCT), pero también habría que hacer exactamente lo mismo sobre los otros temas, es decir, la cuestión del saldo no utilizado, de las consultas para el Código de Conducta para el Director General y para la cuestión de abuso y acoso sexual. Habría que hacerlo de la misma manera para que el texto quede equilibrado.

De otra manera, también podríamos ir por la opción que mencionó el Reino Unido de la Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte, de cortar y pegar el párrafo 10 de la Reunión Conjunta en su totalidad.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I support the Mexican proposal and I thank Mexico for it. We could make this Item very quick, couldn't we? Thank you. My understanding of his proposal is that we do this for the whole Joint Meeting, which I am very content with.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

I can support the proposal made by our Mexican colleague, and of course, I am in line with what has been said by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Germany and Cameroon and by you, Chairperson. We have to close, otherwise we will remain until tomorrow.

Ms Pernilla IVARSSON (Sweden)

We would go along with your proposal, which is also I think the proposal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Germany, now Italy, and Cameroon and Mexico.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Toda la construcción de la propuesta superadora que yo hice era por el planteo del Reino Unido de la Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte. Si el Reino Unido de la Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte está dispuesto a aceptar la sugerencia de México de incluir en forma equilibrada todo el texto de la Reunión Conjunta, nosotros estamos absolutamente de acuerdo. No somos nosotros los que, en general, tenemos posiciones no flexibles. Al contrario, lo único que no queremos es que esté desbalanceado el report y creo que la sugerencia de México permite que esté equilibrado el Informe. Así que, de parte nuestra, estamos absolutamente de acuerdo.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Just to also lend our support to the proposal made by Mexico. We were also fine with going along with the previous proposal that was based on the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Cameroon and Germany, but we can also accept the Mexican proposal. And I do not think that in the discussions today there was anything that went beyond what was in the recommended by the Joint Meeting. I think we were just reiterating and emphasizing points that have not been discussed in separate Agenda items.

Mr Toru HISAZOME (Japan)

I would like to express my full support to the proposal by Mexico. That is a very good and effective way to solve the problems in a comprehensive way.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

The second proposal is a very good one. We support it.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Simplemente manifestar nuestro acuerdo con la propuesta de Alemania, México y del Reino Unido de la Gran Bretaña e Irlanda del Norte.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

We are happy to go along with the Mexican proposal. I just would like to add one subparagraph at the end, but I do not know whether I should come back later or whether we should include that now. Could you give me guidance, Mr. Chairperson?

CHAIRPERSON

Would it be separate paragraph or attached?

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Under 1. (b), therefore, a new 1. (c).

CHAIRPERSON

Okay, let us see the proposal.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

The proposal is “urged FAO to reduce the number of Agenda items for virtual sessions” and then subparagraph (d) follows.

CHAIRPERSON

I support that proposal.

Sr. Mario ARVELO (República Dominicana)

Como habíamos tenido una intervención de tan largo aliento hace unos momentos, estamos interviniendo ahora para manifestar nuestro aprecio al colega Benito Jiménez, de México, y nuestro apoyo a la vía de solución que ha planteado y nos unimos, entonces, al consenso que, entendemos, que se está formando alrededor de ella.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

We also support what has been in front of us, but I have a question of clarification regarding the new proposal regarding the Agenda for virtual meetings proposed by His Excellency, Ambassador of Germany. This is the intention for only the Joint Meeting items or all the items of the Council? Because if this is for the Joint Meeting, okay, it is fine with us to support this, but if His Excellency, Ambassador of Germany, is speaking about all the items of the Council, I think this is not the perfect place to add this comment.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

I was reflecting on the proposal of Germany. There is some logic behind it. Nevertheless, I understand that you support it, but it might be very difficult to insert it here. Firstly, because it was not discussed, and secondly, because the Agenda of any session, be it the Programme Committee or the Finance Committee or the Joint Meeting, is a provisional Agenda, which is adopted by the Committee itself. A provisional Agenda is prepared with the Chairperson of that Committee. Therefore, I think everything comes down to what the Chairperson would like to do, in consultation with the Members. It might be a little difficult for us to insert it here for those two reasons.

CHAIRPERSON

No, Cameroon, when I said I agree, I was not suggesting where it should be. My agreement, and that is based on my experience ever since it became virtual, the Council and not only the Council, other virtual meetings. My support was for reducing as to which place we should put it that we can discuss and it is for Members.

My agreement or support is for these Agenda items to be reduced and, in fact, we did it for the Programme Committee. The Agenda is not drafted by the Chairperson of the Committee, it is drafted by the Director-General in consultation with the Chairperson. Therefore, the first proposal comes from the Director-General, but that is irrelevant, it is going off track.

My support for the German proposal was reducing these Agenda items. As to where it should be, it is now for Members to decide.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I partly speak here also in my capacity as President of the World Food Programme Executive Board, where we had the same issue to discuss and we decided that indeed, the reduction of the number of Agenda items per day is something that is indispensable. It is then perhaps to consider to extend the length of the Council Sessions, or Conference Sessions in the future. We have to bear in mind that a virtual meeting is much more exhausting and tends to last much longer.

However, I understand the point that my Egyptian colleague made, and it is a valid point. I agree. Since we are talking here about the Report of the Joint Meeting, it would of course, only apply to Joint Meeting measures. I am totally flexible. I agree that it is a general point, and it refers, of course, to the whole session in a way. I am open if you have a suggestion where it would fit better. I did not find a better place in the agenda. If we do not find a better place, than we would like to keep it here, but I am open to suggestions.

CHAIRPERSON

In fact, during the half an hour when we adjourned the Meeting, I was talking to my colleagues just on that issue. I know exactly when the Council's duration was reduced, the Conference's duration was reduced. They used to be much longer in the old days, and it was all streamlined. Even the Committees, both the Finance and Programme Committees, durations were reduced.

I was saying to my colleagues with these virtual meetings, I was going to take this matter up in my monthly meetings with the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups on the question of the procedures of the Council and its Committees, like the Finance and Programme Committees, that they would have to go back to the old system of the Council. The Council was not one week. It became one week because the whole Organization and deliberations were different.

We have seen how long it takes to agree on the conclusions in a virtual meeting. That is another issue, which I can understand putting the conclusions on the screen because in the old days, before the reform process, the conclusions were not like this.

After the reform when they changed the mandate of the Independent Chairperson of the Council, the conclusions had become what they are, and Members have consistently said. Although I used to draw attention to this fact that we are becoming like a Drafting Committee, Members always intervene to say they want to negotiate in the Plenary, not in a small group. That is why we are here. It takes longer to agree on the conclusions, and I can understand.

That is why it was my proposal to put it on the screen because the conclusions are lengthier and lengthier, and it is not easy for Members to react if the Chairperson just reads them out. I agree with you. If we stick to this process of virtual meetings, and these type of Agenda items, the Members have to go back and look at the duration of all the meetings, not just the Council, because we face this problem in the Programme Committee.

Last time, the Council actually gave guidance that we should have a look at the items on the Agenda of the Programme Committee. The Agenda of the Programme Committee was cut because the Council gave that guidance. Now I think the time has come to look at issues like the duration of the Council, the Finance Committee, the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) and the Programme Committee.

In the old days, the Conference was much longer than it is today. These virtual meetings, I entirely agree with Germany, it has to be an item which has to be discussed by Members and different set of procedures and which would affect duration as well to be worked out. But as to where this should go, one option could be to put it under the Item which deals with the Working Methods of the Council.

We have a standing item even in my informal meetings with the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups on the working methods. This could be one issue which I could take up at these meetings and report back to; my Informal Meetings are not a decision-making group, but its discussions and conclusions facilitate discussions in the Finance Committee, in the Programme Committee, in the Joint Meeting, and perhaps even in the Council.

One way would be to take it up under the standing Item, which I have in my meetings, the Working Methods, and to discuss all aspects of this issue in that Meeting. I do rely on Members to give their views and come to a decision.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

No voy a entrar en la discusión sobre esta sugerencia de Alemania, pues, la verdad no estoy convencido. Todavía estoy analizándola, pero sí quiero hacerle una consulta y le pido expresamente que haga esta consulta a la Secretaría, Presidente. La pido por favor que me permita transmitir una preocupación que tengo.

Con respecto a todo este subpárrafo (a), yo me pregunto, ¿cómo se haría en este caso el seguimiento de las decisiones adoptadas por el 165° Período de Sesiones de Consejo en lo que se refiere a este punto de agenda. ¿Tomaríamos directamente las decisiones de la Reunión Conjunta, las haríamos propias y las vamos a monitorear en el 166.º período de sesiones del Consejo con un cuadro como

hacemos en todas las sesiones? Por ejemplo, el tema que nos preocupaba a nosotros, Presidente, ¿cómo hacemos el seguimiento de que se va a revisar el Programa de Cooperación Técnica (PCT)?

Por ejemplo, ahora en el Ítem 16 del programa, estudiamos detalladamente el Estado de aplicación de las decisiones del 164.º período de sesiones del Consejo. Entonces, yo lo que le pido, Presidente, es que estoy muy contento con que hayamos logrado un consenso y creo que todos hemos puesto flexibilidad y está muy bien, pero lo que me gustaría es que la Secretaría pueda explicarnos cómo puede resolverse esto técnicamente. Me refiero específicamente al *follow-up* del contenido de este punto. Ésta es mi primera intervención. De acuerdo a la respuesta de la Secretaría, en todo caso ahí debíamos quizás hacer una propuesta de algún *wording* para estar todos tranquilos que todo lo que aquí hemos consensuado obviamente se apropia la propia FAO y tendremos la capacidad de hacer el *follow-up*.

CHAIRPERSON

On your first question, let me perhaps ask Mr Rakesh Muthoo, Secretary-General of the Council, whether he can assist us in answering your first question. Mr Muthoo, you have the floor.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Indeed, if the Council was to adopt the text that is in front of you under 1 (a), at the moment, the understanding for the Secretariat would be to follow up the implementation of any action points within the Joint Meeting Report, as if they are Council decisions. Thereby, for the next time when we have the status of implementation of decisions taken by the 165th Session of the Council, it would include the whole compendium of action points which are in the Joint Meeting Report with regard to the points that have been outlined in subparagraph (a) here and specifically for example, on the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP). There is one specific request from the Joint Meeting for review of percentages of distribution of TCP amongst regions and a recommendation that the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees review this at their next Session. That will automatically be the decision of the Council now at the 165th Session and reported upon therefore at its 166th Session in that manner.

CHAIRPERSON

Before I give the floor to other speakers, Argentina may I have your reaction to what you have just heard?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Una reacción muy positiva a lo expresado por el Sr. Rakesh Muthoo. Lo único que quiero saber y ahí sí también le pido permiso a usted, Presidente, si no sería necesario, o sea, si esto se presume o tenemos que agregar algún párrafo específico que diga que “Assume as its own the decisions adopted in Paragraphs XXX for the purpose of monitoring and follow up is...”, es decir, quiero saber si no es necesario para la Secretaría, yo me quedo tranquilo, pero si no estamos todos tranquilos deberíamos poner algún párrafo. Por supuesto, es importante lo que dicen mis colegas, era solo para clarificar esta cuestión.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I wanted actually to go back down. But now that I see here the language inserted in subparagraph (a), would it not be correct to say and looked forward to the “reporting on the status of implementation of any related recommendations in the established manner” because the Joint Meeting, if we then could go down, please. The question where to put this subparagraph (c), and the urging the reduction of the number of Agenda items for virtual sessions.

My colleagues here indicated to me that Item 18, perhaps Agenda Item 18, *Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2020-2022*, might be a good location where to put this subparagraph in a more general sense, that applies basically, not only to the Report of the Joint Meeting, not only to Joint Meeting Sessions, but to more generally to all Sessions of FAO in a virtual working mode. I just wanted to submit this suggestion and if that finds agreement, then of course, we could spare it here, then we would not need this language here in this Report.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Germany, the Item you are referring to, *the Calendar of Meetings*, is really a schedule of meetings. Perhaps it may be better under the Item of the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW) of the Council. Because the Calendar is just giving when a particular meeting is taking place.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

We are in your hands. Yes. What should be the best place to decide that?

CHAIRPERSON

One option is that and the Council could provide guidance like it did on the Programme Committee issue. Asking the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) to take it up with the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups and then pass it to the Finance and Programme Committees and back to the Council with proposals. It is up to you, but I think it would be better under the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) of the Council.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Wonderful, then we take it under Item 15 with the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW).

CHAIRPERSON

With these, I still have some speakers.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I would like to thank Ambassador of Germany for proposing this and I feel that we are asking, as Members of the Council, to reduce the numbers of the items of the incoming sessions of the Council. I think that the best and the proper Agenda Item is *the Tentative Agenda for the 166th Session of the Council* in April 2021, because I think in April, we will have also the same format of meeting, which will be also virtual unfortunately, given the continuing circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is a proposal, but we are in your hands, Mr Chairperson. However, I take this opportunity to highlight or underline something. Unfortunately, we found ourselves in this unfortunate and proper situation and right now, we are asking the Management to reduce the number of the items that will be discussed. Always we are blaming and putting the burden on the FAO Management. Unfortunately, we have to blame ourselves or the Members of the Council, because some Members, unfortunately, take a lot of time to negotiate and put long proposals and they know from the beginning that it is not agreed language, and it will not move forward and will take a lot of time. I would like to, once again, urge myself and all the distinguished delegates of the Council to be more concise, more focused, and to stick to the agreed language.

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

I thank the flexibility of the Ambassador of Germany on how to handle this matter. However, I have never been here and seen a substantive modification of the procedures being done by a Governing Body itself.

I recall perfectly, historically, what the modification we have done in World Food Programme (WFP) to streamline and the meetings and the volume of documents and so on, we created a governance structure, which was at that time chaired by the Ambassador of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. That is when we have at three days of some Sessions, three days of the two Sessions in four days to five days of the administration and we streamline the pages of the document.

We did the same in effect, we created a governing small structure that will reflect on that and I believe that if we want to streamline such a thing and we did that also in, mind you, the reform, the 2008 Reform, was driven by the Members, and it took so many decisions, including with the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP). I believe that if we want to handle this issue, let us discuss it not in the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) of the Council, that we discuss it in the working methods of the Council with the understanding that the ICC will take that off as an assignment.

However, here, we cannot just put a sentence in one Report and feel that it would resolve the issue. No, we should not, let us discuss that under the Item the Working Methods of the Council, including the Technical Committees of the Council.

CHAIRPERSON

That was one of my options, which I said it could be under the working methods of the Council. I even suggested that the Council may wish to give guidance like it did the last time, because it spent too much time on the Report of the Programme Committee and felt there were too many items. It should be looked at whether the Agenda could be reduced, and the guidance was that the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) should discuss this with the Regional Groups in the monthly meetings.

Then, the matter went to the official Governing Bodies and they adjusted the Agenda. Therefore, I suggested one of the things could be the Council may ask the ICC to discuss it in these monthly meetings with the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups.

Now, let me tell you that the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons is not limited to the seven Regional Groups. In this monthly meeting, there is also the Chairperson of the Programme Committee, the Finance Committee, the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM), the European Union, apart from European Regional Group (ERG), the Nordic Group, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Group, the G77 and China group; it is quite a vast group, but it has always been known as the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups in the Informal Meeting.

The option I suggested, but it is up to Members, whether they want to give it to the ICC to discuss it with this group. Then, it follows its way back through the official Governing Bodies, back to the Council. I agree that is one option.

Sr. Benito JIMÉNEZ SAUMA (México)

Dos temas. Uno, sobre el lenguaje para el Informe de la reunión conjunta, no estoy de acuerdo con la propuesta. La verdad tengo un poco de ansiedad en que el tema sigue abierto. Quizás lo ideal sería cerrar esta parte del Informe de la reunión conjunta y concentrarnos en la idea que propuso Alemania a nombre de la Unión Europea sobre reducir los temas de la agenda porque creo que ya quedamos claros que no habría que incluirlos aquí. Y por eso, hasta el momento, todos creo que, en principio, están de acuerdo con la propuesta. No he escuchado a nadie que quiera meter más temas en la agenda. Creo que hay consenso sobre ello y lo que tenemos que discutir es dónde lo vamos a reflejar.

Creo, que sería bajo el tema de métodos de trabajo del Consejo, sin embargo, acabo de revisar la agenda y no forma parte de la agenda de trabajo de esta sesión del Consejo. Si recuerdo bien, cuando ese tema ha sido incluido ha estado bajo otros temas, no como un tema pleno de la agenda. El problema es que, si lo dejamos como otros temas, los Comités de Finanzas, del Programa y la reunión conjunta no tendrían ese mandato formal para considerar reducir sus temas en la agenda.

Entonces, creo que habría que ver dónde lo insertamos. Puede ser en el [XX] o donde sea, pero creo que tenemos un buen consenso en que queremos reducir la agenda. Nadie se ha opuesto a ello y solo nos falta decidir dónde vamos a indicar esa directiva.

CHAIRPERSON

I think the working methods, you are right, it is under *Any Other Matters* on the Agenda. I give the floor to Germany followed by Kuwait.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Thank you to Mr Benito Jiménez Sauma from Mexico for trying to clarify this matter. We are completely flexible where to take it up, whether it is under Item 15, *Council Multi-year Programme of Work 2021-2024*, Item 20, *Tentative Agenda for the 166th Session of the Council (April 2021)*, or, Item 21, *Any Other Matters*, we should not make it too complicated.

It is most important that the language that was suggested by Members and deliberated by the Secretary-General of the Council is maintained so that we can use it. Following such a decision we

could also include a request to the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) to take this up, as a follow-up on our decision, in the form of the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups meetings and the other groups that you mentioned.

Therefore, we can move on as we are all in agreement, and we are open to guidance from the ICC and the Council Secretariat on where best to place this. At present, this should not be a matter of further discussion.

Mr Yousef JUHAIL (Kuwait)

I completely agree with the Representative of Egypt, it all comes back to us as Members, whether it is put at the top or at the bottom. It actually took us more than 30 minutes to discuss this single Item on wanting to shorten and not extend meetings. However, I would like to listen to the Chairperson of the Programme Committee's suggestions on where it should go and on how to schedule the meetings, be it Council or any other Committee.

CHAIRPERSON

I wanted to give the floor to the Chairperson of the Programme Committee, because I saw he had asked for the floor, but I wanted to give the floor to Members first and then the Observers. Therefore, now that the Members have all spoken, I give the floor to the Chairperson of the Programme Committee.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of Programme Committee)

All the elements for a good decision of the Council are on the table. We have to be very careful, as we have to look like Members to the Council itself. The agenda-setting that was mentioned by the distinguished delegate of Egypt is that the Director-General puts forward proposals for the Agenda in consultation with the Chairperson of the specific Committee. Nevertheless, at the beginning of every meeting it is Members that approve the Agenda. At this stage certainly the decision could be taken whether or not the Agenda is too long or more time is needed. However, your proposal was very good.

Based on the experience with the Programme Committee and on the decision of the last Council, we discussed the matter in the Informal Meetings of the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) with the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups and Chairpersons of the Council Committees, and we came forward with a reduced agenda in addition to a reordering of Agenda items, which made it possible to finish even before time.

It is important to do both actions: look at the length of the Agenda and the number of the Agenda items, and the duration of the meeting. The best setting would be in the Informal Meeting, as proposed by the ICC. Let us join forces, work out concrete proposals for the next Council Meeting and in the meantime, we can certainly start looking at the Agendas and duration of each of the Committees' meetings.

CHAIRPERSON

Therefore, I think we can take this up when we come to *Any Other Matters*. Therefore, may we conclude on this Item and move forward because it is already 19:00.

The wording which is on the screen of subparagraph (a), then there is subparagraph (b) and (d). Can we agree on this and move forward?

I see no requests, so that means Members are in agreement. This Item is closed.

Item 10. Report of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee (9-13 November 2020)

Point 10. Rapport de la cent vingt-neuvième session du Comité du Programme (9-13 novembre 2020)

Tema 10. Informe del 129.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa (9-13 de noviembre de 2020)

(CL 165/10)

CHAIRPERSON

We move to the next Item. The next Item 10 is the *Report of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee (9-13 November)*. Please ensure that document *CL165/10* is before you.

The Programme Committee at its 129th Session discussed items on the Outline of the Strategic Framework and the Outline of the Medium Term Plan and the Hand-in-Hand Initiative. However, these items have been addressed under relevant stand-alone Items 3 and 6 and therefore will not be discussed under this Agenda Item. The introduction by Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen, Chairperson of the Programme Committee, has been circulated to you.

Introduction to Item 10: Report of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee (9-13 November 2020)

Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen, Chairperson of the Programme Committee

The 129th Session of the Programme Committee was held from 9 to 13 November 2020 and its Report is submitted to the Council in document *CL 165/10*.

The Programme Committee had twenty items on its Agenda, including eight items for information. The session was conducted virtually on an exceptional basis due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It had excellent substantive discussion in a positive and constructive way.

The Programme Committee discussed the *Outline of the Strategic Framework (2021-31)* and *Outline of the Medium Term Plan 2022-25* at length. Members of the Committee appreciated the inclusive consultation process to date, and the reflection of inputs from Members, welcomed the focus on a food systems approach and the strategic narrative of “Leaving No One Behind through sustainable, inclusive and resilient food systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life” to support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and FAO’s three Global Goals, and looked forward to further formal and informal consultations with Members for its elaboration.

On the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, the Programme Committee recognized its substantial progress, welcomed the flexible and innovative matchmaking approach to building multidimensional partnerships that strengthen mobilization of means of implementation, and noted with appreciation the transparent approach to monitoring performance for the multi-partner Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

The Programme Committee requested the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture to develop a framework on the basis of the recommended practices related to the digital food and agriculture for Members’ consideration through FAO Governing Bodies processes, following the review of the Terms of Reference by the Council.

The Programme Committee reviewed and discussed four evaluation items: the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations and the Indicative Rolling Work Plan of Evaluations 2021-2023.

Under *Any Other Matters*, Members requested to discuss multilingualism, and they expressed concern about the delay in publication of documents in all Committee languages and agreed that for future sessions, the Committee will adhere to the rule that documents which are not published in all Committee languages by the established deadline will not be considered at the meeting.

The Programme Committee was also informed of extensive and detailed information on topics such as the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 and FAO’s work in food systems, FAO’s response to the Desert Locust upsurge and Fall Armyworm, FAO’s Gender Action Plan and the draft Nutrition Strategy.

CHAIRPERSON

I now open the floor for the Members to make their comments. The floor is open.

Mr Laith OBEIDAT (Jordan)

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of the Near East Group in order to convey our input and views on this Item.

At the outset, the Country Programming Framework (CPF), we welcome the more coordinated approach between FAO and other United Nations (UN) Agencies at country level through strong government involvement on implementation, monitoring and evaluation for FAO's CPF. We recognize that FAO's new CPF guidelines are fully in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and we underline the need that the new Strategic Framework should similarly use Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets and indicators which will allow for promoting focus and tracking progress seamlessly at all levels.

Regarding the Food Systems Summit (FSS) 2021, we welcome the United Nations Secretary-General's decision to hold the pre-Summit in Rome, and appreciate the engagement held so far, including the Informal Rome-based membership Group of Friends to the FSS 2021. At the same time, we call FAO for more regular updates and engagements with Members on this matter. We recognize FAO's role in the preparatory process and in providing technical and scientific input for the Summit. We reiterate the need for a science- and evidence-based approach for this Summit, and at the same time we recognize the important role of trade, market access, and the importance of sustainable and integrated approaches that should be highlighted in the FSS. We welcome FAO's work through the Food Safety Division which provides a basis for strengthening the coordination of inputs to the Food Systems Summit and ensuring that the Organization is well placed to support post-Summit implementation through its new Strategic Framework.

The Desert Locust upsurge and Fall Armyworm are unexpected phenomena we are dealing with at the moment, and we welcome the launch of the Desert Locust Global Response Plan and the FAO Global Action for Fall Armyworm Control. At the same time, we recognize the need for the establishment of global coordination mechanisms to scale up technical support in affected areas. We welcome FAO's continued response beyond 2020 to combat these transboundary plant pests and diseases.

On the Terms of Reference of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture, the Near East Group took note of the progress made towards the development of the Terms of Reference of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture. However, we highlight the need that the Terms of Reference set out its work on all food and agriculture sectors including livestock and aquaculture. It is imperative to us to emphasize the importance of issues related to digital technology applications and data including management, data protection, intellectual property rights, and privacy and ask that they be included in the plan of action. We support the request asking for the platform to develop a framework on the basis of the recommended practices related to the digital food and agriculture for Members' consideration through FAO Governing Body processes, following the review of the Terms of Reference by the Council.

The Near East Group supports the work of the platform and the need to strengthen governance through the involvement of Permanent Representatives to FAO and Regional Development banks. We believe that the Platform is an important tool that will aid small, medium-sized producers, and family farmers build their capacities and have the help of technology and new innovations at their fingertips.

With regards to the Evaluation of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), the Near East Group welcomes and reaffirms the complementary role of TCP in FAO's efforts for improving the technical capacity projects based on country's specific needs, and we encourage FAO to continue streamlining the TCP project and refine the resource allocation beyond the criteria of per capita income based on its mission of "No One Left Behind". In order to make TCP more efficient and accessible based on country's needs and situations, we fully support FAO's Technical Cooperation Program considering the special technical needs of developing, conflict-affected and food deficient countries.

With regards to the Evaluation of FAO's support to Zero Hunger (SDG 2) the Group agrees with the recommendations, but we see that it is necessary for FAO to take actions that will enhance capacities at country level due to the unsatisfactory levels of capacities present at the moment. Improving knowledge sharing and boosting operational capacities to assist countries should be at the centre of FAO's focus. Therefore, we appreciate the ongoing efforts to improve regional and sub-regional structures. We also welcome FAO's efforts in strengthening decentralized administrative and operational capacities through delegation of authority and improving skill mix. The Group sees that it is important for alignment with the implementation of the repositioning of the UN Development System and to take advantage of the opportunities that arise in order to give it the needed capacity to

support Members' pursuit of achieving SDG2 Targets and further boosting the Organization's work at country level. Local contexts should be taken into account due to their vitality and FAO's global approaches should be tailored as such, via better knowledge sharing in a participatory and horizontal manner.

Finally, we welcome FAO's Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and we encourage FAO to emphasize long-term strategic partnerships with the CSOs. We recognize the importance of the contribution of CSOs in FAO's work at global, regional and country levels. At the same time, this collaboration should be based on a more creative approach.

I end my remarks by saying that on behalf of Jordan and the Near East Group, we endorse the Report of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee.

Ms Baoying ZHU (China) (Original language Chinese)

China will deliver this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We thank the Chairperson of the Programme Committee, its Members and the Secretariat for the Report of the deliberation of many important matters. We welcome the more coordinated approach between FAO and other UN Agencies at country level, through strengthening the governance and oversight of FAO's Country Programming Framework (CPF).

We noted that FAO's new CPF guidelines are fully in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. On this note, we echo the Committee's emphasis on the importance of accountability mechanisms and FAO's Governing Bodies oversight at the country level. We underline that a strong government involvement in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the CPF as well as in preparation, implementation and the follow-up of the Common Country Analysis.

On the Evaluation of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), we welcome the reaffirmation of the complimentary rules of TCP to FAO's normative work through the provision of technical capacity programme based on country-specific needs. Recognising this importance, we call for FAO to continue streamlining the Technical Cooperation Programme cycle and the approval procedures, and to refine the resource allocation beyond the criteria of per capita income to make Technical Cooperation Programme more efficient and accessible.

We also welcome the second phase of the Evaluation of FAO's support to Zero Hunger, in particular the recommendation to identify tangible actions, to enhance capacities at country level. The Asia Group is so diverse that a tailored approach to local context is crucial to improve knowledge sharing and provide vital assistance. To achieve this in the context of zero nominal growth, we support deeper partnerships with various stakeholders and the use of South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

On the Evaluation of FAO's Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Asia Group recognises the important contribution of CSOs in FAO's work at global, regional and country levels, and supports FAO to emphasize our long-term strategy partnership with the CSOs. We echo the call for the strategy to continue guiding this partnership based on equality, trust, inclusion and mutual benefits. FAO should also explore creative ways for its partnerships with CSOs especially at the country level to streamline partnership processes and promote shared value collaborations.

On the Food Systems Summit 2021, we recognise the substantive role FAO plays in the preparation process and in providing technical and strategic input for the Summit. As such, we welcome the UN Secretary-General decision to hold the pre-summit in Rome and appreciate the engagement so far. Including other Informal Group of Friends of the Food Systems Summit. The Asia Group is committed to support this preparation process towards a successful Summit and calls for more regular updates on the engagements with Members on this matter.

Finally, we welcome the draft Strategy and Vision for FAO's Work in Nutrition, including its accountability framework and implementation plan. We support the Programme Committee's various recommendations to further strengthening the draft. However, we would like to stress the importance to consider diverse contextual realities in the implementation of the Strategy across regions and countries. We also noted the ongoing negotiations of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) Voluntary Guidelines on food systems and nutrition as one of the potential tools to support the

implementation of the Nutrition Strategy, as well as an important input to the UN Food System Summit, along with other relevant and CFS-agreed products. With these comments, the Asia Group endorses the Report of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee.

China encourages FAO to further strengthen close cooperation with the governments of Member States in the joint formulation of Country Programming Frameworks and to strengthen its leadership and supervision of the work at country level. The Report on the Evaluation of FAO's Technical Corporation Programme (TCP) affirms the important value of the TCP, provides a comprehensive evaluation of its effectiveness since its implementation, and puts forward constructive suggestions and recommendations. We welcome the Evaluation Report and acknowledge its constructive suggestions such as improving the strategic nature of the TCP to render it a powerful tool for FAO and increase in the number and proportion TCP projects with a catalytic effect.

China supports the hosting of the UN Food Systems Summit and the important role. As we take the floor on behalf of the Regional Group now, we go the conclusions, we support the focus in the Programme Committee's Report on multilingualism, which is an important condition for full participation of all Members. We request FAO to ensure that multilingualism is fully reflected in this work and encourage them to take up with practical and physical action plans.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States.

We welcome the comprehensive Evaluation of FAO's support to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, and Management's acceptance of all the Evaluation's recommendations, particularly the need to focus more on nutrition, biodiversity and ecosystem conservation and to continue the implementation of the Ten Elements of Agroecology. Finally, we support the recommendation made in the document that FAO should rely more on the voluntary guidelines produced by the Organization, as well as the agreed products of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

With regard to the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture, we note with satisfaction that the missions and objectives have been refined and now refer to the importance of reducing the digital gap. We support the recommendation that the Platform should seek to work in synergy with other initiatives to avoid any duplication. We also welcome the improvements and clarifications made with regard to the operational mechanism. However, we regret that no progress has been made ensuring data security and confidentiality. We would also appreciate an update on the progress made in ensuring sustainable funding for the Platform.

We welcome the information provided by FAO regarding its action against the major transboundary pests, the Desert Locust, the African Migratory Locust and the Fall Armyworm. These pests are all of major concern to the EU and its Member States. This is why we support FAO's mentioned efforts with substantial contributions. We appreciate and acknowledge FAO's essential role in the fight to control their expansion, in synergy with other relevant institutions. We stress the importance of a more preventive approach to addressing growing threats and crises such as these. Hence, we encourage the implementation of sustainable integrated pest management methods, good agronomic practices and improved early-warning systems and governance.

We thank FAO for the draft Nutrition Strategy, which ensures that sustainable food systems and the implementation of sustainable, healthy, balanced, nutritious and diversified diets are at the heart of FAO's work and programmes. The draft document has evolved and is now better articulated, more coherent and includes the accountability framework requested by Members. We trust FAO to integrate all the comments made by Member States at the 129th Session of the Programme Committee, and we look forward to reviewing this strategy in its final version at the 130th Session of the Programme Committee before its approval by the Council.

We would like to encourage FAO to strongly engage in the preparation of the UN Food Systems Summit. We also highlight the need for Member States to get involved in the process. We would appreciate any support FAO can provide in the organisation of an informal session on Action Track 1.

We support the Programme Committee's recommendation for full integration of the CFS and the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE) in the preparation and follow-up of the Summit, and of their products as inputs to the Action Tracks and to the Scientific Group.

Finally, we highlight the importance of sustainable and integrated, coherent approaches for other high-level events in 2021, in particular, the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15), the 26th Meeting of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) and the UN Ocean Conference, and encourage FAO to engage accordingly.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Quisiera, en esta oportunidad, referirme al trabajo que se realizó durante el 129.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa que, gracias al liderazgo del embajador Hans Hoogeveen y el compromiso de sus miembros sirvió para abordar temáticas de suma importancia para el futuro de los sistemas alimentarios.

Con relación a la Cumbre de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Sistemas Alimentarios de 2021, como lo he manifestado en reiteradas oportunidades, mi país se encuentra plenamente comprometido en brindar apoyo a una iniciativa que nos permitirá tener un franco y profundo debate acerca de como mejorar nuestros sistemas productivos de alimentos.

Retomando las discusiones sobre los *Action tracks*, el Informe del Comité del Programa observó con preocupación la falta de neutralidad y solidez científica en la labor de algunas líneas de acción, en especial el número dos, así como la escasa participación de los Miembros en la organización de la Cumbre y la incertidumbre sobre la gobernanza y los resultados del proceso.

Me gustaría insistir en la necesidad de garantizar que las construcciones conceptuales que se lleven a debate durante la Precumbre y Cumbre de Sistemas Alimentarios estén basadas en elementos científicos, objetivos y neutrales que no privilegien una visión sobre otra. O mejor dicho, que no prejuzguen sobre cuál es la mejor respuesta para producir más con menos.

En reiteradas oportunidades escuchamos que la Cumbre será un evento abierto, transversal y cristalino. Coincidimos con esa aspiración, pero reiteramos la imperiosa necesidad de involucrar a los gobiernos que, en definitiva, son quienes tienen que garantizar el bienestar social, económico y medioambiental de sus pueblos.

No nos tiene que generar ningún pudor hablar de comercio internacional, también en la Cumbre, toda vez que se trata de una herramienta vital que sin obstáculos y barreras artificiales que responden al interés de algunos pocos tienen un enorme potencial para darle fuerza a la Cumbre y para ayudarnos a alcanzar el Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) 2.

Esto lo uno a la iniciativa de avanzada que nos propuso la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura (FAO) de crear y poner en marcha una plataforma internacional para la alimentación y la agricultura digital. Este mecanismo nos permitirá englobar de forma asertiva cuatro aceleradores transversales o intersectoriales como la tecnología, la innovación, el tratamiento de datos y la gobernanza, a fin de mejorar los esquemas productivos, reduciendo el estrés sobre los recursos naturales y aumentando el acceso a alimentos de calidad a precios asequibles, la reducción de brechas digitales y la potenciación de las capacidades de los pequeños y medianos productores, con especial atención a las mujeres rurales e indígenas y jóvenes campesinos: esa es una realidad que podemos conseguir gracias a este mecanismo de avanzada que nos propone la FAO.

Las herramientas innovadoras, las soluciones digitales y las tecnologías aplicadas a las producciones agropecuarias no son una quimera, sino son el camino estratégico para fomentar producciones sostenibles y resilientes capaces de alimentarnos a todos, cuidando nuestros recursos escasos.

Para ir terminando quisiera referirme a la importancia de equilibrar las visiones de trabajo en la Organización. Como se reconoció en el Informe del Comité del Programa, es imperioso estimular un balance técnico-científico en la gama de enfoques y estudios sobre sistemas agrícolas sostenibles que lleva adelante la FAO. Nuestro pedido es muy sencillo: abogamos por una abordaje equilibrado y objetivo que nos permita tener acceso a análisis sobre los comportamientos de los distintos esquemas

productivos sin anteponer uno sobre otros. La FAO cuenta con la capacidad científica y con los recursos humanos necesarios para llevar a cabo esta tarea que, con gusto, apoyaremos con datos y estadísticas y ciencia.

Bajo el liderazgo del Director General, estamos construyendo una nueva FAO. Estamos seguros que conceptos como neutralidad, solidez científica, respeto a la pluralidad de visiones, el comercio internacional como parte de la solución y la necesidad de reducir las asimetrías dentro y entre los países a través de las innovaciones tecnológicas y digitales serán los pilares fundamentales y que nos permitirán alcanzar el ODS 2 y no dejar a nadie atrás.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I would like to start by thanking the Chairperson of the Programme Committee and indeed all colleagues from the Programme Committee for the substantial discussions that we had last month.

As we mentioned on other Agenda items, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland endorses the Programme Committee recommendations, and we would be content to follow Mexico's approach to our conclusions on this issue. Indeed, we encourage Council to do so.

I would like to use this intervention to reiterate the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland support to the direction of travel on FAO's Strategic Framework and our support for next steps we agreed on earlier this week.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland would also thank FAO for all the work to combat the outbreak of the Desert Locusts. This effort is making the difference in very difficult circumstances. I would also note, as we did in the Programme Committee and the Joint Meeting, that it is FAO's emergency work that has been evaluated as the most effective and we should recognize this in our strategic planning.

Nonetheless, we would like to take this opportunity to highlight an overarching area of concern that has emerged from the Programme Committee discussions and this is our concern about the effectiveness and oversight of FAO's work at country level.

The Evaluation of FAO's support to Zero Hunger highlights the lack of implementation capacity at country level and the Evaluation of FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) finds that there is no institutional mechanism to report on the outcomes or impact of TCP projects and there is no system to assess their effectiveness. The Evaluation concludes that inadequate project design has hindered the impact of the TCP. The Programme Committee makes a number of recommendations designed to address this and if we are to agree to detailed conclusions on this Item, I remind colleagues that we will be content to take the Mexican approach here. I would urge Council to highlight these conclusions from the Programme Committee.

Firstly, the importance of accountability and FAO Governing Body oversight of FAO's work at country level. This is set out in paragraph 10 (h) of the Programme Committee Report and indeed Management commitment to improve visibility of results reporting from FAO's Country Offices in the new Strategic Framework.

Secondly, I would like to highlight the need for corporate monitoring and quality assurance of TCP's projects to ensure accountability for the effective use of TCP funds, as the Programme Committee mentioned in paragraph 17. (f). As we mentioned under the previous Item on the Joint Meeting Report, we look forward for the consultation on how to reimagine the TCP and we would reiterate the Programme Committee conclusion that the future of the TCP that should be based on evidence of what works, in particular, on the evidence.

Finally, we would like to return to the two outstanding areas of action that the Programme Committee has highlighted in paragraph 21. (c) and we would urge Council to reiterate the Programme Committee request for a consultation process on the Tripartite Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Work Plan and also on the AMR indicators as we mentioned under Item 8.1 on the *Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Report*.

CHAIRPERSON

In fact, I was going to propose that we should follow what we did for Item 9, the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committee, which has become known as the “Mexican proposal” for not only the Programme Committee but for the Finance Committee and the Committee on Constitutional Matters (CCLM). It will enable us to move faster and it has all the recommendations there, as it were. Perhaps the Members could give it a thought and when we come, we could use that format as well.

Sra. Diana INFANTE QUINONES (República Dominicana)

Agradecemos la labor que el embajador Hans Hoogeveen despliega como Presidente del Comité del Programa y celebramos la elección del embajador Carlos Bernardo Cherniak de Argentina como Vicepresidente. Al acoger el Informe reiteramos la importancia vital del Programa de Cooperación Técnica (PCT) para que la FAO cumpla su mandato según la evaluación temática.

También apreciamos las conclusiones y recomendaciones de las evaluaciones sobre el trabajo de la FAO para el logro del Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible Hambre cero (ODS 2), incluyendo el papel clave del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial (CSA), la Estrategia para las asociaciones con la sociedad civil.

De igual modo, aprovechamos la oportunidad para subrayar una vez más la importancia de la función de evaluación y elogiamos la labor que desarrolla la oficina de evaluación (ESS) al proveer a los órganos rectores y partes interesadas análisis basados en evidencias sobre la contribución de la FAO a la realización de sus objetivos estratégicos y programáticos.

Ms Supajit SRIARIYAWAT (Thailand)

Thailand aligns itself with the statement of the Asia Regional Group delivered by China. Thailand appreciates the enhanced coordination of FAO’s new guideline on Country Programming Frameworks with the UN Agencies at country level in jointly monitoring and reporting based on Sustainable Development Goals targets.

We stress the importance of accountability mechanisms and FAO Governing Bodies oversight at country level. We request the involvement of governments in preparation, implementation and for all the Common Country Analysis.

Thailand supports the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and emphasizes the need of the Initiative to be extended to lower, middle and upper middle income developing countries. We encourage FAO to extend the Initiative’s analytical and partnership-based approach to increase FAO’s support to achieve countries’ priorities.

Lastly, we welcome the updates on the preparatory process of the UN Food Systems Summit and are in favour of the Pre-Summit event to take place in Rome next year, either in person or in virtual mode. We stress the need to adhere a science and evidence-based approach in the preparatory process of the five Action Tracks. This represents a great opportunity of FAO to bring its expertise in a knowledge organization. We echo the importance of a full integration of the agreed products of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) as inputs to all five Action Tracks. With this statement and these comments, Thailand endorses the Report of 129th Session of the Programme Committee.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

En lo relativo al informe del 129.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa, queremos destacar los siguientes aspectos. En primer lugar, obviamente, nuestro total apoyo a la intervención de la delegación alemana en nombre de la Unión Europea y de sus 27 Estados miembros.

Agradecemos, seguidamente, la información recibida sobre las acciones de lucha contra el brote de la langosta del desierto, el brote del gusano cogollero y felicitamos a la FAO por su trabajo en ambos campos. Apreciamos especialmente los avances en la plataforma para la agricultura y la alimentación digital, que consideramos de vital importancia para conseguir el Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible Hambre cero (ODS 2) y esperamos mejoras en las cuestiones de protección de datos.

En cuanto a la evaluación de la FAO en su apoyo del ODS 2, apreciamos su voluntad de incorporar las recomendaciones propuestas, especialmente en aquellas que subrayan la importancia de la biodiversidad, la nutrición y la conservación de los ecosistemas. Esperamos que mejore su capacidad

técnica y que se aprovechen las directrices voluntarias y los trabajos acordados en el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial (CSA) con estos objetivos.

Valoramos positivamente los trabajos realizados sobre la estrategia de nutrición y esperamos las siguientes versiones con interés. Por último, apreciamos el trabajo que está desarrollando la FAO para obtener el máximo de la Cumbre de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Sistemas Alimentarios de 2021 para la cual esperamos que se desarrolle un diálogo sobre la vía, la acción, uno que cuente con el máximo de participación de los Estados Miembros.

M. Moez SINAOU (Tunisie)

Au nom du Groupe régional Afrique, le Mali et la Tunisie félicitent le Secrétariat de la FAO pour la production du rapport *CL 165/10*, et le document annexe y afférent. De manière globale, nous accueillons favorablement les conclusions et les recommandations formulées par les participants à la Réunion conjointe.

Le Groupe régional Afrique salue le processus inclusif dans l'élaboration des grandes lignes du Cadre stratégique et du Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025, y compris la stratégie de gestion du changement, et accueille favorablement la priorité accordée par le Cadre stratégique à une approche axée sur des systèmes alimentaires durables, inclusifs et résilients, qui visent à «ne laisser personne de côté».

Le Groupe régional Afrique se félicite du suivi des cadres de programmation par pays de la FAO et de la communication d'informations à leur sujet qui serait menée conjointement au moyen du plan cadre de coopération.

Le Groupe régional Afrique partage le point sur l'initiative Main dans la main, au sujet duquel il est important de renforcer les capacités nationales et locales, conformément aux priorités gouvernementales, pour mieux intégrer les données en vue de concrétiser les multiples objectifs visés dans le Programme 2030.

Le Groupe Régional Afrique encourage la FAO à tirer parti de la collaboration entre les organisations ayant leur siège à Rome, notamment de leur plan d'action commun pour le Sahel.

Le Groupe régional Afrique souligne l'importance du Programme de coopération technique de la FAO, et la réponse de la Direction. Il suggère de faire de ce Programme un instrument stratégique qui contribue à la réalisation du Programme 2030.

Le Groupe régional Afrique souscrit à l'idée de demander à la FAO d'entamer un exercice stratégique en consultation avec les Membres, en vue d'affiner voire uniformiser les critères d'allocation des ressources, sans se limiter aux critères classiques fondés sur le revenu par habitant, et en tenant compte des besoins spécifiques de chaque région.

Le Groupe régional Afrique prend note avec préoccupation du fait que les capacités disponibles au niveau national, compte tenu de leur insuffisance, ne permettent pas de mener à bien les programmes et les projets sur le terrain. Il est donc important de s'aligner sur les mesures prises pour le repositionnement du système des Nations Unies pour le développement. Le Groupe régional invite la FAO à saisir les occasions offertes dans ce contexte et à intégrer cette question dans son nouveau Cadre stratégique.

Le Groupe régional Afrique rappelle l'annonce du Secrétaire général des Nations Unies sur la tenue du Sommet prévue pour septembre 2021, à New York et l'organisation d'une manifestation avant le Sommet à Rome, au cours de l'été 2021.

Enfin, le Groupe régional Afrique sollicite vivement une pleine participation des Membres aux prises d'action et aux préparatifs de ce Sommet.

Ms Agnes Rosari DEWI (Indonesia)

Indonesia aligns itself with the statement of the Asia Regional Group delivered by China.

Indonesia appreciates the presentation by the Chairperson of the Programme Committee and commends his leadership in conducting the meeting. We also extend our appreciation to the Members of the Committee for their hard work.

Indonesia welcomes the more coordinated approach between FAO and other UN Agencies at country level. We appreciate the efforts on strengthening the governance and oversight of FAO's Country Programming Framework (CPF). We also note that the FAO's new CPF guidelines are fully in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). On that note, we underline the need for strong involvement of governments in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the Framework in country level and look forward to furthering information on the Common Country Analysis (CCA).

With regards to the UN Food Systems Summit 2021, we acknowledge the substantive, technical, and logistical support of FAO in the process. We share the concern of the Committee on the lack of neutrality and scientific soundness in the work of some of the Action Tracks, as well as the lack of involvement of the Membership, and some level of uncertainties about governance and the process. We underline the importance of the full involvement of the Membership in the preparatory process.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I would like to extend our appreciation to Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen for effectively chairing very substantive discussions in this Programme Committee Session. I would like to focus our remarks now on items that have not yet been considered, although underlining the importance of the Strategic Framework in our comments that were made earlier.

Canada appreciated FAO's presentation on strengthening the governance and oversight of FAO's Country Programming Framework (CPF) and regarding its request for further information on the Common Country Analysis, we would further request more information on how gender analysis or assessment is being integrated.

Regarding the UN Food System Summit, we appreciate the Programme Committee discussions on this issue and stress the need for a science- and evidence-based approach, the important role of trade and market access, the importance of sustainable and integrated approaches and the importance of trade-offs and balanced narratives. As a knowledge Organization, FAO has a key role to play in this regard.

On the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), we appreciate the evaluation, which was long awaited, and Management's response, and we stress the need for a corporate monitoring system and mechanisms for quality assurance of Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) projects and accountability for the effective use of its funds.

On FAO's Gender Action Plan, we appreciate the update provided on the development of the Gender Action Plan and would like to receive a copy of the revised Gender Equality Policy, which we believe is now ready for publication. We also note that the Gender Action Plan is being developed in parallel with the Strategic Framework given the close linkages and synergies with the ongoing Committee on World Food Security (CFS) work stream on gender equality and women's empowerment.

We support the Programme Committee's request for a separate chapter on progress achieved under the Agenda Action Plan in the Mid-Term Review and the Programme Implementation Report. We also believe it is crucial that sufficient funding be made available to support the implementation of the Gender Action Plan as per the Programme Committee's recommendations.

Finally, on Desert Locusts, we welcome the update of FAO's response to this unprecedented crisis and commend its efforts which clearly show an area of comparative advantage.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

Australia endorses the findings and recommendations of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee. We would like to take this opportunity to briefly note Section VI on the UN Food Systems Summit and highlight the need for neutrality and scientific soundness in the work of the Action Tracks, as well as the full involvement of the Membership. We would also like to highlight the Committee's findings on the importance of trade and market access.

Finally, as has been raised by others, we would like to emphasize the importance of striving for a common goal while allowing countries to seek their own pathways to achieving this.

CHAIRPERSON

That brings to an end my list of speakers who are Members of the Council.

I now move to the Observers.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France) (Observateur)

Je souhaite d'abord m'aligner sur la déclaration prononcée au nom de l'Union européenne et de ses 27 États membres. La France souhaite remercier le Président du Comité du Programme, l'Ambassadeur Hoogeveen, et tous les collègues qui ont travaillé de manière extrêmement constructive tard dans la nuit pour ce Comité du Programme.

Pour rester brève, je souhaite évoquer trois points.

Premièrement, le Sommet des Nations Unies sur les systèmes alimentaires. La France souligne le besoin d'intégrer le Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale (CSA) et le Groupe d'experts de haut niveau sur la sécurité alimentaire et la nutrition (HLPE) à la préparation, mais aussi au suivi du Sommet, comme demandé par le Comité du Programme au paragraphe 12 des conclusions de son rapport, et ma délégation souhaite que ce point soit reflété dans le rapport du Conseil.

La France rappelle en effet que le CSA joue un rôle central dans la gouvernance mondiale de la sécurité alimentaire et de la nutrition. Il représente une plateforme des plus inclusives, permettant à tous les acteurs concernés de s'exprimer et d'échanger entre eux. Le Sommet des Nations Unies sur les systèmes alimentaires aspire à cette inclusivité et à la prise en compte des intérêts de toutes les parties prenantes, notamment des petits exploitants, des femmes et des jeunes.

Le HLPE, quant à lui, est une interface science-politique qui produit des recommandations fondées sur la science et les faits, ainsi que des rapports sur lesquels se fondent notamment les produits en cours de négociation au CSA. Toutes les parties reconnaissent qu'elles feront des contributions importantes au Sommet. C'est pourquoi, il nous paraît non seulement logique, mais aussi souhaitable d'inclure pleinement le CSA et le HLPE dans la préparation et le suivi du Sommet.

Deuxième point, dans le cadre de l'évaluation de la contribution de la FAO à l'objectif de développement durable ODD 2, la France se félicite de l'engagement de la Direction de la FAO à prendre en compte toutes les recommandations de l'évaluation, en particulier le besoin de se concentrer davantage sur la biodiversité, la conservation des écosystèmes et la nutrition, mais aussi l'importance de continuer la mise en œuvre des 10 principes de l'agroécologie, qui ont été approuvés par la FAO en 2019.

Troisième et dernier point, le multilinguisme. Comme souligné dans le rapport du Comité du Programme, la France rappelle son attachement fort à ce que le multilinguisme soit pleinement pris en compte dans les travaux de notre Organisation, qu'il s'agisse de la traduction en temps utile de tous les documents, ou d'encourager la Direction, les fonctionnaires de la FAO à parler dans leur langue d'origine, pour refléter ainsi concrètement cette diversité. Il faut «lead by example», comme on dit en bon français. Je souhaite à cette occasion remercier tout particulièrement les interprètes pour leur travail exceptionnel tout au long de nos discussions.

M. Aly COULIBALY (Mali) (Observateur)

Le Mali fait sienne la déclaration formulée au nom du Groupe régional Afrique par la Tunisie. Le Mali félicite le Secrétariat du Conseil pour le travail exceptionnel réalisé.

Nous félicitons le Comité du Programme pour l'énorme travail fourni à travers l'examen des 15 points qui figuraient à son ordre du jour.

Nous saluons le processus inclusif de l'élaboration des grandes lignes du Cadre stratégique et du Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025. Nous saluons les efforts de la FAO dans le cadre de la lutte contre les criquets pèlerins, particulièrement en Afrique, dans le Sahel.

Nous partageons pleinement la préoccupation évoquée tantôt par la représentante de la France, concernant la forte implication du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale (CSA) dans la préparation du Sommet et le suivi des recommandations qui s'en dégageront.

En raison de son caractère inclusif, le CSA prend en compte, de notre point de vue, les préoccupations de l'agriculture familiale, socle de notre agriculture au niveau africain.

Ainsi, le Mali donne un avis favorable quant à l'approbation du document en tenant compte des observations soulignées tantôt par ma prédécesseur.

Mr Johannes M. BRAND (Netherlands) (Observer)

The Netherlands aligns itself with the statement made by Germany on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Members. We would like to share some additional thoughts on the UN Food Systems Summit that will be held next year.

The Netherlands is fully committed and has high expectations of the Summit. We hope it will mark the start of an action agenda with concrete outcomes to improve the outcomes of food systems in both developing and developed countries.

The Netherlands believes we should take a very broad view of food systems, including their interlinkages, for example, with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Summit on Biodiversity, the Climate Summit on Climate Change, the Nutrition Summit and with human health in accordance with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic as stage setting international meetings towards the Food Systems Summit in 2021.

The food systems approach, which is in our view key, acknowledges that food and agriculture are closely linked to climate change, natural resource management, water and sanitation, private sector development, infrastructure and public health. Food systems thereby reinforce the interconnection with all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and supports on the delivery of Agenda 2030.

The Netherlands' priorities for the Summit are, firstly, a better organized science-policy interface. The view is that, to make well informed decisions in redesigning food systems, access to the best scientific insights is crucial. Our food systems currently lack a globally accepted mechanism for collecting, analysing and organizing all the knowledge that is relevant for political and societal decision making. The Food Systems Summit should lay the foundations for a better institutional arrangement to ensure this interface between science and policy with an instrumental role of the Scientific Group.

The second priority is a multi-stakeholder approach and active involvement of the private sector. As we said before under Item 4, *FAO's Private Sector Strategy*, we strongly support a multi-stakeholder approach for the Summit. The private sector, in our view, plays a dominant role in the shaping and re-shaping of food systems and to make the Summit truly action- and results-oriented, it is therefore key that private companies be actively involved.

Thirdly, concrete case studies that bring together the thematic Action Tracks. Food systems are multi-dimensional in nature. We look forward to having informed discussions on synergies and trade-offs within and between different thematic areas such as nutrition, production and sustainability. The Action Tracks of the Summit should be approached from a systems perspective, all interlinking with each other. We believe concrete case studies, based on the food systems analysis, are key in this regard. These case studies, combined with national dialogues, will best inform the Summit on what is meant with a food systems approach and which interventions are most promising in impact and scalability.

Mr José Alexandre RODRIGUES (Portugal) (Observer)

Portugal aligns itself with the statement made by Germany on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

While acknowledging that FAO should focus on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, regarding its mandate in the United Nations System, taking the evaluation of FAO's support to SDG 2 results, we welcome the recognition that more focus is needed to take into consideration, in particular, nutrition, biodiversity and ecosystem conservation.

We look forward to reviewing the draft of the Nutrition Strategy in an inclusive manner and by all Membership, prior to its implementation in FAO's work and activities.

CHAIRPERSON

The list of speakers is finished. I now give the floor to Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen, Chairperson of the Programme Committee, to comment on some of the issues raised by the Members.

Mr Hans HOOGEVEEN (Chairperson of the Programme Committee)

I will be very brief. I would like to thank Members of the Council for their nice words and I certainly think the result of the Report and recommendations of the Programme Committee is the result of teamwork effort.

I think as Members of the Programme Committee, we worked extremely hard to get these recommendations done. It was in a virtual setting, which always takes more time and sometimes makes the discussion even more difficult. However, we had a very constructive atmosphere, we were really listening to each other and always tried to find, although we had differences of view, we tried to find compromises and you have seen that in this Report. I am not going to repeat all the important Agenda Items because you have seen them. I think it is also a moment where we have to thank not only the Secretariat and what was already done by my colleagues, friends, and Ambassadors, the interpreters and technicians, but I think we should thank all FAO staff.

When we had discussed the Desert Locusts and its devastating effects, we saw how successful FAO was on the ground in fighting Desert Locusts. I think it is really that we have to thank all the FAO staff in headquarters, Regional Offices and Country Offices for the great work they are doing to achieve Zero Hunger, leaving nobody behind and they have done this under very difficult circumstances. I believe a big virtual applause is certainly deserved.

We listened carefully to the guidance of the Council, we rearranged our Agenda, we shortened our agenda items and we worked in a more efficient and effective manner. I would like to draw the attention, Mr Chairperson, to the conclusions of especially under Any Other Matters, the conclusions of paragraph 20 (a), subparagraphs (f) and (g), when it comes to our work and the efficiency of our work. I think it is very important that we have, Mr Chairperson I think it is also important for your conclusions because it is certainly a recommendation to the Council because I think we agreed within the Programme Committee that we can only work in an efficient and effective manner if we have the documents in time in all languages. We highlighted the need for a comprehensive report about multilingualism in all its work of FAO. I think that is a strong recommendation to make our work even more efficient and effective. Of course, we know that with COVID-19 we have difficult times, but only if we have the documents in all six languages can we proceed, not only with our work, but we can proceed to achieve results on the ground.

I would like to again thank all Members of the Programme Committee, certainly also the Secretariat, for their hard work and I think we should be proud of the Report before you.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the Secretariat.

I want to say at this stage that at 20:30 hours we will be adjourning to come back at 21:00 hours and then have the final session. If the Secretariat has not finished its comments, they can carry on after 21:00 hours. However, at 20:30 hours I have to adjourn.

I give the floor to the Deputy Director-General, Ms Beth Bechdol.

Ms Beth BECHDOL (Deputy Director-General)

I will be very brief with my comments on just a few topics. I would like to underscore Management's commitment to the recommendations of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees, and also to reinforce the points that have been made on this Agenda Item and even on our last Agenda Item, the discussion around the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP).

I wish to emphasize that we do continue to closely monitor TCP programming rates and can assure you that early reprogramming of the savings, in compliance with TCP criteria to ensure full and timely commitment of the appropriations is something we are working towards. We are fully committed to facilitate the process of reviewing the TCP criteria, the regional and country allocations in the

framework of the requested consultations in the Joint Meeting and in the Council. We greatly appreciate the focus you have raised on unique country level needs, as the TCP is there to support.

We are committed to more strategic and effective responsiveness of TCP to priority needs in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other recommendations of the evaluation. We continue our efforts to improve communications and transparency and will continue to keep you apprised of those improvements and enhancements as well. We will continue our efforts to simplify procedures to make the programme more effective and more deliverable to country needs in a timely manner.

Finally, on our own internal consultations, that as we say are on reimagining of the TCP, do continue, and these consultations possibly will align with the findings and recommendations of the TCP Evaluation and Audit. Again, I wish to thank Members for their continued direction and guidance and simply underscore our continued commitment to ensuring that the effectiveness, the improvements and the enhancements that I believe we all look for, in the delivery of the TCP, are underscored.

I wish to thank you for your continued support, including financial contributions, for the continued global coordination on both the Fall Armyworm and the Desert Locust mitigation and control efforts, which Deputy Director-General, Mr Laurent Thomas, and myself referenced earlier.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to Deputy Director-General, Ms Maria Helena Semedo.

Ms Maria Helena SEMEDO (Deputy Director-General)

I wish to emphasize the importance of the Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Action Plan and AMR indicators. I would like to assure the Members of Council that we will take this forward as a priority, as it has been recommended by the Programme Committee in a very consultative way with the Members.

Equally, regarding the Sustainable Development Goal 2 Evaluation, where we accepted all the comments, recommendations and the need to strengthen our Decentralised Offices in order to be more responsive and to better deliver for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular ending hunger and leaving no one behind.

CHAIRPERSON

Now I have got Deputy Director-General, Mr Laurent Thomas.

M. Laurent THOMAS (Directeur Général Adjoint)

Je serai très bref. Deux points sur lesquels je voudrais commenter.

À propos des observations très positives faites sur le travail des équipes de la FAO en réponse aux crises et dans la construction de la résilience, je voudrais les retourner à nos partenaires financiers et aux pays membres qui contribuent à ce programme.

Pour la lutte contre les criquets pèlerins, nous avons réussi à mobiliser plus de 200 millions de dollars. C'est ce qui nous a permis de contrôler jusqu'à présent la situation et de l'améliorer. De même, pour la réponse d'urgence à la situation créée par le Covid, nous avons pu mobiliser plus de 103 millions de dollars. Sans ces contributions volontaires, nous ne pourrions pas répondre comme nous le faisons aujourd'hui.

Beaucoup reste à faire, mais nous sommes vraiment satisfaits de voir que nos partenaires, dont beaucoup sont membres du Conseil continuent à investir dans la réponse d'urgence de la FAO comme un bon investissement pour sauver des vies et sauvegarder des moyens de subsistance.

Le deuxième point concerne le multilinguisme. Je veux rassurer les pays qui sont intervenus à ce sujet, nous sommes conscients qu'il y a des progrès à faire dans ce domaine.

Le multilinguisme fait partie intégrante du fonctionnement de la FAO dans toutes ses dimensions, et en particulier de la gouvernance pour s'assurer que tous les pays puissent débattre sur un mode égal,

qu'une langue ne domine pas plus qu'une autre dans les débats. Le multilinguisme est partie intégrante de nos textes fondamentaux, avec six langues officielles reconnues.

Le multilinguisme touche non seulement les documents, mais aussi l'interprétation, la terminologie et nous avons l'intention de vous présenter, comme vous nous le demandez, un rapport sur ce qui pourrait être fait pour améliorer le multilinguisme à la FAO.

Il est clair qu'il est une priorité pour le Directeur général, et cela a été bien défini dans le projet de Cadre stratégique que vous savez discuté. Nous voulons assurer une augmentation du nombre de produits dans les langues officielles de la FAO, une amélioration de l'équilibre entre les différentes langues officielles dans l'Organisation, également un renforcement de l'appui aux pays membres en ce qui concerne, au-delà des langues officielles, les langues nationales considérées non officielles.

Il y a lieu de noter cette année une augmentation substantielle dans le domaine de l'appui au multilinguisme puisque le volume des traductions a augmenté de plus de 100 pour cent comparé à l'année 2019.

Vous aurez également remarqué que de gros efforts ont été faits pour améliorer «le web», même si nous sommes encore loin de ce qu'il nous faut.

Il est important de souligner les deux points suivants: l'amélioration du multilinguisme doit être envisagée dans le cadre également de l'exercice de négociation du budget. Il faut savoir que la division CSG a connu la suppression de plus de 36 postes depuis l'exercice 2014-2015. En effet, des gains d'efficacité ont pu être faits, mais il ne faut pas l'oublier; la FAO dépense à peu près 2,3 pour cent de son budget sur les services linguistiques; en comparaison, le BIT dépense 6 pour cent et le Secrétariat des Nations Unies à New York, 9 pour cent, ce qui peut donner une idée du degré d'efficacité obtenu à la FAO.

En dernier point, l'importance de vous fournir les documents pour vos débats en temps voulu. Nous sommes d'accord, nous allons veiller à progresser conformément à l'indicateur de performance qui a été défini pour s'assurer que les documents soient livrés bien à temps afin de pouvoir les analyser et contribuer ainsi à des débats riches.

À noter à ce sujet que les enjeux sont pour nous tout le long de la chaîne de production, depuis celui qui prend le stylo et prépare le rapport jusqu'à la traduction finale.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to the Chief Scientist, Ms Ismahane Elouafi.

Ms Ismahane ELOUAFI (Chief Scientist)

I wish to briefly make two points. Firstly, on innovation and secondly, on the UN Food Systems Summit 2021. It is encouraging to see how most of the countries, if not all, are very supportive of the science and innovation agenda at FAO. I am really delighted to hear so much demand for science-based action, evidence-based decisions, actual data, and I hear it in the Programme Committee Report, we hear it in the Strategic Framework, in the various Committees such as the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) and the Committee on Forestry (COFO). I want to tell you that this is our approach.

The approach is that we wish to ensure that technology and know-how is no longer divided between developed and developing countries. This is the reason I see it as a platform where we bring all the science and innovation to find solutions. The best example where the innovation cycle is working very well is in the private sector. In the private sector it is working effectively. However, it is for commercial purposes. What if we take the same model and we use it for international development? We can do that only if we really harness the global network. FAO is not the knowledge generator, it is the academia, the research centres across the world, be it national or regional, it is the private sector itself as well. We are really going to set up a platform whereby we could bring all of this, to really harness it and use it, particularly to reduce poverty in the rural areas because that is where agriculture is.

On the UN Food Systems Summit 2021, I wish to assure you that FAO is leading Action Track 1 on access to safe and nutritious food, and both the Chief Economist and the Chief Scientist are part of the Scientific Committee. We are following up on the United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021. FAO will play a role, particularly in the Scientific Track. I am in Action Track 5 and Mr Máximo Torero Cullen, the Chief Economist, is in Action Track 2. Be assured that it is going to be science-based and that we are trying to fit in as much information from all FAO work and partners as possible.

CHAIRPERSON

That brings us to the end of the discussions. Please go ahead, Chief Economist, Mr Máximo Torero Cullen.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

I wish to emphasize that our efforts, as the Chief Scientist has mentioned, are to bring the best possible evidence, both in socio-economic and on the science perspective. At the same time to bring the best possible data and quality of data. This is what we have been doing throughout the past year since the Director-General took office.

At the same time, we are putting all our effort into supporting the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 in all its dimensions and we are trying to bring science to it. We are trying to bring modelling to it, and to provide support with all the work that we have across our Food Systems Division and across FAO, so that the Summit can be as effective as possible.

CHAIRPERSON

That is the end of our discussions. I have to conclude on this. It is 20:30 hours, so we will adjourn the meeting and we will reconvene at 21:00 hours with my conclusions to you. The meeting is adjourned. We reconvene at 21:00 hours.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

¿Hasta qué hora vamos a sesionar?

CHAIRPERSON

I just checked the interpretation. We have interpretation until midnight.

The meeting was suspended from 20:30 to 21:02 hours

La séance est suspendue de 20 h 30 à 21 h 02

Se suspende la sesión de las 20.30 a las 21.02

CHAIRPERSON

For this last session I hope we move quicker. I was going to suggest that we follow what we did for Item 9's conclusions on the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committee. In the Joint Meeting we followed the concept proposed by Mexico. I am using the same "Mexican concept" for this meeting as well.

The first two paragraphs are in accordance with the Mexican concept and then, if you recall, there were three small subparagraphs which the United States of America had proposed and Argentina had suggested that we should take under Item 10, which is this one. They are on the screen; I will read them out.

Item 10: *Report of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee, 9-13 November 2020.*

1. The Council approved the Report of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee and in particular:
 - a) Endorsed its observations and recommendations on the Technical Cooperation Programme, Country Programming Frameworks, the UN Food Systems Summit, Gender Action Plan, Desert Locust upsurge and Fall Armyworm, Nutrition Strategy, multilingualism, rolling work plan of Evaluations, Terms of Reference of the Joint Evaluation on Rome-based Agency (RBA) Collaboration and on evaluations relating to Zero Hunger, sustainable agriculture and partnerships with civil society Organizations; and

- b) Looked forward to the reporting on the status of implementation of any related recommendations in the established manner.
2. With regard to the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture, the Council:
- a) Requested FAO ensure that the Initiative will create synergies between international organizations and stakeholders and strengthen coordination between them without duplicating their activities under their respective mandates.
 - b) Requested FAO to include in the Terms of Reference of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture reporting mechanisms through which Voluntary Guidelines from the Platform on issues related to digital food and agriculture are submitted to the FAO Members for consideration through the FAO governing body process; and
 - c) Supported the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture as well as the progress in the development of its Terms of Reference and looked forward to continuing developing and refining these Terms of Reference for further review at its 166th Session.

That ends the conclusions. Now I open the floor for Members to comment.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I understand it is late and that we have applied the Mexico approach as you described it, Chairperson. We have applied that before and I agreed to apply it under Item 9. It would be incorrect to currently make this the procedure of choice. As the distinguished Representative of the Dominican Republic pointed out, the Membership composition of the Programme Committee is different from that of the Council. We should not, as a standard practice, reduce our role to endorsing observations and recommendations made by the Programme Committee, because then we could abolish the Council and we would just work in the frame of the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee. This cannot be the solution.

We chose this practice, the “Mexican approach”, with regard to the very controversial matters and where it would not make sense to engage in lengthy discussions, which would lead to no other outcome than the consensus that was reached in these Committees. However, we should allow and encourage to work on Council conclusions outside of these recommendations and, therefore, this remark is to flag that we would not agree in general with this approach. We agree with it when it is a controversial matter, where we cannot find a solution here at Council, then this is an *ultima ratio*, it is not the first choice.

Having said that, we can agree with subparagraph (a), and I would like to suggest a new subparagraph (b). It would read as follows “took note with interest of the results provided by the second phase of the Evaluation of FAO’s support to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 and noted the need to strengthen FAO’s action in the areas of biodiversity, nutrition and ecosystem conservation.”

CHAIRPERSON

If I can just comment on what you said. I entirely agree with what you said about the Council Report. The reason I was suggesting the “Mexican approach” is that we only have this Session left and we still have to go through quite a few agenda items. Tomorrow everything would have to be done in the morning for preparation for the Drafting Committee. It was purely because we are running out of time and the reason, we are running out of time is what you said before we adjourned, and I entirely agree with that, to see whether to extend the duration of the Council or to reduce the Agenda items. We are in this situation, exactly as you said, because of this virtual meeting.

I think if we carry on this way, we will have to go back to what I said, in the future. The Council used to be longer. The Council used to be two weeks. The Conference was one month. The Programme Committee used to be two weeks. The Finance Committee used to be two weeks. It was Members who reduced it as a measure of efficiency and savings, etcetera. Now, as we have seen, we have been totally engaged throughout the day and we are out of time. However, I do not want to spend more time on it. I agree with what you said. It was purely a suggestion because we are in the situation we are in, in view of the time.

We will proceed with your amendment there. I would request Members to comment on subparagraph (a). We are going paragraph by paragraph. We will go to subparagraphs (a) and (b) together, two paragraphs.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Mi primera reacción es apoyar absolutamente su primera sugerencia, Presidente. La verdad es que es muy tarde y, en general, no me gusta tener diferentes estándares de acuerdo a la situación. Creo que el escenario conversado hoy demostró que tenemos diferencias y que fue muy difícil en cada uno de los Comités poder llegar a un acuerdo. Después de haber llegado a esos acuerdos, me parece que lo lógico a esta altura sería ir por la propuesta suya.

De todas maneras, somos jugadores de muy buena fe y si hay alguna posibilidad de llegar a acuerdos con nuevas propuestas, lo intentaremos. Pero si eso se bloquea, yo sugiero volver a la solución que hemos utilizado en la anterior instancia porque, naturalmente, ya tenemos un mecanismo que puede ser razonable y que ya fue apoyado por todos y como un intento de buscar un acuerdo. Pero si no hay este acuerdo, yo creo que ya teníamos la solución resuelta con lo que ya hemos hecho.

Dicho esto, voy a pasar directamente al subpárrafo (b) sugerido por el embajador de Alemania. Si vamos a colocar en ese párrafo el subpárrafo 18 (h) del informe del Comité del Programa, tendríamos que ponerlo en su totalidad. No entiendo por qué se utilizaron solamente partes y hacer lo que en inglés se dice “cherry picking”. No sé si es así, pero si vamos a utilizar esta propuesta de mi estimado colega de Alemania, hagámosla completa con el texto total del 18 (h) del Informe del Comité del Programa.

A su vez, primero me gustaría que refleje la Secretaría en el subpárrafo (b) el 18 (h) del Informe del Comité del Programa en su totalidad. Después de este párrafo habría que agregar otros párrafos que se refieren al Informe del Comité del Programa que están individualizados en el artículo 23 (b) que sería el subpárrafo (c).

Como punto adicional, por separado, en otro subpárrafo, le pido que agregue el punto 23(b) del Comité del Programa que tendría coherencia con lo que planteó de manera muy interesante mi colega de Alemania - 23(b) del reinforme porte del Comité del Programa.

También habría que agregar después de ese subpárrafo, el 18(f) del Comité del Programa. El 18(f) y luego para terminar con esta primera intervención, agregaría el punto 12(d) del informe del Comité del Programa.

Me parece innecesario todo este ejercicio, pero si se abre el texto esta es nuestra propuesta.

Mr Wendell DENNIS (United States of America)

I thank Members that have been so patiently and diligently working towards making progress. We have a long road ahead, but I am hopeful that we can find success to get there together.

I would not have taken to intervene on paragraph 1 and the subparagraph underneath it. However, seeing the proposal made now, one thing that struck us is the terminology that we had not seen before that was introduced by the distinguished Representative of Germany, the words “ecosystem conservation.” I looked back at the Programme Committee Report and did not find that.

With Argentina’s suggestion of making sure we are using the terminology that was used in the Programme Committee Report and contained in Member’s discussions, we should try to stick with that. I do not have a fix for it, other than the language that is in the Programme Committee Report. I believe that the text shown on the screen has the language that we already found agreement on. It is “biodiversity, forests and ecosystems”. There was no “nutrition”, other than further down, “the importance of the achievement”. The formulation there is quite different. Maybe introducing “ecosystem”, not to complicate things nor to favour anybody’s proposal, but the way to fix that with the best terminology would be “ecosystem services” and “conservation of resources”. I know that FAO and Members have used this consistently. Maybe if you could reflect that in subparagraph (b), if that gets further consideration, we would like to include that amendment.

I do not think that reflects the text that I wanted. We need some notation here. There are two subparagraphs (b). When I refer to (b), I do not know which one I need to talk about. We need to go to a *bis* and *ter* so that we can be clear. My amendment textually was for the German delegate's proposal of subparagraph (b), which is the first red text. That is where I suggest adding, after "ecosystem", "services, and conservation of resources." There would be a deletion of the word "and" before "ecosystem services" to make that grammatically correct.

Looking at the other subparagraphs that were introduced by the distinguished Representative of Argentina, subparagraphs (c), (d) and (e), which are textual copies from the Programme Committee Report, the one thing that troubles me a little bit is how we might have lost our way in that. I understood the Chairperson's conclusions were to reflect the conversation, the discussion among Members during this session on this item. What I am not seeing is much of that. I heard a lot about the Food Systems Summit. I heard a lot about some of the Private Sector Strategy. I heard interventions on the Digital Platform, which we have. I am just left in a quandary in terms of how we can avoid copying, for the simplicity and ease of efficiency, the Programme Committee notations that are already well documented. That was a point delegates made when I intervened to add text on the Digital Platform.

I am prepared to show flexibility on that, so I am not sure what to do with subparagraphs (c), (d) and (e). We have no objections to those texts, we have already agreed to it once, so we obviously would be consistent in agreeing to it again.

With that I am not going to make amendments to subparagraph (c). With regard to subparagraph (e), I will make amendments as we return to the Digital Platform.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Thank you to the United States of America for the attempt and good faith to respond to my proposal. I am not going to comment on the various subparagraphs that the esteemed Representative from Argentina now suggested. I take it that he did not really mean them seriously, he wanted to make the case that if we make suggestions then we should refer to all subparagraphs in the Programme Committee Report.

I do not think this is the right approach. If we want to stick to the language of the Programme Committee then I think probably paragraph 1 (a) is enough. We do not have to copy and paste, that would be a waste of time. My suggestion was not copied from the Report of the Programme Committee, it was a reflection of the interventions made here today. I am worried that if we just restrict ourselves to referring to the Programme Committee Report, then we do not have a role in the Council anymore and consequently we do not need Council sessions.

I greatly appreciate the attempt of the esteemed Representative of the United States of America to work on the language proposed by me. If His Excellency Ambassador Carlos Bernardo Cherniak or distinguished Delegates are not in agreement with the suggestion I submitted, I would ask them to say that. We should not waste our time now with throwing language from the Programme Committee Report at each other as it does not help us further.

If my proposal on subparagraph (b), and I am happy to accept suggestions from the distinguished Representative of the United States of America, if that is not agreeable to other distinguished Representatives, we probably can stick to paragraph 1 (a), and we do not have to refer further to other paragraphs.

Ms Xi LI (China)

I think that some of the distinguished Representatives have opened a Pandora's box. We look forward to the observation from the Chairperson on the type of information we put into this Report and how to define it. For example, if we simply state that we agree with the recommendations of the Programme Committee Report, some Representatives commented that it will make the Council's work in vain. If we quote too much information from the Report, then some distinguished Representatives also say that it will make the effort of the Council in vain.

This is what we need to know. What are the criteria? Where can we draw the line between what can be discussed here and what kind of content should be added here? We would like to agree with the distinguished Representative of Argentina, if we are going to discuss a specific topic, let us do it.

This is our proposal. We also think that some topics, for example the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), which the discussion has been totally deleted from the Chairperson's draft conclusions on the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees, we would like to stress the importance here that we would like to quote the Programme Committee Report, that "welcomed the Evaluation Report's analysis of the TCP's effects and contribution to food and agriculture development at country level and took note of the Management response".

If we can agree with Mexico's approach, we can agree with the first plan, but we cannot agree with an approach for some countries' benefit. We can add whatever they want, but we delete the other countries' request. This is something we cannot accept. If we are going to do it, let us discuss all the topics one by one. If not, we just accept the Programme Committee's Report and we finish today's Meeting as early as possible.

CHAIRPERSON

As I mentioned before, we have just this one Session to complete quite a lot of items. We are behind on our schedule and I do not know whether to ascribe it to this virtual setting. Germany raised this issue before, and I entirely agree, that the one-week Council is not enough to deal with the Council meeting in virtual format. This needs to be discussed and addressed urgently at the next session because a lot of items on the Agenda are outstanding. We have just this session this evening. Tomorrow the Drafting Committee is supposed to meet, and the morning is devoted to preparing documentation for them. I do not know what they are going to discuss, other than the few items we have agreed.

That was the reason I proposed to follow the Mexican approach. I entirely agree that the Council must have its own views. It is made up of 49 Members, while the Programme Committee is made up of 12 Members. Even if they agree with the Programme Committee's findings or recommendations, they must have a view of their own as well. Normally it should go in the Report. However, the reason I suggested the Mexican approach is because we have no time left and that is what I would like to put before the Members. Please bear in mind that we have to finish tonight, and we have only one session.

I will not take up any more time. I will give the floor to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

As I said in my intervention under this Item, we support the Mexican approach on this Agenda Item for the reasons you have set out Chairperson. I will also say that I have listened very carefully to the concerns that my German colleague and friend raised and of course I understand the point that Council is much bigger than the Programme Committee.

I would also remind distinguished Delegates that the substantive issues for this Council were the Strategic Framework and the Private Sector Strategy and we have discussed those at length, and we have spent a lot of time negotiating the Council conclusions on those issues. We have taken out and addressed separately the really big issues that the Joint Meeting and the Programme Committee discussed. Therefore, I think that leaves us a little bit of scope to save some time here in these circumstances on these issues and I would urge distinguished Delegates to use the Mexican approach.

I would also suggest that the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), I recognise it is a sensitive issue and we do not have enough time to negotiate conclusions on it now, however, we have it on the Agenda for the next Joint Meeting and perhaps it should be a Council Item as well, therefore, distinguished delegates will have the opportunity to have a long and detailed conversation about it and negotiate it. At this point in our proceedings, having had substantial discussions on the Strategic Framework and the Private Sector Strategy, perhaps we can summarize our deliberations on the Programme Committee Report with paragraph 1 (a), as you proposed initially.

Ms Marija MILIVOJEVIC (Sweden)

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland took the words out of my mouth. It is very late, and this is a conclusion on a meeting that already took place and where we know what was said. We would like to go along with your original proposal, given that we do understand the concerns of the distinguished Representative of Germany, however, we believe that this is a much more substantial discussion that should be given enough time on another occasion. We would like to go back to your original proposal, which is now famously known as the Mexican proposal.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

No sé si no estaba primero, Egipto. Está bien.

CHAIRPERSON

On the list you appeared before Egypt, but I can give the floor to Egypt if you like?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

No, sigo hablando. Yo quería respetar la lista.

CHAIRPERSON

The list on my screen has you before Egypt.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Entonces, que hable Egipto primero si estaba primero. ¿O yo estoy primero? No le entiendo, Presidente, hablo primero, entonces.

CHAIRPERSON

What I was saying was on my screen you appear first, so please go ahead.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

En primer lugar, quiero apoyar las sabias palabras de mi colega Li Xi de China, porque acá hay un principio fundamental que nada está acordado hasta que todo está acordado. Lo que a mí particularmente me preocupa son los “double standards”. Nosotros tenemos que ser muy coherentes.

Está claro que tenemos posiciones diferentes y esas posiciones diferentes tienen un tiempo para ser saldadas y para ser discutidas. Sabemos y, en eso sí comparto con mi colega de Alemania, sería bueno que, si tenemos tantos temas, el próximo Consejo quizá tenga que tardar o durar mayor cantidad de tiempo, pero hoy la realidad que tenemos es que tenemos que resolver esto en el tiempo que está asignado, el tiempo que tenemos.

La solución más razonable es volver a la propuesta original suya, Presidente. Yo no pienso de ninguna manera que no sea importante el Consejo que tiene 49 miembros, son más miembros que los Comités o los otros Órganos Rectores, por supuesto que eso lo tengo muy claro porque soy partícipe de todos los Comités y de todos los Órganos Rectores, pero quiero decir que no puede haber “double standards”, porque hay temas que son sensitivos para algunos países y en este caso puntual creo que fue claro que el Programa de Cooperación Técnica (PCT) es un tema sensible para los países en desarrollo, para el Grupo de los 77 y China (G77) y, en particular, para América Latina y el Caribe, que los ministros de la región lo incluyeron en el informe de la Conferencia Regional.

Por lo tanto, ¿quién es el que decide qué tema es sensitivo y qué tema no es sensitivo? ¿Quién decide por qué tenemos que buscar soluciones de flexibilidad cuando son sensitivas para algunos países y cuando las mismas cuestiones son sensitivas para otros países, allí hay que permitirnos ser inclusivos e incluir absolutamente las sugerencias de los países que se consideran preocupados por algunos temas?

Entonces, lo más importante en una organización intergubernamental es ser una organización equilibrada, neutral, sin “double standards”, que se respeten a todos los países por igual. Y para lo cual, repito, los temas sensitivos no son exclusivos de un grupo de países sino que los temas sensitivos están para todos los países. Quiero concluir diciendo, soy constructivo como lo he sido siempre y

coherente como he sido siempre. No tengo ningún problema en retirar cada una de las sugerencias realizadas si los demás colegas hacen lo mismo.

La solución de compromiso es volver a la propuesta original suya, Presidente, y eso es tener códigos, ser coherentes y, sobre todo, actuar de buena fe que es, por lo menos, como yo quiero actuar y absolutamente creo que todos quieren actuar de buena fe. Repito, retiro si es acuerdo de todos, retiramos los puntos que hemos agregado con la excepción del compromiso que hemos hecho con Estados Unidos, que eran temas que hemos acordado incluir y eso es una solución de compromiso, también de buena fe que quiero respetar, pero luego volvemos a la posición original del señor Presidente.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I would also like to, for the sake of consistency, efficiency and flexibility, and at this very late hour and long agenda ahead of us, to fully support the subparagraph (a) proposed by you, Mr Chairperson. I encourage all Members who proposed a new subparagraph here to withdraw it, and we would like to thank His Excellency the Ambassador of Argentina for withdrawing his proposals and we request Germany and China to do so. Let us keep subparagraph (a) and move forward.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I indicated already in my last intervention that I am happy to go along with your original proposal with subparagraph (a).

CHAIRPERSON

As I see it, there is flexibility and cooperation to bring this matter to an end between Members and I thank all the Members. Could we then go back to my original proposal, which we call the “Mexican approach”? It is subparagraph (a), if it is agreeable, we can then go to paragraph 2 and then deal with (a), (b) and (c), which we had agreed during our Committee on Agriculture (COAG) item that these three issues would be dealt under Item 10, which is the Report of the Programme Committee.

Do I take it that subparagraph (a) and (b) would be okay with Members to move forward? Considering that both Germany and Argentina have shown flexibility and cooperation to move forward and to arrive at a consensus.

I see no requests for the floor, so subparagraphs (a) and (b) are okay with Members.

Now we go to paragraph 2, subparagraph (a). We can either take it subparagraph by subparagraph or just (a), (b) and (c). Let us take (a), (b) and (c) together. The floor is open.

Do I take it that there is no request on this, so we can adopt these three subparagraphs? There is no request from Members, so these three subparagraphs seem to be okay with Members and we can go forward.

Thank you, so much, all of you, Argentina, Germany, China, because this was your cooperation. Not only yours, but United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Sweden, and Egypt. It was needed to move forward because we have to go through quite a few other items.

Item 11. Reports of the 182nd (29-30 October 2020) and 183rd (9-13 November 2020) Sessions of the Finance Committee

Point 11. Rapports des cent quatre-vingt-deuxième et cent quatre-vingt-troisième sessions du Comité financier (29-30 octobre et 9-13 novembre 2020, respectivement)

Tema 11. Informes de los periodos de sesiones 182.º (29 y 30 de octubre de 2020) y 183.º (9-13 de noviembre de 2020) del Comité de Finanzas

(CL 165/11; CL 165/19)

Item 11.1 Audited Accounts – FAO 2019

Point 11.1 Comptes vérifiés – FAO 2019

Tema 11.1 Cuentas comprobadas de la FAO correspondientes a 2019

(C 2021/6 A; C 2021/6 B)

Item 11.2 Status of Current Assessments and Arrears

Point 11.2 Situation des contributions courantes et des arriérés
Tema 11.2 Estado de las cuotas corrientes y los atrasos
(CL 165/LIM/2)

CHAIRPERSON

We go to our next item. The next Item is Item 11, *Reports of the 182nd and 183rd Sessions of the Finance Committee*, held on 29-30 October and 10 and 13 November 2020 respectively. The Council is invited to note that the Report of the 182nd Session of the Finance Committee deals with World Food Programme (WFP) matters and has been considered by the WFP Executive Board.

This Item has two Sub-items, namely *Sub-Item 11.1: Audited Accounts – FAO 2019* and *Sub-Item 11.2: Status of Current Assessments and Arrears*. The documents before the Council are *CL 161/11*, *CL 165/19*, *CL 165/inf/6 rev 1*, *C 2021/6A*, *C 2021/6B* and *CL 165/LIM/2*. I draw your attention to document *CL 165/LIM/2* that sets out the status of contributions and arrears as of 23 November 2020.

Member Nations owe to FAO USD 123.11 million and EUR 86.30 million for 2020 and prior years, which represents 45.31 percent of current assessments. As at of 23 November 2020, the Organization had collected USD 187.26 million and EUR 122.46 million in respect of 2020 assessments. This represents 68.23 percent of US dollar assessments and 65.06 percent of Euro assessments, 66.79 percent consolidated.

During 2020, USD 9.26 million and EUR 5.46 million was received from Members in full settlement of arrears and USD 43.54 million and EUR 51.67 million was received in partial payments of arrears.

As of 23 November 2020, 33.21 percent of the 2020 assessed contributions still needed to be settled. This is an improvement when compared to the same period last year, which was 45.43 percent. Based on the latest information from Members about their expected payment dates, the Regular Programme cash level is expected to be sufficient to cover operational dates through the end of December 2020. Sixty-two Member Nations still had arrears outstanding from 2019 and previous years and 20 Member Nations owed arrears in such amounts as to jeopardise their right to vote, in accordance with Article III.4 of the Constitution.

The introduction to this Item by Ms Imelda Smolčić Nijers, Chairperson of the Finance Committee, has been circulated to you.

Introduction to Item 11: Reports of the 182nd and 183rd Sessions of the Finance Committee

Ms Imelda Smolčić Nijers, Chairperson of the Finance Committee

I am pleased to present the *Reports of the 182nd and 183rd Sessions of the Finance Committee*. These Reports are submitted to the Council in documents *CL 165/19* and *CL 165/11*, respectively. In addition, document *CL 165/LIM/2* provides Council with an update on the status of contributions and arrears as at of 23 November 2020.

The Council is requested to approve the *Reports of the 182nd and 183rd Sessions of the Finance Committee*.

While the 183rd Session dealt with FAO issues, the 182nd Session was a special session convened to deal with World Food Programme (WFP) matters. Our Report on WFP matters has also been submitted to the WFP Executive Board for its consideration.

The 183rd Session of the Finance Committee examined the financial position of the Organization, human resources, oversight and other matters within its mandate. These are presented in detail in document *CL 165/11*. I would like to highlight the following matters for which action is requested by the Council.

On the Committee's review of the Financial Position of the Organization, the Council is requested to urge Members to make timely and full payment of assessed contributions.

On the Committee's review of the Audited Accounts - FAO 2019, the Council is requested to endorse the Draft Resolution for adoption by the Conference of the FAO Audited Accounts 2019 as presented in paragraph 13 of document *CL 165/11*.

On the Committee's review of the FAO Oversight Advisory Committee Membership, the Council is requested to endorse the extension of the term of Mr Gianfranco Cariola on the FAO Oversight Advisory Committee for a further, final three years.

On the Committee's review of the Updated Terms of Reference of the FAO Oversight Advisory Committee, the Council is requested to endorse the proposed updated Terms of Reference.

Finally, the Council is requested to note the Financial Committee's guidance to Management on all other matters within its mandate and covered during the Committee's considerations at its 183rd Session.

I would be pleased to provide any further explanations you may have regarding our Reports.

CHAIRPERSON

With this, I open the floor for members to make their interventions.

Sra. Julia VICIOSO (República Dominicana)

La delegación de República Dominicana extiende sus felicitaciones a la presidenta Smolcic por su liderazgo al frente del Comité de Finanzas. Tomamos nota de los informes presentados, observando con satisfacción que la liquidez de la Organización sería suficiente para cubrir sus necesidades operativas por lo que queda del año. Deseamos también mencionar tres aspectos sobre recursos humanos.

Primero, resaltar la importancia del Plan De Acción Estratégico, sobre todo en el contexto de los presentes retos. Segundo, dar la bienvenida a la nueva Política De Diversidad e Inclusión para que la FAO cuente con una fuerza de trabajo más diversa y representativa. Y, tercero, subrayar los progresos realizados en materia de hostigamiento, acoso sexual y abuso de autoridad, al tiempo que alentamos que este ámbito continúe siendo una prioridad en todas las instancias de la Organización. Muchas gracias.

Sr. Benito JIMÉNEZ SAUMA (México)

Respecto al informe del 183.º período de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas permítame los siguientes comentarios. En su informe, el Comité de Finanzas hace mención a las recomendaciones formuladas por el Auditor Externo en su informe relativo al año 2019. Ese es un documento muy completo y nos complace que la Administración haya dado respuesta positiva a las recomendaciones del Auditor Externo.

De la amplia serie de recomendaciones quisiera enfatizar la relativa a la función de evaluación en la FAO y a la revisión de la carta de la Oficina de Evaluación en la Organización. Las recomendaciones del Auditor Externo en ese tema son relevantes para el trabajo de la Organización ya que solo con una función de evaluación independiente se genera valor agregado para los Estados miembros y para la FAO.

En nuestra opinión, apoyamos que la función de evaluación tenga una independencia estructural y funcional; reevaluar sus líneas de notificación. En este punto, creemos que debe reportar únicamente al Consejo, así como tener un presupuesto independiente del resto de la Organización. Además, la selección del titular de la oficina y su posible rescisión debería recaer también en el Consejo.

El Auditor Externo recomienda que el titular de esa oficina tenga un mandato único no renovable y estamos de acuerdo con esto. Asimismo, cabría revisar la pertinencia de los productos de evaluación, contar con un programa de trabajo multianual y flexibilidad en las modalidades de trabajo.

Nos complace que el proceso de revisión de la carta de la Oficina de Evaluación de la FAO se realizará durante 2021, así como otras recomendaciones propuestas por el Auditor Externo. Los Órganos Rectores las deben revisar a fines del año próximo, por lo que quedamos a la espera de las propuestas.

Respecto al plan de acción estratégico sobre recursos humanos, felicitamos a la Administración por este nuevo plan que responde a varias de las necesidades detectadas desde hace tiempo y que fue elaborado en consulta con representantes del personal. El rumbo que propone es el adecuado. No

obstante, queda pendiente resolver la elevada tasa de vacantes en la sede y en las oficinas descentralizadas, como se señala en el párrafo 15(e) del Informe del Comité de Finanzas. En este punto, creemos que debe haber un indicador clave de rendimiento para la tasa de vacantes y ajustarlo a la baja cada dos años, hasta llegar a un nivel similar al de otros organismos de la ONU.

Con esos comentarios, aprobamos el informe del 183. período de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas.

Mr Fei HUANG (China) (Original Language Chinese)

First of all, I would like to give the floor to the Delegate of Bangladesh to speak on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. I will speak afterwards.

Mr Manash MITRA (Bangladesh) (Observer)

Bangladesh has the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

The Asia Regional Group highly commends the excellent work carried out by the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, Ms Imelda Smolcic Nijers of Uruguay, and the Members of the Finance Committee with the support of the FAO Management and Secretariat.

The Asia Regional Group supports the views and recommendations in the *Report of 183rd Session of the Finance Committee* and would like to highlight the following points.

With regard to the financial position of the Organization, the Asia Regional Group is satisfied with the sufficient liquidity position of the Organization to the end of 2020 and encourages all Members to continue the timely payment of Assessed Contributions to continue to ensure the sound financial health of the Organization. The Asia Regional Group also encourages Management to look to the experience of other United Nations' organizations and the steps they are taking to address unfunded staff-related liabilities.

The Asia Regional Group concurs with the Committee's request for Management to continue its efforts to ensure full implementation of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) appropriations as approved by the Conference, and also welcomes the confirmation that the target of 100 percent delivery of TCP projects against the 2018-19 appropriation would be achieved by the end of 2021.

Regarding Human Resources (HR) management, the Asia Regional Group welcomes the development of the Human Resources Strategic Action Plan and appreciates the comprehensive process, also through consultations with key stakeholders. The Asia Regional Group encourages Management in its implementation of the HR Strategic Action Plan to ensure due consideration of streamlined and merit-based staff selection and recruitment processes, while considering the need for equitable geographical distribution and gender parity, in particular at senior level positions. The Asia Regional Group expresses concern about the high vacancy rate both in Headquarters and in Decentralized Offices, and requests Management to work to substantially reduce the vacancy rate.

The Asia Regional Group further wishes to join the Committee in expressing its appreciation to the outgoing External Auditor, the Commission on Audit of the Republic of the Philippines, for the excellent work and reports provided during its term of office.

With these comments, the Asia Regional Group endorses the *Reports of the Finance Committee*.

Mr Fei HUANG (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China aligns itself with the statement of the Asia Regional Group and takes note of the information on FAO's financial position and recommendations contained in the Finance Committee Report. China supports Member Nation's payment of their Assessed Contributions on time and in full, which is conducive to maintaining FAO's technical capacity and financial health. China welcomes Management's confirmation that the target of 100 percent delivery of TCP projects against the 2018-2019 appropriation will be achieved by the end of 2021.

China takes note of the discussion on the Human Resources Strategic Action Plan and geographic representation in the Finance Committee report. We encourage FAO to continue to step up and improve its work on better geographic representation, with a particular focus on addressing under-

representation. The Human Resources Strategy should fully reflect contributions made by Member Nations.

China supports making all Finance Committee documents available in all FAO official languages to guarantee Members' right to be informed and their participation. China is concerned that currently not all Finance Committee documents are provided in all official languages and requests the Secretariat to take effective measures to effectively ensure multilingualism.

Mr Toru HISAZOME (Japan)

Let me start by saying 'good morning' to colleagues in Tokyo and other capitals in Asia-Pacific. It is almost 06:00 hours in Tokyo and I would just recognize that four or five colleagues in Tokyo are online. I could say *Ohayōgozaimasu*. I have just said good morning in Japanese. It is a kind of multilingualism.

Japan aligns itself with the statement delivered by Bangladesh on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. I have some additional comments Japan would like to highlight.

Firstly, regarding Human Resources management, although Japan has serious concerns about the high vacancy rate, I thank Management for publishing the vacancy announcements, including senior positions, recently. Japan encourages Management not to excessively concentrate to decision making authority on Core Leadership Team in order to avoid malfunctioning of transparent governance and accountability.

As far as we understand, some Assistant Director-General (ADG) posts are vacant, and Japan is concerned about the implementation of high level missions or special tasks that are assigned to Assistant Directors-General (ADGs).

Last but not least, with regard to the oversight function of the Organization, Japan urges FAO to actively participate in the Chief Executives Board (CEB) processes for a coordinated and harmonized implementation of Recommendation 7 of the recent Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) report, JIU/REP/2020/1, on handling allegations of misconduct against the Executive Heads of the United Nations System organizations.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

Germany is honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States. We will provide only some specific comments on the Report of the 183rd Session of the Finance Committee.

The EU and its 27 Member States fully share the Committee's appreciation for the Report of the External Auditor for 2019, both regarding the unmodified audit opinion and for the valuable long form report. Based thereon, we agree that the Council should forward to the Conference the Draft Resolution by which the Conference will adopt the *Audited Accounts*.

Furthermore, we would like to express our satisfaction with the Human Resources Strategic Action Plan. This is an important step in finally fixing Human Resources management in FAO. We strongly support the Committee's request to substantially reduce the vacancy rate both at headquarters and in Decentralised Offices. We are looking forward to seeing the new Human Resources Annual Report at the next Session of the Council.

As to the post-Employee Satisfaction Survey Action Planning process, we would like to emphasise that such surveys have been proven effective in rebuilding sound staff management relations. Therefore, we underline the importance of extensively involving the Staff Representative Bodies in the analysis and interpretation of the survey results and the action planning process as recommended by the Committee.

Finally, we encourage Management to actively participate in the Chief Executives Board (CEB) processes for the coordinated development of procedures for handling allegations of misconduct against the Executive Heads of UN Organizations.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

We would like also to join other distinguished Delegates to commend the excellent work of the Chairperson of the Finance Committee and all the Members of the Committee and to commend their excellent Report. Egypt speaks on behalf of the Near East Group on this Item and we will limit our comments on *the Report of 183rd Session of the Finance Committee*.

The Near East Group took note that the Organization's cash liquidity is sufficient to cover the operational needs until the end of 2020 and we would like to encourage Members to pay their assessed contributions on time and in full to enable the Organization to implement its Programme of Work, especially during the unprecedented circumstances amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Near East Group encourages Management to implement the recommendations contained in the Report of the External Auditor in 2019, and the Audited Accounts within the set timeframe of 2021 based on the comments and the clarification by the External Auditor and Management. The Near East Group recommends that the Audited Accounts are submitted by the Council to the Conference for adoption.

The Near East Group emphasizes the need to address the increased time-lag and requests for Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) projects approval and the lower delivery of TCP projects against 2018-19 appropriations. We request Management to continue its efforts to enhance the efficiency and the impact of utilization of TCP funds as an important tool to support the developmental needs of developing countries in their endeavour to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this regard, we request Management to update us on the current unspent balance against the 2018-19 and 2020-21 TCP appropriations.

The Near East Group is grateful to Management for developing and presenting the Human Resources Strategic Action Plan 2020-2021 with specific timelines and results. We encourage Management, while implementing the Action Plan, to continue to give due attention to merit on staff selection and recruitment processes and enhance equitable geographical distribution and gender parity, in particular in senior level positions.

The Group looks forward to reviewing the Progress Report of the implementation of the Action Plan in the next Session of the Finance Committee in March 2021. The Near East Group appreciates Management's commitment to the zero-tolerance policy and to take measures to prevent sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse and we also welcome the updated versions of both the Action Plan on Prevention on Sexual Harassment and that on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, and the Group encourages Management to continue its efforts to address this issue.

In conclusion, the Near East Group supports the updated Terms of Reference of the FAO Oversight Advisory Committee and endorses the Director-General's recommendation for extending the term of office of its Members for the second term.

With these comments, the Near East Group approves the recommendations of the 183rd Session of the Finance Committee.

Sr. Gonzalo EIRIZ GERVÁS (España)

En cuanto a este tema del Comité de Finanzas, lo primero es mostrar nuestro apoyo total a la intervención alemana en nombre de la Unión Europea y de sus Estados miembros y hacer dos breves comentarios. El primero es decir que nos parece imprescindible que para aprovechar al máximo el potencial humano de la FAO y mantener, asimismo, su posición como referencia mundial, se deben incorporar las personas que sean necesarias en las vacantes que existen, tanto en sede como en las oficinas descentralizadas.

El segundo comentario era simplemente mostrar nuestra positiva valoración del plan de acción estratégico de recursos humanos del que esperamos ver sus frutos muy pronto.

Ms Agnes Rosari DEWI (Indonesia)

Indonesia aligns itself with the statement of the Asia Regional Group delivered by Bangladesh. Indonesia wishes to join the Committee in expressing its appreciation to the outgoing External

Auditor, the Commission on Audit of the Republic of the Philippines, for the excellent work and reports provided during its term of office.

With regard to the Organization's financial position, Indonesia endorses the recommendation of the Committee on timely payment of assessed contributions on the Audited Accounts for 2019 and the updated Terms of Reference of the FAO Oversight Advisory Committee and on the extension of the term of office of all Members of the FAO Oversight Advisory Committee.

Indonesia also takes note of the Committee's guidance provided to the Secretariat on all matters within its mandate.

Indonesia takes note of the views and recommendation of the Finance Committee in respect of matters considered by the second renegotiation of the World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Board. Indonesia praises the Independent Auditor's Report on Financial Statements for 2019 of FAO and acknowledges that the Organization has operated satisfactory systems of internal controls for the year 2019. Furthermore, Indonesia recommends Management to design support to the objectives of FAO's work to reinforce its accountability and transparency and to improve and add value to FAO's financial management and governance.

Indonesia also urges FAO to prepare or revise and roll out a Country Programming Framework (CPF) Training Module based on the new CPF Guidelines in order to continue engagement with Member Nations, the United Nations Country Teams and the Resident Coordinators in order to jointly formulate the UN's CPFs.

Ms Fiona PRYCE (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland would like to thank the Chairperson and all Members of the Finance Committee for their work and the final Reports including, most recently, of the November Session.

On the Audited Accounts, we very much support the recommendation that the Statement of Internal Control (SIC) should be further strengthened to include an update on the status of the Fraud Risk Management policy framework as well as the system of accountability and responsibility. We agree that the Audited Accounts for 2019 and the External Auditor's Report should be submitted to the Conference in 2021.

We are very pleased to hear about the progress being made in the area of Human Resources Management, encourage the implementation of the Human Resources Strategic Action Plan, and look forward to regular updates.

On the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Authority Abuse, we underline the importance of continued commitment from Senior Management. On reporting, it was positive to hear about the new internet page of the Ethics Office launched in April, providing information and contact details for FAO reporting channels. Could we check on how information on reporting channels for those outside the Organisation is communicated? The paper also mentions that the Office of Inspector General (OIG) is currently looking into upgrading their helpline systems by integrating them through an external provider. Could FAO share more on this?

Finally, we support the Committee's recommendations on the updated Terms of Reference of the FAO Oversight Advisory Committee, and the Director-General's recommendation of a final three-year term of a Member of the FAO Oversight Advisory Committee.

Ms Jennifer HARRIGH (United States of America)

The United States of America wishes to echo the comments made by many of our colleagues, specifically to thank FAO Management and our Chairperson of the Finance Committee for what we thought were very productive and efficient discussions at our recent Finance Committee meeting.

Like several others have said, we too are encouraged by the developments on the Human Resources front and we very much look forward to reviewing the Human Resources Annual Report next spring. This is an area very much confirmed to us. Staff are FAO's biggest asset and the biggest budget item.

CHAIRPERSON

That completes my list of speakers. I will now give the floor to the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, Ms Imelda Smolcic, followed by the Secretariat.

Sra. Imelda SMOLCIC (Presidente del Comité de Finanzas)

El único comentario que tengo que hacer al momento, y dada la hora, es solamente resaltar el nivel de diálogo que el Comité ha tenido con la Administración. En primer lugar, el Comité de Finanzas se ha adecuado al trabajo que hemos tenido, que dada la pandemia hemos hecho vía Zoom, y lo hemos hecho muy bien y en un sentido muy práctico, eficiente y profundo.

Por otro lado, quería destacar el nivel de diálogo que se ha desarrollado con la Administración que ha hecho que nuestro trabajo se haya visto mutuamente enriquecido. En ese sentido, tenemos mucha confianza de que esto pueda continuar de esta manera. Les agradezco muchísimo y ahora preferiría que la sesión continuara porque quedan muchos temas por abordar.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to Deputy Director-General, Ms Beth Bechdol.

Ms Beth BECHDOL (Deputy Director-General)

I will be very brief on just two topics because I believe that Deputy Director-General, Mr Laurent Thomas and our HR Director, Ms Greet De Leeuw, will add significantly to this Report.

I would repeat our continued commitment to working alongside Members on the continued evaluation of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP). I do want very specifically to respond to Egypt's question regarding current allocations and I would just point out that all of the current approvals and allocations by biennium are now posted on a regular basis on the new TCP website. I would encourage Members who have concerns about these issues to make sure that you visit the new website to look at the progress that is being made and to be in close coordination with us.

Currently, for the 2018-19 biennium, 66 percent of the allocation has been fully programmed and we are very confident that we are in full alignment with the anticipated projects that are in the pipeline to meet the full appropriation of programming. For the 2020-2021 biennium, 47 percent of the USD 136 million has been allocated. Again, we are feeling that the trajectories for both years' biennium are in a very good place.

I do want to say that it has been a real pleasure and an honour to be a part of the Employee Satisfaction Survey work that is a part of the ongoing and very foundational human resources cultural change work that is taking place here in this Organization and I have very much enjoyed coordinating that work with Ms Greet De Leeuw and really aligning the work of the Survey results in the newly formed Taskforce with the outstanding work that she has done in the larger corporate strategic planning efforts.

There was one specific question from Germany about the taskforce and the work and the connection in coordination with the Staff Representative Bodies. I can assure you that continued dialogue, as you heard in the Staff Representative Bodies presentation earlier today, is indeed very solid and is going in a very strong direction. We have two designated representatives from the Staff Representative Bodies on the 15-person Employee Satisfaction Taskforce and close coordination and communication is indeed taking place and we appreciate you underscoring the importance of that in our continued work of the Taskforce in its action planning.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to Ms Greet De Leeuw, the Director of Office of Human Resources, to respond to some of the remarks which were made on Human Resources issues.

Ms Greet DE LEEUW (Director, Office of Human Resources)

I would first of all like to start by thanking you all for your encouragement expressed here tonight. The Human Resources (HR) Strategic Plan, welcomed by Members and Staff Representatives alike, will

help us to prioritize and focus the work and report on progress made towards the implementation of the plan.

The Plan is only one element of culture change and I do enjoy working with Ms Beth Bechdol on the listening sessions and the action planning around the Employee Survey Results and also to work with Deputy Director-General, Mr Laurent Thomas on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment and authority abuse in coordination with the also relatively new Ethics Officer, Ombudsman, Inspector-General, and we are bringing together new practices in preventing and addressing misconduct and it is a very interesting discussion that we are having.

I believe there is a lot of opportunity to make FAO a better place to work, a priority of the Director-General. People management is a shared commitment and I look forward to working with everyone in moving this important agenda forward and I take note on the priorities expressed tonight on the vacancy rates, both in headquarters and Decentralized Offices, and the need for streamlined, merit-based recruitment policies and practices, taking into consideration gender parity and equitable geographical distribution.

CHAIRPERSON

We have come to the end of the discussions on this Item. Colleagues, I will summarize the conclusions. We have got one and a half hours left before this Session ends. If you agree, without creating a precedent, that I go with the Mexican approach again. Otherwise, we have got one and a half hours left for this Session and we have still got quite a few items.

I will read out the Mexican approach to this Item as well.

Item 11, *Reports of the 182nd and 183rd Sessions of the Finance Committee*.

1. The Council approved the *Reports of the 182nd and 183rd Sessions of the Finance Committee* and in particular:
 - a) Endorsed the observations and recommendations in the Report of the 183rd Session on the Status of Current Assessments in Arrears, the Financial Position of the Organization, the Technical Cooperation Programme, Human Resources Management, the 2019 Employee Satisfaction Survey, Terms of Reference of the FAO Oversight Advisory Committee, terms of Mr Gianfranco Cariola on the FAO Oversight Advisory Committee, implementation of the External Auditors and the FAO Oversight Advisory Committee Recommendations, the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) Reports and multilingualism; and
 - b) Looked forward to the reporting on the status of implementation of any related recommendations in the established manner.
2. The Council recommended the Draft Resolution for adoption by the Conference of the FAO Audited Accounts for 2019 as set out in Appendix of this Report.

That is the total summary. The floor is open for Members.

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

We want to have something that relates to the 182nd Session. Subparagraph (c) might say, "Noted that the reports of the 182nd Session that dealt with World Food Programme (WFP) matters was considered by the Second Regular Annual Session of the WFP Executive Board." It is just a statement of fact because we said we approve the two Reports but deal only with one.

Mr Benito JIMÉNEZ SAUMA (Mexico)

It is just a minor thing. Just put the full name of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) at the end of subparagraph (a).

CHAIRPERSON

I see no other requests for the floor. I take it that this text is approved.

Approved

Approuvé
Aprobado

Item 12. Report of the 111th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (26-28 October 2020)

Point 12. Rapport de la cent onzième session du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques (26-28 octobre 2020)

Tema 12. Informe del 111.º período de sesiones del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos (26-28 de octubre de 2020)

(CL 165/12)

CHAIRPERSON

Now we move to the next Item, Item 12, *Report of the 111th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters*. This was held on 26-27 October 2020 and the documents before you for this are CL 165/12, CL 165 INF/7 and CL 165/12 *Information Note 1*. The introduction by Ms Daniela Rotondaro, Chairperson of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM), has been circulated to you.

Introduction to Item 12: Report of the 111th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (26-27 October 2020)

Ms Daniela Rotondaro, Chairperson of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters

I am pleased to present to the Council the outcomes of the One Hundred and Eleventh Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) which was held from 26 to 27 October 2020.

As you all know the Session was convened virtually on an exceptional basis due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Italy and worldwide.

The CCLM followed the modalities applied to the CCLM's 110th Session, as reflected in the Note from the Chair (Annex 1 to CL 164/2) and agreed to suspend the rules that may be incompatible with the virtual meeting for the 111th Session, in accordance with Rule VII of the Rules of Procedure.

The CCLM considered document CCLM 111/2 *New Strategy for Engagement with the Private Sector* submitted to the CCLM under Rule XXXIV, paragraph 7 (m) of the General Rules of the Organization (GRO). The Committee was called to consider exclusively the legal and constitutional framework under which the New Strategy for Private Sector Engagement has been drafted and is currently still under development.

Based on a thorough presentation by FAO Management focusing on the overarching legal principles for FAO's engagement with the private sector, the CCLM welcomed, in the framework of its specific mandate, the work done in developing the Strategy as well as the ongoing extensive and inclusive consultations conducted with Members, the private sector and other stakeholders.

The Committee endorsed the overarching legal principles that should govern FAO's engagement with the private sector as reflected in document CCLM 111/2 with a view to preserving the legal and constitutional status of the Organization in accordance with its Basic Texts. Moreover, the Committee observed that, in balancing respective interests, FAO's goals should be prioritized, and UN values promoted.

The CCLM endorsed the need to maintain FAO's impartiality, integrity and reputation, through implementing due diligence mechanisms and risk management to uphold these legal principles and FAO's institutional framework. It encouraged consultations with Regions, Sub-regions and Members to ensure accountability and transparency and the fundamental role of the private sector in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda/SDGs.

The Committee underlined that the Strategy should closely follow and be consistent with UN system policies and reports. In light of the legal and constitutional status of the Organization, the Committee observed that, in balancing respective interests, FAO's goals should be prioritized, and UN values promoted.

The CCLM considered document *CCLM 111/3, Selection and Appointment of Secretaries of Article XIV Bodies*. It noted that this item had been considered at the 103rd, 106th, 107th, and 110th Sessions of the CCLM and had also been the subject of extensive consultations by the present Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC), Mr Khalid Mehboob, and his predecessor.

The ICC presented the outcome of his consultations with the Chairpersons of the three Statutory Bodies concerned and informal consultations with the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups. The CCLM noted the process had been on-going for quite some time, and welcomed the work undertaken by the ICC in his extensive consultations with a view to reaching a consensus on a lasting solution for the selection and appointment of Secretaries of Article XIV Bodies as soon as possible.

The Committee confirmed that the proposal presented by the ICC in Annex 3 to *CCLM 111/3* for the selection and appointment of Secretaries was consistent with the Basic Texts and the Constitution of FAO and relevant Article XIV Treaties.

The CCLM took note of document *CCLM 111/4 Activities of the Development Law Branch – Information report* providing information on the activities undertaken by the Development Law Service (LEGN) in support of the FAO mandate.

The Committee acknowledged the 25th anniversary of FAOLEX as an important milestone in the service provided to Members by the Legal Office. It highlighted the importance of sound legal frameworks and their effective implementation for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, also in times of emergency, and expressed appreciation for the contribution of LEGN to the Organization's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme, observing the importance of entrenching the One Health approach through strong legal frameworks in the context of the pandemic.

The CCLM took note of document *CCLM 111/5 Review of the jurisdictional set up of the United Nations common system (as per UN General Assembly Resolution 74/255B, paragraph 8) – Information report* presented by the Legal Office for information providing clarifications on the ongoing consultations internally as well as amongst the organizations of the UN System.

The CCLM took note of the complexity of this matter and welcomed the consultations with FAO Management and the Staff Representatives Bodies and looked forward to being informed on further developments.

The CCLM considered document *CCLM 111/6, Working Methods of the Conference: The General Committee*.

The ICC provided a presentation, in light of his mandate given by the 162nd Session of the Council to considering Working Methods of the Conference, including methods to enhance efficiency.

The Committee, having reviewed the General Rules of the Organization, observed that the General Committee is constituted upon election of its Members by the Conference, following a nomination by the Council. Accordingly, it considered that, pursuant to the FAO Basic Texts, the General Committee could not meet prior to the Conference.

Acknowledging the need for efficiency gains, the Committee suggested that nominees for the General Committee could meet informally prior to the Conference without the authority to take decisions or make recommendations.

Under *Any Other Matters*, the Committee acknowledged that the item on unspent balances would be considered by the next Joint Meeting of the Finance and Programme Committees after which the CCLM will be in the position to reconsider this Item.

CHAIRPERSON

The 111th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) addressed the new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement, which has been addressed under Item 4, so we will not reopen discussion on this under this Agenda Item. The CCLM also addressed the Working Methods of the Conference, which is addressed by this Council Session under Item 14, *Arrangements for the 42nd Session of the Conference*. Therefore, the Council will not address this subject under this Agenda Item.

The Council shall address the outstanding issue of the long-term procedures for the selection and appointment of Secretaries of Article XIV Bodies under this Agenda Item and my Interim Report to the Council is found in document *CL 165/INF/7*. I would also like to bring to your attention and error in the cover page of document *CL 165/12*, especially in paragraph 2 of the box entitled, “suggested action by the Council,” which is rectified in *CL 165/12, Information Note 1*.

Before opening the floor to Members, I would like the Legal Counsel, Ms Donata Rugarabamu, to explain the error and its solution. Legal Counsel, you have the floor. We cannot hear you, Ms Rugarabamu, there is a big disturbance.

Ms Daniela ROTONDARO (Chairperson of Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters)

If we cannot hear the Legal Counsel, would you like me to explain to the Members instead, so that we can proceed?

I would like to thank the Legal Counsel and the Secretariat of the CCLM for their effort in circulating *Information Note CL 165/12*, which is comprised of an Executive Summary, a suggested action box and the Report of the CCLM. This document reflects the formal conclusions which were adopted by the Committee.

In accordance with long-established practice, the Executive Summary and the suggested action by the Council are prepared by the Secretariat and attached to the Report. We have noticed that there has been a discrepancy in paragraph 2 under Item 3 concerning the *Selection and Appointment of the Secretaries of Article XIV Bodies*, as the language did not reflect the Report of the Committee. This is why we have this Information Note and I would please request Members of the Council to disregard the suggested action box and to consider the recommendations and conclusions of the Committee as set out in its Report.

CHAIRPERSON

Before I open the floor, perhaps I could also give just a slight background to the question of the appointment of Secretaries of Article XIV Bodies.

My Interim Report is set out in document *CL 165/INF/7* and it shows that these discussions have been carrying on since 2016. I inherited this issue from my predecessor and the main reason for this long-drawn-out consultation is that each time we have a discussion and exchange of views the Chairpersons of the Article XIV Bodies have to consult their Governing Bodies and those Governing Bodies meet at specific times in the year. We have to wait.

To give you an example, I once wrote at the end of February or March and received a reply that we will let you know once the Bureau meets. The Board Bureau met in September, so I got a reply in September, after almost eight months. However, when September came the Bureau could not agree and then I was told we will let you know when the Governing Body meets, which was another three months later. This is long and drawn out because the Chairpersons cannot give a decision, they have to have clearance of their Governing Bodies.

In these consultations, which have gone on for quite some time, and recently we had video conferences with them as well, there were two aspects which we always highlighted. One was the Director-General’s responsibilities as set out in the FAO Basic Texts, which the Legal Counsel always explained to the Chairperson and their team when they met with us. I also explained the Director-General’s accountability under the Rules and Regulations; accountability for the expenditure of these Article XIV Bodies and accountability for the performance of the Secretary of the Article XIV Bodies because the Secretary is a staff member of FAO and therefore the Director-General is responsible and accountable for his or her performance.

I finally made a compromise proposal, and that compromise proposal had the approval of FAO Management and this gave the Article XIV Bodies total involvement in every step of the recruitment process. For example, they were involved in the drafting of the vacancy announcement. A panel was envisaged and there were two representatives envisaged from the Governing Body side and two from FAO, plus an independent external member. This panel even reviewed the applications received to shortlist the applications for interview. They were involved in the Vacancy Announcement, in

reviewing the candidates to be interviewed and then as part of the Panel they interviewed the candidates. They shortlisted five candidates to submit to the Director-General. Out of those five, the Director-General nominated one or selected one and submitted it back to the Governing Body for approval. They had the final approval from the Vacancy Announcement to shortlisting of the candidates for interview, for interviewing of candidates, for preparing the Panel Report to the Director-General, the Director-General nominating one candidate for approval of the Governing Bodies. I do not see how they could be involved any further than that.

From one of the Bodies, I have not received a reply because they are waiting for their Governing Body to meet. One Body, which is the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), replied that they prefer to have the procedures they have at the moment, which are actually electing a Secretary. They elect a Secretary, but they are not accountable for the work of that Secretary, the Director-General of FAO is accountable. They did not agree with the compromise proposal. The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) did not agree with the proposal, they proposed their own amendments, which is listed in my document, so I will not take up the time.

What I am trying to say is that the compromise proposal which I made foresees the involvement of the Article XIV Body in every step of the recruitment process, including the final approval. I am submitting this to the Council for further guidance on whether we can go ahead with the compromise proposal, or whether the Council like that these consultations should continue. It seems like a parallel run, there does not seem to be any meeting point.

With these few comments, I open the floor to Members to discuss the Report of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) and subsequently the Article XIV Bodies.

Mr Mohammad AL SHABBAR (Jordan) (Original Language Arabic)

The Kingdom of Jordan wishes to take the floor on behalf of the Near East Group. The Group endorses the conclusions of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters following the deliberations at its 111th Session and as set out in document CL 165/12.

On the selection and appointment of Secretaries of Article XIV Bodies, our Group deems that the process adopted by some of these Bodies to select Secretaries by vote or by electing a Member of the Body limits FAO's role, and contradicts the provisions of the Treaty that set out these Bodies and the Basic Texts of FAO, as well as practice in the United Nations for similar Bodies.

The Group also supports the conclusions of the CCLM *vis a vis* the proposal in Annex 3 of the document CCLM 111/3 regarding the selection and appointment of Secretaries, which is in line with the Basic Texts of FAO.

We would like to thank the Independent Chairperson of the Council for all of his efforts during the consultations that were carried out with Management and the Article XIV Bodies involved. We also encourage these consultations to continue to conclude this matter as soon as possible.

Onto constitutional and legal matters and the new Strategy for Engagement with the Private Sector, we would like to stress the need to ensure a balance between taking into consideration the Organization's neutrality and the need to preserve its reputation whilst also encouraging engagement with the private sector. This would prioritize the values of the United Nations and the activities of the Organization while engaging with the private sector. We also stress the timing of this Strategy for Engagement with the Private Sector to encourage and drive forward sustainable development as well as mobilizing knowledge of technology and tools.

The principles set out in the new Strategy are exhaustive and allow us to preserve a reputation of transparency and integrity so that we can ensure a balance between crisis management and encouraging participation and cooperation with the private sector. We are mindful that we have learned lessons in this area through the long track record of the whole United Nations System and Specialized Agencies, and the experience of FAO itself.

Lastly, our Group would like to express its endorsement for the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters regarding nominees of the General Committee being able to meet before the Conference. This is because their election is only made official in the first Plenary Session of the

Conference and any such meetings before the Conference do not grant them any decision-making powers.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

First of all, we take note of the clarifications provided by the Secretariat on the Executive Summary in document CL 165/12 and note the corrections made. We regret the very late stage at which the Secretariat of FAO corrected this mistake despite several reminders from Members of the CCLM. In order to avoid such issues in the future, we recommend that the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) Report follows the same presentation format used in the Programme Committee and Finance Committee Reports, which provide only a very succinct Executive Summary and suggest endorsing the recommendations of the Committee.

We acknowledge that the CCLM endorsed the overarching legal principles that should govern FAO's engagement with the private sector, as reflected in document CCLM 111/2. We appreciate that the CCLM emphasized that when engaging with the private sector, FAO's goals should be prioritized, and the values of the United Nations promoted.

We also note that the CCLM pointed out the need to strengthen safeguards in mechanisms to maintain FAO's impartiality, integrity and reputation and emphasized the importance of due diligence mechanisms and risk management to uphold these legal principles and FAO's institutional framework. We also welcome the CCLM's view that the new private sector Strategy should closely follow and be consistent with United Nations System policies and reports.

We note that the CCLM confirmed that the last proposal by the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) on the selection and appointment of Secretaries of Article XIV Bodies was consistent with the Basic Texts and the Constitution of FAO and relevant Treaties establishing Article XIV Bodies.

In light of the need for further consultations between the Independent Chairperson of the Council and the Chairpersons of the relevant Bodies on elements of the ICC's proposal, we strongly support the CCLM's conclusion to encourage the ICC to advance his consultations with the Article XIV Bodies concerned and FAO's Management with a view to enabling the Council to reach a conclusion on this matter soon.

We take note of the update on the activities of the Development Law Service and encourage its increased cooperation with other Rome-based Agencies (RBAs). We also note the information referring to the review of the jurisdictional setup of the United Nations Common System.

Finally, we appreciate that even though the General Committee of the Conference cannot meet before the Conference, the CCLM suggested the possibility of an informal meeting of the nominees for the General Committee before the Conference without the authority to take decisions or make recommendations.

Mr Caka Alverdi AWAL (Indonesia)

Indonesia has the honor to deliver this joint statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. The Asia Group appreciates the excellent presentation of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) Chairperson, Ambassador Daniela Rotondaro. The Asia Group also expresses its appreciation to the CCLM Members, the Legal Counsel, and the FAO Secretariat for their efficient work.

On the discussions on FAO's new Strategy for Engagement with the Private Sector, the Asia Group welcomes the endorsement by the CCLM of the overarching legal principles to govern FAO's engagement with the private sector. We agree that FAO should make clear, well-defined rules on its business sector engagement, consistent with its Basic Texts, UN values and international agreements.

On the proposal for the selection and appointment of Secretaries of Article XIV Bodies, the Asia Group appreciates the consultations and discussions pursuant to the Council direction. The Asia Group agrees with the CCLM that the proposal is consistent with the Basic Texts and Constitution of FAO

and relevant Treaties establishing Article XIV Bodies. The Asia Group likewise supports the changes to the proposal made by the Independent Chairperson of the Council ICC. It looks forward to reaching a conclusion on this matter.

On the working methods of the Conference, the Asia Group fully agrees with the CCLM that, pursuant to the Basic Texts, the General Committee cannot meet prior to the Conference because the General Committee is constituted only upon the election of its Members by the Conference. The Asia Group, however, notes the CCLM's suggestion that, for purposes of efficiency, nominees for the General Committee could meet informally prior to the Conference but without the authority to make decisions or recommendations. The Group also wishes to highlight that the Committee should be grounded on the mandate of FAO's Conference as the highest decision-making authority of the Organization.

The Asia Group acknowledges the contributions of the Development Law Service (LEGN) of the Legal Office, particularly in the Organization's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme. We agree that sound legal frameworks and collaboration with various stakeholders would further facilitate the effective implementation of the Programme and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Asia Group also welcomes the ongoing review of the jurisdictional set up of the United Nations Common Systems.

With the comments above, the Asia Regional Group endorses Council's approval of the Report of the 111th Session of the CCLM.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

Australia welcomes the clarification provided at the beginning of this Agenda Item that Council is not being asked to endorse the recent proposal put forward by the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) to the relevant Article XIV Bodies for their consideration.

With regard to this matter, Australia acknowledges the efforts of the ICC and notes the good progress that has been made over recent months. Australia also welcomes advice from the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) that the most recent proposal put forward by the ICC to the relevant Article XIV Bodies for consideration is consistent with the Basic Texts. We understand that some of the details of the ICC's proposal, such as the number of representatives involved in the selection process and on the interview-panel remain subject to further discussion between the ICC and the Chairpersons of relevant Bodies.

We also understand that alternative proposals may have been put forward by the Article XIV Bodies and that, subject to legal review, these proposals may be equally consistent with the Basic Texts. We therefore encourage the ICC to continue to prioritize these consultations over the coming few months. While we trust a consensus position can be reached imminently, in the event that it is not, we would request that the ICC present a paper in advance of the 166th Session of the Council, which clearly outlines the areas where consensus can not be reached, along with any information on any alternative proposals made. This approach would allow Council Members to reach an informed decision with a view to finalizing this long-standing issue.

Finally, as was raised during the CCLM discussions, and notwithstanding the information presented by the Legal Counsel at this meeting, Australia respectfully requests consideration by the Council to recommend that once agreed, and subject to the approval of other Article XIV Bodies, the selection and appointment process be streamlined across all Article XIV Bodies.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

We would like to express our appreciation to the Chairperson of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) and took note of the clarification made at the beginning of the discussion of this Report.

We would like also to express our appreciation for the consultations led by the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) with FAO Management and Article XIV Bodies to reach a consensus on the selection process of the Secretaries of Article XIV Bodies.

In our capacity as one of the Contracting Parties to the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) we would like to limit our intervention on the selection and appointment of the Secretaries of the Article XIV Bodies.

We would like to stress that Egypt supports the maintenance of the current procedures for selection and appointment of the Secretaries of Article XIV Bodies, which we believe guarantees the active involvement of all Contracting Parties throughout the entire selection process. We also support the conclusion of the CCLM to request the ICC to advance consultations with all the Article XIV Bodies, and also with the FAO Management, to reach a consensus or a satisfactory solution to the selection process of the Secretaries of the Article XIV Bodies.

Sr. Gonzalo EIRIZ GERVÁS (España)

En lo relativo al Informe del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos (CCLM), queremos manifestar los siguientes puntos. El primero es nuestro total apoyo a la intervención de Alemania en nombre de la Unión Europea y sus Estados miembros. Segundo punto es que aceptamos con alivio la intervención que nos ha facilitado la embajadora Rotondaro y felicitamos al Presidente Independiente del Consejo por la labor realizada, así como, aceptamos también la nota informativa al respecto, por la que se rectifica el documento inicial.

Adicionalmente proponemos a la Secretaría, como ya se ha dicho antes por otros intervinientes, que las partes del resumen ejecutivo y medidas que se proponen en el Consejo sigan los mismos principios que los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas.

En lo que se refiere a la estrategia del sector privado, y apreciando mucho los avances que se están haciendo en este campo, creemos que es fundamental y en ello coincidimos plenamente con las conclusiones del Comité que se mantenga la independencia y la reputación de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura (FAO), puesto que son uno de sus mayores capitanes. También que la estrategia debería ajustarse estrechamente a las políticas y a los informes del sistema de Naciones Unidas y guardar coherencia con ellos.

En relación con el procedimiento de selección y nombramiento de los secretariados de los organismos del artículo 14, apoyamos firmemente la conclusión del Comité de animar al Presidente Independiente del Consejo a continuar el diálogo con, por una parte, los organismos del artículo 14 implicados y, por otra parte, con la gerencia de la FAO para llegar a un acuerdo lo antes posible.

Por último, indicar que valoramos muy positivamente el informe sobre las actividades de la Subdivisión de Derecho para el Desarrollo y animamos a dicha subdivisión a continuar con su colaboración con otras organizaciones, particularmente con las que tienen sede en Roma.

Por último, agradecer los esfuerzos de la Presidenta del CCLM, la embajadora Rotondaro, durante estas semanas en estos temas.

Sr. José Teófilo ESONO ASANGONO (Equatorial Guinea)

La República de Guinea Ecuatorial hace esta alocución conjuntamente con la hermana República de Gabón en nombre de los países del Grupo Africano, los cuales acogen con beneplácito el Informe del 111.º período de sesiones del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos de la FAO, celebrado del 28 al 27 de octubre último. Felicitamos a la embajadora Daniela Rotondaro por la brillante aclaración que ha hecho al Comité y así como la forma que había conducido los debates durante las deliberaciones virtuales del Comité, al propio tiempo que felicitamos a los miembros por sus capacidades de negociación para acercar posiciones y llegar a las conclusiones que nos han presentado.

Manifestamos nuestra satisfacción en el sentido de que el Comité ha respaldado los principios jurídicos generales que deben regular la colaboración de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura (FAO) con el sector privado, ya que el sector privado tiene intereses lucrativos que son contrapuestos con los intereses humanitarios que persiguen los organismos del sistema de Naciones Unidas. Uno de los problemas que hemos podido observar en la colaboración del sector privado con los organismos internacionales es que dicho sector a veces trata de influenciar en las decisiones para sacar máxima rentabilidad por lo que debemos evitar que eso suceda en la FAO.

En este contexto los países africanos apreciamos la decisión del Comité que, cuando hace referencia, le da prioridad a los valores de la FAO y los de las Naciones Unidas en colaboración con el sector privado.

Por último, el Grupo Africano expresa su preocupación sobre el tiempo que está transcurriendo para encontrar una solución de avenencia a la cuestión del nombramiento de los secretarios de los órganos establecidos bajo el artículo 14 y sugiere seguir negociando para encontrar una solución definitiva que sea viable, duradera, sostenible y sustentable sobre este espinoso tema, ya que como acababa de decir el señor Presidente, es un tema que venimos arrastrando desde 2016 y habida cuenta que cada año se celebran dos consejos, es decir, de 2016, estamos finalizando el 2020, estamos contando con que han transcurrido ocho sesiones del Consejo. Un tema así necesita una solución.

Por último, por todo lo antes expuesto, el Grupo Africano respalda la aprobación del Informe del 111.º período de sesiones del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos de la FAO, así como las medidas que se proponen al Consejo.

Ms Agnes Rosari DEWI (Indonesia)

Indonesia aligns itself to the statement of the Asia Regional Group. Indonesia welcomes the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) Chairperson, Ambassador Daniela Rotondaro, for her presentation, and also the explanation made earlier in the Session. We also extend our appreciation to the CCLM Members, the Legal Counsel, and the FAO Secretariat for their hard work.

On the FAO's new Strategy for Engagement with the Private Sector, we agree with CCLM that the overarching legal principles that govern FAO's engagement should preserve the legal and constitutional status of the Organization in accordance with its Basic Texts. We also underline, when engaging with the private sector, FAO's goals should be prioritized, and UN values and principles should be fully adhered to. We recognize the important role and contribution of the private sector in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and that the FAO efforts to engage with the private sector should also aim at realizing the SDGs, including SDG 2.

On the proposal for the selection and appointment of Secretaries of Article XIV Bodies, we welcome the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC)'s words and support the outcomes of his consultations with a view to reaching a consensus on a lasting solution for the selection and appointment of Secretaries of Article XIV Bodies. We look forward to the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) furthering his consultations to reach a convergence of views among Members and hope the Council can reach consensus on this matter at its earliest convenience.

On the Working Methods of the Conference, we fully support the opinion that, pursuant to the Basic Texts, the General Committee cannot meet prior to the Conference because the General Committee is constituted only upon the election of its Members by the Conference. Nevertheless, we also support CCLM's view that, for purposes of efficiency, nominees to the General Committee could meet informally prior to the Conference but without the authority to make decisions or recommendations. We note with appreciation the contributions of the Development Law Service (LEGN) of the Legal Office, particularly in the Organization's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme. We support that the sound legal frameworks would further facilitate the effective implementation of the Programme and the achievement of SDGs.

With those comments, Indonesia supports the adoption of the Report of the 111th Session of the CCLM by the Council.

Ms Alison STORSVE (United States of America)

The United States of America is prepared to approve the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) Report of its 111th Session, so I will keep my comments to your specific question regarding the proposal for the selection of Secretaries of the Article XIV Bodies. Like others, the United States of America appreciates the long-standing consultations conducted by the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) and your work to find a proposal that ensures the Members' role in the process. I would like to echo our support for the CCLM conclusions on this matter and I can

underline and support the intervention made by Australia as a prudent way forward and urge continued consultations in this regard.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

We fully endorse the recommendations of the Report of the CCLM, so we will restrict our comments on the selection and appointment of the secretaries of the Article XIV Bodies and welcome the extensive consultations that the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) has conducted so far with a view to reaching a long-lasting solution.

We fully subscribe to the points that were made by Australia, which we will not reiterate here for the sake of time. We also support the Committee's suggestion that nominees of the General Committee meet prior to the Conference, not only for efficiency gains, but also for better preparation for the General Committee's deliberations based on past experience.

CHAIRPERSON

That brings us to the end of Members speakers. I now give the floor to the Chairperson of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) to respond to any points that Members made.

Ms Daniela ROTONDARO (Chairperson of Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters)

I will be very brief. First of all, as you know, the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) was the first Committee that held its Sessions virtually. I really would like to thank all the Members of CCLM for their flexibility, for their support and open and constructive dialogue. Moreover, I also would like to thank the Legal Counsel and CCLM Secretary for their support in all the preparations and work that we have conducted. I also take the opportunity to thank all the Members and delegations that have intervened and have supported the work of the CCLM and its conclusions and findings.

There was just a question by Germany on behalf of the European Union. I would like to respond to those concerns and inform that we have already planned that our next Session on the Agenda will contain the working methods of the CCLM, including the procedure to align our Report to that of the other Committees such as the Finance Committee and Programme Committee. Thank you very much to all the Members for their support and for approving the findings and conclusions of the Committee.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Legal Counsel.

Ms Donata Mary RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

My sincere apologies to you, Chairperson and indeed to the Members. I have been testing the system throughout the day and then the one time I really needed it, it did not work, but that is the way. I also express my gratitude to the Chairperson of the CCLM for stepping in in this regard. I just wanted to address a couple of the points that were raised during the consideration of this Item.

As the Chairperson has mentioned, we have already discussed the changes to the established practice of the CCLM *vis a vis* its Report. You can rest assured that this matter will be addressed carefully by the CCLM.

Moving to the substance of the matter of the selection and appointment of the Article XIV Body Secretaries, in that regard, the position at the moment is very much being guided by the Basic Texts which inform the content of the Treaties; the legal instruments which established these Bodies.

The focus has been therefore on three of the Bodies whose methods of selection were not compatible with the Basic Texts. I would recommend bearing in mind the framework within which we operate, that the way forward continues to be guided by the Basic Texts of the Organization and I would invite Members to consider the particular instruments that are in fact framing the operations and the existence of these Bodies when looking at this matter.

Finally, I would just like to welcome and thank Members for their expressions of support for the work of the Development Law Service. This we believe is an important contribution to our Members that we can provide valuable support and we look forward to doing so in the future, particularly in the

wider context of the work that is now beginning to be developed in the context of the new Strategic Framework and the various strategies and guidelines that are going forward at this moment in time.

Thank you Chairperson, Members of the Council for your valuable comments and guidance.

CHAIRPERSON

That completes the discussions under this Item. I will read out my conclusions, bearing in mind that quite a few of the items in the Report had been considered under other Agenda Items and Members' comments had been reflected in the conclusions or in the Draft Report of that Item.

Item 12 *Report of the 111th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters*, 26 - 28 October 2020.

1. The Council approved the Report of the 111th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) and in particular:

- a) Appreciated the update provided by the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC). And commended the ICC for the consultations undertaken with the Members and the Chairpersons of the Bodies established under Article XIV of the Constitution towards long-term procedures for the appointment of Secretaries to these Bodies among the parties concerned, noting that the matter has been subject of review by governing bodies and consultations by the ICC since 2016.
- b) Concurred with the view of the CCLM that the proposal for the selection and appointment of Secretaries set out in Annex 1 to *CL 165/12* is consistent with the Basic Texts and the Constitution of FAO and relevant treaties establishing Article XIV Bodies.
- c) Requested the ICC to continue his consultations on the revised procedures for the Selection and Appointment of Secretaries of Article XIV Bodies as set out in Annex 1 to documents *CL 165/12* with a view to finding a lasting solution. Agreeable to the concerned Article XIV Bodies and the FAO Management or Secretariat and submit a paper to the 166th Session of the Council outlining areas on which consensus may be reached or otherwise.
- d) Supported the endorsement of the overarching legal principles that should govern FAO's engagement with the private sector as reflected in documents *CCLM 111/2*, underlined that the strategy should closely follow and be consistent with you and system policies and reports and highlighted the need to strengthen safeguards and mechanisms to maintain FAO's impartiality, integrity and reputation.
- e) Welcomed the assistance provided by Members to Members by the Development Law Branch in particular, its contribution to the organization's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme and emphasize the importance of sound legal frameworks and their effective implementation for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

That ends the list of my conclusions. I will open the floor for Members to provide the comments.

I see no request for the floor. I take it that the Members agree to these.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

Is it correct that it is only since 2016 that this matter has probably been in the hands of the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC)? She said 2016 but these matters have been under discussion since probably 2011 or 2012, I do not know, where it was put in the hands of the ICC. The ICC started to negotiate in 2016, but I remember this was discussed in the Finance Committee in 2011 when I was Chair.

The second thing, what I wanted to change there is that there should be wording that it is in the hands of the ICC since 2016 but has been considered by the Governing Bodies much further back than 2016. I do not know if there is a suggestion for language, which we would appreciate.

On the same matter, the reference to Annex 1 is okay for me, concurring with the view of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) that the proposal for the selection and appointment of Secretary set out in Annex 1 is consistent with the Basic Texts and the Constitution of

FAO. Now, how can we make that available to the hands of the relevant Bodies? It was a terrible discussion in the International Treaty, which we had for two subsequent Governing Bodies, so I do not know and think that they would never accept that.

For me, as a Council, we can say that the ICC should use other means and should give the ICC some powers to negotiate. I do not have anything to suggest here, but I just wanted to share this experience that it is a very, very difficult issue in the hands of the ICC. We can probably agree with what is there now and continue the discussion to hear what other people have to say. I will probably come back.

CHAIRPERSON

If I understood your point correctly with regard to subparagraph (b), is how would Annex I be made available to Article XIV Bodies; am I correct in my understanding?

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

That is the correct understanding because they have never accepted anything where they do not have the final say.

CHAIRPERSON

No, we have shared the Annex I with the Chairpersons, because the Annex I is the Revised Procedures and it is the first time a compromise procedure has been proposed. Before, it has been proposed but rejected by either side. For example, it would be of interest for you to know that the Plant Genetics Treaty. The Chairperson came to me and suggested that we should follow the procedures, which they, the treaty, follow with United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). I said, I referred that to FAO's Management and FAO's Management was sympathetic to agreeing to follow the procedures which the treaties following with UNEP.

Now UNEP procedure is much worse than the compromise procedure I have proposed. For example, they do not get involved in the shortlisting of candidates for interview. They are in the panel with two members from the Governing Body, and no limit from the Management side on the interview panel. The interview panel's report is submitted to the Director-General of UNEP who makes the final decision while according to my compromise procedure, the panel submits five candidates to the Director-General. The Director-General nominates one and sends it to the Governing Body for final approval. They have accepted a procedure in UNEP, which is less beneficial to them than the FAO procedure, which I have proposed.

This is the type of, for example, when the UNEP procedure, which is enforced between the Treaty and UNEP, when it is submitted to the Bureau of the Treaty, with the information that I feel would be sympathetic. The Bureau refused the panel of two plus two and proposed that they would like a panel of one person from each region, which would have made seven members from the Governing Body, seven Members from FAO. I think 14 members in an interview panel is almost unheard of.

These are the sort of tos and fros have been going on and this is the first time when I proposed an overall procedure and that has been shared with the chairpersons. The Chairpersons informed me, that they have to consult their Governing Bodies on it. Probably with the treaty, the consultation still has to take place. The other two have done it and one has rejected it. One has come with the revised proposal, which we will discuss further with them. At the moment, they have that process, but when you met them, maybe they did not have it.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I would like to suggest that the last sub-paragraph under sub-paragraph (e) reads as follows: "appreciated the fact that, even though the General Committee of the Conference cannot meet prior to the Conference, the Committee on Constitutional and the Legal Matters (CCLM), suggested the possibility of an Informal Meeting of the nominees without the authority to take decisions or make recommendations".

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

Just a minor amendment to subparagraph (c) to introduce further specificity as I raised in my intervention. For the very last line of subparagraph (c) after the word 'areas', we add or we modify it

such that it reads 'areas where consensus cannot be reached, along with information on any alternative proposals made'.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I would like to thank the distinguished delegates from Cameroon, Australia and Germany for their proposals and we can support them. Hopefully we will not open Pandora's Box again and, it is 23:30 hours right now, and we need to move forward.

CHAIRPERSON

Could we move forward with these amendments shown in red? I see no request for the floor. Therefore, these conclusions are approved with the amendments in red. I thank the Members for their cooperation and flexibility to move forward since we are running out of time.

Approved

Approuvé

Aprobado

Item 17. World Food Programme

Point 17. Programme alimentaire mondial

Tema 17. Programa Mundial de Alimentos

Item 17.1 Election of Six Members of the WFP Executive Board

Point 17.1 Élection de six membres du Conseil d'administration du PAM

Tema 17.1 Elección de seis miembros de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA

(CL 165/17.1; CL 165/LIM/3)

Item 17.2 Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board on its activities in 2019

Point 17.2 Rapport annuel du Conseil d'administration du PAM sur ses activités en 2019

Tema 17.2 Informe anual de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA sobre sus actividades en 2019

(CL 165/17.2)

I now go to the next Item, which is Item 17, which concerns the World Food Programme (WFP) matters under Sub-Item 17.1. The Council is requested to elect Six Members to the WFP Executive Board, the documents before Council, our *CL 165/17.1* and *CL 165/LIM/3*.

Before commencing, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the General Counsel and Director of the Legal Office of the World Food Programme, Mr Bartolomeo Migone, as well as Mr Phillip Ward, Secretary of the Executive Board of WFP. I will now give an update on the candidates listed in documents *CL 165/LIM/3*, for List A, there is one candidate for one seat, Morocco. For List C, there are two candidates for two seats, Guatemala, and Brazil. For List D, there are two candidates for two seats, Norway and Denmark.

For list E, there is one candidate for one seat Hungary.

I should like to draw your attention to correspondence from the Chairperson of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC), regarding an agreement that has been reached on the sharing of terms of office. As a result of the agreement mentioned in documents *CL 165/LIM/3*, Guatemala and Argentina will share a seat for the period 2021-2023, with Guatemala serving from 1 January 2021 until 31 December 2021 and Argentina occupying the seat for the remainder of the mandate. Brazil and Guatemala will share the second vacancy in this seat, with Brazil serving from 1 January 2021 until 31 December 2022 and Guatemala will occupy the seat for the remainder of the mandate.

Given that we have the same number of nominations as seats to be filled for List A, C, D and E. I propose that the Council appoint these countries by clear general consent. Therefore, would the Council agree to appoint by consent? I see no requests, so the Council is agreed to appoint these Members. I wish to congratulate all the newly elected WFP Executive Board Members and wish them well for the work that lays ahead of them. I also wish to thank the WFP Secretariat Members for having joined us today for this Item.

Item 21. Any Other Matters**Point 21. Questions diverses****Tema 21. Asuntos varios****CHAIRPERSON**

I now move to Item 21 - *Any other matters*

This is the last Agenda Item of the 165th Session of the Council to be addressed in virtual as the remaining Agenda Items have been addressed through the written correspondence procedure, and the Council will address only the conclusions for these Items after we conclude Item 21- *Any other matters*.

As pointed out on Monday morning under Item 1, Sub-Item 21.1, *Statement to the Council on behalf of the Staff Representatives* was added to the Agenda, and the staff representatives have made that statement. That concludes Item 21. This concludes Item 21.1, and I would like to give the floor to the Secretary-General to provide a clarification on one issue.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

It was simply to reiterate that there was an agreement to come back under this Item on the matter of efficient conduct of virtual meetings. In this regard, to perhaps put up the text that was suggested by Germany earlier on with your permission.

CHAIRPERSON

I think I will read out the text because they may be Members, non-English speaking through interpretation they could understand. Item 21, *Any Other Matters*, paragraph 1

1. The Council
 - a) noted the challenges to the efficient conduct of virtual meetings of governing bodies and underscored the need to reduce the number of Agenda Items for virtual sessions. In particular, the number of items scheduled per day.
 - (b) urged review of the setting of Agenda and Timetables of the Council and its Committees.
 - (c) requested the Independent Chairperson of the Council to undertake such review before the 166th Session of the Council, within the context of discussions on the methods of work of the Council in his informal meetings with Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups.

Item 21.1 was *Statement by the Representative of the Staff Bodies*. Mr Jacob Skoet, current President of the Association of Professional Staff in FAO, made a statement on behalf of the FAO Staff Representative Bodies. I now open the floor for Members to comment.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I thank the Secretary-General of the Council Secretary; I think this is a very good wording, it captures exactly what we had in mind. We would approve that.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

I believe that the drafting is good, but I am a bit puzzled here with the edge review of the setting of the Agenda and Timetable. We are referring to specific or difficult circumstances due to the COVID-19, which is taking notes to conduct virtual meetings. This is just simply the second experience. The first one was very conclusive, but this one was much more difficult. I do not know if we are well positioned now, or we can take an informed decision on something that we have not experienced enough.

That is my problem, because if we add elements of analysis to say, what are the challenges? We do not know them. Is it a matter of the volume of the items or the number of items? Or is it a matter of streamlining the presentation and the discussion of the items? What is it? That, you know, what are those challenges? I perfectly understand what is behind it, but still I am still puzzled because I am not so sure that we have done a good analysis of what it is at stake here. However, we can go along with this if the Council so decides.

As a trial, to see if there could be some conclusive discussion initiated by an Independent Chairperson of the Council to undertake that review. However, I will take, I am sure you have the terms of reference of that review yourself, Mr Chairperson of the Council to be distributed prior to undertaking the review for adoption.

CHAIRPERSON

This whole problem as it has arisen because of the meetings taking place in virtual modality. I think that was the point raised in the beginning by Germany, and which I concurred with. The classic case is today, this Council, we are running far behind. It is setting the Agenda and Timetables it is during this period of virtual modality. That is my understanding. Any comments from Members?

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

I want to understand whether it is the procedure of setting the Agenda or a Timetable, because we know the procedure of setting the Agenda and a Timetable. What are we reviewing here? I need to understand. I am a little bit puzzled, pardon me if I am dragging a little bit, but at this hour, we might be very slow at understanding some difficult matters.

CHAIRPERSON

I do not think it is the Agenda setting because the process for Agenda setting is the Director-General in consultation with the Chairperson, as it were. I thought the point highlighted or raised by Germany this morning was because of the virtual modality of these meetings. His suggestion was that the Items should be less than what they are on the Agenda. That was my understanding, but I can ask Germany to confirm or to amend that.

I give the floor to the Dominican Republic, followed by Germany and then India and then Mexico.

Sr. Mario ARVELO (República Dominicana)

Muy brevemente, me va a perdonar no poner la cámara porque estoy con otro Zoom ahora en paralelo con la Cancillería, avisé que me iba a retirar un momentito, entonces no me puedo desconectar de allí, pero es para decirle rápidamente que, yo entiendo lo que dice Camerún y entiendo lo que dice usted también. Nosotros tenemos que preguntarnos como Consejo, ¿estamos nosotros ahora pidiendo que queremos cambiar el modo de trabajar del Consejo? Las modalidades de trabajo del Consejo. Cómo se aprueba el programa, quién la presente, cómo se decide el contenido de la agenda.

Entonces, si de eso es lo que estamos hablando, entonces estamos hablando de modificar la constitución de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura (FAO). Hay que convocar al Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos. Hay que convocar una sesión especial del Consejo, hay que cubrir unos plazos que son de 120 días para convocar un período de sesiones extraordinario de la Conferencia o en la Conferencia próxima de 2021 someter a todos los Estados miembros una revolución de esa envergadura.

Entonces, lo que nosotros entendemos es que estamos enfrentándonos a una situación muy problemática. Yo no puedo ahora conectarme para la cámara, justamente porque estamos por vía telemática, no estamos viéndonos en la sala roja, allí en la sede de la FAO. Entonces, ¿qué significa esto, Presidente? En estas circunstancias, estamos teniendo inconvenientes. Entonces, los inconvenientes se derivan de la respuesta a la pandemia, de las restricciones sanitarias que estamos obligados a seguir y por allí vienen vacunas y la humanidad triunfará en esta batalla. Y cuando eso ocurra, entonces, el Consejo regresa a la sala roja y ya esta situación excepcional pertenecerá al pasado.

Entonces, vamos a estar invirtiendo dinero, horas/persona, hacer una evaluación y ¿para cambiar la Constitución de la FAO? No, mi contribución es esta. Tiene mucha razón Camerún y tiene mucha razón usted y hay que preguntarnos qué queremos hacer. ¿Lo que queremos hacer es mejorar nuestro trabajo? Bueno, examinemos lo que sucede en realidad virtual, modalidad electrónica, y a partir de allí las lecciones aprendidas, entonces, ya veremos cómo las aplicamos. La humanidad necesita que el Consejo ya vaya a hacer la labor para la cual fue elegida, que es luchar contra el hambre y la malnutrición y no sé, examinar, quizá, cuáles son los problemas de Zoom. ¿Es a esto que estamos abocados?

CHAIRPERSON

Even in this particular Council, there were a lot of a number of items, which Members agreed that they could be handled through correspondence. The items for discussion were reduced, but probably not enough because they have created some difficulty. I give the floor to Germany because perhaps he would be able to help us clarify this issue.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I do not know whether I am able to do anything at this point in time anymore. The suggestion was motivated through our experience in World Food Program (WFP), but perhaps decision-making is easier in WFP than it is in FAO. Indeed, we wanted to avoid Sessions like this, which last 14 hours now. We think this is not really a good idea. We think that the human capacity to work in a virtual mode is limited and that is why we decided to extend duration the days of our board Sessions, and to limit the hours per day.

That is basically the main point and I do not know exactly which capacity is there to reduce the number of agenda items for a Council Session, but I think it should be possible to extend the duration of the Council Session in days, and to limit the hours of the meetings. If I may say, it is important to have a clear regulation on how the first part of the first day is conducted, for instance. We spent half a day with introductory statement of the Director General and replies from Members. It was noted and I was very grateful for your recommendation that one should not respond to the Director-General, because most of the matters would be dealt with under specific Agenda items later. Nevertheless, we spent basically two and a half hours with this before we started our discussions.

All these things can basically be regulated. Thereby, they can all contribute to make such a virtual Council Session shorter and more manageable. I do not think that we would have to change the Constitution that was not the point for me. It is more of a procedural issue, and a factual thing. Who is interested in sitting here 14 hours and having discussions, like the ones we have this evening? Then, not being able under the Agenda items to have a discussion because we are running out of time. It is a dysfunctionality of the Council that in a way has to be addressed. I think it is just perhaps even aggravated through what we now experienced in our virtual working mode. Perhaps it is something that is there anyway, but I would suggest that we think about extending the duration of the Council Session days. That is probably the easiest thing to do and that would allow to limit the hours per day to meet virtually

CHAIRPERSON

I support what you are saying, because of this virtual modality. Can you imagine my position?

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I speak here for all our utmost admiration and respect. It is unbelievable how fit you are and how well you managed to chair this Session after 14 hours. I really am full of respect and I am very grateful to you, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for your kind words. Members can turn the video off and stretch their legs, but the Chairperson has to sit there constantly because if he switches off, the Meeting has to be suspended. I totally agree that we have to look into this as long as this modality is there. With these amendments in red, could we go forward?

Mr Bommakanti RAJENDER (India)

I do not want to take much time, but I fully support the Ambassador of Germany. I wanted to say the same thing and we are passing through these extraordinary circumstances due to COVID-19. I believe with the number of Agenda items are limited per day and the extra it can be extended 14 hours. As he already mentioned, I would like to say our admiration to Chairperson I fully support the Ambassador for the Germany and there is no need, it is only a procedural matter not anything of a constitutional matter. That is what I understand.

Sr. Benito JIMÉNEZ SAUMA (México)

Unas consideraciones. La primera es que el tema que vimos el primer día, el marco estratégico, creo que todos sabíamos que ése era un tema muy sensible que iba a generar debates muy largos. Afortunadamente es un tema que vemos una vez cada diez años, pero sabíamos que iba a ser un tema muy complicado.

La otra, en mi limitada experiencia creo que cuando una reunión tiene más días para trabajar, los delegados usan ese tiempo. Si uno tiene más días, van a seguir hablando y hablando, eso ya lo hemos visto en muchas ocasiones. No estoy muy convencido de ampliar todavía más los días del Consejo. La otra, si estamos trabajando en sesiones virtuales, francamente creo que muchos de los debates que tuvimos ahora los hubiéramos repetido y tenido igual en una sesión presencial.

Respecto al texto, estoy de acuerdo con [XX], podemos aceptar lo que propuso. Creo que esta cuestión es algo de procedimiento, no va más allá de eso, y creo que mucho pasa por la responsabilidad que cada país tenga al hacer sus intervenciones y sus propuestas.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

We have got four minutes before the new day breaks. I have a huge amount of sympathy for the point that Germany has raised, and I do think we need to look at our Agenda for the next meeting in the event that it is indeed a virtual meeting. We do have on our Agenda, the Item 20, which is the Tentative Agenda for the next Session of Council.

Perhaps, we could just leave the Drafting Committee to reflect this sentiment that we absolutely need to review the Agenda with a view to it being held virtually and put that under Item 20 and ask the Drafting Committee to reflect that. I do not think we need to be talking about any sort of major change to FAO's procedures. We always have an opportunity to review the Agenda at the preceding meeting and we could make some comments along these lines when we get or when the Drafting Committee gets to the Agenda Item 20.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

My utmost admiration for you, Mr Chairperson. I also want to express my sympathies and my sympathy for the points and rationale expressed by the Ambassador of Germany. I think that we all are learning from this experience this time as well, including the way we dealt with the conclusions of the Reports for the Technical Committees of the Council, and knowing that the next Council will be the one before the Conference with a lot on the Agenda, and important issues at a critical juncture of power. I think that it is very wise to reflect on how we will want this the next Council Session, especially if part of its entirety is held in virtual modalities.

We really have the disposition to give the great strategic direction that we want to give to FAO. Therefore, it could be dealt, I think that I support the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland's proposal, that it could be done under the tentative Agenda of the next Council Session if we wanted it to be less, a bit more concrete. I also think it is not a question of changing any Constitution and Basic Texts. It is looking at how we can encourage Organization to be more agile, and we can see how we can be more efficient but as well realistic in how we manage our discussions.

CHAIRPERSON

I think there is sympathy all around to adapt to the new situation. Especially, for the points raised by the Ambassador of Germany. Therefore, could we go forward with these red amendments and sort of look at the processes and procedures and the working methods? As long as this virtual modality is there, to come up with proposals so that the next Council could be sort of held in a different manner than the present, very rigid time frames, etcetera?

If you agree with these amendments, which make clear that it is the virtual modality, which has created most of the problems? We can go and have discussions on the Working Methods of the Council, this would be part of that with the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons, which as I mentioned, is not just seven groups. It is a wider group and come forth with some proposals to address these issues, which had been raised, especially before the next Council and as Canada said, the next Council will have some important Agenda items to be dealt with.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

We can give it a trial, but I do not see if it will be different from what we are doing so far. As we always sit, discuss the Agenda in your former meetings. I do not see what we are probably shaken by the way we moved into this Council. Nevertheless, the Council in June was better. In July, I do not remember if it was better, it was way harder. This one we knew is going to be difficult and this for the items on the Strategic Framework, because we are moving very fast, which is not so common.

With this virtual modality, usually, we used to develop the Strategic Framework in two to three years. You started with the Outline, and then you go along with it, there was a long process, but this time, it has taken us virtually one year to complete it. We knew it was going to be difficult because we are going quick probably due to the pressure from the Director-General. We knew it was going to be difficult because there will be many things to discuss, including the strategy for the engagement with the private sector.

Therefore, we should not be afraid because I have experienced so many things in this FAO; sometimes, when we used to have 14 days or 21 days of the Conference the budget discussion will take you till dawn. You start the first morning at 9:00 hours and finish next morning at 4:00 or 5:00 hours. We used to do that, but everything has been streamlined gradually. We think that we are learning. This is a good learning process this time, how we are ending; we are correct to go along and you continue with your deflection, but you should not make it a real case. That is my problem. We are making it a real case.

Meanwhile, we do not have the necessary information to move ahead with this. Therefore, we give this a try. I am sure that it will not change the methods, the way you are dealing with those matters prior to any Governing Body meeting. I am sure it would not change much, but since the text is there, we can go along with it, approve it and give it a try.

Item 17. World Food Programme

Point 17. Programme alimentaire mondial

Tema 17. Programa Mundial de Alimentos

Item 17.1 Election of Six Members of the WFP Executive Board

Point 17.1 Élection de six membres du Conseil d'administration du PAM

Tema 17.1 Elección de seis miembros de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA

(CL 165/17.1; CL 165/LIM/3)

Item 17.2 Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board on its activities in 2019

Point 17.2 Rapport annuel du Conseil d'administration du PAM sur ses activités en 2019

Tema 17.2 Informe anual de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA sobre sus actividades en 2019

(CL 165/17.2)

CHAIRPERSON

We will go forward with this and have discussions under the Methods of the Council with the Regional Groups. We can go to the next Item, which is 17.2, *Annual Report of the Executive Board on its activities in 2019*, CL165/17.2.

We will now consider the draft conclusions for items addressed through the Written Correspondence procedure. As agreed by the Council on Monday morning under the Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable deliberations on Item 7, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.2, 18, 19 and 20, has taken place through the written correspondence procedure. The written exchange among Members and the Secretariat is available to be on the dedicated webpage on the website of the 165th Session of the Council.

We now move to Sub-Item 17.2, *Annual Report of the World Food Programme Executive Board on its activities in 2019* to address its conclusions.

Members of the Council have submitted their written inputs and the Secretariat has provided written responses, which may be found on the dedicated webpage on the Council website. Please ensure that you have document CL165/17.2 before you. The introduction to this Item has been provided by Ms Jennifer Nyberg, Deputy Director of Corporate Planning and Performance Division of WFP.

Introduction to Item 17.2: Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board on its activities in 2019 (CL 165/17.2)

Ms Jennifer Nyberg, Deputy Director, Corporate Planning and Performance Division

I am pleased to present you with an overview of World Food Program's (WFP) 2019 Annual Performance Report (APR). The document is a result of extensive consultations with key stakeholders including the Executive Board membership, which helped us to refine and structure the report and give every piece of evidence on our performance in 2019.

The year 2019 benefits from being the first with all WFP country offices operating under the Integrated Road Map (IRM) framework through a Board-approved Country Strategic Plan (CSP), Interim Country Strategic Plan (ICSP) or transitional ICSP. This has allowed for more consistent reporting and stronger governance. The 2019 APR is also the first to report against only one results framework and draws on the latest additions and revisions in the revised Corporate Results Framework (CRF), such as inclusion of new outcome indicators and global targets for programme and management indicators.

To better understand the context in which we operated, I would like to take you through some of our key financial figures. Given the increased complexity in our operating environment due to instability around the world, our needs grew to over USD 12 billion. Our donors showed confidence in our abilities by providing a record USD 8 billion in contributions. However, the funding gap widened more than USD 1.3 billion compared to 2018 and was USD 4.1 billion. This inevitably led WFP to suspend or reduce the breadth and scope of its operations.

While the growth in contribution revenue was critical for meeting increasing needs, there was a disproportionate concentration in both the source and the allocation of funding. In 2019, the top five donors accounted for 76 percent of total contributions, highlighting WFP's reliance on its key donors. Further, two-thirds of the contribution revenue was allocated to Level 3 and Level 2 emergency responses. Yemen remained WFP's largest operation, registering an increase of 41 percent in contributions compared to 2018.

Looking at our programme performance, WFP reached 97.1 million people through food and cash-based transfers in 75 countries, representing an increase of 12 percent from 2018. Similarly, the amount of food provided, resources transferred through Cash-Based Transfer (CBT) and commodity vouchers, and investment in capacity strengthening and service delivery activities, also all saw increases.

As for our transfer modalities, a significant increase was observed in CBT from USD 1.8 billion in 2018 to USD 2.1 billion in 2019, demonstrating our continued evolution to cash programming as an effective investment to assist people in meeting their unique and essential needs.

In the APR, programme results from the Annual Country Reports are aggregated up to the corporate level and a consolidated WFP-wide performance is presented in terms of its contribution to five Strategic Objectives (SO). WFP made strong progress against yearly average targets under four of five Strategic Objectives, demonstrating a positive trend in indicators.

SO 1 – end hunger by protecting access to food – remained consistent in performance and also SO 4 and SO 5 which could not be assessed in 2018 due to insufficient data, now show strong performance. WFP showed a partial achievement against SO 3 – achieve food security – similar to its performance in 2018. This SO consists of Strategic Result (SR) 3 – smallholders have improved food security and nutrition, and SR 4 – food systems are sustainable. The 2019 results show there was room for improvement under SR 3, where 14 out of 28 countries met or exceeded targets, while the performance against SR 4 was satisfactory.

Now, I would like to take you through some of our management highlights. We monitor our management performance at various levels as you see in the APR. However, today I would like to focus on how we measure the overall achievement of management performance standards. This reflects how WFP offices manage their available human, physical and financial resources to facilitate implementation of CSP activities. The KPI covers ten standard functional areas that work with each other, providing internal and external services that facilitate direct implementation. One or two critical

indicators, those considered as the most representative for each functional area, have been selected as standards, covering the majority of the processes carried out by the respective units. In 2019, most functional areas were in the medium to high performance range, with *Finance* and *Security* functional areas performing particularly well against the target.

Looking ahead at our priorities, the COVID-19 pandemic has emerged as one of the greatest global threats of the past century and is one of the key drivers of food insecurity in 2020. To tackle the pandemic, WFP joined the global humanitarian response and is aligning its support to governments and national stakeholders' priorities. To ensure that people continue to receive the life-saving assistance they need, WFP adapted its planning and distributions and is operating under pandemic preparedness plans for the headquarters, regional bureau and country office levels. At the onset of the emergency, WFP immediately put mitigation measures in place so that the implementation of its programmes does not put beneficiaries at a higher risk of infection (for example by reducing congestion at food distribution sites or switching to take-home rations where schools are closed). In the medium term, WFP will partner with governments to provide policy and programme advice, data analytics and operational support for saving lives, protecting livelihoods and reinforcing government leadership and accountability.

CHAIRPERSON

For Item 17.2, the conclusions would be the following.

Item 17.2 *Annual Report of the World Food Programme Executive Board on its activities in 2019.*

1. The Council endorsed the Annual Report of the World Food Programme, WFP, Executive Board on its activities in 2019. In particular:
 - a) Acknowledged WFP's programme performance results in meetings its strategic objectives, supported by achievements by Management, results, dimensions.
 - b) Recognized the commitment of WFP staff in the field that are working in challenging circumstances to address complex crisis driven primarily by violent conflicts which affected more people than in any of the previous 20 years.
 - c) Welcomed WFP's commitment to annual targets for key programme output indicators through 2021 to show where resources are directed, and demonstrate the breadth of WFP's work; and
 - d) Welcomed WFP's involvement in partnership and coordination efforts, including its engagement with partners towards Zero Hunger and the Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs.

That is the end. The floor is open for Members.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I am aware that this is an Annual Report on activities of World Food Programme (WFP) in 2019 but taking into consideration that WFP was just awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. I think it would be appropriate to, at least at the beginning of the text, acknowledge that. One could say "the Council appreciated WFP's work and congratulated on receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize 2020 and endorsed" and then we continue with the text. "Appreciated WFP's work and congratulated on receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize 2020 and endorsed." It would be a nice acknowledgement from our side.

CHAIRPERSON

I agree.

Sr. Benito JIMÉNEZ SAUMA (México)

Mi propuesta es en el mismo sentido que hizo Alemania, y la puedo acompañar.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

The same for us. We endorsed the proposal.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

I would like to thank the Ambassador of Germany for proposing this wording which I totally support. I just want to propose changing the words “receipt of award”, because as far as I know, he will be awarded his Nobel Prize as he has not received it yet.

Item 7. Regional Conferences

Point 7. Conférences régionales

Tema 7. Conferencias regionales

Item 7.1 Report of the 31st Session of the Regional Conference for Africa (26-28 October 2020)

Point 7.1 Rapport de la trente et unième session de la Conférence régionale pour l'Afrique (26-28 octobre 2020)

Tema 7.1 Informe del 31.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para África (26-28 de octubre de 2020)

(C 2021/14)

Item 7.2 Report of the 35th Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (1-4 September 2020)

Point 7.2 Rapport de la trente-cinquième session de la Conférence régionale pour l'Asie et le Pacifique (1-4 septembre 2020)

Tema 7.2 Informe del 35.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para Asia y el Pacífico (1-4 de septiembre de 2020)

(C 2021/15)

Item 7.3 Report of the 32nd Session of the Regional Conference for Europe (2-4 November 2020)

Point 7.3 Rapport de la trente-deuxième session de la Conférence régionale pour l'Europe (2-4 novembre 2020)

Tema 7.3 Informe del 32.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para Europa (2-4 de noviembre de 2020)

(C 2021/16)

Item 7.4 Report of the 36th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean (19-21 October 2020)

Point 7.4 Rapport de la trente-sixième session de la Conférence régionale pour l'Amérique latine et les Caraïbes (19-21 octobre 2020)

Tema 7.4 Informe del 36.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para América Latina y el Caribe (19-21 de octubre de 2020)

(C 2021/17)

Item 7.5 Report of the 35th Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East (21-22 September 2020)

Point 7.5 Rapport de la trente-cinquième session de la Conférence régionale pour le Proche-Orient (21-22 septembre 2020)

Tema 7.5 Informe del 35.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para el Cercano Oriente (21 y 22 de septiembre de 2020)

(C 2021/18)

Item 7.6 Report of the Sixth Informal Regional Conference for North America (22-23 October 2020)

Point 7.6 Rapport de la sixième Conférence régionale informelle pour l'Amérique du Nord (22-23 octobre 2020)

Tema 7.6 Informe de la Sexta Conferencia Regional Oficiosa para América del Norte (22 y 23 de octubre de 2020)

(C 2021/LIM/1)

CHAIRPERSON

With this, we can agree to this Item and move to the next one, which is Item 7. Item 7 is the *Regional Conferences*. Item 7.1 is the *Report of the 31st Session of the Regional Conference for Africa (26 to 28 October 2020)*. We will now consider the draft conclusions on Item 7, *Regional Conferences*, which has six Sub-Items.

Item 7.1, *Report of 31st Session of the Regional Conference for Africa*. This took place 26 to 28 October 2020. Item 7.2 is in support of the 35th Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific, which took place from 1 to 4 September. Item 7.3 is *Report of the 32nd session of the Regional Conference for Europe*, which took place 2 to 4 November 2020. Item 7.4, *Report of 36th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean*, which took place from 19 to 21 October. Item 7.5, *Report of the 35th Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East*. This took place from 21 to 22nd September. Item 7.6, *Report of the 6th Informal Regional Conference for North America*. This took place from 22 to 23 October.

The relevant documents are C 2021/14, 2021/15, 2021/16, 2021/17, 2021/18, 2021/LIM/1.

Introduction to Item 7.1: Report of the 31st Session of the Regional Conference for Africa (26-28 October 2020)

The Honourable Anxious Jongwe Masuka, Chairperson of the 31st Session of the Regional Conference for Africa (ARC), Minister for Lands, Agriculture, Water and Rural Resettlement of the Republic of Zimbabwe

The 31st FAO Regional Conference for Africa (ARC) was held from 26 to 28 October 2020 in full virtual mode. Members agreed to hold the conference virtually due to health concerns and restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and suspended all General Rules of the Organization that were incompatible with a virtual environment.

His Excellency Dr Emmerson D. Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, opened the Conference. In total, 874 delegates attended over the course of the 3-day Conference. The delegates were comprised of 95 Ministers (including 12 deputy ministers and two ministers of foreign affairs) from 44 countries, 20 ambassadors, 12 private sector organizations, 28 civil society and/or non-governmental organizations, 10 inter-governmental organizations (including the African Union Commission, which was represented at the highest level), six United Nations (UN) organizations and four Observer nations.

The Regional Conference highlighted the prevalence of undernourishment in sub-Saharan Africa, which has been on the rise for the past five years, reaching 22 percent in 2019. The rise of food insecurity is now widespread, with reports indicating climate variability and extremes, conflict, and economic slowdowns and downturns, as the main drivers. The worst desert locust outbreak in 25 years and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have further compounded the situation.

The Regional Conference recognized the importance of the technical paper presented by FAO on the development of an Action Programme to Address Food Security and Nutrition Challenges in Landlocked Countries in Africa. The paper highlighted the necessary actions in key areas, including increasing public and private sector investment in agriculture, proactively engaging landlocked countries in Regional Initiatives and sustaining efforts to improve their competitiveness and business regulatory environments. The Conference also highlighted that FAO's Hand-in-Hand Initiative could provide a holistic framework to support country-led and country-owned actions to respond to the needs of the highly vulnerable populations in landlocked African countries and consider effective responses to mitigate and overcome the effects of shocks that result in negative impacts on livelihoods, food security and nutrition.

Below are the recommendations that derived from the Programme and Budgetary matters:

Results and Priorities for FAO in the Africa Region

The Regional Conference recognized the importance of FAO's Strategic Framework in providing direction for FAO's technical work and took note of the arrangements regarding the proposed revision of the Strategic Framework to be submitted to the FAO Conference in July 2021. The Conference considered the document *Results and Priorities for FAO in the Africa Region*, covering achievements

in 2018-19. The Report proposes to maintain in 2020-21 all current Regional Initiatives, which support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and relevant regional commitments, such as the 2014 Malabo Declaration.

The Regional Conference recommended that FAO reiterate the three Regional Initiatives: Ending Hunger by 2025, Sustainable Intensification of Production and Value Chain Development; and Building Resilience in Africa's Drylands, in driving the priority areas for Africa. The Report also refines the regional priorities in the context of new initiatives such as inclusive food systems transformation, the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, digitalization and innovation, the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Umbrella Programme and the UN Development System repositioning.

Recognizing that Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDSs) face similar challenges (e.g., vulnerability to climate shocks, reliance on imports), the Conference recommended FAO to strengthen its support to SIDS, Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and LLDCs, noting their vulnerability to unique and complex food security and nutrition challenges.

Decentralized Offices Network

The Regional Conference considered the document on Decentralized Offices Network reporting on actions taken in 2018-19 and those planned for 2020-21 and expressed its satisfaction with the implementation of the decisions of the 30th ARC and the progress made in the decentralization of the FAO Country Office Network.

The Regional Conference recommended FAO to:

- ensure full implementation of all the recommendations on the Decentralized Offices Network at the 30th ARC in Sudan and to continue efforts to strengthen its technical capacities and policy integration at regional and subregional levels;
- ensure leadership in the region across relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), (including those under FAO's custodianship), with special attention to addressing hunger and poverty in the most needy and vulnerable countries; and
- pursue the adjustment of its decentralized offices business models, in particular in light of the UN Development System Reform, in order to ensure greater flexibility and efficiency in the use of the Organization's existing limited financial and human resources, aiming to respond to the Member Nations emerging needs and priorities in line with the SDGs.

In collaboration with other partners, especially in the Rome-based Agencies (RBA) environment, the Regional Conference recommended FAO to evaluate, identify and seize emerging opportunities arising from UN Reform at country and regional levels, building on lessons learned and successful experiences.

Noting the recently established Office for SIDS, LDCs, and LLDCs, the Conference recommended FAO to bring technical departments and divisions, technical experts and decentralized offices together to strengthen the impact of programmes in the priority countries and engage with external actors and partners. Such actors and partners would include Members, the private sector and UN partners to mobilize resources and/or complement interventions in areas beyond the Organization's mandate or capacity, and to facilitate the implementation of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative in SIDS, LDCs, and LLDCs.

Regarding the next venue of the Regional Conference, Members agreed to hold the 32nd Session in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea in 2022. The exact date will be agreed jointly by the selected host country and the Secretariat of the Regional Conference.

Introduction to Item 7.2: Report of the 35th Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (1-4 September 2020) (C 2021/15)

The Honourable Lyonpo Yeshe Penjor, Chairperson of the 35th Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific, Minister for Agriculture and Forests of the Kingdom of Bhutan

Mr Chairperson, Distinguished Members, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (APRC), it is an honour and a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to address the Council regarding the outcome of the 35th Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific, which was held virtually from 1-4 September 2020.

The Regional Conference was attended by Representatives from 41 Member Nations. Representatives of 9 inter-governmental organizations and 34 international and non-governmental organizations attended as Observers. Representatives of 13 sister United Nations organizations and specialized agencies also attended as Observers. The final Report includes a Summary of the Main Recommendations requiring the attention of the Council. This note briefly summarizes those recommendations.

The Royal Government of Bhutan, represented by Honorable Foreign Minister Lyonpo Dr. Tandi Dorji on behalf of His Excellency Honorable Prime Minister of Bhutan, expressed the great honour of hosting the Regional Conference and his confidence that the Conference would bring about actions that would increase the resiliency and prosperity of the region in the face of the current pandemic.

Results and Priorities for FAO in the Asia and the Pacific Region

The 35th Session of APRC welcomed the actions taken and the results achieved in 2018 and 2019 in addressing regional challenges, in particular through the five Regional Initiatives (RIs) supported by the 34th Session of APRC, namely, the Zero Hunger Challenge; Blue Growth; Climate Change; One Health; and the Interregional Initiative on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) – Pacific Component.

The APRC welcomed the programmatic approach adopted for activities in the region, and supported the 14 Programme Areas of Focus to support the implementation of the four consolidated and expanded RIs for 2020-21. It also emphasized the importance of Rome-based Agencies (RBA) collaboration and partnership and welcomed the progress FAO has made in forging alliances with other UN Agencies and regional institutions, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Pacific Community (SPC).

The APRC recommended FAO to ensure that the expanded RI on Climate Change and Enhancement of Sustainable Management and Use of Natural Resources includes a strong focus on human, social and economic aspects of water management, Blue Growth for fisheries and aquaculture, resilience of small-scale fisheries, forest conservation and climate change risk reduction, and to mobilize the extensive and rich capabilities and expertise in the region to achieve solutions to the various challenges, maximizing through mechanisms such as South-South and Triangular Cooperation and the Hand in Hand Initiative, promoting engagement with civil society, especially family farmers, and the private sector, as well as developing new partnerships.

The APRC also recommended FAO to update its technical expertise in accordance with the needs to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to re-profile its workforce in Regional Offices and Country Offices, in line with the approved Further Adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget for 2020-21 by the 164th Session of the Council, and to ensure a participatory and transparent process for the development of the new Strategic Framework.

Decentralized Offices Network

The APRC welcomed FAO's continued engagement in the implementation of the United Nations Development System (UNDS) repositioning at regional and country levels, its efforts to identify and seize emerging opportunities for better collaboration with other UN Agencies and respond to the aspirations of the 2030 Agenda. The APRC supported the effort to strengthen the policy and technical capacities to ensure FAO leadership in the region across relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including those under FAO's custodianship and to contribute effectively to the new UN Cooperation Frameworks and common country analysis and stressed the importance of FAO headquarters continuing its full support to the Decentralized Offices to ensure the Organization's impact at regional, sub-regional and country levels. The APRC also requested FAO continue to pursue the review and transformation of the Decentralized Offices and adjust the business models to ensure

greater flexibility and efficiency in the use of the Organization's financial and human resources to better respond to Members' needs, in consultation with affected Member Nations.

Prioritization of Country and Regional Needs

The Ministers and delegates encouraged FAO to sustain collaboration with regional institutions such as ASEAN, SAARC and SPC in developing approaches that are more effectively implemented on a regional scale such as in policy coherence, statistics, research and development, control of zoonotic risks and transboundary pests and diseases and promoting innovative digital technologies.

Ministers and delegates highlighted the importance of promoting sustainable land, water, forestry and fisheries resources management. They also emphasised the need for robust biosecurity systems and improved food safety across the supply chain through a strengthened One Health approach to reduce the risk of zoonotic diseases and Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), and prevent the risk of future pandemics across the region. They reinforced the need to address the threat to agriculture from transboundary plant pests and animal diseases such as Fall Armyworm, desert locust, African Swine Fever and coconut Rhinoceros beetle. Comprehensive measures to address these challenges are more important than ever in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Regional Conference affirmed that digitalization and innovation could contribute to improvements in agriculture productivity and sustainability. These are increasingly important, especially in areas where there are large areas to cover, extreme terrain and weather and inadequate infrastructure. Promoting innovative precision agriculture and smart farming could improve productivity, including for smallholders, family farmers and medium and large-scale producers.

The Ministers and delegates recognized the vital role of smallholders, family farmers and fisher folk, including women and youth, in achieving Agenda 2030 and called for comprehensive support in harnessing their full potential, notably in the context of the UN Decade of Family Farming (2019-2028). The Ministers and delegates also emphasized their efforts to invest in agriculture research, extension and education systems to meet the objectives of transforming agriculture and food systems through upgraded training and extension services. This is also needed to attract youth to agriculture, encourage agri-entrepreneurs and assist countries, especially with ageing farming populations.

Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2020-2023 for the FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific

The Meeting endorsed the MYPOW for the 2020-2023 period to frame the work of the Regional Conference, encouraged regular and systematic review of the performance and efficiency of the Conference, and looked forward to receiving a full report at the next session.

Date and place of the thirty-sixth FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific

The Regional Conference recommended the acceptance of the gracious offer of the Government of Bangladesh to host the thirty-sixth Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific in 2022.

Introduction to Item 7.3: Report of the 32nd Session of the Regional Conference for Europe (2-4 November 2020)

His Excellency Jamshid Abdukhakimovich Khodjaev, Chairperson of the 32nd Session of the Regional Conference for Europe (ERC), Minister for Agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan

The 32nd Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe (ERC) was held from 2 to 4 November 2020. In light of the global COVID-19 pandemic and associated public health concerns, the Session was convened virtually on an exceptional basis, thus suspending the respective articles of the Rules of Procedure of the ERC requiring holding a physical meeting.

The session recorded historic numbers of participation - 51 FAO Members, three Observer FAO Member Countries, 15 ministers and 16 vice ministers, over 300 delegates and observers, in addition to more than 1 500 following the proceedings on webcast and 15 000 impressions on Twitter. The conference was preceded by the Consultation of the Civil Society Organizations and, for the first time ever, a Consultation of the Private Sector, whose representatives delivered their views during the ERC sessions.

Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory Matters

The Regional Conference global policy discussions focused on: i) Sustainable food systems and healthy diets in Europe and Central Asia, including discussions on the UN Food Systems Summit in late 2021 with the participation of Her Excellency Agnes Kalibata, UN Special Envoy; ii) Solutions for Youth, Employment and Developing Rural Areas in relation to the United Nations Decade of Family Farming, and iii) FAO's Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

In relation to the item on sustainable food systems, the ERC requested FAO to support, through the Regional Initiatives, governments and non-state actors - in particular the private sector - the development, refinement and implementation of the transformative agenda on sustainable, resilient, inclusive and equitable food systems and healthy diets, taking into account the One Health approach while addressing specific impacts due to COVID-19. Upon the request by FAO Members, FAO should also work with regional and national coordinating mechanisms and bodies in developing a methodology to assess the sustainability of food systems and to analyze, at the country level, the status of current diets and food systems.

With regards to the second main topic of the Session, the Regional Conference requested FAO to continue assisting the countries in the region in the sustainable structural transformation of rural areas to expand the multidimensional nature of family farming and to leverage the livelihoods of family farmers, with emphasis on youth and women. Members also recommended that FAO take into consideration the CFS policy recommendations for promoting youth engagement and employment in agriculture and food systems and include gender equality as a crosscutting topic under all proposed FAO solutions for youth, employment and development of rural areas. Furthermore, the Conference requested FAO to consider the organization of a youth forum in preparation for the UN Food Systems Summit 2021.

As for the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, it was recommended that FAO closely involve Members in the region in the shaping of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and its implications for FAO's programme of work and budget, and asked FAO to consider ways to enhance and extend the Hand-in-Hand Initiative approach to strengthen FAO country support to achieve other FAO priority objectives and, especially, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated impact.

Programme and Budget Matters

The Decentralized Offices Network Item was considered through a written correspondence procedure, whereby based on the inputs received from the Members, FAO was requested to further pursue the adjustment of its Decentralized Offices business models in order to further align and create synergies with the single action plan under the responsibility of the Resident Coordinator. In line with the recommendations of the evaluation of FAO's Strategic Results Framework, the ERC further requested FAO to shift towards a full programmatic approach at the decentralized level, and to continue its efforts to strengthen its technical capacities and policy integration at regional and subregional levels, in particular through further cooperation with the RBAs at regional and country level.

The ERC further appreciated the results achieved by FAO in 2018–2019 in the region under the Regional Initiatives (RIs) and other main areas of work, as well as FAO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and endorsed the proposed regional priority areas and the revised Regional Initiatives as a programmatic framework approach for FAO's action in 2020–2021, under the item of Results and Priorities for FAO in the Region. The Regional Conference also requested FAO to strengthen the work under respective priorities within the FAO mandate, in relation to FAO's contribution to the UN Food Systems Summit, the integration of policy changes related to nutrition and healthy diets and transforming food systems based on the three dimensions of sustainable development, the integration of One Health approach, the promotion of equality and digital inclusion - stressing social protection and school food and nutrition programmes, and many other issues as outlined in the ERC Report. The importance of FAO's Strategic Framework has been recognized by the Regional Conference in providing direction for FAO's technical work and welcomed the efforts to anchor the revised Strategic Framework to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including to SDG 2 and SDG 1 as cornerstones for all FAO activities.

The Regional Conference appreciated the Synthesis of FAO Evaluations 2014-2019 in Europe and Central Asia Region, welcoming FAO management's acceptance of the recommendations, to name a few: improving the existing accountability framework at regional and thematic level; implementing a consistent and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system at all levels; strengthening the capacities of regional and subregional offices to provide backstopping support to FAO country offices in project formulation and resource prospecting, etc. Finally, a progress report on the implementation of the recommendations at the next ERC has been requested by the Members and to become a regular feature in future regional conferences under a similar agenda item.

Introduction to Item 7.4: Report of the 36th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean (19-21 October 2020)

Excmo. Sr Don Edward Francisco Centeno Gadea, Chairperson of the 36th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, Minister for Agriculture and Livestock of the Republic of Nicaragua

The 36th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean was held from 19 to 21 October 2020. Members agreed to hold the Conference virtually due to health concerns and restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, in this instance suspending all regulations of the General Rules of the Organization incompatible with a virtual environment.

In all, 545 official participants from 33 Members virtually attended the Regional Conference, beyond the tens of thousands of public participants via webcast. Official attendees included a Prime Minister; two Vice Presidents; 92 ministers and vice ministers; 14 ambassadors; 2 States as observers; plus representatives from 10 United Nations agencies; 9 intergovernmental organizations; 10 civil society organizations; 1 representative of the Parliamentary Fronts Against Hunger; 5 private sector organizations; and 5 scientific and academic organizations.

The Inaugural Ceremony of the Regional Conference was held on 19 October in the presence of H.E. Mr Denis Moncada, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Nicaragua, and Mr Qu Dongyu, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Nicaragua welcomed participants, affirmed our country's commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and stressed the importance of advancing towards a region free from hunger and extreme poverty, by promoting sustainable and inclusive rural development, and agriculture that is resilient to climate change.

The Regional Conference reviewed and discussed four items in relation to Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory Matters: the impact of COVID-19 on food and agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean and the response from FAO; sustainable food systems to provide healthy diets for all; Hand-in-Hand for prosperous and inclusive rural societies; and sustainable and resilient agriculture. Welcoming the proposed priorities under the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme and appreciating the support already provided to Member States, the Regional Conference recommended that FAO help to mobilize investment and partnerships to recover food and agricultural systems and rural non-farm activities. Member States supported the reformulation of the Regional Initiatives for biennium 2020-2021 and the Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

Recognizing the steps being taken to revise the Strategic Framework, Members prioritized a stronger gender focus, the inclusion of indigenous peoples, youth and resilience. Other priorities for the Strategic Framework included small producers' access to innovations and information, management of plant and animal pests and diseases, an integrated approach between urban food environments and rural areas, and the contribution of sustainable agricultural practices for achieving the SDGs. Member requested FAO's support to strengthen international food trade within the framework of a multilateral trade system, with the World Trade Organization (WTO) at the center, to maintain the predictability and transparency of commercial flows. FAO's support for measures and investments oriented toward the achievement of Agenda 2030, including mobilizing private investments and environmental and climate financing, without exclusion to any category of countries, was also requested.

The Regional Conference reviewed and discussed three items in relation to Programme and Budget Matters: Results and priorities for FAO in the Latin America and Caribbean region; Improvement of

FAO's capacities to support Latin America and Caribbean Member States; and Digital innovation and agriculture. It welcomed FAO's commitment to improve innovation and digital agriculture and recommended better monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management, a stronger regional governance of FAO, a strengthened and revised Technical Cooperation Programme, and greater administrative and fiduciary decentralization.

The Regional Conference supported the Multiyear Programme of Work 2020-23 and encouraged regular and systematic reviews of performance and efficiency, and a full report at the Thirty-seventh Session.

In other matters, the Regional Conference noted the measures adopted for the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH), underlined the importance of continued negotiations in developing the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition at the 47th Session of the CFS and recognized the leadership of the region in the preparation of the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables (2021). FAO's dynamism in South-South and Triangular Cooperation and partnerships with civil society, the private sector, academia, scientific research and technology institutions, agencies of the United Nations system and other resource partners were also noted. Finally, the Regional Conference welcomed the generous offer of the Government of the Republic of Ecuador to host the 37th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in 2022, and recommended that the offer be accepted.

Introduction to Item 7.5: Report of the 35th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for the Near East

His Excellency Dr. Saud Hamood Ahmed Al-Habsi, Chairperson of the 35th Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East (NERC), Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources of the Sultanate of Oman

I am pleased to present the salient highlights of the report of the thirty-fifth session of the FAO Regional Conference for the Near East (NERC35) convened virtually from 21 to 22 September 2020.

It is important to note that the Regional Conference was organized as a Ministerial-level Meeting only whereby the accustomed Senior Officers Meeting was replaced with two Regional Consultative Technical Meetings (RCTMs). This novel approach was welcomed by Members as an important means to enhance multi-stakeholder consultation and interactive dialogue across the region.

The Regional Conference discussions focused on i) transforming food systems to achieve the SDGs and respond to the impacts of COVID-19; ii) FAO's Hand-in-Hand Initiative, which was endorsed by member countries as a timely, country-driven and innovative initiative that is much needed in the region; and iii) the adoption of the reports of the first and second Regional Consultative Technical Meetings (or RCTMs).

The first RCTM took place in January 2020 prior to the widespread outbreak of COVID-19 and addressed the theme of "Transforming Food Systems to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)." This was followed by a second RCTM organized in July 2020 on "Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic Impact on Agriculture and Food Security in the Near East and North Africa Region."

I would like to take this opportunity to summarize the key outcomes related to programme and budget matters for the attention of the Council.

The documents on the Decentralized Offices Network and Multi-year Programme of Work were circulated to Member States for their consideration through a written correspondence procedure. Accordingly, the Regional Conference supported FAO's efforts towards decentralizing decision-making in administrative and programmatic areas, including human resources and procurement aiming to improve overall delivery of the Strategic Results Framework and achievement of the SDGs. FAO was called upon to strengthen its technical capacities and policy integration to seize emerging opportunities arising from the UNDS repositioning at country and regional levels and refine its value proposition vis a vis other partners and Rome-based agencies.

The Regional Conference further endorsed the revision of the Multi-year Programme of Work 2018-21 for the Near East Conference.

The results and priorities for FAO in the Near East and North Africa region were discussed through first and second RCTMs. The Regional Conference endorsed the four suggested regional priorities encompassing (i) rural transformation for youth employment and income, (ii) developing food systems that promote food security and healthy diets for all, (iii) greening agriculture through addressing water scarcity, ensuring environmental sustainability and climate action and (iv) building resilience to protracted crises and emergency situations. Key cross cutting issues were highlighted including the importance of gender mainstreaming, partnerships, data and evidence generation and resource mobilization.

The Regional Conference also endorsed the twelve regional priority areas for action under the Regional COVID-19 Response Plan, which are closely aligned to both the corporate FAO Covid-19 Response and Recovery Umbrella Programme and aforementioned regional priorities.

Notably, the Regional Conference affirmed the importance of regional and global solidarity in responding to COVID-19 and requested FAO to develop a plan of action based on the proposed priorities and to pursue resources mobilization efforts by working with countries towards the establishment of a Regional Solidarity Trust Fund to combat COVID-19 and build more resilient food systems.

Finally, as there were no official candidatures that had been presented to host the 36th Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East, the Conference called upon the Near East Regional Group to discuss and agree on the date, place, Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the 36th Session, in consultation with the Director-General, prior to the end of the year 2020.

Introduction to Item 7.5: Report of the Sixth Informal Regional Conference for North America (22-23 October 2020)

Mr. Frédéric Seppey, Assistant Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Mr. Ted McKinney, U.S. Undersecretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs, Co-Chairs of the 6th Informal Regional Conference for North America (iNARC)

It is our pleasure and honor to present the Report of the 6th Informal Regional Conference for North America held on 22 and 23 October 2020.

The Informal Regional Conference for North America (iNARC) was established in 2010 as a forum for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the North American Region (United States and Canada) to strengthen collaboration between the Region's Members and the Organization. Though informal in its format, as distinct from other Regional Conferences, we consider the priorities detailed in the 2020 iNARC Report to be a formal declaration of the North American Region's views regarding the FAO's strategic programming. Canada and the United States expect these views be given equal consideration to the reports of other Regional Conferences in FAO's budgetary and operational planning and reporting. Through the iNARC meetings, we have sought to express the North American Region's views on FAO's work and activities globally, as well as our Region's views on effective institutional governance.

The 6th iNARC, hosted by Canada, was held virtually and in two main parts, after the originally planned in-person Conference was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The North America Region held a series of pre-briefings and discussions with FAO on 22 and 23 September 2020, followed by the iNARC plenary Session on 22 and 23 October 2020. Representatives from Canada and the United States participated in the Regional Conference alongside officials from FAO and FAO's Liaison Office in Washington (FALOW).

This year's iNARC opened with commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of FAO's first Conference, held in Québec City, Canada, in 1945. Canada's Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Marie-Claude Bibeau, United States Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue, FAO Director-General, Dr. Qu Dongyu, and Québec Minister of International Relations and the Francophonie, Nadine Girault, each delivered remarks. All speakers addressed the critical role the North American Region has played in

FAO's creation and highlighted the seminal work done by FAO over the last seven and a half decades to reduce global hunger and malnutrition.

Minister Bibeau identified the need for innovation, international trade and inclusive food systems as prerequisites to addressing global hunger.

Secretary Perdue spoke about the need for a digital FAO, stressing that FAO should continue to adapt to, and address, the challenges of today and the future.

FAO Director General, Dr. Qu Dongyu, highlighted that hunger was a direct and powerful constraint for economic and social development of many poor and developing countries and it was necessary for the international community to come together, in solidarity, to meet this challenge.

The anniversary commemoration was followed by a two-day iNARC plenary which started with a high-level segment addressed by the co-Chairpersons from Canada and the United States, Assistant Deputy Minister, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Frédéric Seppey and Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Ted McKinney. The FAO Director-General provided opening remarks addressing the delegates on a multitude of topics including the recent steps FAO has taken to respond to Covid-19 and to increase transparency. The Director-General concluded his remarks by explaining the need for efficient reform of FAO's structure and governance to make the Organization more agile and responsive. Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to FAO, Alexandra Bugailiskis, Assistant Deputy Minister, Global Affairs Canada, Peter MacDougall, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations Agencies in Rome, Kip Tom, and Assistant to the Administrator for Resilience and Food Security, USAID, Jim Barnhart, also addressed the delegates.

The High-Level segment was followed by a presentation by the United States and Canada on the summary of deliberations at the pre-iNARC Session held on 22 and 23 September 2020. This was followed by a presentation by Beth Crawford, Director of the Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management (OSP) of FAO of the Action Taken Report on the priorities identified in the 5th iNARC in 2018 and their integration into FAO's Programme of Work and Budget (PWB). A presentation on FAOLOW's activities on the identified priorities was made by the Director, FAOLOW.

The Conference deliberated at length on FAO's next Strategic Framework and iNARC 2020 priorities and its inclusion in FAO's PWB.

Based on discussions during pre-iNARC briefings and the 6th iNARC plenary, a set of concrete priorities were identified for FAO's 2022-2031 Strategic Framework and PWB, including global and in-country actions, including the following five key strategic recommendations:

1. a) FAO should pursue an inclusive innovation agenda that promotes scientific, digital, technological, and other innovations that contribute to fostering environmental, social, and economic sustainability;
2. b) FAO adds most value when delivering the critical functions of its core mandate: normative and standard-setting work, scientific, evidence-based, and impartial analysis and serving as a knowledge aggregator;
3. c) FAO will best build resilience to persistent and emerging threats by focusing on timely, science and evidence-based responses and highlighting the importance of global supply chains and international trade;
4. d) FAO will be most effective by systematically adopting gender-responsive approaches, including those that tackle underlying social norms, attitudes, behaviors and social systems perpetuating gender inequalities and increasing its focus on engaging women, youth, and indigenous peoples; and
5. e) to meet the global challenges and emerging threats before it, FAO must optimize its comparative advantage by leveraging partnerships with the private sector, civil society, the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), and other international organizations.

Under these five strategic recommendations a total of 34 priorities have been identified. These strategic recommendations and priorities are presented in Annex C of the 2020 iNARC Report. FAO should consider these recommendations and priorities for inclusion in FAO's work strategy going forward.

A full and dedicated report on the 6th iNARC has been submitted to the 165th Session of the FAO Council for its consideration and information. We look forward to continuing our Region's robust partnership with FAO, including in working together to address the priorities identified in the 6th iNARC.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to conclude Item 7 as follows:

1. The Council expressed gratitude to the host countries for their flexibility and collaboration in holding the 2020 Regional Conferences in virtual modality.
2. The Council reviewed, endorsed and endorse the recommendations on Programme, and Budget matters contained in the Reports of the five Regional Conferences and of the Informal Regional Conference for North America and in particular supported:
 - a) the regional priorities identified as inputs for the development of the new Strategic Framework, including its alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
 - b) programmes for developing food systems to promote food security, and healthy diets for all;
 - c) applying digitalization and innovation to improve agricultural productivity and sustainability; and
 - d) the importance of regional and global level responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, including by linkages to the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and the development of plans of action based on the proposed priorities.
3. The Council acknowledged the Multi-year Programme of Work, framed the work of the regional conferences and encourage regular and systematic review of their performance and efficiency. End of conclusions on Item 7.

The floor is open for Members. I see no request for the floor.

This text on the conclusions of Item 7 is approved.

Approved

Approuvé

Aprobado

Item 13. Progress Report on Rome-based Agencies collaboration

Point 13. Rapport intérimaire sur la collaboration entre les organismes des Nations Unies ayant leur siège à Rome

Tema 13. Informe sobre la marcha de las actividades de colaboración de los organismos con sede en Roma

(CL 165/13)

CHAIRPERSON

Now we move to Item 13. I will read my conclusions.

Item 13, *Progress Report on Rome-based Agencies' (RBAs) collaboration*, document *CL165/13 Rev 1*.

1. The Council:
 - a) welcome the RBA is renewed plan of action for the sale to be launched in 2021, which has been adapted to the COVID-19 crisis;

- b) urged further progress on the analysis of integration of administrative functions and common specialized expertise and look forward to the outcome of the ongoing feasibility study;
- c) welcome the strategic direction of RBA collaboration, and its five longer-term priorities over the 2020-2021 reporting period;
- d) encouraged the RBAs to reinforce and strengthen collaboration in the preparatory work for the UN Food System Summit across the five action tracks.

End of my conclusions.

The floor is open for any comment from Members.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I would request that we remove the words “with the major impact at country level”. We are still awaiting the outcome of the Joint Evaluation on collaboration among the United Nations Rome-based Agencies, and I do not think we can say there has been impact until we have seen the Evaluation.

Ms Vincenza LOMONACO (Italy)

At the end of subparagraph (e) after “the UN Food Systems Summit”, I would like to add “including the pre-Summit to be held in Italy”.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

I apologize for taking the floor again, but actually, we had discussions on the Action Plan for the Sahel in the World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Board, and we were not really content with what we received. I would suggest a different wording.

I suggest of subparagraph (b) “Welcomed an update on the development of a more elaborated version of the Joint Action Plan for the Sahel, taking due note of all related comments and proposals”.

Sr. Mario ARVELO (República Dominicana)

Nosotros habíamos planteado en un momento dado, en lo que enviamos por escrito, pero también en lo que hemos escuchado de otros delegados a lo largo de este propio Consejo, justamente en referencia a la colaboración institucional que se presenta. La única colaboración institucional que existe en las normas, en las reglas, es la del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial, donde tanto la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura (FAO), como el Fondo Internacional de Desarrollo Agrícola (FIDA) y el Programa Mundial de Alimentos de las Naciones Unidas (PMA), comparten y son las agencias que aportan el presupuesto operativo del Comisión del Codex Alimentarius (CCA), un tercio cada una. Y son también los únicos miembros permanentes del grupo asesor de la mesa ejecutiva de este importante Comité. Esto fue aprobado en el más reciente período ordinario de sesiones en octubre del año pasado.

Por todos estos motivos, necesitaríamos ver allí un reflejo de lo que es una realidad concreta que se manifiesta de manera cotidiana con la producción por parte del CCA de recomendaciones de políticas que están siendo aplicadas a nivel global. Y allí están. Es un comité tripartito de FAO, FIDA y PMA como lo indica su constitución. Entonces, yo no tengo un texto, pero yo estoy seguro que el Secretariado liderado por el señor Muthoo, podría aquí reflejar lo que es, vuelvo y repito, una realidad jurídica, política concreta de aplicación cotidiana, la colaboración de las tres agencias alrededor del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial.

Mr Haitham ABDELHADY (Egypt)

We would like to support the amendments made by the Ambassador of Germany on subparagraph (b), but we wish to see something related to the launch of this Joint Action Plan. We would like to add after “the Joint Action Plan for the Sahel”, “prior to its Launch in 2021”, “while taking due note of all related comments and proposals”. We propose after “the Sahel, to its launch in 2021”.

CHAIRPERSON

With these amendments, the Council approves the text of these conclusions. We can go now to Item 14. I am sorry, Dominican Republic.

Mr Mario ARVELO (Dominican Republic)

I do not know if you were expecting and did not receive any support from me on my earlier proposal or if, Secretary-General is preparing something about signaling, recognizing, taking note, welcoming the fact that the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) is in point of fact the only institutional, legally based collaboration that occurs amongst the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs).

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to Mr Rakesh Muthoo.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

With your permission, and with the agreement of the other Members, I would draft a clause reflecting the comments from the Dominican Republic with reference to the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and its institutional role, for consideration and finalization by the Drafting Committee. It has a unique institutional role in the collaboration of the three Agencies.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Para hacer una sugerencia en el párrafo A, luego de “levels”, poner, “incluyendo actividades en el terreno en todas las regiones.” .

¿Puedo proponer un texto para poder ver si puedo capturar el mensaje de mi estimado amigo de República Dominicana? Entiendo que lo está haciendo la Secretaría, pero yo doy una sugerencia. No quiero interrumpir a la Secretaría. Después de “architecture”.

“and encourage, continued Rome Based Agencies (RBAs) collaboration within the framework of the European Economic Community (CPA), CPAs as well as in the field”.

CHAIRPERSON

We go forward with this text, as amended in red.

Ms Agnes Rosari DEWI (Indonesia)

I want to suggest that we recognize the work of Rome-based Agencies (RBA) collaboration, in particular in the areas within the context of COVID-19. I do not know if I can suggest words, or if the Secretariat can do that and we can then draft it in the Drafting Committee.

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

My comments are related to subparagraph (e). We feel that the addition rather distorts the role of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS). The CFS is formed by the three Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) and it seems very unusual to have language such as this, talking about the institutional role of CFS and RBA, collaboration, architecture, particularly the role of the Secretariat. Our suggestion, therefore, is to delete subparagraph (e).

CHAIRPERSON

There is a difference of opinion on subparagraph (e) between the United States of America and Argentina. It was your suggestion, Argentina, can I have your reaction?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Mi intención, fue tratar de captar lo que dijo mi estimado colega de República Dominicana. No pretendo a esta hora de la noche estar muy lúcido. Lo único que quise fue tratar de capturar el mensaje de mi colega de República Dominicana.

CHAIRPERSON

Could we, as another option, deal with it like the Secretary-General had suggested?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Perdón, si pudiéramos sacar, “as well as in the field” en la última parte. No lo sé, estoy tratando de capturar lo que decía mi colega. Espero que tenga consenso y quizás empezar directamente “encourage continued collaboration with the framework of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).” Quizá con eso también capturaríamos la sugerencia de mi colega y podríamos quizá llegar a un consenso. Es un intento cooperativo y constructivo. Hasta acá llego.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

In the same way as my Argentinian colleague, to find a compromise, one could either chose the suggestion he made, “encourage continued collaboration within the framework of the World Committee on Food Security (CFS)”, or “encourage FAO to pay new attention to the CFS guidelines and policy recommendations.” If that could perhaps be a compromise, then I would be happy to suggest that.

CHAIRPERSON

Is this wording acceptable? Argentina.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

La verdad es que yo le agradezco mucho a mi colega de Alemania y sus sugerencias, pero, en esto, terminaríamos abriendo una discusión que ya hemos tenido. Por eso me parecía que lo mejor era capturar el tema de la cooperación que fue mencionado, pero sin entrar en cuestiones que ya empezamos a discutir productos y cuestiones. Es abrir un debate que yo creo que no deberíamos abrir aquí, ahora y a esta hora en particular.

Por lo tanto, repito, me gustaría solamente poner énfasis en la continua colaboración con el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial (CSA) C y hasta allí llegamos. Si no hay consenso sobre esto, entonces, mi propuesta la cancelo y prefiero que no esté el párrafo.

CHAIRPERSON

Is this sentence, as it were, or line in subparagraph (e) acceptable?

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Looking at the Progress Report, the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) is mentioned as part of all the examples of the Rome-based Agencies (RBA) collaboration in global UN *for a*. It mentions the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) as well, the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) and other examples. I believe it is good to highlight the CFS, but maybe we can just say “encourage continued collaboration in global UN *for a*, including the CFS”. I am not sure I understand “within the framework of the CFS”.

CHAIRPERSON

The alternative would be what was suggested in the beginning, that the Secretariat would draft something for the Drafting Committee.

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

We support the Canadian suggestion to include the language reflecting other UN entities, as well as your suggestion to refer this to the Drafting Committee, given the very late hour.

Mr Mario ARVELO (Dominican Republic)

I thank everyone participating in this conversation, we believe it is important. We are not tied up with any wording or any phrasing because this is what we said at the beginning. What we need to do is to recognize that there is institutional Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) collaboration taking place within the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) since its 2009 reform. Therefore, it could be a statement of fact. It does not need to go into any details, but the CFS needs to be recognized because if we are talking about how the RBAs collaboration, this is a real-life institutional collaboration that has been in place for 11 years now. As a result, if the Council can agree that we could even just make a statement of fact to that effect, then we would be happy.

CHAIRPERSON

This seems to be now a factual statement.

Ms Jennifer HARHIGH (United States of America)

I am wondering if we might be able to ask our Canadian colleague to re-read her proposal, because we did prefer her formulation.

CHAIRPERSON

Canada, could you repeat your suggestion?

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

It was simply built on what was there before, which was “encourage the continued collaboration” or “the continued RBAs collaboration in Global *fora*, including the CFS”. I refer to paragraph 18 of the Progress Report, where there is a summary of the highlights of all collaboration in Global *fora*, starting with the [Committee on World Food Security \(CFS\)](#), including the International Digital Council for Food and Agriculture, The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI), and High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). There are many initiatives where Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) collaboration is happening.

CHAIRPERSON

May we move forward with this wording?

Mr Mario ARVELO (Dominican Republic)

We can go along with all formulations. If everyone is happy with this one, we are as well.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Sí, nosotros estamos de acuerdo.

CHAIRPERSON

We can move forward with this. This is amended.

Item 14. Arrangements for the 42nd Session of the Conference**Point 14. Préparatifs en vue de la quarante-deuxième session de la Conférence****Tema 14. Disposiciones para el 42.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia**

(CL 165/14)

CHAIRPERSON

Now we move to Item 14, *Arrangements for the 42nd Session of the Conference (CL165/14, CL165/18)*.

Introduction to Item 14: Arrangements for the 42nd Session of the Conference (CL 165/14)

Mr Rakesh Muthoo, Secretary-General of the Conference and the Council

Document CL 165/14, Arrangements for the 42nd Session of the Conference, addresses a number of procedural matters in preparation for the upcoming Conference Session in July 2021. The document provides an overview of arrangements for the upcoming Conference Session with regard to invitations, the establishment of Commissions of the Conference, scheduling of items and elections.

The Council is requested to make decisions on:

- 1) The Provisional Agenda for the 42nd Session of the FAO Conference given in *Appendix A* of the document *CL 165/14*;
- 2) The closing date for submission of nominations for the Office of Independent Chairperson of Council (July 2021 to June 2023) at 12.00 hours on Monday, 5 April 2021; and Monday, 12 April 2021, as the date by which such nominations are circulated by letter and through the FAO Members Gateway by the Secretary-General of the Conference and the Council;

- 3) The closing date for submission of nominations for Members of the Council (July 2021 to June 2023 and July 2022 to June 2024) be set at 12.00 hours on Monday, 12 July 2021.
- 4) The establishment of two Commissions:
 - a. on Substantive and Policy Matters (Commission I)
 - b. on Programme and Budgetary Matters (Commission II).
- 5) Inviting Palestine to participate in the Session as an Observer.

The Council is also invited to review the four additional proposals contained in companion document CL 165/18, *Working Methods of the Conference*.

Introduction to Item 14: Arrangements for the 42nd Session of the Conference (CL 165/14 and CL 165/18)

Mr Khalid Mehboob, Independent Chairperson of the Council

Document CL 165/18, *Working Methods of the Conference* addresses four proposals for reform of Conference working methods to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Conference proceedings. These four proposals have been discussed and supported by Members during my informal meetings with the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups, as mandated by the Council at its 162nd Session. The compendium of proposals outlined in the document aim to streamline the meetings of the Conference, reduce overlap between Conference meetings, and bolster Members participation in all Conference meetings, as well as quorum in all meetings. The proposals further aim to foster informal, action-oriented dialogue among senior level officials in attendance at the Conference.

The 111th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and legal Matters (CCLM) considered the proposal to convene meetings of the General Committee prior to the opening of the Conference, from the perspective of the Basic Texts of the Organization. The CCLM observed that the General Committee is constituted only upon election of its Members by the Conference and therefore could not meet and take decisions prior to the Conference. Acknowledging the need for efficiency gains in Conference proceedings, the CCLM therefore suggested that informal meetings be held by the nominees to the General Committee prior to the opening of the Conference without the authority to take decisions or make recommendations. Consequently, in line with the *modus operandi* of the Credentials Committee, it is proposed that the General Committee convene informal meetings ahead of the Conference to undertake preliminary discussions. However, no decisions or recommendations by the General Committee would be made before the constitution of its Membership by the Conference. Once the Chairperson and Members of the General Committee are elected by the Conference at its meeting, the General Committee may take decisions on the basis of prior informal discussions.

The Joint Meeting of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee and the 183rd Session of the Finance Committee considered document CL 165/18 and all four proposals contained therein. The Joint Meeting welcomed the CCLM's suggestion and recommended the Council consider for endorsement the proposal to convene informal meetings of the General Committee prior to the opening of the Conference to undertake preparatory work, noting that such preparatory work would not constitute formal decisions and recommendations of the Committee until its membership is elected by the Conference.

With regard to the remaining three proposals, the Joint Meeting recommended the Council consider for endorsement the proposals to i) introduce, on a voluntary basis, the option for delegations to deliver statements in digital form under the General Debate of the Conference, ii) schedule meetings of Commission I and Commission II of the Conference consecutively, to the extent possible, and iii) introduce Round Tables during the Conference to foster senior or high level official action-oriented dialogue on matters of strategic importance to Members. In addition, the Joint Meeting noted that such Round Table events could be facilitated by an external moderator. Finally, the Joint Meeting proposed that the established practice of time limits under the General Debate be maintained, as outlined in the Arrangements for the 41st Session of the Conference document (C 2019/12 Rev.1).

The Council is invited to consider the four proposals contained in document CL 165/18, alongside the related observations and advice from the CCLM and the Joint Meeting, and submit any such recommendations as it considers appropriate for approval by the Conference at its 42nd Session. Any recommendations of the 165th Session of the Council with regards to the working methods of the Conference will then be incorporated into the document ‘Arrangements for the 42nd Session of the Conference’ submitted to the 166th Session of the Council in April 2021.

CHAIRPERSON

The conclusions on this Item would read:

Item 14 - Arrangements for the 42nd Session of the Conference

1. The Council recommended the Conference approve the provisional agenda as contained in document *CL165/14*, arrangements for the 42nd Session of the Conference, 12 – 16 July 2021 and in particular that
 - a) two Commissions be established to examine respectively: Substantive and Policy Matters in Food and Agriculture; and Programme and Budgetary matters.
 - b) The deadline for receipt of nominations for election to the Council be set at 12:00 on Monday, 12 July 2020, and the elections be held on Thursday, 15 July 2020.
2. The Council decided to establish a deadline for receipt of nominations for the Office of the Independent Chairperson of the Council, ICC, at 12:00 on Monday, 5 April 2021.
3. The Council agreed to recommend to the Conference that Palestine be invited to the Conference in an observer capacity.
4. The Council recalled the guidance of the 162nd Session of the Council on potential improvements to the working methods of the Conference and appreciated the work undertaken in this regard by the Independent Chairperson of the Council through informal meetings with the Chairpersons and vice- Chairpersons of the regional groups. Accordingly, the Council recommended that the Conference approve the proposals contained in document *CL165/18*, *Working Methods of the Conference*, in particular to
 - a. Introduce on a voluntary basis the option for delegations to deliver keynote statements under general debate of the Conference in digital form;
 - b. Schedule meetings of Commission 1 and Commission 2 of the Conference consecutively to the extent possible.
 - c. Introduce informal round table events at the Conference to foster senior or high-level action or reentered dialogue.
 - d. Convene informal meetings of the General Committee prior to the opening of the Conference to undertake preparatory work, noting that such preparatory work would not constitute formal decisions and recommendations of the General Committee until its membership is elected by the Conference.

That is the end. The floor is open for Members.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

We had made a comment in the written procedure regarding FAO policy concerning relations with international non-governmental organizations. We appreciate the response made by the Secretariat, and we do understand it was also in the document, all the Rules and the Basic Texts.

However, we would like to propose to add that “there be a clear procedure on the participation of such organizations, including from the private sector in advance of the Conference”. While there are some provisions in the Basic Texts, in practice the Director-General may invite some organizations. The list is done, but at the last Conference it was not clear which organizations were invited. Therefore, I think that it would be very useful to have this clarity in advance of the Conference.

CHAIRPERSON

Canada, if you have a specific wording, we can use that. Otherwise, we can leave the wording to be refined by the Drafting Committee.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I did not have any specific language to propose but I think that what is reflected could underline the need for clarity with regard to participation or invitation of such organizations, meaning the international non-governmental organizations, including from the private sector, in advance of the Conference.

CHAIRPERSON

"In advance of the Conference, I confirm.

Item 15. Council Multi-year Programme of Work 2021-2024**Point 15. Programme de travail pluriannuel du Conseil pour 2021-2024****Tema 15. Programa de trabajo plurianual del Consejo para 2021-24**

(CL 165/15)

CHAIRPERSON

With this we can move to the next item, which is Item 15, *Council's Multi-year Programme of Work 2021-2024* (CL165/15). The conclusion is a one-liner.

1. The Council reviewed and approved its Multi-year Programme of Work 2021-2024. I assume this is acceptable, this Item is concluded.

Item 16. Status of Implementation of Decisions taken at the 164th Session of the Council (6-10 July 2020)**Point 16. Suite donnée aux décisions adoptées par le Conseil à sa cent soixante-quatrième session (6-10 juillet 2020)****Tema 16. Estado de aplicación de las decisiones adoptadas por el Consejo en su 164.º período de sesiones (6-10 de julio de 2020)**

(CL 165/LIM/4)

CHAIRPERSON

Now we go to Item 16, *Status of Implementation of Decisions taken at the 164th Session of the Council*. We will address the conclusions of this Items on our Agenda addressed through the written correspondence procedure.

Item 16 - *Status of Implementation of Decisions taken at the 164th Session of the Council (6-10 July 2020)* and the document is CL165/LIM/4. The Council is invited to note the information on the implementation of decisions taken at the 164th Session in July 2020.

Also, a very short conclusion here. Item 16 - *Status of Implementation of Decisions taken at the 164th Session of the Council (6-10 July 2020)*.

1. The Council took note at its stages of implementation of decisions taken at its 164th Session of the Council, 6 to 10 July 2020.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I want to refer back to the Joint Meeting and our discussions there. The 164th Session of Council made a request to Management to share their project allocation criteria with a Joint Meeting. That was not done and remains outstanding. I do not have any text suggestions, but I would like that point to be reflected here by the Drafting Committee.

CHAIRPERSON

We leave it to the Drafting Committee. This is on Item 16.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

It is an outstanding recommendation of the 164th Session of the Council that was not included in this Report.

CHAIRPERSON

We will submit it to the Drafting Committee.

Item 18. Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2020-22**Point 18. Calendrier 2020-2022 des sessions des organes directeurs de la FAO et des autres reunions principales****Tema 18. Calendario de los períodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores de la FAO y otras reuniones importantes en 2020-22**

(CL 165/LIM/1)

CHAIRPERSON

Item 18, *Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other main Sessions, 2020-2022*. The document is CL 165/LIM/1.

To avoid meetings overlapping, FAO draws up this calendar in close coordination with IFAD and WFP and through the web-based Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) Common Calendar, which may be consulted by Members at any time through the Members Gateway, on the FAO homepage and on the relevant platforms of the other two Agencies.

The schedule of meetings for 2021 is before Council for approval and the Council is invited to take note of the Draft Calendar for 2022. Any changes made since the last Session, when the Calendar was presented for information, are indicated with an asterisk.

The conclusion on this Item, *Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2020-2022*, is:

1. The Council approved the Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies for 2020 and 2022, as reproduced in Appendix, and we will put the number later, to this Report.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Levanté la mano antes, no lo quise interrumpir pero levanté la mano antes. Yo le pediría que volvámos atrás. Volvamos atrás porque la sugerencia.

CHAIRPERSON

Which Item?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Item 16. La sugerencia de la Embajadora del Reino Unido no la entendimos. Queremos entenderla.

CHAIRPERSON

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, could you kindly repeat your suggestion?

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

At the Joint Meeting, we noted that one of the recommendations made by the last Council Session was still outstanding and that the outstanding recommendation is not reflected in this Report. However, it is noted in the Report of the Joint Meeting and it relates to the request for information on project allocation criteria of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP). This is not controversial. It is something the Joint Meeting has agreed is outstanding.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

No me convence. Lamentablemente no me gusta. Me gustaría, en todo caso, pensarlo esto. Así no. Necesitaría revisar algunos puntos anteriores. En todo caso, que sea una propuesta de texto concreto para ver si estamos de acuerdo o no. Repito lo que dije antes, el Programa de Cooperación Técnica

(PCT) es muy sensible para muchos de nuestros países, por lo tanto, que proponga un texto y vamos a ver si estamos de acuerdo.

CHAIRPERSON

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, would you have a suggested wording?

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

What I would suggest would be something like “Council noted the relevant paragraph.” I am just looking for it now in my paperwork, “paragraph 10 (g) in *CL165/9*”. We could just leave it at that. I will read the paragraph, “recalls that the 164th Session of the Council requested that FAO updated information, including criteria for project resource allocation on the ground for review by the Joint Meeting and noted that this was outstanding.”

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

We also made that point in our statement during the discussions. I would like to note that the *CL 165/LIM/1* document with the status of implementation, at page 15 and the decision at page 20, it does talk about “it looked forward to updated information on the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), including its criteria for resource allocation on the ground being submitted for review by the Joint Meeting of the Programme Committee and Finance Committees in November 2020”. That was not submitted, that is why the conclusions of the Joint Meeting set outstanding. However, I see that in the table it is written ‘Completed’ and we think it should be ‘Ongoing’. Therefore, we can support the language that the United Kingdom Great Britain and Northern Ireland proposed, that reflects the language of the Joint Meeting. However, I do not know how to reflect that in this table, “the status of implementation is ongoing”, not “completed”. This should be changed.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

La primera reacción es si ya lo vimos en el “Joint Meeting”, ¿para qué imprimirlo aquí? Primera reflexión.

La segunda reflexión es que para nosotros no es “ongoing” sino que es “outstanding”, porque como ya hemos expresado no se han hecho las evaluaciones correspondientes desde hace muchísimos años con respecto al Programa de Cooperación Técnica (PCT)TCP. A pesar de que había habido un mandato de la Conferencia de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura (FAO).

Y, en tercer lugar, me gustaría decir que, en todo caso, no es pertinente hablar del párrafo 10(g) del CL165/9 sino hablar de las tablas que estarían en el CL165/LIM/4. Pero, repito, me parece que incluir esto acá está complicando algo que estaba fluyendo. Podríamos discutirlo, pero a mí me parece que complicaría avanzar. Yo preferiría que esto no lo incluyamos aquí. Ya está incluida la discusión en el “Joint Meeting” y en todo caso, si insistieran en querer incluir este párrafo acá, tendríamos que ir específicamente a las modificaciones sugeridas por Argentina en este punto.

CHAIRPERSON

I am just told the interpretation time is over, so we will have to end this Session. It is a pity because we have got very little left. May I ask the Secretary-General to see whether there is any scope in the morning for the remaining items?

SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Council may meet tomorrow morning at 9:30 hours to continue and finalize this Plenary discussion. Then, according to what time that finishes, one would expect the Drafting Committee to convene late in the afternoon.

CHAIRPERSON

We will have to adjourn now because we do not have interpretation. I want to thank all Members for having stayed so late in the effort to complete our work. The objective was to finish it today, so that

tomorrow it would be all Drafting Committee-related work, but we fell short of just two items which we can take up, as the Secretary-General said we could, since hopefully it will not take us long.

I adjourn the Meeting and we will reconvene tomorrow at 9:30 hours.

The meeting rose at 1:08 hours

La séance est levée à 1 h 08

Se levanta la sesión a las 1.08

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-Fifth Session Cent soixante-cinquième session 165.º período de sesiones
Virtual Meeting, 30 November - 4 December 2020 Réunion Virtuelle, 30 novembre - 4 décembre 2020 Reunión Virtual, 30 de noviembre - 4 de diciembre de 2020
SEVENTH PLENARY SESSION SEPTIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SÉPTIMA SESIÓN PLENARIA
3 December 2020

The Seventh Plenary Meeting was opened at 9:32 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La septième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 32
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la séptima sesión plenaria a las 9.32
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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Item 16. Status of Implementation of Decisions taken at the 164th Session of the Council (6-10 July 2020) (*continued*)**Point 16. Suite donnée aux décisions adoptées par le Conseil à sa cent soixante-quatrième session (6-10 juillet 2020) (*suite*)****Tema 16. Estado de aplicación de las decisiones adoptadas por el Consejo en su 164.º período de sesiones (6-10 de julio de 2020) (*continuación*)**

(CL 165/LIM/4)

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, good morning to you. We can start our morning Session. We continue from last night. We left off at Item 16, the text will be placed on the screen, and I have already got a request for the floor from the Ambassador of Argentina.

Therefore, this is the text of Item 16 and the text in red is an amended version of the discussion yesterday.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

¿Podríamos tener la propuesta sobre la pantalla? No me parece mal la propuesta como está redactada por la Secretaría. De todas maneras, yo tengo una propuesta de texto, si a usted le parece, quisiera hacer una redacción alternativa, pero si el consenso pasa por la que está escrita en la pantalla, yo me allano al consenso.

Presidente, como usted prefiera, no quiero complicarlo.

Ms Marie-Therese SARCH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I am very content with that paragraph and thank you to the Secretariat for finding a solution. I am optimistic we can move swiftly through the rest of our Agenda now.

CHAIRPERSON

This text is fine; therefore, we go to Item 18.

Item 18. Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2020-22 (*continued*)**Point 18. Calendrier 2020-2022 des sessions des organes directeurs de la FAO et des autres réunions principales (*suite*)****Tema 18. Calendario de los períodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores de la FAO y otras reuniones importantes en 2020-22 (*continuación*)**

(CL 165/LIM/1)

CHAIRPERSON

Item 18 is *Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2020 to 2022* and the document is CL 165/LIM/1. To avoid meetings overlapping, FAO draws up this calendar in close coordination with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) and through the web-based Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) common calendar, which may be consulted by Members at any time through the FAO Members' Gateway on the FAO home page and on the relevant platforms of the other two Agencies.

The schedule of meetings for 2021 is before Council for approval and the Council is invited to take note of the draft calendar for 2022. Any changes made since the last Session, when the calendar was presented for information, are indicated with an asterisk. Therefore, my conclusion again is a one-liner.

Item 18, *Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2020-2022*

1. The Council approved the *Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies for 2020 to 2022* as reproduced in an appendix to this Report.

Mr Ulrich SEIDENBERGER (Germany)

It is good to see everybody fresh and to have the finish line just ahead of us. I would like to suggest a subsequent paragraph. The text reads “urge FAO to respect the Joint Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) Calendar when planning Governing Body meetings and consultations”. That would be the text and I will explain why I think, or we think that this is necessary.

In my capacity as Board President of the World Food Programme (WFP), I and the Members of our Bureau have experienced it repeatedly, that reservations, if I may say so, from WFP were then subsequently duplicated or overlaid by reservations from FAO. My predecessors in the Office of Board President can confirm that this is a recurring problem that at least WFP is experiencing.

I cannot speak about the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) however FAO sometimes has the tendency to disrespect the reservations of other Agencies in Rome and this is not a problem for a mission of the size of Germany with sufficient staff. However, it is, of course, a huge problem for small missions where basically sometimes one person has to deal with all three RBAs and therefore it is really important that this Joint RBAs Calendar is respected by all. It is not a means in itself.

It serves a purpose, and this purpose is that if one of the three RBAs has made a reservation in this Calendar or scheduled a meeting in the Calendar, that this is respected by the others and since we are here, the Council of FAO, we should address FAO in this respect.

Sr. Benito JIMÉNEZ SAUMA (México)

Nada más para apoyar la propuesta de Alemania. Lo mismo se percibe desde el punto de vista del Fondo Internacional de Desarrollo Agrícola (FIDA) donde también han habido traslapes con reuniones que la FAO ha puesto de último momento y eso nos ha creado problemas. Creo que este mismo párrafo lo deberíamos proponer también para los otros organismos con sede en Roma (OSR).

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Yo no tengo objeciones sobre el párrafo propuesto, pero no cargaría las cintas sobre la responsabilidad de la FAO. En todo caso, a veces es complejo en el contexto que estamos viviendo, la dificultad de poder coordinar seguramente los horarios y los días de los diferentes organismos con sede en Roma (OSR). Pero, repito, no tengo objeciones y acompaño la propuesta del distinguido embajador de Alemania.

Mr Bommakanti RAJENDER (India)

I echo the comments made by the colleagues just now. It is really a big issue. In every meeting I have been raising this, that if there is a clash of meetings and especially after these virtual meetings, there is a rush for so many meetings and it is creating a problem. As the Ambassador of Germany mentioned, I believe that the statutory meetings should not be clashed. I think it must be taken into account. This is how I would like to express my opinion.

Sr. Juan PRIETO GÓMEZ (España)

Sencillamente queríamos respaldar la propuesta planteada por Alemania en nombre de la Unión Europea y de los 27 Estados miembros para tratar de evitar solapamientos indeseados.

CHAIRPERSON

I do not have any other requests from Members. Therefore, we go forward with this wording.

Item 19. Developments in *Fora* of Importance for the Mandate of FAO

Point 19. Évolution des débats au sein d'autres instances intéressant la FAO

Tema 19. Novedades en foros de importancia para el mandato de la FAO

(CL 165/INF/4)

CHAIRPERSON

We can now go to Item 19, *Developments in Fora of Importance for the Mandate of FAO*. Document CL 165/INF/4 and CL 165/INF/4, Web Annexes 1 to 4.

The conclusions for Item 19, *Development in Fora of Importance for the Mandate of FAO*.

1. The Council received Concept Notes on the following topics for information only:
 - a. Latest developments on the SDG1 Indicator Framework and the financing mechanisms for SDG Data and Statistics;
 - b. Establishment of the Global Leaders Group (GLG) on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) by the FAO, WHO and OIE Tripartite;
 - c. 11th Session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, 4 to 6 August 2021; and
 - d. UN Summit on Biodiversity, 30 September 2020.

Now the floor is open for Members.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Yo pondría en el primer texto, “*briefing notes*” no “*concept notes*.” “*Briefing notes*”.

CHAIRPERSON

I see no other request for the floor, so we can go forward with this wording.

Item 20. Tentative Agenda for the 166th Session of the Council (April 2021)

Point 20. Ordre du jour provisoire de la cent soixante-sixième session du Conseil (avril 2021)

Tema 20. Programa provisional del 166.º período de sesiones del Consejo (abril de 2021)

(CL 165/INF/2)

CHAIRPERSON

We move to our last item, Item 20, which is the *Tentative Agenda for the 166th Session of the Council (April 2021)*, document CL 165/INF/2.

For this Item 20, it is again a one-liner. The heading, again, is *Tentative Agenda for the 166th Session of the Council (April 2021)*.

1. The Council endorsed the *Tentative Agenda of its 166th Session (April 2021)* as contained in document CL 165/INF/2.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

I just wanted to bring your attention to the fact that New Zealand had their hand up for Item 18. Therefore, it would be appreciated if we would be able to give New Zealand the floor.

CHAIRPERSON

I do not mind, however, the practice when adopting conclusions is that it is restricted to Members.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

I understand, he just has an important point to raise under Item 18 on behalf of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

CHAIRPERSON

Okay. New Zealand, you have the floor.

Mr Don SYME (New Zealand) (Observer)

Sorry, I do not want to take any time. It is not to change the recommendation; it is just that there is a new additional Plenary Meeting of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) on 4 June 2021 that came in after the written comments due date. Therefore, for the benefit of the Members, if they can include on 4 June 2021, CFS48.

Mr Seung-lyong KIM (Republic of Korea)

Can you see the Document CL 165/INF/2? Since the Republic of Korea would like to make one proposal regarding the Agenda Item 20. Our request is, adding one urgent Item under the section of

Any Other Matters, as a new paragraph 14, tentatively entitled as “Progress Report of the World Fisheries University of FAO, and the subsequent steps to be taken”.

This is not intended to get the final decision on the establishment of the University, but to get an approval from the Council to start development consultation for the establishment of the University between interested Members and FAO Secretariat. For Members’ understanding, we would like to please explain the background of this proposal.

I will say the name for the Agenda, *Progress Report of the World Fisheries University of FAO*, and the subsequent steps to be taken”. For Members better understanding, we would like to please explain the background of this proposal. The Republic of Korea concluded a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with FAO on a pilot programme for the establishment of the World Fisheries University, in May 2019. Under this MoU, FAO and the Republic of Korea launched a Joint Pilot Programme in March this year.

Currently, 30 students from 22 countries are taking Masters’ Degree programmes, despite various challenges posed by COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to strong prevention and contra-measures taken by the Korean government, all students have carried out their studies successful, with no confirmed case reported thus far. Moreover, we would like to advise the Council of the news that the FAO Fisheries Department is undertaking an external evaluation on this Pilot Programme.

Distinguished Members may have an opportunity to discuss the results of the pilot programme at the coming Committee on Fisheries (COFI), at its the 34th Session, in February next year. We would like to highlight that this initiative is directly related to capacity building on fisheries, particularly in consideration of challenging situations that many seas are facing.

It also fully aligns with FAO's mandate in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, as well as the FAO Constitution Article 1, Paragraph 2. (b). So, of course, the Korean government will continue to consult closely with the FAO Secretariat regarding this issue, until the next Session of the Council. We would like to kindly request the Council’s Members keen attention to this matter, as well.

Ms Agnes Rosari DEWI (Indonesia)

We would like, also, to bring your attention to the comments that we have submitted. We requested to put the Report of Intergovernmental Group on Oilseeds and Fats, to be submitted as a Sub-Item, under Item 5.1., of the 73rd Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems. Indonesia has the honour to be the host of the meeting, tentatively scheduled on 18 March 2021.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Quería reaccionar sobre la sugerencia de República de Corea. Me parece un tema muy importante. Me parece un tema relevante, sobre todo, por la especificidad técnica y la verdad es que me pregunto si no debería ser tratado específicamente como un tema relevante en el Comité de Pesca (COFI) próximo para luego ser tratado en el Consejo de la primavera de 2021.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

I would just like to intervene, again, to posing a reflection. Hearing the intervention coming from New Zealand, we do not have a formal limitation for that, for sure. However, we understand that important decisions like calling for a new session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) should be discussed in-depth in the Session, and not as Item in the [XX] Session, without any full discussion on the importance, and the consequences of a new Session for this year first.

Again, we recognise that formerly the decision was taken according to the rules, however in terms of opportunity, we understand we should have a better discussion at the Session.

Ms Anna JO (Republic of Korea)

First of all, sorry to take the floor, again, and I also would like to thank Argentina for providing insightful input. For your information, I would like to share the news that, as another Korean Delegate said before, the external evaluation of the pilot programme is being undertaken now. Therefore, the results of the evaluation of the pilot programme will be forwarded and reported to the 34th Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) first.

Then, the result would be incorporated in the Report of COFI, and then the COFI Report will be forwarded to the next Council meeting. Therefore, it is the process we are envisioning, and along with the evaluation result, we hope that the Progress Report of the World Fisheries University, and the steps to be taken, would be able to be deliberated in the Council Meeting. This is why we propose the inclusion of the Sub-Item under, Any Other Matters, as the next Council Meeting.

Ms Baoying ZHU (China) (Original Language Chinese)

[Speaking in Chinese]

Continues in English

Yes, I can continue. I repeat, we listened very attentively to the proposal in relation to the World Fisheries University. I repeat, we listened carefully to the proposal on the World Fisheries University.

CHAIRPERSON

I have a request from the Legal Counsel. Perhaps the Legal Counsel comments may facilitate our discussions. We will get back to China, when China is connected with us. Ms Donata Mary Rugarabamu, you have the floor.

Ms Donata Mary RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

It is with respect to the proposal, and Sub-Item 1 (a), concerning the proposed addition of a reference to a World Fisheries University. This is a matter that, many Members may be aware, has a long history. Essentially, it relates to a proposal to establish a World Fisheries University of FAO.

At this moment in time, a Pilot Programme is on-going. This is a Pilot Programme between the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea, and FAO, bearing in mind that the proposal ultimately is to establish an institution of FAO. The matter raised a number of constitutional and legal implications, as well as technical. It is for this reason that this Pilot Programme is on-going.

There is, thus, at this moment in time, no university of FAO, as such. Indeed, it was going to be that the Members were going to be requested to decide on the next steps, based upon the outcome of the Pilot Programme.

I would therefore recommend that, in considering an addition of an Item of this nature, that care be taken to refer to the Pilot Programme of the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic Korea and FAO, on a World Fisheries University, as distinct from referring to this as the World Fisheries University of FAO, bearing in mind that the decision has not yet been taken by the Members on whether to go forward. By way of guidance, also, clearly as this would be a matter of constitutional impact and implication, it would not normally be solely the Committee of Fisheries (COFI) which would consider this matter in the long term.

CHAIRPERSON

I see China is back, so China, please go ahead, you have the floor.

Ms Baoying ZHU (China) (Original Language Chinese)

Apologies for the technical glitch. Thank you for giving me the floor again. I was not able to hear the explanation provided by Legal Counsel. I will simply repeat our position. We are very pleased and agree with the statement made by the Ambassador of Argentina, this is a very important issue.

We also feel, however, that we need to discuss this matter within the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), so that we can have an in-depth debate on this, before we submit it to the Council.

CHAIRPERSON

Ms Donata Rugarabamu, may I ask whether, in view of your comments about the Pilot, by putting the word, proposed, it would be okay, or you would like to suggest change in the wording, there?

Ms Donata Mary RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

It would be my recommendation to insert the words, “Pilot Programme”, after the word, “Progress Report on the pilot programme for” Then continue with the “proposed World Fisheries University”. That is my suggestion.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Lamento levantar este tema que pueda parecer que no nos parece importante. Es justamente porque nos parece muy importante. Nosotros tenemos una política en Argentina donde los temas que tienen que ver con la pesca, sean desde cualquier tipo de aproximación, deben ser observados por nuestros técnicos. Y eso se da en el Comité de Pesca (COFI). Para mí esto es un problema porque yo no soy un experto en este tema e, incluso, por un tema de competencias necesito que tener que discutir con los técnicos que asesoran a mi Representación en materia de pesca y que están en el COFI trabajando.

Por lo tanto, me parece que lo dicho por mi estimada colega de República de Corea confirma que si va a estar en el COFI y que va a salir un dictamen, un informe en el COFI, pidiendo que esto sea tratado en el Consejo inmediatamente subsiguiente que es el de abril de 2021, yo creo que deberíamos de tratar este tema directamente en el COFI. Me parece que estamos dedicándole mucho tiempo a un tema que, reitero, es muy importante y esa importancia técnica debería ser tratada en el lugar que es, básicamente, el Comité técnico.

Yo estoy seguro que vamos a estar todos de acuerdo con esta maravillosa idea, pero yo no me animaría a apoyar o promover una actividad sobre la cual COFI no se haya todavía expresado por dos motivos. Por un tema técnico, pero, además, por un tema de principios, que es el voto “bottom up approach”. Tenemos que respetar este esquema porque es lo que nos da garantías a todos, sobre todo a los que no somos expertos, de poder tener las revisiones de correspondan.

Entonces, si cada uno vamos a sugerir ideas que impliquen no pasar por los comités técnicos y directamente nos aseguramos que va a ser tratado en el Consejo, me parece que no es un buen precedente. Yo, insisto, salvo que usted, Presidente, me diga que estoy equivocado. Pero me parece que, técnicamente, e incluso escuchando a la propia distinguida colega de República de Corea y también a la Asesora Jurídica, esto debería primero ser resuelto en el comité técnico, para luego ser tratado en el próximo Consejo y va a tener, seguramente, si es como parece y nuestros expertos están de acuerdo, el respaldo unánime y el apoyo unánime, seguramente, de todos.

CHAIRPERSON

I agree with your comments that there is a Technical Committee for dealing with this issue and that the Technical Committee Report would come to the Council, ultimately. I do not know when the next Committee on Fisheries (COFI) meeting is.

Ms Maria Helena SEMEDO (Deputy Director-General)

Beginning of February, Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON

In fact, following the comments of the Ambassador from Argentina, should this go to the February Meeting of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), and then it will come to the Council as part of COFI's Report, we do not need to put it on the Agenda now, Republic of Korea?

China, you would like the floor.

Ms Baoying ZHU (China) (Original Language Chinese)

We agree with your conclusion, Mr Chairperson, as the Ambassador from Argentina has expressed, we agree with him, we have the same thought. Thus, in this context, we consider that subparagraph (a) is inappropriate.

CHAIRPERSON

Therefore, I think we will follow the route of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), and COFI's Report coming to the Council, we could take away this Item from the Agenda.

Ms Anna JO (Republic of Korea)

Sorry for taking the floor again. First of all, we can go along with your suggestion, Chairperson, however I would like to kindly request that the discussions that have been taken to be recorded in the Report of the Council, that the Republic of Korea made this suggestion, and other Delegations had an opinion about this inclusion in the Sub-Item.

Once again, I would like to reassure that, the reason why we made this proposal is because, of course, the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) would deliberate the evaluation result of the Pilot Programme. However, our intention was to make a separate Agenda Item, so that along with the evaluation results, we also would like to talk about the steps to be taken about the proposed establishment of World Fisheries University, based on the results of the Pilot Programme.

This is why we made this initial proposal, and also, taking this opportunity, I would like to thank all the Delegations who made the remarks about this important initiative of World Fisheries University. We can go along with your suggestions.

CHAIRPERSON

I just wanted to say that the official records of the Council include the Verbatim Records. All this discussion is in the Verbatim Records of the Council. I wonder whether it is necessary to say, “the Council noted a request from the Republic of Korea”, because it has no sort of conclusion, it is just noted. Nevertheless, the discussion is reflected in the Verbatim Records, which is the official record of the Council.

My suggestion would be to leave it in the Verbatim Records, and not put such a comment in the Report, which the reader would ask, why is this there, without saying in the Report, why is Republic of Korea not saying something else. This does not mean anything on its own. Therefore, could we go forward without making any reference here, but leaving, in fact, all the interventions by Argentina, by China, by yourself, they are all reflected in the Verbatim Records?

I would think this is not necessary, but I rely on Members. I would like to give the floor to the Legal Counsel, because this issue has a history, and legal sort of considerations, and it may facilitate discussions.

Ms Donata Mary RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

I apologise for intervening again. Here, I take the opportunity to recall that the Item under consideration is the Tentative Agenda for the 166th Session of the Council. Consequently, the question does arise whether, in light of the anticipated consideration by Technical Committees, and indeed, presumably, other Committees, of this proposal, whether it is appropriate to have a specific reference in this particular position in the Report of the Council.

It would appear, and as you had also already indicated, that this would be a matter that would reach the Council, through appropriate reports of relevant and concerned Committees, rather than placing it here. This was just to try and facilitate the discussion, I am just pointing to the Item that is actually under consideration at this moment in time.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Thailand)

I would like to support the proposal made by New Zealand, to propose a Special Session on 4 June. Potentially, the Bureau, and also the Advisory Group Members agree to have the Special Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) on 4 June, to adopt the policy recommendations on agriculture and other innovative approach.

CHAIRPERSON

I think, we need to adopt this, and we carry on minus this comment on the Fisheries University, in view of what the Legal Counsel said. We have a mechanism in place, like I explained. Luckily, the meeting of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) is taking place before the Council, so it will come automatically to the Council as part of the COFI Report. I think with this wording, we can move forward, and conclude on this matter. Would that be agreeable to Members? I see no request. Therefore, Item 20, is concluded.

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, this concludes our work on all Items of the 165th Session of the Council.

The first meeting of the Drafting Committee will take place at 11:00 hours today, this morning. Please note that the Verbatim records of the Monday Session, and Tuesday morning Session, are now available through the Members Gateway.

I also wish to remind Members that the draft Council Report will be transmitted through the FAO Members Gateway and will be available on the password protected area of the portal.

Thank you again for the time you have devoted, and late-night Session yesterday, which enabled us to conclude our Meeting.

I thank you again, and we will reconvene on Friday for the Adoption of the Report.

I wish you all a good afternoon and thank you again. The meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 10:21 hours

La séance est levée à 10 h 21

Se levanta la sesión a las 10.21

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Sixty-Fifth Session Cent soixante-cinquième session 165.º período de sesiones
Virtual Meeting, 30 November - 4 December 2020 Réunion Virtuelle, 30 novembre - 4 décembre 2020 Reunión Virtual, 30 de noviembre - 4 de diciembre de 2020
EIGHTH PLENARY SESSION HUITIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE OCTAVA SESIÓN PLENARIA
4 December 2020

The Eighth Plenary Meeting was opened at 16:00 hours
Mr Khalid Mehboob,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La huitième séance plénière est ouverte à 16 h 00
sous la présidence de M. Khalid Mehboob,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la octava sesión plenaria a las 16.00
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khalid Mehboob,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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**ADOPTION OF REPORT
ADOPTION DU RAPPORT
APROBACION DEL INFORME**

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, Director-General, we can commence this last Session to this 165th Session of the Council. I wish to inform the Council that the Report for Adoption is available on the password-protected area of the FAO Members Gateway in all languages.

We will now proceed with the Adoption of the Report. The relevant document is *CL 165/Report for Adoption* which was made available to the password-protected area of the FAO Members Gateway.

I now invite the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, Ms Kelli Ketover, to provide some remarks.

Ms Kelli KETOVER (Chairperson of the Drafting Committee)

Let me start by thanking you for placing your confidence in me to chair the Drafting Committee of the 165th Session of the Council. I want to thank the ten Members of the Drafting Committee, Australia, Canada, China, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Germany, Kuwait, Tunisia, Spain and the European Union, for your hard work and dedication.

The Drafting Committee was convened in a constructive spirit and I applaud the collaboration by all which led to the finalisation of the Report for Adoption before the Council this afternoon.

It is because of the collaboration and collective experience of the Members that our work was completed in a timely and efficient manner yesterday afternoon. We avoided any substantial changes to the conclusions of the Council, sticking to the consensus of Plenary on concept and substance.

Finally, I would like to thank the Secretariat, including the interpreters, for their tireless support to the Drafting Committee Meeting.

With this I recommend the Report to be adopted *en bloc*.

CHAIRPERSON

I would like to extend my appreciation to you and to all the Members of the Drafting Committee for the good work done. It appears that the Report of this Session may be approved *en bloc*.

Any linguistic observations should be communicated in writing to the Secretariat for inclusion in the Final Report. Does the Council wish to adopt the Report *en bloc*?

Sra. Diana INFANTE QUINONES (República Dominicana)

Queremos felicitar por la excelente labor en el Comité de Redacción a la Presidenta del Comité, Señora Kelli Ketover de Estados Unidos de America, se hizo muy buen trabajo y también a usted, señor Presidente, por la conducción que ha tenido en el Consejo, que ha sido excelente.

Nosotros solo queremos señalar un pequeño detalle para la Secretaría para que por favor lo tome en cuenta luego en el tema 29, literal (e), solo para mantener la misma consistencia que se tiene en el texto en español. Mantener el lenguaje completo cuando se habla del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial (CSA) porque en la versión en inglés aparecen solo las siglas. Este breve comentario. Muchas felicidades a todos por el gran trabajo.

CHAIRPERSON

We have noted your remarks.

Does the Council now wish to adopt the Report *en bloc*? I see no request for the floor, so the Report is adopted.

Adopted
Adopté
Aprobado

I now invite the Director-General to address the Council.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Thank you, my dear Brother, Independent Chairperson of the Council, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Colleagues, we have reached the end of this important Council Session after a long week of ‘rallying’.

I want to thank all delegations for their valuable contributions and active engagement during this Session.

My appreciation goes to our esteemed Chairperson, Mr Khalid Mehboob for his hard work not only in this week, but also for many weeks before this week, day and night without work-shifts. I know, a lot of delegates have had work shifts, but he did not. In addition, to the Chairpersons of the Finance Committee, the Programme Committee, the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters, and others.

This was the second Council held in a virtual mode and it was my third one, since I came to office. Our Governing Bodies are now solidly positioned in the digital age. This is the ‘evolution of human being.’

I am pleased that the Council welcomed the Outline of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and the Outline of the Medium Term Plan 2022-25. This is the outcome from so many times of the inclusive and transparent consultation process we established in the development of the new Strategic Framework, as the Council rightly acknowledged. It is a way to build up ownership and volunteering contribution later.

As I said in my Opening Remarks, this Strategic Framework builds on the momentum and the harmonized transformations already taking place in the Organization it builds on all the efforts of the past 16 months: our new business model, the structural reforms, the Hand-in-Hand initiative, and the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme.

This is an important sign of trust not only in what we want to achieve, but also how we are working to get there.

I also welcome the approval by Council of FAO’s new Strategy for Private Sector Engagement. Again, as I had stressed in my speech on Monday, an efficient, transparent and inclusive FAO is my highest priority, and this also applies to the way we approach the private sector as well as any other non-governmental institutions that we work with. It is not one shot-end. We will keep you informed on how the Strategy is being implemented and hopefully present satisfying results of our work.

Your support of our ongoing initiatives, like Hand-in-Hand and our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, is very well noted and inspires us to work even harder in collaboration with all of you for the benefit of the vulnerable, the farmers, youth and women, citizens and netizens all around the world.

I would like to thank the Staff Body Representatives for their speech and the positive assessment it contained. Your positive and dynamic engagement lead our solidarity among employees. That is a real contribution, not only from the resources’ aspect, but also from the spiritual aspect. We share the same goal of ensuring our employees’ safety and wellbeing and our open and constructive dialogue will continue.

You can count on me. I hope you are already convinced by yourself during these past 16 months.

Distinguished Delegates, 2020 is a turning point for a new FAO and for transformation of agri-food systems. This very different and very challenging year is about to end. The catastrophe of the century will be over. We have spared no efforts to continue the hard work and deliver despite all the difficulties and the Council has acknowledged this today. For that, I wish to thank all of you, distinguished Members, for your support and advice, but also for your hard questions and demanding comments to my colleagues.

All of you have offered ‘pulling in front, pushing behind, supporting below and pressing from all sides’ when we are climbing to the peak of the mountain. That is a real world, I fully understand. I was fully prepared to come to FAO. Some people come; some people go. This is nature. Life is a faith. We

benefit from all of it in our quest to offer the best tangible services – holistically, coherently and historically to the Members.

In closing, I wish you all restful winter and look forward to seeing you in brighter spring of 2021. My deep appreciation goes to all my dear employees, especially skeleton from management to the operation, from Headquarters in Rome to global decentralization offices on the ground.

Thank you

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Director-General.

I have a request from the Ambassador from Argentina. He would like to make a comment.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Quiero reconocer la tarea impresionante realizada por usted, Presidente, por su Secretaría, por los intérpretes, por todos aquellos que hicieron posible que tuviéramos este Consejo exitoso. Permítame compartir con usted una experiencia que, creo, puede ser útil a los efectos de pensar las nuevas sesiones del Consejo, las nuevas reuniones de los órganos rectores.

En el día de ayer sucedió un hecho que considero relevante para traerlo a esta sesión en orden de seguir mejorando el funcionamiento de nuestra Organización. Argentina solicitó a través de uno de los miembros del Comité de Redacción su voluntad de sumarse en carácter de observador silente al mismo. Algunos miembros se opusieron y la Presidencia, con muy buen criterio, consultó a la Secretaría si ello era una práctica habitual. Correctamente, la Secretaría afirmó que no era una práctica habitual y, finalmente, no pudimos ser observadores silentes.

Esta situación me permitió reflexionar en algunas cuestiones muy sintéticas que quisiera compartir. Primero, que no sea una práctica habitual, yo interpreto que no significa que esté prohibido. Como muy bien expresado por la Secretaría, no es una práctica habitual, pero todos sabemos que no estamos en *modus operandi* usual, sino que estamos, como dijo muy bien el Director General, en una situación excepcional, novedosa.

La excepcionalidad del modo virtual no ha creado protocolos que garanticen que en la reunión del Comité de Redacción pueda evitarse que sus miembros tengan, por ejemplo, en la misma sala otros Miembros sin que ello esté en conocimiento de la propia Presidencia del Comité de Redacción o de los otros miembros.

La excepcionalidad nos interpela a ser innovadores, sobre todo innovadores en clave transparencia porque, obviamente, estoy seguro porque conozco a mis colegas, nadie tiene nada que ocultar. He escuchado en estas últimas reuniones, en muchas reuniones aquí en la Organización, que se habla mucho de transparencia. Y yo creo que estamos construyendo la FAO más transparente que hemos conocido. Por lo tanto, quizás, es el momento de empezar a considerar este punto para la próxima sesión del Consejo y de los órganos rectores en la cual la posibilidad de que, cuando un Miembro solicite ser observador silente en el Comité de Redacción de cualquier órgano, sea absolutamente parte de la nueva FAO.

Por lo tanto, en la próxima reunión informal del Presidente Independiente del Consejo con los presidentes y vicepresidentes de los grupos regionales, Presidente, le plantearé y les propondré esta idea para que empecemos a discutirlo. Muchísimas gracias, Presidente, y vuelvo a felicitarlo por la excelente tarea realizada, así como a todos los miembros del Comité de Redacción.

CHAIRPERSON

This question of the Drafting Committee and Observers, if I recall, has quite a history and it is part of the Working Methods of the Council. I think it would be appropriate to take it up at the future meetings of the Regional Groups, I will do that.

Before closing this meeting, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to offer some reflections on this 165th Session of the Council which has taken place at the end of an extraordinary year worldwide, for FAO and for its governance.

At this Session, the Council has reviewed some important matters for the Organization and provided its recommendations to the Conference and guidance to Management, discharging its governance with utmost diligence and responsibility.

Members examined inputs from the Regional Conferences and Technical Committees and recommendations from the Programme and Finance Committees on the Outline for the Strategic Framework 2022-2031. The Council has now given clear guidance in this regard, including the need for alignment with Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals, which are national companions for FAO's ambition for the next ten years, both in substance and in timing.

This guidance will allow the Management to finalize its proposals for the new Strategic Framework, Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget 2022-2023, which the Council will consider at its next Session in April 2021.

Council Members also received key ongoing matters, including FAO's response to the current COVID-19 pandemic and the progress of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

The Council approved an historic new Strategy for Engagement with the Private Sector. In its guidance, the Council stressed the importance of balance believed to accelerate connection with the private sector to deliver on objectives, with ensuring the independence, neutrality and credibility of the Organization.

Members of the Council worked hard this week, sometimes late into the night. There were divergent views and there was spirited debate, that was sure. In the end, with respect and collaboration, Members always came together in consensus.

I would like to commend and congratulate Members for their engagement, their conduct and, above all, their willingness to seek consensus, which is crucial for the effectiveness of governance at FAO and for the work of the Organization.

I would also like to extend sincere appreciation and congratulations to the Director-General of FAO. Your transparency and openness with Members are unprecedented and we witnessed that again this week. This follows your participation at the Regional Conferences, formal meetings, informal consultations and Management briefings in 2020.

Indeed, your handling of the Organization's work this year, the well-being of FAO staff as well as the innovation for Governing Body meetings have all been underpinned by enhanced communication which has been welcomed by all of us in these difficult COVID-19 days. This week the Council reaffirmed its support to your leadership of the Organization, and we look forward to continued engagement in 2021.

Finally, my sincere thanks go to Mr Rakesh Muthoo, the Secretary-General of the Council. As always, Mr Muthoo and his Governing Bodies Servicing (CSG) team have planned, supported and delivered smoothly this Session of the Council with tireless dedication, including for documentation, translation, interpretation and audiovisual communication and reports.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, this 165th Session of the Council rounds up a very particular year for all of us. While we managed to carry out our work this week successfully in a forced virtual modality, I look forward, hopefully, to returning to our physical meetings in April 2021, which will be my last session as Independent Chairperson of the Council.

Normally, at this stage I wish delegates safe travel back to their capitals. On this occasion, I would like to wish you all to keep safe and well with your families in your homes.

With this I declare closed the 165th Session of the Council.

I close this Session and thank you, everybody. I wish you all the best.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Take a rest.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you.

The meeting rose at 16:26 hours

La séance est levée à 16 h 26

Se levanta la sesión a las 16.26