

**REPORT OF THE
TWENTY-THIRD FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA**

Johannesburg, South Africa, 1-5 March 2004

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

FAO Member Nations in the Africa Region

Algeria	Gabon	Nigeria
Angola	Gambia	Rwanda
Benin	Ghana	Sao Tome and Principe
Botswana	Guinea	Senegal
Burkina Faso	Guinea-Bissau	Seychelles
Burundi	Kenya	Sierra Leone
Cameroon	Lesotho	South Africa
Cape Verde	Liberia	Sudan
Central African Republic	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Swaziland
Chad	Madagascar	Tanzania
Comoros	Malawi	Togo
Congo	Mali	Tunisia
Congo, Democratic Republic of	Mauritania	Uganda
Cote d'Ivoire	Mauritius	Zambia
Djibouti	Morocco	Zimbabwe
Egypt	Mozambique	
Equatorial Guinea	Namibia	
Eritrea	Niger	
Ethiopia		

Date and place of FAO Regional Conferences for Africa

First	-	Lagos, Nigeria, 3 – 12 November 1960
Second	-	Tunis, Tunisia, 1 – 10 November 1962
Third	-	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 3 – 15 September 1964
Fourth	-	Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 9 – 19 November 1966
Fifth	-	Kampala, Uganda, 18 – 29 November 1968
Sixth	-	Algiers, Algeria, 17 September – 3 October 1970
Seventh	-	Libreville, Gabon, 14 – 30 September 1972
Eighth	-	Rose Hill, Mauritius, 1 – 17 August 1974
Ninth	-	Freetown, Sierra Leone, 2 – 12 November 1976
Tenth	-	Arusha, Tanzania, 18 – 28 September 1978
Eleventh	-	Lomé, Togo, 16 – 27 June 1980
Twelfth	-	Algiers, Algeria, 22 September – 2 October 1982
Thirteenth	-	Harare, Zimbabwe, 16 – 25 July 1984
Fourteenth	-	Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, 2 – 11 September 1986
Fifteenth	-	Moka, Mauritius, 26 April – 4 May 1988
Sixteenth	-	Marrakech, Morocco, 11 – 15 June 1990
Seventeenth	-	Accra, Ghana, 20 – 24 July 1992
Eighteenth	-	Gaborone, Botswana, 24 – 28 October 1994
Nineteenth	-	Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 16 – 20 April 1996
Twentieth	-	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 16 – 20 February 1998
Twenty-first	-	Yaoundé, Cameroon, 21 – 25 February 2000
Twenty-second	-	Cairo, Egypt, 4-8 February 2002
Twenty-third	-	Johannesburg, South Africa, 1-5 March 2004

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SUMMARY OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

Country Statements and General Debates

Report on FAO Activities in the Region 2002-2003 (ARC/04/2)

The Conference:

1. welcomed the comprehensive report presented by the Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa (ADG/RR) and commended the active role that FAO is taking in supporting African Agriculture, particularly the NEPAD-CAADP; (paragraphs 25 and 26)
2. recommended that the next Regional Conferences should be organized in a way that country statements focus only on key success stories to share with others; (paragraph 26)
3. noted that selected FAO achievements in individual countries could be of high interest to neighbouring countries because of the cross-border implications; and therefore recommended that FAO should adopt the sub-regional approach when implementing such programmes. (paragraph 27)

Discussion Items

Implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP): Progress Review (ARC/04/4.1) and related Sub-Items

For the Attention of Governments, Regional Economic Communities, the African Union and NEPAD

The Conference:

4. recommended the establishment of a Forum of Permanent Secretaries in order to support and ensure the implementation process for the CAADP at the national, regional and continental levels in an effective and coherent manner; (paragraph 34a)
5. recommended setting up CAADP focal points at national level to drive the process; (paragraph 34b)
6. urged that annual reports on CAADP Implementation are prepared by the NEPAD Secretariat; (paragraph 34c)
7. urged the NEPAD Secretariat to work with FAO and other development partners to set up a clear mechanism for monitoring the progress of the CAADP, with well-defined performance indicators and specific time-frame; (paragraph 34d)
8. stressed the need for NEPAD and the African Union (AU) to consider including the agricultural sector in peer review to support good governance for implementation, in line with the existing established principles of the AU; (paragraph 34e)

9. recommended that NEPAD works with the AU to establish a CAADP Support Group; (paragraph 34f)
10. recommended that particular attention be given to the improvement of fertilizer availability, affordability and production in Africa, on the basis of regional cooperation and involvement of the private sector; in this respect, the Conference unanimously adopted the Resolution ARC/04/RES; (paragraph 34h)
11. recommended to countries that had not done so, to engage with FAO to review policies and strategies, and the development of medium-term investment plans and bankable projects; (paragraph 35a)
12. urged the NEPAD Secretariat and FAO to continue to facilitate exchanges of experiences on success stories among countries in Africa; (paragraph 35b)
13. recommended that the AfDB infrastructure programmes for the development of rural infrastructure should support food production and market access; (paragraph 35c)
14. recommended that mainstreaming gender issues should be integral to all CAADP strategy programmes; (paragraph 35d)
15. stressed the need to do further work to clarify the concept and process of establishing African Centres of Excellence as a basis for facilitating capacity-building and sharing experience; (paragraph 36b)
16. requested that the implementation of CAADP should take into account the specificity, peculiarity, and the challenges of Small-Island Developing States; (paragraph 36c)
17. urged member countries to ensure that the 10% budget allocation for investment in agriculture and rural development should be justified by good returns. (paragraph 37b)

For the Attention of FAO

The Conference:

18. urged FAO to assist member countries to develop sustainable approaches to soil fertility improvement based on integrated natural resources management and greater integration of crop-livestock systems; (paragraph 34h)
19. recommended further consultations with national governments and farmers' organizations to identify concerns, priorities and areas of investments when preparing the CAADP companion document on integrating forestry, fisheries and livestock sectors; (paragraph 36a)
20. recommended that FAO and other development partners should assist member countries in better articulating and defining the scope and application of the 10% budget allocation for investment in agriculture and rural development. (paragraph 37a)

Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) for Food Security in Africa (ARC/04/5)
For the Attention of Governments, Regional Economic Communities and AU/NEPAD

The Conference:

21. acknowledged that IWRM was now considered the most appropriate framework for "good water governance" and recommended its adoption as a strategic framework for all water-related socio-economic development activities; (paragraph 38)
22. further acknowledged the risks associated with rain-fed agriculture in semi-arid and drought-prone areas and urged member countries to adopt drought-mitigation measures in those areas subject to frequent weather vagaries leading to famine and food-aid requirements; (paragraph 39)
23. recognized the important role of irrigation in food production and poverty reduction and recommended that irrigation should be integral to any strategy to sustainably increase agricultural output; (paragraph 40)
24. noted that some 60% of water withdrawn for agricultural production was lost in a variety of ways and recommended the adoption of water saving techniques and better on-farm water management in order to improve irrigation water efficiency and productivity; (paragraph 41)
25. further noted the 25 action-points - which confirmed the existing commitments and the new actions that were proposed by the Heads of State and Governments in their February 2004 Sirte, Libya Declaration on Agriculture and Water in Africa within the context of NEPAD and recommended that:
 - a. The AU working with Member Countries should take appropriate steps to translate the commitments into concrete actions; (paragraph 42a)
 - b. National governments should ensure public investment and private sector participation in the development of water resources for agricultural production and food security. (paragraph 42b)

For the Attention of FAO

The Conference:

26. recognized the advantages of small-scale irrigation and requested FAO to continue its assistance to Member Countries to expand their water management programmes within the framework of the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS); the Conference however emphasized the need to build environmental and health-protection measures into irrigation development programmes. (paragraph 40)

Standing Item: Follow-up to the World Food Summit (WFS) and The World Food Summit: five years later (WFS:fyl) - Regional Dimensions (ARC/04/3)

For the Attention of Governments and Regional Economic Communities:

27. The Conference recommended that:
- a. Governments should step up their efforts to translate the commitments made at the WFS and at the WFS:fyl into actions; (Appendix F, paragraph 45a)
 - b. Governments should coordinate policies and programmes and have holistic inter-disciplinary approach to tackle food insecurity in all its dimensions; (Appendix F, paragraph 45b)
 - c. Governments should accord high priority to food and the agricultural sector within a broad-based development framework, and that development approaches, strategies and programmes be nationally owned; (Appendix F, paragraph 45c)
 - d. Regional Economic Communities should explore creating internal funding mechanism to help implement their respective regional programmes for food security. (Appendix F, paragraph 45d)

For the Attention of FAO

28. The Conference recommended that:
- a. FAO should ensure that apart from cassava and rice, other staple crops such as maize be given due emphasis in CAADP, in view of their importance in the diet of many Member Countries; research should be undertaken to diversify in the long-term diets in countries where maize is the main food commodity; (Appendix F, paragraph 46a)
 - b. FAO should continue to provide its technical assistance to Member Countries towards the work on grain reserves in view of their importance at national, sub-regional and regional levels. (Appendix F, paragraph 46b)

Information Items

Contribution of Agricultural Research and Extension to Food Security and Poverty Reduction in the African Region (ARC/04INF/5)

For the Attention of Governments

29. The Conference:
- a. stressed the need for an African Research Agenda to cover all sub-sectors; (Appendix F, paragraph 58a)

- b. especially underlined the necessity for the effective use of existing technologies and the opportunities provided by "intra-Africa technical cooperation"; (Appendix F, paragraph 58b)
- c. recommended that more attention should be given to the funding of Agricultural Research and Extension Systems (ARES) in line with financial commitments made by the Governments, regional and international funding agencies. (Appendix F, paragraph 58g)

For the Attention of FARA (Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa), FAO and NEPAD

30. The Conference:

- a. endorsed in principle the recommendations to hold sub-regional conferences on agricultural research and extension and requested FARA, FAO, NEPAD and other stakeholders to work out the details; (Appendix F, paragraph 54)
- b. urged NEPAD, FARA and FAO to report on progress at the next FAO Africa Regional Conference. (Appendix F, paragraph 56)

The Bushmeat Crisis in Africa: Conciliating Food Security and Biodiversity Conservation in the Continent (ARC/04/INF/7)

For the Attention of Governments, FAO and Other Development Partners

31. The Conference noted that bushmeat continues to play an important role in providing protein, medicine and in providing income for rural poor and therefore recommended:

- a. that Governments, FAO and international partners should accord particular attention to identifying appropriate alternative solutions and help implement them in collaboration with local communities. (Appendix F, paragraph 58)

For the Attention of FAO

32. The Conference:

- a. recommended that FAO in collaboration with relevant international and regional organizations should initiate studies on sanitary risks and eventual diseases transmitted through bushmeat consumption; (Appendix F, paragraph 59)
- b. requested FAO to work with Member countries and development partners to continue sharing experiences on the subject. (Appendix F, paragraph 60)

HIV/AIDS and the Food Crisis in Sub-Saharan Africa (ARC/04/INF/8)

For the Attention of Governments

33. The Conference recommended that:

- a. Governments should take urgent action to review and strengthen agricultural policy and programming in order to mainstream HIV/AIDS considerations in sectoral strategies for agricultural development; (Appendix F, paragraph 63a)
- b. All parties involved should aim to reach an integrated response to cover the emergency-to-development continuum whilst maintaining a humanitarian perspective. (Appendix F, paragraph 63c)

For the Attention of FAO and other Development Partners

34. The Conference recommended that development partners, especially UNAIDS, WHO, FAO and the World Bank in close cooperation with NEPAD should increase their budget allocation to strengthen the institutional capacity to combat the epidemic through increasing collaboration with Governments, NGOs and Civic Society. (Appendix F, paragraph 63b):

International Year of Rice – 2004 (ARC/04/INF/9)

For the Attention of Governments

35. The Conference:

- a. noted the presentation and particularly the high potential contribution of NERICA rice to food security and urged Member Countries to promote the dissemination of the new rice variety; (Appendix F, paragraph 64)
- b. encouraged Member Countries to observe the International Year of Rice. (Appendix F, paragraph 65)

Side Events

FOURTH FAO/NGO/CSO CONSULTATION FOR AFRICA

For the Attention of Governments

36. The Conference recommended to:

- a. increase public funding to agriculture/rural sector by at least 10% rising to 30%; (paragraph 69a)
- b. formulate and promote policies and programmes that support family-based agroecological approaches to agriculture; (paragraph 69b)
- c. commit themselves to promoting the establishment of national alliances against hunger enshrining the Right to Food, with strong civil society involvement; (paragraph 69c)
- d. apply for TCP funding for Farmers' Organizations capacity building; (paragraph 69d)

- e. work on mechanisms of involving Farmers' Organization/Civil Society Organization (FO/NGO/CSO) in development policy programmes and projects and initiatives such as NEPAD; (paragraph 69e)
- f. address problems that make farming difficult and unprofitable: funding, Infrastructure, markets, peace and security; (paragraph 69f)
- g. involve FO/NGO/CSO in international protocols and agreements like WTO that affect the rural people; (paragraph 69g)
- h. commit themselves to enhance sub-regional integration to promote inter-regional trade. (paragraph 69h)

For the Attention of FAO:

37. The Conference recommended that FAO should:

- a. Provide support to NGO/CSO/FOs to enable their effective participation in the NEPAD/CAADP; (paragraph 70a)
- b. contribute to promote policy dialogue between NGO/CSO and Governmental actors at national and regional levels; (paragraph 70b)
- c. sensitize FAO country offices on the need to strengthen their relations with NGO/CSO and promote policy dialogue with Governments; (paragraph 70c)
- d. designate focal points for FAO-NGO/CSO relations in the FAO country offices in order to promote cooperation with NGO/CSOs/FOs at the national level; (paragraph 70d)
- e. support and involve Farmers' Organizations in its programmes and projects by working out a clear mechanism of participation, particularly in the Special Programme for Food Security at national and regional level; (paragraph 70e)
- f. encourage the use of TCP funding for the capacity-building of FOs; (paragraph 70f)
- g. contribute to the strengthening of the International Planning Committee (IPC) networking in the Africa Region and assist the network in the implementation of its plan of action; (paragraph 70g)
- h. assist NGO/CSOs/FOs in mobilizing resources required for the implementation of their activities. (paragraph 70h)

FAO/AfDB Round Table on Financing Agricultural and Rural Development

For the Attention of Governments and Development Partners

38. The Conference agreed that:

- a. Governments should continue to review agricultural policies and legislative frameworks to create an enabling environment for making better use of development resources; (paragraph 74)
 - b. Ministries of Agriculture should become more effective as "champions" of the agricultural sector and the rural poor and in securing a larger share of PRSP and HIPC resources; (paragraph 74)
 - c. Governments should ensure that investment funds reach the farmers themselves, since they are the primary producers of wealth in most African countries. (paragraph 76)
39. The Conference emphasized:
- a. the need for small-scale, low-cost participatory approach; (paragraph 75)
 - b. the need for financing institutions and development partners to streamline their own procedures in project processing, procurement, disbursement and monitoring; (paragraph 78)
 - c. furthermore, the role of Governments in engaging local stakeholders, i.e. the private sector, farmers, development finance institutions, as well as development partners and finance institutions in increasing investment in agriculture; (paragraph 79)
 - d. the need to further examine the question of preferential interest rates for small-scale farmers and other options for rural finance (paragraph 76).
40. The Conference recommended that agriculture's contribution to the economic growth and its role as a productive sector in the economy should be recognized and reflected in budgetary allocations. (paragraph 77)

Other Matters

For the Attention of Governments

41. The Conference decided that Rome-based Permanent Representatives should continue their discussion with FAO and WHO to agree on the time and the venue of the proposed regional conference on food safety for Africa. (paragraph 82)

For the Attention of FAO

42. The Conference recommended that FAO should consider the use of Portuguese language during the 33rd Session of the FAO Conference in 2005. (paragraph 81)

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

Organization of the Conference

1. The Plenary Session of the Twenty-third FAO Regional Conference for Africa was held at the Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa, from 4 to 5 March 2004.

2. The Conference was attended by 167 delegates from 37 Member Nations of the Region, of which 23 were represented at Ministerial level; 13 observers from Member Nations outside the Region, 2 observers from the Holy See, 13 representatives from 9 Organisations of the United Nations Specialized Agencies, 20 observers from Intergovernmental Organizations and 49 from International and Regional non-governmental organizations. The list of delegates is given in Appendix B.

Inaugural Ceremony

3. The inaugural ceremony was held at the Sandton Convention Centre, in the presence of His Excellency Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Mr. Jacques Diouf. Her Excellency Thoko Didiza, Minister for Agriculture and Land Affairs of South Africa, welcomed the delegates to Johannesburg on behalf of the Mayor of the city. She wished the Delegates a successful meeting and looked forward to the outcome of the Conference which would respond to and address the food security as well as poverty alleviation challenges in Africa.

4. On this occasion, the Director-General of FAO and the President of the Republic of South Africa delivered two inaugural speeches summarized under section II - Statements. His Excellency Helder Muteia, Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of Mozambique, expressed the delegates' appreciation of the warm welcome and the multicultural show that displayed the rich arts of the Republic of South Africa. He finally thanked the President for sharing his insights on agricultural development and poverty as well as the Government and people of South Africa for their warm hospitality.

Election of Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Appointment of Rapporteurs

5. The Conference considered the recommendations made by the Africa Group of Permanent Representatives to FAO in Rome, regarding the officers to service this session of the Conference and approved by acclamation the composition of the bureau as follows:

Chairperson:	Republic of South Africa H.E. Thoko Didiza, Minister for Agriculture and Land Affairs
First Vice-Chairperson:	Gabon Mr Aristide Ongone Obame Secrétaire Général de la Commission Nationale pour la FAO
Second Vice-Chairperson:	Morocco H.E. Mohand Laenser

Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

First Rapporteur: Senegal
H. E. Dr Samba Buri Mboup,
Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa

Second Rapporteur: Kenya
Dr. Gerrishon Gituma
Deputy Director Veterinary Services

6. The Conference also constituted a "Friends of the Rapporteur Group" comprising: Angola, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Egypt, Mali, Madagascar, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

7. The Meeting adopted the Agenda and Timetable with amendments. The Agenda is given as Appendix A, while the list of documents is shown in Appendix C.

II. STATEMENTS

Statement by the Director-General of FAO

8. In his opening speech, Mr. Jacques Diouf, Director-General of FAO, expressed his great pleasure to be in South Africa, the symbol of Africa's renaissance and extended his gratitude to President Thabo Mbeki and to the Government of the Republic of South Africa for their generous hospitality.

9. The Director-General recalled that the number of undernourished people, most of whom were in developing countries, was on the rise and that at the current pace, the WFS goals would be achieved only in 2150. He further pointed out that the prices of major commodities exported by developing countries were now lower than ever. Hence, in line with Doha Development Agenda for agriculture and the role of FAO's Committee on Commodity Problems, the Director-General intended to invite the representatives of the ministries of trade to the meeting of this Committee in February 2005. He pointed out that investment in agricultural development had dropped and in order to address the issue, FAO decided to jointly organize, with regional development banks, round tables on financing agriculture to be held in parallel with each of its 2004 Regional Conferences in the developing regions.

10. He stated that national alliances were being formed in member countries following the establishment of an International Alliance Against Hunger during the *World Food Summit: five years later*.

11. The Director-General emphasized the need for developing countries to take up the challenge of agricultural productivity and market competitiveness to improve their food security by addressing issues of land and water management, urban and peri-urban agriculture, livestock and transboundary diseases. He outlined FAO's initiatives in the area of forestry, fisheries and sustainable development projects for mountain regions and Small Island Developing States. FAO is striving to tackle women's unequal access to production resources.

12. He then briefly outlined central issues for discussion during the Conference among which was the implementation of the CAADP of NEPAD. In this regard, he indicated that FAO and other development partners were assisting member countries in CAADP-related activities. He encouraged exchange of experience on measures member countries have undertaken to implement the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa. He stated that the Conference would also examine a proposal to integrate fisheries, forestry and livestock component into CAADP; food security reserve systems in Africa; and the implications of fertilizer production and use in Africa. He underscored the importance of the availability and use of fertilizer for significant and sustainable improvement in Africa's agricultural productivity.

13. He also urged the international community to adopt the required measures that would enable more fair trade among all parties, notably between developing and developed countries.

14. Finally, he expressed the urgent need to translate the Maputo Declaration and Sirte commitments into coherent, realistic and effective programmes. In concluding, he wished the delegates of the Twenty-third FAO Africa Regional Conference (ARC) successful deliberations.

The full text of the Statement is attached as Appendix D.

Opening Address by the President of the Republic of South Africa

15. His Excellency, Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, extended a warm welcome to all delegates and thanked FAO for allowing South Africa the honour of joining the African family of nations to host the Twenty-third Africa Regional Conference.

16. The President reflected that development is about transforming societies, improving the lives of the poor, enabling everyone to have a chance at success and access to health care and education. President Mbeki elaborated that the situation of the continent and the tasks politicians had set themselves within the context of the African Union and its development programme, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), made it imperative that experts, politicians and the African small scale farmers worked together in a broad partnership towards the betterment of the latter.

17. The President of South Africa observed that whether politicians talked about "achieving a better life for all", "working towards poverty eradication", "changing the conditions of the working people" or "improving gender equality and the emancipation of women", it all came down to working with rural men and women. He recognised, however, that governments' investment in the past had often favoured the rural elite and the urban upper and middle classes rather than the small family operator. He called upon the current political leadership to allocate sufficient resources to agricultural development programmes while ensuring an active engagement of the peasant masses.

18. The President concluded by calling on the participants to be "dedicated to the strategic task to end the vulnerability, exclusion and powerlessness of our peasant masses, determined to ensure that they are liberated from fear and hunger, and that their voices are heard loud and clear." After this, he declared the Twenty-third Africa Regional Conference open and wished the delegates success in their deliberations.

The full text of the Address is attached as Appendix E.

Statement by the Independent Chairman of FAO Council

19. The Independent Chairman of the FAO Council, His Excellency Aziz Mekouar, expressed his appreciation to FAO for organizing the regional conference, in Johannesburg, South Africa, that had coincided with the celebration of the 10th year of the end of apartheid. He then congratulated the Technical Committee for the report and thanked the Director-General for his active engagement in the development of African agriculture.

20. He pointed out that the Conference provided a platform to discuss crucial issues of African agriculture in the framework of NEPAD in order to improve food security, reduce poverty and assure prosperity in the region. He further indicated that despite variation in African economies, most of them were characterized by low agricultural performance. It is for this reason that he expressed his keen interest in the outcome of the discussions, especially as regards CAADP implementation and other related agenda items of the conference. He further expressed his satisfaction that the issue of financing for agriculture would be discussed at the roundtable organized as a parallel event.

21. He expressed his appreciation to the Government and the people of South Africa for hosting the Regional Conference. He thanked the FAO Regional Office for Africa for the quality of the organization of the Conference and the Technical Committee for their excellent work. He wished the delegates fruitful deliberations.

Statement by the Deputy Executive Director of the World Food Programme

22. In her statement to the Conference, Ms. Sheila Sisulu, Deputy Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP) expressed her anticipation for collaborative work towards eradicating hunger and malnutrition in Africa. She stated that it was alarming to note that the number of hungry people in Africa was growing, contrary to other regions. She indicated that while causes of hunger were many and complex, the devastating effects were the same. She stated that until hunger was stamped out and universal education introduced, it would be difficult to eradicate poverty.

23. She referred to WFP collaboration with NEPAD, for feeding and schooling 40 million African children. She stressed the need for special assistance to some 34 million orphans - 11 million as a result of HIV/AIDS.

24. She outlined that one of WFP's five strategic priorities for 2004-2007 was to help governments establish and manage their own food assistance programmes. She concluded that fewer resources implied the need to eliminate duplication and maximize synergy. In this regard, the WFP Deputy Executive Director informed the Conference that the Rome-based UN Agencies were collaborating on a twin track approach to ending hunger: providing short-term investments in food aid and looking into possibilities for long-term investments.

Report on FAO Activities in the Region 2002-2003 (ARC/04/2)

25. The Conference welcomed the comprehensive report presented by Mr. Joseph Tchicaya, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, informing on FAO activities in Africa during the biennium 2002-2003. It presented follow-up measures to recommendations of the 22nd ARC, especially with regard to FAO technical assistance to countries in the

implementation of the SPFS, support to the NEPAD Secretariat and to African ministries in the field of strengthening their capacities on addressing gender issues in agricultural development.

26. Member countries commended FAO's active role in support of African Agriculture, particularly the NEPAD-CAADP. They expressed their appreciation of FAO support to many countries in their efforts to improve policy management for agriculture productivity and food security. In this regard, member countries recommended that next Regional Conferences should be organized in a way that country statements focused mainly on key success stories to share with the others.

27. The Conference noted that selected FAO achievements in individual countries could be of high interest to neighbouring countries because of the cross-border implications. It was therefore recommended that FAO should adopt a sub-regional approach when implementing such programmes.

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

28. The Conference had on its agenda two discussion items: i) Implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) with four sub-items and ii) Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) for Food Security in Africa.

29. The Chairperson of the Technical Committee, Ms. Bongiwe Njobe, presented the report of the Committee, laying emphasis on the recommendations of the above two discussion items and giving an overview of the standing item i.e. Follow-up to the World Food Summit (WFS) and the *World Food Summit: five years later – Regional Dimensions*.

Implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP): Progress Review and related Sub-Items (ARC/04/4.1)

30. The Conference noted that its Technical Committee had deliberated upon the main Document ARC/04/4.1 on the Implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and also took note of the related sub-item documents: ARC/04/4.2, ARC/04/.3, ARC/04/.4 and ARC/04/INF/6.

31. The Conference further noted that progress on CAADP implementation had been realized in all of its four pillars except for the market access programmes under the Rural Infrastructure and Market Access pillar, which were not well defined. It acknowledged the critical need for civil society and in particular, farmer's participation in the implementation of the CAADP as well as the importance of partnership between civil society, government, the private sector and other development partners to support CAADP implementation. It requested NEPAD Secretariat, AfDB, FAO and other development partners to further elaborate the Market Access component of CAADP pillar No. II for its effective implementation.

32. More significantly, the Conference acknowledged the progress made by a number of countries on follow-up to the Maputo commitment of allocating at least 10% of national budgets to agriculture and rural development within 5 years and appreciated FAO's assistance in preparing Medium-term Investment Programmes and bankable projects. The Conference appreciated the organization of the Roundtable on Financing Agriculture by FAO and AfDB as a parallel session at this conference.

33. The Conference also appreciated the documentation on the CAADP related sub-Items, including: initiative to review and update national agricultural policies and strategies; integrating forestry, fisheries and livestock into CAADP; fertilizer production and use in Africa; and the establishment of regional food reserve systems, including food stocks. It agreed with the objectives of the proposed NEPAD/WFP/FAO study on Food Reserve Systems and the finalization of the study.

34. To accelerate progress in the implementation of CAADP, the Conference:

- a. recommended the establishment of a Forum of Permanent Secretaries in order to support and ensure the implementation process of the CAADP at the national, regional and continental level in an effective and coherent manner;
- b. recommended setting up CAADP focal points at national level to drive the process;
- c. urged the NEPAD Secretariat to prepare annual reports on CAADP implementation;
- d. urged the NEPAD Secretariat to work with FAO (and other development partners) to set up a clear mechanism for monitoring the progress of the CAADP, with well-defined performance indicators and a specific time frame;
- e. stressed the need for NEPAD, with AU's support, to consider including agricultural sector in peer review mechanism to ensure good governance for implementation, in line with the existing established principles of the AU;
- f. recommended that NEPAD should work with AU with a view to establishing a CAADP Support Group;
- g. recommended that the outcome from the continental Farmers' Organization's consultation on CAADP implementation held from 23-25th February 2004, Johannesburg, should be taken into consideration;
- h. urged FAO to assist member countries to develop sustainable approaches to soil improvement based on integrated natural resources management and greater integration of crop-livestock systems. Particular attention should be given to the improvement of fertilizer availability, affordability and production in Africa, on the basis of regional cooperation and involvement of the private sector. In this respect, the Conference unanimously adopted the Resolution ARC/04/RES below.

35. To ensure alignment of CAADP with national and other programmes, the Conference:

- a. recommended to countries that had not done so, to engage with FAO to review policies and strategies, and develop medium term investment plans and bankable projects;
- b. urged the NEPAD Secretariat and FAO to continue to facilitate exchanges of experiences on success stories among countries in Africa;

- c. recommended that the AfDB infrastructure programmes for the development of rural infrastructure should support food production and market access;
- d. recommended that mainstreaming gender issues should be integral to all CAADP strategies and programmes.

36. **To expand the scope of CAADP, the Conference:**

- a. noted that progress was made with the development of a companion document on integrating forestry, fisheries and livestock sectors. The Conference, however, recommended that there should be further consultations with national governments and farmers' organizations to identify concerns, priorities and areas of investments;
- b. stressed the need to do further work to clarify the concept and process to establish African Centres of Excellence as a basis for facilitating capacity building and sharing of experience;
- c. recognized the work being done to address specificity, peculiarity and the challenges of Small Island Developing States, hence requested that the implementation of CAADP should take into account this issue.

37. The Conference applauded the commitment made by the African Heads of State and Government at the Maputo Summit, July 2003 to allocate at least 10% of national budgetary resources to agriculture and rural development within 5 years. In order to assist member countries to operationalize this commitment in a cost effective and efficient manner, the conference:

- a. recommended that FAO and other development partners assist member countries to better articulate and define the scope and application of the 10% investment in the context of agriculture and rural development;
- b. urged member countries to ensure that the 10% investment in agriculture and rural development should be justified by good returns.

**RESOLUTION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF FERTILIZER INDUSTRY IN AFRICA
IN SUPPORT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE AFRICA AGRICULTURE
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (CAADP)**

The Conference:

Welcoming the call by the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union in the Maputo Declaration for the implementation, as a matter of urgency, of the CAADP at the national and regional levels and their commitment to allocate at least 10% national budget resources for its implementation within 5 years;

Noting that the CAADP document has set the target of 6% annual growth rate for food production in Africa, with particular attention to small-scale farmers and women;

Noting Further that the current annual growth rate for food production in Sub-Sahara African countries is less than 3%;

Aware that the use of fertilizers can greatly increase crop yield;

Aware Also that Africa is the only continent in which per capita food production has declined continuously over the past two decades, making the Continent a net food importer;

Recognizing that the decline in food production in Africa is due, *inter alia*, to the continuous mining of soil nutrients by cropping without adequate replenishment;

Noting that fertilizer use in Sub-Saharan Africa is only 9 kg/ha, as compared to 100 kg/ha in South Asia, 150 kg/ha in East and South-East Asia, 73 kg/ha in Latin America and 206 kg/ha in the industrial developed countries;

Aware that Africa has large deposits of natural gas and rock phosphate which are exported cheaply to the developed countries and the manufactured fertilizers are imported into Africa at high costs which the small-scale farmers cannot afford to pay;

Reaffirming the NEPAD principle of self-reliance and ownership:

- i) **Expresses** appreciation to FAO for the assistance rendered to the NEPAD Secretariat in the preparation of CAADP and the Action Plan;
- ii) **Recommends** to the NEPAD Implementation Committee of Heads of State to give top priority to the development of the fertilizer industry in Africa to support the sustainable implementation of the CAADP;
- iii) **Calls** on the NEPAD Secretariat, with the assistance of FAO and the International Fertilizer Development Centre (IFDC) and other relevant Organizations to conduct an up-to-date assessment of all fertilizer plants in Africa with estimated costs of revamping them and the establishment of new plants at suitable sites, with the aim of making Africa not only self-sufficient in fertilizer production, but a net exporter of the finished products by the year 2015; and

- iv) **Calls upon** National Governments, FAO and NEPAD to utilize the results of relevant national and sub-regional initiatives as well as of this assessment in order to facilitate fertilizer availability, affordability and production in Africa.

Integrated Water Resource Management for Food Security in Africa (ARC/04/5)

38. The Conference acknowledged that Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) was now considered the most appropriate framework for "good water governance" and recommended its adoption as a strategic framework for all socio-economic development activities.

39. The Conference further acknowledged the risks associated with rain-fed agriculture in semi-arid and drought-prone areas and urged member countries to adopt drought-mitigation measures in those areas subject to frequent weather vagaries leading to famine and food aid requirements.

40. The Conference recognized the important role of irrigation in food production and poverty reduction and recommended that it should be integral to any strategy to sustainably increase agricultural output. It further recognized the advantages of small-scale irrigation and requested FAO to continue its assistance to member countries to expand their water management programmes within the framework of the Special Programme for Food Security. The Conference, however, emphasized the need to build environmental health protection measures into irrigation development programmes.

41. Noting that some 60% of water withdrawn for agricultural production is lost in a variety of ways, the Conference recommended the adoption of water saving techniques and better on-farm water management in order to improve irrigation water efficiency and productivity.

42. The Conference noted the 25 action points - which confirmed the existing commitments and the new actions that were proposed by the Heads of State and Governments in their recent Sirte, Libya Declaration on Agriculture and Water in Africa within the context of NEPAD and recommended that:

- a. AU working with member countries should take appropriate steps to translate the commitments into concrete actions.
- b. National governments should ensure public investment and private sector participation in the development of water resources for agricultural production and food security.

Standing Item: World Food Summit and World Food Summit: five years later - Regional Dimensions (ARC/04/3)

The Conference:

43. expressed appreciation for the initiatives taken by FAO to implement the World Food Summit Plan of Action and the *World Food Summit: five years later*;

44. noted, however, that the progress towards the WFS goal of reducing the number of the undernourished has so far been disappointing in that the number of undernourished people in Sub-Saharan Africa has increased from 168 million in 1990/92 to 202 million people in 1999-2001; and, therefore, recommended that:

45. Governments and Regional Economic Communities:

- a. step up their efforts to translate the commitments made at the WFS and at the WFS: *fyl* into action;
- b. coordinate policies and programmes and have holistic inter-disciplinary approach to tackle food insecurity in all its dimensions;
- c. accord high priority to food and the agricultural sector within a broad based development framework, and that development approaches, strategies and programmes be nationally owned;
- d. explore creating internal funding mechanisms to help implement their respective Regional Programmes for food security.

46. FAO:

- a. ensures that apart from cassava and rice, other staple crops such as maize be given due emphasis in CAADP, in view of its importance in the diet of many member countries; research be undertaken to diversify in the long-term diets in countries where maize is the main food commodity;
- b. continues to provide its technical assistance to member countries towards the work on grain reserves in view of their importance at national, sub-regional, and regional levels.

IV. INFORMATION ITEMS

47. In addition, the Conference considered and endorsed the following conclusions and recommendations of the Technical Committee as related to the Information Items below:

Contribution of agricultural research and extension to food security and poverty alleviation (ARC/04/INF/5)

The Conference:

48. noted the lack, in particular, of long-term research funding, weak agricultural research and extension linkages and insufficient attention to farmers' needs;
49. emphasized the constraints, opportunities and challenges of technology transfer mechanisms;
50. agreed that an Agricultural Research Extension System Support Programme which aims to reinforce achievement of the established NEPAD/CAADP goals requires, urgent implementation with the assistance of FAO, NEPAD Secretariat, FARA and other stakeholders;
51. stressed the need for an African research agenda to cover all sub-sectors, and especially underlined the necessity for the effective use of existing technologies and the opportunities provided by "intra-Africa technical cooperation";

52. urged FAO to continue its efforts in further enhancing NARS capacity building in the areas of agricultural research, knowledge and technology transfer, and strengthening the linkage between research, extension and farmers to effectively reverse productivity decline;
53. emphasized the urgent need for a “demand-driven” agricultural research and extension agenda that aims at problem solving for intended beneficiaries;
54. endorsed in principle the recommendation to hold sub-regional conferences on agricultural research and extension, details of which would be worked out between FARA, NEPAD, FAO and other stakeholders;
55. recommended that more attention should be given to the funding of ARES in line with the financial commitments made by the Governments, regional and international funding agencies;
56. urged NEPAD, FARA and FAO to report on progress at the next FAO Africa Regional Conference.

The Bushmeat Crisis in Africa: Conciliating Food Security and Biodiversity Conservation (ARC/04/INF/7)

The Conference:

57. noted that bushmeat continues to play an important role in providing protein, medicine and in improving income for rural poor. However, population growth and commercial hunting have led many key species to a dramatic decline while others are at the brink of extinction;
58. recommended that Governments, FAO and international partners should accord particular attention to identify appropriate alternative solutions and help implement them in close collaboration with local communities;
59. recommended that FAO, in collaboration with relevant international and regional organizations, should initiate studies on sanitary risks and diseases eventually transmitted through bushmeat consumption;
60. requested FAO to work with member countries and development partners to continue sharing experiences on the subject.

HIV/AIDS and the Food Crisis in Sub-Saharan Africa (ARC/04/INF/8)

The Conference:

61. took note of FAO’s responses to the changing context of agricultural development, as a result of the HIV/AIDS impact at macro/meso level or institutional, community and the households/individual level and identified areas which require further action and follow-up;
62. agreed that two critical areas for FAO’s future strategy stand out: one, the prevention of double emergencies of HIV/AIDS and food shortages in Africa and elsewhere; and two, the assistance to be provided to member countries to develop effective agriculture and rural resource-based mitigation and rehabilitation responses to the epidemic.

63. recommended that:

- a. Governments should take urgent action to review and strengthen agricultural policy and programming in order to mainstream HIV/AIDS considerations in sectoral strategies for agricultural development;
- b. Development partners, especially UNAIDS, WHO, FAO and the World Bank in close cooperation with NEPAD should increase their budget allocation to strengthening the institutional capacity to combat the epidemic through increasing collaboration with governments, NGOs and civil society;
- c. All parties involved should aim to reach an integrated response to cover the emergency-to-development continuum whilst maintaining a humanitarian perspective.

The International Year of Rice (ARC/04/INF/9)

The Conference:

64. noted the high potential contribution of NERICA to food security and urged member countries to promote the dissemination of the new rice variety;

65. encouraged member countries to observe the International Year of Rice.

FAO Strategic Framework for Bridging the Rural Digital Divide (ARC/04/INF/10)

The Conference:

66. noted the information contained in the document as well as the presentation in South Africa's experience with policy management to facilitate bridging the rural digital divide.

V. SIDE EVENTS

FOURTH FAO/NGO/CSO CONSULTATION FOR AFRICA

67. The fourth NGO/CSO Regional Consultation for Africa took place from 27 to 29 February 2004 at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg prior to the Twenty-third African Regional Conference. Ms Edith Molewa, Member of the Executive Council for North-West Province, on behalf of the Minister for Agriculture and Land Affairs, South Africa and the FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, Mr. Joseph Tchicaya, officially opened the meeting. The Consultation was attended by 46 participants from 19 African Countries, including 27 representatives from Farmers' Organizations (FOs) and 14 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

68. The Consultation agenda included two main themes that were also on the agenda of the Twenty-third ARC as follows: the follow-up to the *WFS:fyI* and the civil society involvement in NEPAD. At the end of the deliberations, the participants issued a final Declaration whose main recommendations are as follows:

69. For the Attention of Governments:

- a. Increase public funding to agriculture/rural sector by at least 10% rising to 30%;
- b. Formulate and promote policies and programmes that support family-based agroecological approaches to agriculture;
- c. Commit themselves to promoting the establishment of national alliances against hunger enshrining the Right to Food, with strong civil society involvement;
- d. Request TCP funding from FAO for Farmers' Organizations capacity building;
- e. Work on mechanisms of involving Farmers' Organization/Civil Society Organization (FO/NGO/CSO) in development policy programmes and projects and initiatives such as NEPAD;
- f. Address problems that make farming difficult and unprofitable: funding, infrastructure, markets, peace and security;
- g. Involve FO/NGO/CSO in international protocols and agreements like WTO that affect the rural people;
- h. Commit themselves to enhance subregional integration to promote inter-regional trade.

70. For the Attention of FAO:

- a. provide support to FO/NGO/CSO to enable their effective participation in the NEPAD;
- b. contribute to promoting policy dialogue between NGO/CSO and Governmental actors at national and regional level;
- c. sensitize FAO country offices on the need to strengthen their relations with NGO/CSO and promote policy dialogue with Governments;
- d. designate focal points for FAO-NGO/CSO relations in the FAO country offices in order to promote cooperation with FO/NGO/CSO at the national level;
- e. support and involve FOs in its programmes and projects by working out a clear mechanism of participation, particularly in the Special Programme for Food Security at national and regional level;
- f. encourage use of TCP funding for the FOs capacity-building;
- g. contribute to strengthening the International Planning Committee (IPC) network in the Africa Region and assist the network in the implementation of its plan of action;
- h. assist FO/NGO/CSO in mobilizing resources required for the implementation of their activities.

AfDB/FAO Round Table

Financing for Agriculture and Rural Development: Summary Record

71. The Round Table considered papers and/or presentations by the NEPAD Secretariat, the African Development Bank and FAO. The purpose of the meeting was to examine how resources could be mobilized to increase investment in agriculture and meet the needs of CAADP implementation. The constraints to increasing investment at all levels were discussed, including external resources, domestic resource allocations, and how to ensure that investment funds actually reach farmers.

72. The background to the discussion was the alarming increase in the number of hungry people in Africa and the decline in aid and lending for African agriculture. Aid to agriculture is just US\$1.1 billion per year – equivalent to US\$1.60 per person. The estimates under CAADP of the investment needed is US\$251 billion to 2015, which is a small figure when compared with the US\$300 billion annual support given to agriculture in the OECD countries.

73. The constraints on internal and external resources include both the commitment of developed countries to aid in general and the government expenditure on agriculture. Over the last two years African leaders have prioritized agricultural development in order to achieve sustainable development across all sectors. This commitment was highlighted in the Maputo Declaration, in which Heads of State and Government pledged more resources to agriculture. It was agreed that the challenge now was to translate budgetary expenditure into effective delivery of services and support for the agriculture sector. The Round Table agreed that it would be useful for countries to share experiences in mobilizing resources for agriculture and ways of achieving effective delivery.

74. It was agreed that governments should continue to review agricultural policies and legislative frameworks to create an enabling environment for making better use of domestic resources. Allocations of public expenditure are made by Ministers for Finance. It therefore follows that Ministers for Agriculture needed to work more closely with Ministers for Finance. It was pointed out that the decline in financing institutions' lending to agriculture can partly be attributed to decline in demand from African countries, as well as the conditionalities set by lending institutions and the perceived high risk associated with the sector. It was agreed that ministries of agriculture should become more effective as "champions" of the agricultural sector and the rural poor and in securing a larger share of PRSP and HIPC resources.

75. The issue of the competing claims of social sectors – health and education – for scarce resources was discussed. The underlying problem was that agriculture was seen as being a "difficult" sector by development partners, with poor perceived performance. Although poor performance was acknowledged, this was attributed, in part, to the large and expensive project approaches of the past. The Round Table emphasised the need for small scale, low cost, participatory approaches. It also discussed how agriculture could become self sustaining and how the equivalent of the high value of imported food could be converted into investment.

76. The Round Table agreed that the most important issue in financing agriculture was to ensure that investment funds reached the farmers themselves, since they were the primary producers of wealth in most African economies. A number of measures for achieving this were discussed, including ensuring that public services aimed at increasing farmers' productivity – research, extension, inputs, information – reached farmers; cutting the cost of loan finance;

supporting MFIs; and supporting development banks' and commercial banks' operations in agriculture. The options for providing rural finance were discussed and the question of preferential interest rates for small scale farmers was identified as a matter that required further discussion.

77. The Round Table stressed that profitability of agriculture underlies all other measures. Some of the major points that were raised in this regard related to enhancing the enabling environment for investment, with special emphasis on investing in infrastructure and promoting market integration. In this context it was recognized that there is considerable scope and need for public/private partnerships. The meeting observed that agriculture's contribution to economic growth and its role as a productive sector in the economy needed to be recognized and reflected in budgetary allocations.

78. The problem of absorptive capacity was discussed. Improved utilization of existing resources can be achieved through ensuring that public services are demand-driven, and improving the implementation of projects. The Round Table emphasized that financing institutions and development partners should streamline their own procedures in project processing, procurement, disbursement, and monitoring.

79. The Round Table concluded that, although constraints exist to accessing external resources, this should not deter governments from initiating the implementation of CAADP with their own resources. The CAADP offers an ideal platform for the implementation of agricultural investments. Furthermore, the role of governments in engaging local stakeholders, i.e. the private sector, farmers, development finance institutions, as well as international development partners and finance institutions in increasing investment in agriculture was emphasized.

VI. OTHER MATTERS

Any other business

80. The Conference noted that Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa use other FAO languages to communicate during conferences. This situation is causing serious communication problems particularly in the exchange of information during technical meetings.

81. The Conference recommended that FAO should consider the use of Portuguese language during the 33rd Session of the FAO Conference in 2005.

82. The Meeting considered the proposal for holding a regional conference on food safety for Africa. It noted that the African countries' Permanent Representatives to FAO have started discussion on the matter with FAO and WHO. The Conference supported, in principle, the convening of a regional conference on food safety for Africa and decided that Rome-based Permanent Representatives should continue their discussion with FAO and WHO to agree on the time and the venue of the Conference.

VII. CONCLUDING ITEMS

Date and Place of the Twenty-fourth FAO Regional Conference for Africa

83. The Chairperson of the Africa Group of Permanent Representatives to FAO in Rome, the Ambassador from Cape Verde, briefed the Conference that, following consultations among

Permanent Representatives it had been proposed that the 24th FAO Regional Conference for Africa be held in Bamako, Republic of Mali.

84. The Conference accepted by acclamation this offer, which would be conveyed to the Director-General of FAO who would decide on the date and place of the Conference, in consultation with member countries.

Adoption of the Report of the Conference

85. The Conference considered and, after a few amendments, adopted its Report by acclamation.

Closure of the Conference

86. In his closing statement, the FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, Mr. Joseph Tchicaya, on behalf of the Director-General of FAO, Mr. Jacques Diouf, thanked all participants for the successful and fruitful conference. He recalled that the conference agreed that there was need to accord high priority to agricultural development and to provide sufficient investment in the sector in order to reduce levels of undernourishment and poverty in the region. He indicated that in pressing on the efforts to fight against hunger and poverty, the Conference reaffirmed its commitment to implement the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme of NEPAD with the support of FAO and other development partners in accordance with the Declaration made by the Heads of State and Government at the AU Summit in Maputo in 2003.

87. Recalling further the endeavors of the conference, Mr. Tchicaya noted that the Conference appreciated FAO's technical assistance in the region and indicated that one of the major outcomes of the Conference was the unanimous engagement and determination of member countries to implement the CAADP in a collaborative manner and in partnership with all stakeholders. He assured the Conference that FAO, in particular through the Regional Office, would provide its technical assistance in response to priority areas of the region to increase food security, agricultural production and trade in a sustainable manner. He was pleased with the discussion on financing agriculture and hoped that the outcome would be taken into consideration by ministers of finance during their forthcoming meeting in March 2004.

88. Mr. Tchicaya expressed his sincere appreciation to all those who in various ways rendered the Conference a success, particularly members of the National Organizing Committee and the FAO Secretariat, interpreters, translators, messengers and the media. Finally, he expressed his profound gratitude to His Excellency Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, to the Government and the People of South Africa for their generous hospitality and for the excellent facilities provided for the Twenty-third FAO Regional Conference for Africa.

89. In moving the Vote of Thanks, His Excellency Jorge Maria Custodio Santos, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Cape Verde to FAO, and Chairperson of the Africa Group of Permanent Representatives, on behalf of all delegates and observers, expressed his sincere and profound gratitude to the Government and People of South Africa for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to the participants during their stay in this beautiful country.

90. In her closing remarks, the Chairperson of the Conference, Her Excellency Thoko Didiza, Minister for Agriculture and Land Affairs, stressed that she was grateful for the mark of appreciation presented to the President, the Government and the People of South Africa for the successful organization of the Conference. She confirmed that it was a great privilege for her country to host the Conference and felt highly honoured to chair the Sessions.
91. She observed that the recommendations of the Conference deserved proper and timely follow-up and expressed her government's readiness for an effective follow-up, in collaboration with FAO.
92. The Chairperson commended FAO for its leadership and untiring efforts to improve food security and alleviate poverty in Africa.
93. She expressed appreciation for the efficient organization of the Conference by the FAO Secretariat and the National Organizing Committee. She finally thanked all those who had in various ways helped to make the Twenty-third FAO Regional Conference for Africa successful and wished all delegates, other participants and observers a safe journey back to their countries.
94. She then declared the Conference closed.

AGENDA**Technical Committee Meeting**

1-5 February 2004

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1. Opening Ceremony
2. Election of Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Appointment of the Rapporteur
3. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

II. SELECTED ISSUES IN AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

4. Follow-up to the WFS and the *WFS:fyl* - Regional Dimensions.
5. Implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) of NEPAD:
 - i. Progress Review:
 - On-going national and Regional Economic Community programmes.
 - The Maputo Declarations of Ministers for Agriculture and Heads of State and Government.
 - The Commitment on budgetary resources and the need for 5-year medium term programmes and associated “Law Programmes” on agriculture and food security.
 - ii. The Initiative to Review and Update National Agricultural, Rural Development and Food Security Strategies and Policies.
 - iii. Integration of Forestry, Fisheries and Livestock issues in the CAADP.
 - iv. Implications of fertilizer’s production and use in Africa.
 - v. Establishment of Regional Food Security Reserve Systems in Africa.
6. Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) for Food Security in Africa
7. Contribution of Agricultural Research and Extension to Food Security and Poverty Reduction in the African Region
8. The Bushmeat Crisis in Africa: Conciliating Food Security and Biodiversity Conservation in the Continent
9. HIV/AIDS and the Food Crisis in Sub-Saharan Africa
10. International Year of Rice – 2004
11. FAO Strategic Framework for Bridging the Rural Digital Divide

III. **OTHER MATTERS**

IV. **CONCLUDING ITEMS**

12. Adoption of the Report of the Technical Committee

13. Closure of the Technical Committee Meeting

APPENDIX B**TWENTY-THIRD REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA****Johannesburg, South Africa, 1-5 March 2004****VINGT-TROISIEME CONFERENCE REGIONALE POUR L'AFRIQUE****Johannesburg, Afrique du Sud, 1-5 mars 2004****LIST OF DELEGATES**
LISTE DES DELEGUES**TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**
COMITE TECHNIQUE

Chairperson: Président:	Ms Bongiwe Njobe, Director General, National Department of Agriculture, South Africa
First Vice-Chairperson: Premier Vice-Président:	Mr. Aristide Ongone Obame, Secrétaire Général de la Commission Nationale de la FAO, Gabon
Second Vice-Chairperson: Deuxième Vice-Président:	Mr. Moha Marghi, Directeur de la Production Végétale, Maroc
Rapporteur:	Mr. Moussa Bocar Ly, Ministre Conseiller, Représentant Adjoint Permanent auprès de la FAO, Sénégal
Co-Rapporteur:	Mr. Joseph K. Mburu, Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO, Kenya

PLENARY SESSION
SESSION PLENIERE

Chairperson: Président:	Her Excellency Thoko Didiza, Minister for Agriculture and Land Affairs, Republic of South Africa
First Vice-Chairperson: Premier Vice-Président:	Mr. Aristide Ongone Obame, Secrétaire Général Permanent Commission Nationale de la FAO, Gabon
Second Vice-Chairperson: Deuxième Vice-Président:	His Excellency Mohand Laenser, Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development, Morocco
First Rapporteur: Premier Rapporteur:	H. E. Samba Buri Mboup, Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa, Senegal
Second Rapporteur: Deuxième Rapporteur:	Dr. Gerrishon Gituma, Deputy Director, Veterinary Services, Kenya

MEMBER NATIONS IN THE REGION
ETATS MEMBRES DE LA REGION

ALGERIA – ALGERIE

Délégué

Rachid Benaïssa
 Ministre Délégué
 Ministère de l'Agriculture et du
 Développement Rural
 12 Bd Amirouche, Alger

I.F.M. Anjos
 Ambassadeur
 Ambassade d'Angola en Afrique du
 Sud
 Schoeman Street 1030
 Pretoria, South Africa
 Tel: +27 12 3429377
 Fax: +27 12 3421511

Suppléants

Aomar Ait Amer Meziane
 Directeur d'Etudes
 Ministère de l'Agriculture et du
 Développement Rural
 12 Bd Amirouche, Alger
 Tel.: +213 21 711712
 E-mail: oitamer@hotmail.com

Carlos A. Amaral
 Counsellor
 Alternate Permanent Representative to
 FAO, IFAD and WFP
 Embassy of the Republic of Angola
 Via Filippo Bernardini, 21
 00165 Roma, Italy
 Tel: +39 06 39366902/3938866
 Fax: +39 06 39366570
 E-mail: carlosamaral@tiscalinet.it

Bouskrine Boudaa
 Cabinet de Monsieur le Ministre
 Ministère de l'Agriculture et du
 Développement Rural
 12 Bd Amirouche, Alger
 Tel.: +213 21 711712

Afonso Pedro Canga
 Directeur Général de l'Institut
 de Développement Agricole
 Ministère de l'Agriculture
 B.P. 2109, Luanda
 Tel/Fax: +244 323651
 E-mail: ida.canga@netangola.com

Mohamed Salim Samar
 Premier Secrétaire
 Ambassade d'Algérie
 950, Arcadia Street
 Arcadia, Pretoria
 Tel: + 27 726954301
 Fax: + 27 12 34 26 479
 E-mail: mohamedsalims@yahoo.fr

Benjamin Alvarault Castello
 Directeur Général
 Institut National de Céréales
 Avenida 4 de Fevereiro No. 1
 Luanda
 Tel: + 244 2 330051
 Fax: + 244 2 33 1611
 E-mail: bcastelo@netangola.com

ANGOLA

Délégué

Gilberto Buta Lutucuta
 Ministre de l'Agriculture et du
 Développement Rural
 Ministère de l'Agriculture
 Luanda
 Tel/Fax: +244 2320553

Joachim Cesar
 Directeur Général
 Institut de Recherche Agronomique
 Luanda

Suppléants

Ditutala Lucas Simão
 Directeur Général
 Institut de Recherche Vétérinaire
 Avenida Amilcar Cabral 45

C.P. 5682, Luanda
 Tel/Fax: +244 2 372873
 E-mail: iivdg@snet.co.ao

Tel: +244 9 2402290
 Fax: +244 2324941
 E-mail: tunga100565@hotmail.com

Pedro Agostinho Kanga
 Directeur de la Coopération et des
 Relations Internationales
 Ministère de l'Agriculture et du
 Développement Rural (MINADOR)
 C.P. 527, Luanda
 Tel: +244 2 324221
 Fax: +244 2 324541
 E-mail: pedrokanga@hotmail.com

Kiala Kia Mateva
 Conseiller/Représentant Permanent
 Adjoint
 Ambassade d'Angola en Italie
 Benvenuto Griziotti 72
 Rome, Italy
 Tel.: +39 06 366902
 E-mail: nsengalu@hotmail.com
Kiala2002@libero.it

Dielobaka Ndombele
 Directeur
 Ministère de la Pêche
 Rua Mamatita No. 19B Ingombota
 Luanda
 Tel: + 244 2 390155
 Fax: + + 244 2 310199

Mukaz Tambwe
 Médecin Vétérinaire
 C.P. 230, Luanda
 Tel: +244 2 91508472
 E-mail: tambwemr@hotmail.com

Lopes Tobias
 Directeur Adjoint du Cabinet
 Ministère de l'Agriculture et du
 Développement Rural, Luanda
 Tel/Fax: +244 2323650

David Tunga
 Director
 Cabinet de Segurança Alimentar
 Ministério de Agricultura et do
 Desenvolimento Rural
 2º Andar, Rua Cte Zika, C.P. 527
 Luanda

BENIN

Délégué

Imorou Adam
 Directeur de Cabinet du Ministre de
 l'Agriculture, de l'Elevage et de la
 Pêche
 Ministère de l'Agriculture, de
 l'Elevage et de la Pêche
 03 BP 2900, Porto-Novo
 Tel.: +229 301087
 E-mail: MAEP@intenet.bj

Suppléants

Hontonnou Dossou Bata
 Directeur de l'Agriculture au
 Ministère de l'Agriculture, de
 l'Elevage et de la Pêche
 B.P. 58, Porto-Novo
 Tel.: +229 213290
 E-mail: MAEP@internet.bj

Jean-Pierre A. Edon
 Ambassadeur du Bénin
 Ambassade du Bénin
 900 Park Street
 Arcadia, Pretoria, South Africa
 Tel: +27 12 3426978
 Fax: +27 12 3421823

Adamou Aba Bagnan
 Chef de Service à la Direction des
 Organisations Internationales
 (MAEIA)
 B.P. 318, Cotonou
 Tel/Fax: +229 3-1092

Claude Ruben Fassinou
 Premier Conseiller
 Ambassade du Bénin
 P. O. Box 26484
 Arcadia, 0007 Pretoria, South Africa
 Tel: +27 12 3426978
 Fax: +27 12 3421823

BOTSWANA

Delegate

Ms Mmapula Modise
 Permanent Secretary
 Ministry of Agriculture
 Private Bag 003, Gaborone
 Tel: +265 3950603
 Fax: +265 3975805
 E-mail: mgmodise@gov.bw

Alternate

Kebabope Laletsang
 Ministry of Agriculture
 Private Bag 003, Gaborone
 Tel: +267 3950573
 Fax: +267 3956027
 E-mail: kelaletsang@gov.bw

BURKINA FASO

Délégué

Mahama Zoungrana
 Directeur Général des Prévisions et
 des Statistiques Agricoles
 Ministère de l'Agriculture, de
 l'Hydraulique et des Ressources
 Halieutiques
 03 B.P. 7010, Ouagadougou 03
 Tel: +226 324577/79/80
 Fax: +226 305486
 E-mail: mazoung@netaccess.bf

Suppléants

Jean-Baptiste Natama
 Coordonnateur National du NEPAD/
 Conseiller Technique
 Ministère des Affaires Etrangères
 et de la Coopération Régionale
 03 B.P. 7038, Ouagadougou
 Tel.: +226 244275
 Fax: +226 314190
 E-mail: natama_jb@hotmail.com
 André Anatole Yameogo
 Secrétaire Exécutif du Conseil
 National de Sécurité Alimentaire
 Ministère de l'Agriculture, de
 l'Hydraulique et des Ressources
 Halieutiques
 01 B.P. 4644
 Ouagadougou 01

Tel: +226 316952

Fax: +226 306886

E-mail: secnsa@cenatrin.bf**BURUNDI**

Délégué

Jérémie Nduhirubusa
 Directeur de Cabinet
 Ministère de l'Agriculture et de
 l'Elevage
 B.P. 1850, Bujumbura
 Tel: +257 229992
 Fax: +257 222873
 E-mail: minagri@usan-bu.net

CAMEROON – CAMEROUN

Délégué

Augustin Frédéric Kodack
 Ministre de l'Agriculture
 Ministère de l'Agriculture
 B.P. 13128, Yaoundé
 Tel: +237 2313362

Suppléants

William Eyambe
 Acting High Commissioner
 Cameroon High Commission
 924 Pretorius Street
 Pretoria, South Africa
 Tel: +27 12 7422477
 Fax: +27 12 7422478

Mme Clémentine Ananga Messina
 Conseiller Technique
 Ministère de l'Agriculture
 B.P. 6931, Yaoundé
 Tel: +237 9906898
 Fax: +237 2231250
 E-mail: c_ananga@yahoo.com

Salvador Ngoande
 Sous-Directeur chargé de la Pêche
 Industrielle et Artisanale
 MINEPIA/DIRPEC
 Yaoundé
 Tel: +237 2316049
 Fax: +237 2221405
 E-mail: sango_cam@yahoo.fr

CAPE VERDE – CAP VERT

Délégué

Mme Maria Madalena Neves
Ministre de l'Agriculture, de
l'Environnement et des Pêches
CP 50 – MAP, Praia
Tel.: (238) 603821
Fax: (238) 614054

Suppléants

João de Deus Fonseca
Conseiller
Ministère de l'Environnement, de
l'Agriculture et des Pêches
CP 50 – MAP, Praia
Tel.: (238) 603821
Fax: (238) 614054
E-mail: JoaoF@ma.gov.cv

Jorge Maria Custodio Santos
Ambassadeur et Représentant
Permanent auprès de la FAO
Ambassade de Cap Vert
Via G. Carducci, 4
00187 Rome, Italy
Tel: +39 06 4744678/596
Fax: +3906 474 4643
E-mail:
jorgemaria.custodiosantos@fastwebnet.it

COTE D'IVOIRE

Délégué

Marcel Koffi-Koumi
Directeur de la Planification et des
Programmes
Ministère de la Production Animale
et des Ressources Halieutiques
B. P. 332 Cidex CI
ABIDJAN
Tel: +225 2022 9926
Cell: +225 0505 2462
Fax: +225 2022 9926
E-mail: makokoumi@avisoci

Suppléants

Prince Albert Adingra
Chargé de Mission
Ministère de la Production Animale et
des des Ressources Halieutiques

B. P. 332 cidex CI
ABIDJAN
Tel : +225 2022 9926
Fax : +225 2022 9926

EGYPT – EGYPTE

Delegates

Ibrahim Ali Hassan
Ambassador and Member of NEPAD
Steering Committee,
Special Advisor to the Minister for
Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Maspiro, Corniche El Nil, Cairo
Tel: +202 5749539
Cellular: +2012 2714272
Fax: +202 5747406
E-mail:
ibrahim_alihassan@hotmail.com

Alternates

Ms Maryam Ahmed Mustafa Moussa
Minister Plenipotentiary for
Agriculture
Deputy Permanent Representative to
United Nations Organizations
Embassy of Egypt
Rome, Italy
Tel: +39 06 8548965
Fax: + 39 06 8542603
E-mail: Maryam.Moussa@Tiscali.it
Agrioff.egypt@mclink.it

Hagar Islambouly
Ambassador of Egypt in South Africa
270, Bourke Street
Madlenende
Pretoria
Tel: + 27 12 3431590
Fax: + 27 12 3431082
egyptemb@global.co.za

Mohamed Khalil
First Secretary
Embassy of Egypt in South Africa
270 Bourke Street
Pretoria
Tel: + 27 12 3431590
Fax: + 27 12 3431082
E-mail: mkhalil66@hotmail.com

**EQUATORIAL GUINEA
GUINEE EQUATORIALE**

Délégué

Carlos Eyi Obama
Ministro
Ministerio de Agricultura
Malabo
Tel: +240 275083
Fax: +240 094227
E-mail: minagri@intnet.gq

Suppléant

Diosdado Sergio Osa Mongomo
Director General of Agriculture
Ministry of Livestock and Rural
Development
Malabo
Tel: +240 272556
Fax: +240 9 4227
E-mail: minagri@intnet.gq

ETHIOPIA – ETHIOPIE

Delegate

Belay Ejigu
Minister for Agriculture
P. O. Box 62347, Addis Ababa
Tel: +251 1 522261
Fax: +251 1 512984
E-mail: bejigu@yahoo.com

Alternates

Sileshi Ashine
Head, Department of Planning and
Programming
Ministry of Agriculture
P. O. Box 62347, Addis Ababa
Tel: +251 158646
Fax: +251 511543

Mebrat Beyeru
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.
Embassy of Ethiopia
47 Charles Street, Brooklyn, Pretoria
Tel: +27 836343555
E-mail: mbeyene@hotmail.com

GABON

Délégué

Aristide Ongone Obame
Secrétaire Général Permanent
Commission Nationale de la FAO
Ministère de l'Agriculture
B. P. 551, Libreville
Tel/Fax: + 241 766077
E-mail: ongoneobame@yahoo.fr

GAMBIA – GAMBIE

Delegate

Ms Fatou Jasseh Kuyateh
Permanent Secretary
Department of State for Agriculture
Banjul
Tel: +220 202322
Fax: +220 201187
E-mail: fatoukuyateh@hotmail.com

GHANA

Delegate

Courage Quashigah
Minister for Food and Agriculture
Ministry of Food and Agriculture
P. O. Box MB 37, Accra
Tel: +233 21 663036/687200
Fax: +233 21 663250

Alternates

Kwaku Nicol
Alternate Permanent Representative
to FAO
Ghana Embassy in Italy
Via Ostriana 4, Rome, Italy
Tel.: +39 06 86217191
E-mail: ghembrom@rdn.it

Lambert Doe Delanyo Abusah
Assistant Director
Ministry of Food and
Agriculture
P. O. Box MB 37, Accra
Tel.: +233 21 668246
E-mail: doeabusah@yahoo.com

Kwasi Asante
 Economic Officer
 Ministry of Regional Cooperation and
 NEPAD
 P. O. Box CT 633
 Cantonments, Accra
 Tel: +233 21 773079
 Fax: +233 21 771778
 E-mail: asantejnr@yahoo.com

Donnan Kobla Tay
 Assistant Director
 Ministry of Food and Agriculture
 P. O. Box MB 37
 Accra, Ghana
 Tel: +233 21 687240
 Fax: +233 21 663250
 E-mail: yatdon@yahoo.com

GUINEA – GUINEE CONAKRY

Délégué

Alexandre Cece Loua
 Ambassadeur de Guinée
 Ambassade de Guinée
 336 Orient Street
 Arcadia 0083
 Hatfield 0028 Pretoria
 South Africa
 Tel/Fax: +27 12 3427348
 E-mail: embaguinea@iafrica.com

Suppléants

Bouakam Diakité
 Conseiller Politique et Culturel
 Embassy of Guinea in South Africa
 336 Orient Street
 Arcadia
 Pretoria
 Tel: +27 72 6864896

KENYA

Delegates

Joseph W. N. Nyaga
 Assistant Minister
 Ministry of Agriculture
 P. O. Box 30028 – 00100
 Nairobi
 Tel/Fax: +254 20 2711715

Fax: +254 20 2722296
 E-mail: gdcc@iconnect.co.ke

Alternates

Ms Tabitha Seii
 High Commissioner of Kenya
 P. O. Box 35954
 Menlo Park
 Pretoria, South Africa
 Tel: +27 12 3622249
 Fax: +27 12 3622251
 E-mail: kenrep@mweb.co.za

Bruce Madete
 Ambassador
 Kenya Embassy
 Via Archimede
 Rome, Italy
 Tel.: +39 06 8082717/8
 Fax: +39 06 8082707
 E-mail: kenroma@rdn.it

James K. Wanjaiya
 Senior Deputy Director of Agriculture
 Ministry of Agriculture
 P. O. Box 30028 – 00100
 Nairobi, Kenya
 Tel/Fax: +254 20 2721641
 E-mail: moakrds@wananchi.com

Gerrishon Gituma Minoti
 Deputy Director of Veterinary
 Services, Veterinary Department
 Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries
 Development
 Veterinary Laboratories
 Private Bag 00625
 Kangemi - Nairobi, Kenya
 Tel: +254 2 631287/631390

Joseph K. Mburu
 Agricultural Attaché
 Kenya Embassy
 Via Archimede
 Rome, Italy
 Tel.: +39 06 8082717/8
 Fax: +39 06 8082707

B. M. Kitheka
 Agricultural Attaché

Kenya High Commission
 P. O. Box 35954
 Menlo Park 0102
 Pretoria, South Africa
 Tel: + 27 12 3622250
 Fax: + 27 12 3621702
 E-mail: kitheka@mweb.co.za

LESOTHO

Delegate

Ms Mamoruti Malie
 Principal Secretary
 Ministry of Agriculture and Food
 Security
 P. O. Box 1045
 Maseru
 Tel: +266 22316410

Alternates

Nchemo Maile
 Deputy Principal Secretary
 Ministry of Forestry and Land
 Reclamation
 P. O. Box 774, Maseru
 Tel: +266 22312826
 Fax: + 266 22310515
 E-mail: nchemo@yahoo.co.uk

Moea Thuso Mofolo
 District Agricultural Officer
 Ministry of Agriculture and Food
 Security
 P. O. Box 24, Maseru 100
 Tel: + 266 22317117

Motsamai Mokoto
 District Agricultural Officer
 Ministry of Agriculture and Food
 Security
 P. O. Box 15, Bothabotho
 Tel: +266 460215/ 58869670
 Fax: +266 461014

Ms Matumelo Monoko
 Economic Planner
 Department of Planning and Policy
 Analysis
 Ministry of Agriculture and Food
 Security
 P. O. Box 24, Maseru 100
 Tel: +9266 223 26235

Fax: +9266 2310186
 E-mail: monokom@agric.gov.ls

Ms Mantho Motselbane
 Director
 Department of Planning and Policy
 Analysis
 Ministry of Agriculture and Food
 Security
 P. O. Box 24, Maseru 100
 Tel: +9226 22316391
 Fax: +9226 22310186
 E-mail: motselebanem@agric.gov.ls

Mohale Gabriel Sekoto
 Director of Livestock Services
 Ministry of Agriculture and Food
 Security
 Private Bag A82, Maseru 100
 Tel: + 266 22312318
 Fax: + 266 22311500
 E-mail: sekoto@livestock.org.ls

MADAGASCAR

Délégué

Auguste Richard Paraina
 Ambassadeur de Madagascar auprès
 de la FAO
 Via Reccardo Zandonai 84/A
 00194 Rome, Italie
 Tel.: +39 06 36307797
 Fax: +39 06 3294306
 E-mail: parainaauguste@yahoo.fr

Suppléants

Modeste Raveloson
 Ministère de l'Economie, des
 Finances et du Budget
 B.P. 674, Antananarivo
 Tel.: +216 20 2232949
 Fax: +216 20 2228508
 E-mail: dscp@drs.mg

Ms Marie Jeanne Razafindranavo
 Chef de Division
 Ministère des Affaires Etrangères
 Antananarivo
 Tel.: +261 331272230
 Fax: +261 2234484
 E-mail: mj_rand@yahoo.fr

Ms Lucie Christina Voca
 Conseiller Général
 Consulat de Madagascar
 16, 6th Street Haughton Estate
 Tel.: +27 11 4423322
 Fax: +27 11 4426660
 E-mail: conseil@infadoor.co.za

MALAWI

Delegate

Bruce C. Munthali
 Controller of Agricultural Extension
 and Technical Services
 Ministry of Agriculture
 P. O. Box 30134, LILONGWE
 Tel: +265 1 789072
 Fax: +265 1 789390
 E-mail: brucemunthali@hotmail.com

Alternates

Patrick A. Makina
 Chief Executive Officer
 Strategic Grain Reserve
 National Food Reserve Agency
 Private Bag B450
 LILONGWE
 Tel: +265 1 774555
 Fax: +265 1 774703
 E-mail: nfra@sudp.org.mw

Sloans K. Chimatiro
 Director of Fisheries
 Department of Fisheries
 P. O. Box 593, Lilongwe
 Tel: + 265 1 788511
 Fax: + 265 1 788712
 E-mail: chimatiro@sdpn.org.mw

MALI

Délégué

Seydou Traoré
 Ministre de l'Agriculture
 Bamako
 Mali

Ibrahim Bocar Daga
 Ambassadeur
 Représentant Permanent du Mali
 auprès de la FAO

Via Antonio Bosio N°2
 Rome, Italy
 Tel: +39 06 44254028
 Fax: +39 06 44254029

Suppléants

Kaba Diakité
 Conseiller
 Ambassade du Mali
 876 Pretoria Street,
 ARCADIA, PRETORIA
 Tel: +27 12 3427464
 Fax: +27 12 3420670
 E-mail: malipta@africa.com

Modibo Mahamane Toure
 Deuxième Conseiller de
 l'Ambassade du Mali /
 Représentant Permanent Adjoint
 Ambassade du Mali, Via Cassia 1020
 00185 ROME – Italy
 Tel: +39 06 44254068
 Fax: +39 06 44254029
 E-Mail: modimah@yahoo.com

Matallah Sabane Traore
 Conseiller Technique
 Ministère de l'Agriculture, de
 l'Elevage et de la Pêche
 B.P. 61, Bamako
 Tel: +223 6738513
 Fax: +233 2231023
 E-mail: matallah@mdr-mali.org

MAURITANIA – MAURITANIE

Délégué

Ould Ahnedou Ahnedou
 Ministre
 Ministère du Développement Rural et
 de l'Environnement
 NOUAKCHOTT
 Tel: +225 5257475
 Fax: +225 5290891

Suppléant

Ould Sidi Boubacar
 Conseiller Technique
 Ministère du Développement Rural
 NOUAKCHOTT
 Tel: +222 5257475

Fax: +222 5290891

MOROCCO – MAROC

Délégué

Mohand Laenser
Minister for Agriculture and Rural
Development
B.P. 607
RABAT, CHELLEH

Suppléants

Talal Rhoufrani
Ambassadeur du Royaume du Maroc
en Afrique du Sud
799 Schoeman Street
ARCADIA, PRETORIA
Tel.: + 27 12 3430230
Fax: + 27 12 3430613
E-mail: sifmaple@icon.co.za

Brahim Elyoussi
Conseiller
2 Rue Dades N° 3 Agdal, RABAT
Tel: +212 37 760707
Fax: +212 37 763378

Hassan Lasri
Conseiller
Ambassade du Royaume du Maroc
799 Schoeman Street, Arcadia,
PRETORIA
Tel.: +27 12 3430230
Fax: +27 12 3430613

Moha Marghi
Directeur de la Production Végétale
Ministère de l'Agriculture et du
Développement Rural
69 Cité Oufouk Massira.1,
TEMARA 1200
Tel: +212 37765871
Fax: +212 37761557
E-mail: dpv@dpv.madrpm.gov.ma

Mohamed Milourhnane
Directeur des Aménagements
Fonciers
Ministère de l'Agriculture et du
Développement Rural
B.P. 1069, RABAT

Tel.: 212 37 299945

Fax: 212 37 698434

E-mail: milourhm@agr.madrpm.gov.ma

MOZAMBIQUE

Delegate

Helder Muteia
Minister for Agriculture and Rural
Development
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural
Development
Rua de Dar Es Salam No 20,
MAPUTO
Tel: + 258 1 460055
Fax: + 258 1 460029
E-mail: hunteia@wap.gov.mz

Alternates

Alfredo V.R. Massinga
Minister
Ministry of Fisheries
MAPUTO
Tel: +258 1 304885
Fax: +258 1 325087
E-mail: amassinga@uuine..co.mz
Francisco Elias P. Cigarro
Ambassador and Permanent
Representative to FAO
Via Filippo Corridoni 14
Rome, Italy
Tel: +39 06 37514675
Fax: +39 06 37514699
E-mail: fcigarro@piscali.it

Roseiro Mário Moreira
Advisor to the Minister
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural
Development/Office of the Minister
Av. Acordos de Lusaka
Praca dos Herois Moçamibanos
Maputo
Tel: +258 1 460105
Fax: +258 1 460678
E-mail: rosemolocue@yahoo.co.uk

A. Rosário Niquice
Senior Official/International
Cooperation
Ministry of Fisheries
International Coordination

Department
 Consegreili Pedroso 343
 Maputo
 Tel: +258 1 300961
 E-mail: niquicej@hotmail.com

Boaventura Simiao Nuvunga
 Deputy National Director of
 Agriculture
 P. O. Box 1406, MAPUTO
 Tel/Fax: +258 1 460195
 E-mail: bnuvunga@map.gov.mz

Joáo Simáo Mussa Nyaima
 Head of Department
 Ministry of Agriculture and Rural
 Development
 Praça Dos Herois, Maputo
 Tel: +258 1 460360
 Fax: +258 1 460058
 E-mail: snyaima@map.gov.mz

Hermiuio Lima Tembe
 National Director of Fisheries
 Economics, Ministry of Fisheries
 R. da Argélia 241, Maputo
 Tel: +258 82 329986
 Fax: +258 1 325087
 E-mail: lima@mozpesca.org

NAMIBIA – NAMIBIE

Delegate

Helmut K. Angula
 Minister for Agriculture, Water and
 Rural Development
 Ministry of Agriculture, Water and
 Rural Development
 GRN Office Park, WINDHOEK
 Tel: +264 61 208 7643
 Fax: +264 61 22996
 E-mail: angulah@mawrd.gov.na

Alternates

Jesaya Nyamu
 Minister for Trade and Industry
 Ministry of Trade and Industry
 P. O. Box 13340, WINDHOEK
 Tel: +264 2837334

Pinehas Nendongo Aluteni
 African Union Desk Officer
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 P. O. Box 61747

WINDHOEK
 Tel: +264 61 2829111
 Fax: +264 61 221145
 E-mail: alutenipn@iway.na

Joseph Shaamu Hailwa
 Director, Directorate of Forestry
 Ministry of Environment and Tourism
 Private Bag 13346, WINDHOEK
 Tel: +264 61 221478
 Fax: +264 61 222830
 E-mail: jhailwa@met.gov.na

George Likukela
 Personal Assistant to the Minister
 Ministry of Agriculture, Water and
 Rural Development
 Private Bag 13184, WINDHOEK
 Tel: +264 61 2087640
 Fax: +264 61 229961

Percy Wachata Misika
 Minister Counsellor
 Embassy of Namibia
 80 Avenue Foch
 75016 PARIS, France
 Tel: +33 144 173265
 Fax: +33 144 173273
 E-mail: namparis@club-internet.fr

Ms Beata Iyaloo Tuwilika
 Nambundunga
 Deputy Director/Policy Planning
 Advisor, Agricultural Planning
 Ministry of Agriculture, Water and
 Rural Development
 P. O. Box 31767, Pionierspark
 WINDHOEK
 Tel: +264 61 2087678
 Fax: +264 61 2087767
 E-mail: nambundungai@mawrd.gov.na

Ms Magdalena N. Ya Kasita
 Forester
 Ministry of Environment and Tourism
 Directorate of Forestry

Private Bag 13346, WINDHOEK
 Tel: +264 61 221478
 Fax: +264 61 222830
 E-mail: ndawapalekwa@yahoo.com

NIGERIA

Delegate

Bamidele F. Dada
 Minister of State
 Federal Ministry of Agriculture and
 Rural Development
 FCDA Secretariat, Area 11
 P.M.B. 135, Garki – ABUJA
 Tel: +234 9 3142405
 Fax: +234 9 3142532
 E-mail: minister@microaccess.com

Alternates

O.O. Ogunkua
 Permanent Secretary
 Federal Ministry of Agriculture and
 Rural Development
 Area 11, FCDA Secretariat
 ABUJA
 Tel: +234 9 3144290
 Fax: +234 9 3142532

David A. Adejuwon
 Special Assistant to the Minister
 Federal Ministry of Agriculture and
 Rural Development
 Area 11, FCDA Secretariat
 ABUJA
 Tel: +234 9 3144290
 Fax: +234 9 3142532
 E-mail: agricnigeria@yahoo.com

O.A. Edun
 Assistant Director
 Department of Planning
 Federal Ministry of Agriculture
 ABUJA

S.A. Ingawa
 Director
 Project Planning Unit
 Federal Ministry of Agriculture
 ABUJA

Aliyu Jada
 Managing Director
 Federal Ministry of Water Resources
 Mbamba, Fufore Road, YOLA
 Tel: +234 75 634756
 Fax: + 234 75 634460

Ganyir Lombin
 Permanent Representative of Nigeria
 to FAO
 Embassy of Nigeria in Italy
 Via Cassiodoro 2C, ROME
 Italy
 Tel.: +39 06 6875803
 Fax: +39 06 6877840

Inuwa Kuta Musa
 Director of Irrigation and Drainage
 Ministry of Water Resources
 Old Federal Secretariat
 Block A, Garki Area 1, ABUJA
 Tel: +234 9 2342910
 Fax: +234 9 2343035
 E-mail: ikmusa@rosecom.net

RWANDA

Délégué

Patrick Habamenshi
 Ministre de l'Agriculture et des
 Ressources Animales
 B.P. 621, KIGALI
 Tel: +250 585053
 Fax: +250 585057

Suppléant

David Bu Cakara
 Directeur
 Ministère de l'Agriculture et de
 l'Elevage
 Direction de la Planification et des
 Statistiques Agricoles
 Kacyiru, KIGALI
 Tel: +250 8860855
 Fax: +250 85008
 E-mail: tinhudavid@hotmail.com

SENEGAL

Délégué

Suppléants

Latsoukabé Fall
 Directeur de l'Agriculture
 Ministère de l'Agriculture et de
 l'Elevage
 14 Av. Lamine Gueye, DAKAR
 Tel: + 221 8225496
 Fax: +221 8225541

Moussa Bocar Ly
 Ministre Conseiller/Représentant
 Permanent Adjoint du Sénégal
 auprès de la FAO
 Ambassade du Sénégal en Italie
 66, via Givlia 00186 Rome, Italie
 Tel.: +39 06 6872353
 Fax: +39 06 68219294
 E-mail: ambessnequiri@tiscali.it

Samba Buri Mboup
 Ambassadeur du Sénégal
 57, Charles Street
 Brooklyn, Pretoria
 Tel: +27 82 3351605
 Fax: +27 12 3465550
 E-mail: smbuub@yahoo.com

C. O. T. Sow
 Manager
 Secrétariat du NEPAD
 Ministère de l'Agriculture
 B.P. 3062 Escal. THIÈS
 Tel: +221 5534354
 Fax: +221 9511708
 E-mail: cheikh.sow@sentoo.sn

SIERRA LEONE

Delegate

Sama Sahr Monde
 Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and
 Food Security

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and
 Food Security
 Youyi Building, Freetown
 Tel: +232 22 240768
 Fax: +232 22 235047
 E-mail: cban@sierratel.sl

Alternates

Mohammed Kandeh
 Director
 Land and Water Development Division
 Ministry of Agriculture
 P.M.B. 187, Tower Hill, Freetown
 Tel: +232 222621

Mohamed Fouad Sheriff
 Deputy Director of Fisheries
 Ministry of Fisheries and Marine
 Resources, Marine House
 11 Old Railway Line
 Brookfields, Freetown
 Tel: +232 22 240642
 Fax: +232 22 235035
 E-mail: alhaji2001@yahoo.com

SOUTH AFRICA – AFRIQUE DU SUD

Delegate

Ms Angela Thoko Didiza
 Minister for Agriculture and Land
 Affairs
 Ministry of Agriculture and Land
 Affairs
 Private Bag X250, Pretoria, 0001
 Tel: +27 12 3196000

Alternates

Dirk Cornelius du Toit
 Deputy Minister for Agriculture
 Ministry of Agriculture and Land
 Affairs
 Private Bag X250, Pretoria, 0001
 Tel: +27 12 3196000

L.M. Shope
 Ambassador
 South African Embassy
 Via Tanaro 14, Rome 00198
 Italy
 Tel: +39 06 852541
 Fax: +39 06 85254301

E-mail: sae2@sudafrica.it

Ms Mariam Makeba
Goodwill Ambassador for Africa
Department of Foreign Affairs
Private Bag X 152, Pretoria, 0001
Tel: +27 12 3511000

Ms Bongiwe N. Njobe
Director-General
Department of Agriculture
Private Bag X250, Pretoria, 0001
Tel: +27 12 3196000

M. Masiphula Mbongwa
Deputy Director-General
Agricultural Economics and Business
Development
Department of Agriculture
Private Bag X250, Pretoria, 0001
Tel: +27 12 3196000

Ms Njabulo J. Nduli
Deputy Director-General
Agricultural Production and Resource
Management
Department of Agriculture
Private Bag X250, Pretoria, 0001
Tel: +27 12 3196000

Ms Vangile B. Titi
Deputy Director-General
Programme Planning, Monitoring and
Evaluation, Department of Agriculture
Private Bag X250
Pretoria, 0001
Tel: +27 12 3196000

J. Duarte
Chief Director, Africa Multilateral
Department of Foreign Affairs
Private Bag X152
Pretoria, 0001
Tel: +27 12 3511000

Ms June B. Josephs
Senior Manager
International Relations
Department of Agriculture
Private Bag X250
Pretoria, 0001

Tel: +27 12 3196000

Ms Margaret Mohapi
First Secretary (Agriculture)
South African Embassy
Via Tanaro 14
Rome 00198
Italy
Tel: +39 06 852541

Ms C. A. du Toit
First Secretary
South African Embassy
Via Tanaro 14
Rome 00198
Italy
Tel: +39 06 852541
Fax: +39 06 85254301

J. Thabo Motsepe
Deputy Director
International Relations
Department of Agriculture
Private Bag X250
Pretoria, 0001
Tel: +27 12 3196000

SUDAN – SOUDAN

Delegate

H. E. El Talib
Deputy Head of Mission
Embassy of Sudan
P. O. Box 25513
Hatfield
Monument Park 0105, Pretoria
Tel: +27 12 3424538
Fax: +27 12 3424539
E-mail talib_43@hotmail.com

SWAZILAND – SWAZILAND

Delegate

Mtiti Fakudze
Minister for Agriculture and Crops
P. O. Box 162
Mbabane
Swaziland
Tel: +9268 4046363

Alternates

N. M. Nkambule
Ministry of Agriculture
P. O. Box 162
Mbabane
Tel: +9268 4042731

Fandile Bhabalala
Ministry of Agriculture
P. O. Box 162
Mbabane
Tel: +9268 4042731

R. S. Thwala
Ministry of Agriculture
P. O. Box 162
Mbabane
Tel: +9268 4049802

P. Lukhele
Ministry of Agriculture
P. O. Box 162
Mbabane
Tel: +9268 4042731

TANZANIA – TANZANIE

Delegate

Charles N. Keenja
Minister for Agriculture and Food
Security
Ministry of Agriculture and Food
Security
P. O. Box 9192, Dar-es-Salaam
Tel: +255 22 2862065
Fax: +255 22 2862075

Alternates

Wilfred Ngirwa
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture and Food
Security
P. O. Box 9192, Dar-es-Salaam
Tel: +255 22 2862064
Fax: +255 22 2862077
E-mail: psk@kilimo.go.tz

Costa Ricky Mahalu
Ambassador of Tanzania to Italy

Villa Tanzania
Cortina d'Ampezzo
185, 00135 Rome, Italy
Tel: +39 06 33485820
Tax: +39 06 33485828
E-mail: info@embassyoftanzania.it

Ms Janet Florence Bitegeko
Director
Policy and Planning
Ministry of Policy and Planning
P. O. Box 9192, Dar-es-Salaam
Tel: +255 22 2862074
Fax: +255 22 2864460
E-mail: dpp@lcilimo.go.tz

Ms Anuciata Peter Njombe
Director of Animal Production
Ministry of Water and Livestock
Development
P. O. Box 9125, Dar –es- Salaam
Tel: +255 22 2864306
E-mail: dlv@raha.com

Adiel Abraham Nyiti
Director for Industry
Ministry of Industry and Trade
P. O. Box 9503, Dar-es-Salaam
Tel: +255 22 2183143
Fax: +255 22 2183138
E-mail: nyitiadiel@yahoo.co.uk

Goefrey Israel Kirenga
Assistant Director
Crop Promotion
Ministry of Agriculture and Food
Security
P. O. Box 9071, Dar-es-Salaam
Tel/Fax: +255 22 2864899
E-mail: gkirenga@kilimo.go.tz

Ms Eronica Onesmo Lyimo
Principal Fisheries Officer
Ministry of Natural Resources and
Tourism, Fisheries Division
P.O. Box 2462
Dar-es-Salaam
Tel.: +255 22 2122930
Fax: +255 22 2110352

Ms Mary Zablon Matari

Minister Counsellor
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs and
 International Cooperation
 P. O. Box 9000
 Dar-es-Salaam
 Tel: +255 22 2111906
 Fax: +255 22 2116600
 E-mail: mzablon@yahoo.com

Ms Perpetua M. Hingi
 Agriculture Attaché
 Embassy of Tanzania in Italy
 Via Cortina d'Ampezzo
 185, 00135 Rome, Italy
 Tel: +39 06 33485820
 Fax: +39 06 33485828
 E-mail: info@embassyoftanzania.it

C. H. Mvula
 Arusha

TUNISIA – TUNISIE

Délégué

Ahmed Bougacha
 Sous-Directeur
 Coopération Internationale
 Ministère de l'Agriculture,
 Environnement et des Ressources
 Hydrauliques
 30, Rue Alain Sawary, Tunis
 Tel: +216 71 793185
 Fax: +216 71 799457

Suppléant

Borhene El Kamel
 Conseiller
 Ambassade de Tunisie
 850 Church Street
 Arcadia, Pretoria
 Tel: +27 12 3426282
 Fax: +27 12 3426284
 E-mail: at.pretoria@mweb.co.za

UGANDA – OUGANDA

Delegates

Wilberforce Kisamba Mugerwa
 Minister for Agriculture
 Ministry of Agriculture

P. O. Box 102, Entebbe
 Tel: + 256 320752 /77450540
 E-mail: kwmmaif@infocom.co.ug

David S. Nsubuga
 Economic Advisor to the Minister for
 Finance
 Ministry of Finance
 P. O. Box 8147, Kampala
 Tel: +256 41 232370
 Fax: +256 41 230163
 E-mail: david.nsubuga@finance.go.ug

Mwesigwa Rukutana
 Minister for Finance
 Ministry of Finance
 P. O. Box 8147, Kampala
 Tel: +256 41 232370
 Fax: +256 41 230163
 E-mail: david.nsubuga@finance.go.ug

Alternates

Nasser Abdu Kabunga
 Chargé d'affaires a.i.
 Embassy of Uganda
 Via E O Visconti 8
 Rome, Italy
 Tel: +39 06 3225220
 Fax: +39 06 3213688
 E-mail: ankabungh@yahoo.com

Robert Sabiiti
 Principal Development Analyst
 Ministry of Agriculture, Animal
 Industry and Fisheries
 P. O. Box 102, Entebbe
 Tel: +256 41 320722
 Fax: +256 41 320069
 E-mail: rsabiiti@yahoo.com

Ms Nanuwgi Alice Tebyasa
 Councilor
 Ministry of Agriculture
 Kikaaya A Zone, Kikaaya Parish
 Kawempe Division
 Kampala District
 Tel: +256 77 465292
 E-mail: nanungialice@yahoo.com

ZAMBIA – ZAMBIE

Delegate

Chance Kabange
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Agriculture and
Cooperatives
P. O. Box 50197
Lusaka

Alternate

Ms Kezia Mbita Katyamba
Planning and Cooperatives
Department
Ministry of Agriculture and
Cooperatives
P. O. Box 50197, Lusaka
Tel: +260 12 53520
Fax: +260 12 53520
E-mail: kimkratamba@mabb.gov.zm

ZIMBABWE

Delegate

Joseph M. Made
Minister for Agriculture and Rural
Development
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural
Development, Harare
Tel: +263 11 402285/4701304
Fax: +263 4 251322

Alternates

J. T. R. Mujuru
Minister for Water Resources and
Infrastructural Development
P. O. Box 7767, Causeway
Harare
Tel: +263 4 708162
Fax: +263 4 707865

Vavarirai Humwe Choga
Director of Water Development

Water Resources and Infrastructural
Development

Private Bag 7767, Causeway
Harare
Tel.: +263 4 735668
Fax: + 263 4 722733

S. D. Mangoma
Minister Counsellor (Trade)
Ministry of Trade
P. O. Box 61736
Marshalltown 2107
Tel: +263 11 8382156
Fax: +263 11 834704

Evans Matsangaise
Personal Assistant
Ministry of Agriculture
The Office of the President
P. O. Box 7701
Causeway, Harare
Tel: +263 4707091
E-mail: matsanga@gt.a.co.zw

Morris Zororai Mtsambiwa
Director-General
Ministry of Environment and
Tourism
P. O. Box Cy 140, Causeway
Harare
Tel: +263 4 724025
Fax: +263 4 724914
E-mail: natparks@mweb.co.zw

Mary M. Muchada
Ambassador
Via Virgilio 8
00193 Rome
Italy
Tel: + 39 06 68308282
E-mail: zmrome-wolit@tiscalinet.it

OBSERVERS FROM MEMBER NATIONS NOT SERVICED IN THE REGION
OBSERVATEURS DES ETATS MEMBRES QUI NE SONT PAS DE LA REGION

CUBA

Ms Engracia Hernandez
 76 Yeo Street
 Yeoville
 Pretoria
 Tel: 083 747 9472
 Fax: + 27 12 429 3221
 E-mail: hernde@onisa.ac.za

FRANCE

Benoit Thomas Jacquot
 Agricultural Attaché
 French Embassy/Trade Commission
 P. O. Box 651048
 Benmore 2010, South Africa
 Tel: +27 11 3037165
 Fax: +27 11 3037176
 E-mail: benoit.jacquot@dree.org

Mme Helène Molinier
 Project Officer
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 250 Melk St., Pretoria, South Africa
 Tel: +27 12 4251718
 Fax: + 27 12 4251719
 E-mail: helene.molinier@diplomatie.gouv.fr

HOLY SEE

Baudouin Muankembe
 Counsellor
 Apostolic Nunciature
 Pretorius Street 900
 Arcadia 0007
 Pretoria
 Tel: +27 12 3443815

D. H. H. Linder
 SACBC
 Pretoria
 South Africa
 Tel: +27 12 3236458
 E-mail: dlinder@sacbc.org.za

UNITED KINGDOM/ROYAUME-UNI

Thomas John Kelly
 First Secretary
 UK DFID, 353 Festival Street
 Pretoria
 Tel: +27 12 4312170
 Fax: +27 12 3423429
 E-mail: tom-kelly@dfid.gov.uk

Ms Paula M. Chalinder
 UK DFID, Sanlam Building
 Arcadia/Festival Street, Pretoria
 Tel: +27 12 4312170
 Fax: +27 12 3423429

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
ETATS UNIS D'AMERIQUE**

Ms Rachel Bickford
 Attaché
 United States of America Embassy
 USDA, Pretoria, South Africa
 Tel: +27 12 431 4057

Eric M. Bost
 Under Secretary
 United States Department of Agriculture
 1400 Independence Avenue
 Washington D.C., USA
 Tel: +1 202 7207711
 Fax:
 E-mail: Eric.Bost@USDA.gov

J. Michael Cleverley
 Deputy Permanent Representative to FAO
 US Department of State
 Piazza del Popolo, 18
 00180 Rome, Italy
 Tel: +39 06 46743513
 Fax: +39 06 46743517
 E-mail: CleverleyJM@State.gov

Cheryl M. R. French
 Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
 (APHIS) Attaché
 United States Department of Agriculture

9300 Pretorius Place, Washington D.C.
 Tel: +1 20521 9300
 +27 12 4314000
 Fax: +27 12 3423385
 E-mail: Cheryl.m.french@aphis.usda.gov

Ms Retha Oliver
 Special Assistant
 US USDA, 3101 Park Cta Drive
 Alex, VA 22302
 Tel: +1 703 6054314
 Fax: +1 703 3052794
 E-mail: Retha.Oliver@FNS.USDA.gov

Reynolds Scott
 Agricultural Counsellor
 US Department of Agriculture
 US Embassy, 877 Pretoria
 South Africa
 Tel: +27 12 4314235
 Fax: +27 12 3422264
 E-mail: scott.reynolds@usda.gov

Mattie R. Sharpless
 Ambassador
 Special Adviser
 Office of the Under Secretary
 US Department of Agriculture
 14th Independence Ave SW
 Washington DC 20520

Tel: +1 202 7263935
 Fax:
 E-mail: mattie.sharpless@FAS.USDA.gov

Geoffrey W. Wiggin
 Alternate Permanent Representative
 US Department of Agriculture
 Piazza del Popolo, 18
 Rome, Italy 00187
 Tel: +39 06 46 74 35 08
 Fax: +39 06 46 74 35 20
 E-mail: Geoffrey.wiggin@usda.gov

Douglas Jerome Brown
 Initiative to End Hunger in Africa Advisor
 USAID IRCSA
 Gaborone, Botswana
 Tel: +267 3924449
 Fax: +267 3924404
 E-mail: jebrown@usaid.gov

Ms Cecilia Mmatladi Khupe
 Programme Manager
 USAID IRCSA
 P. O. Box 2427
 Gaborone, Botswana
 Tel: +267 3924449
 Fax: +267 3924404
 E-mail: Cecilia.khupe@usaid.gov

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND SPECIALIZED AGENCIES
REPRESENTANTS DES NATIONS UNIES ET DES INSTITUTIONS SPECIALISEES

UNITED NATIONS
NATIONS UNIES

Ejeviome E. Otobo
 Chief of Policy Analysis and Monitoring
 Unit and Special Adviser on Africa
 Office of the Under-Secretary-General
 One UN Plaza DC-1250
 New York, NY 10017
 Tel: +1 212 9635006
 Fax: +1 212 9633892
 E-mail: otobol@un.org

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR
ORGANIZATION (ILO)

Ms Boshigo Matlou
 Programme and Administrative
 Support Officer
 347 Hilda Street
 Hatfield 0023 Pretoria GP, South Africa
 Tel: +27 12 4318800
 Fax: +27 12 4318859
 E-mail: matlou@ilo.org

**INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND
(IMF)**

Vivek Arora
Resident Representative
P. O. Box 12082
Hatfield
Pretoria, South Africa
Tel: +27 12 3423444
Fax: +27 12 3422668
E-mail: Varora@imf.org

**INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR
AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Mohamed Beavogui
Director of West and Central Africa
Division
Rome, Italy
E-mail: Mbeavogui@ifad.org

**UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON
TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT
(UNCTAD)**

Kamran Kousari
Special Coordinator for Africa
UNCTAD/GDS
United Nations
1211 Palais des Nations Unies
Geneva, Switzerland
Tel: + 41 9075800
Fax: + 41 9070274
E-mail: Kamran.Kousari@unctad.org

**UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC
COMMISSION FOR AFRICA (ECA)**

Josué Dione
Director
Sustainable Development Division
P. O. Box 3001
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel: +251 1 510406
Fax: +251 1 510350
E-mail: jdione@uneca.org

Abdoulaye Niang
Team Leader
Agriculture and Food Security
UN System
P. O. Box 3005
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel: +251 1 517094
E-mail: aniang@uneca.org

UN-HABITAT

Ananda Weliwita
Human Settlements Officer
Urban Economy and Finance Branch
UN-HABITAT
P. O. Box 30030
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 20 623743
Fax: +254 20 623080
E-mail: Ananda.Weliwita@unhabitat.org

**THE WORLD BANK/SPAAR
BANQUE MONDIALE**

Jean Paul Chausse
Senior Advisor
World Bank Africa Region
1818 H Street N.W.
Washington D.C., USA
Tel.: +1202 4736758
Fax: +1202 4738929
E-mail: jchausse@worldbank.org

WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME (WFP)

Ms Sheila M. Sisulu
Deputy Executive Director
Policy and External Affairs Department
Rome, Italy
Tel: + 39 06 6513 2041/2005
Fax: + 39 06 6513 2839
E-mail: Sheila.sisulu@wfp.org

Haladou Salha
Senior Advisor for Africa
Policy and External Affairs Department
Rome, Italy
Fax: + 39 06 6513 2839
E-mail : Haladou.salha@wfp.org

Mustapha Darboe
Deputy Regional Director
Sunninghill, Johannesburg
Tel: +27 11 517 1644
Fax: +27 11 5171642
E-mail: Mustapha.darboe@wfp.org

**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
(WHO)**
Nathaniel Tembo
WHO Regional Inter Agency Coordination
Office
Emergency Public Health Officer
11 Naivasha Road
Sunninghill
Tel: +11 517 1667
Fax: +11 517 1629
E-mail: Nathaniel.tembo@wfp.org

OBSERVERS FROM INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
OBSERVATEURS DES ORGANISATIONS INTERGOUVERNEMENTALES

**AFRICAN CENTRE FOR FERTILIZER
DEVELOPMENT (ACFD)**

Samuel Cephas Muchena
Managing Director
P. O. Box A469
Avondale
Harare, Zimbabwe
Tel: +263 4 860421-4
Fax: +263 4 860423
E-mail: acfd@africaonline.co.zw

Director a.i.
Rural Economy and Agriculture
P. O. Box 3243
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia
Tel: +251 9 225033 / 715810
E-mail: ibrahima_diallo2@hotmail.com

**AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
(AfDB)
BANQUE AFRICAINE DE
DEVELOPPEMENT (BAD)**

Birama Boubacar Sidibé
Director
Agriculture Department
North, East and South Regions
African Development Bank
B.P. 323
1002 Tunis Belvedere
Tunisia
Tel: +216 71102037
E-mail: b.sidibe@afdb.org

**AFRO-ASIAN RURAL
DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION**

Abdalla Yahia Adam
Secretary General
2, State Guest Houses Complex
Chanakyapuri
New Delhi 110 021
India
Tel: +11 24100475, 26877783/4
Fax: +11 24672045, 26115937
E-mail: ayadam@aardo.org

AFRICAN UNION (AU/UA)

Ibrahima Kegneko Diallo

**ARAB MAGHREB UNION
UNION DU MAGHREB ARABE
(AMU/UMA)**

Ahmed Srikah
Chef de Division
14 Rue Salagh Agdal
Rabat, Maroc
Tel: +212 37 671274

Fax: +212 37 671253
E-mail: sg.uma@maghrebarabe.org

**WEST AFRICA RICE DEVELOPMENT
ASSOCIATION/ASSOCIATION POUR
LE DEVELOPPEMENT DE LA
RIZICULTURE EN AFRIQUE DE
L'OUEST (WARDA/ADRAO)**

Shelleemiah Keya
Director of Research
B.P. 320
Bamako, Mali
Tel: +223 222 3375
Fax: + 223 222 8683
E-mail s.keya@cgiar.org

R. Gouantoueu Guei
Head of Genetic Resources Unit
& INGER-Africa Coordinator
01 BP 4029 ABIDJAN 01
Côte d'Ivoire
Tel: + 225 2241 4436/3019
Cell: + 225 0504 0805
Fax: + 225 2241 1807
E-mail: riguei@cgiar.org

**COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN
& SOUTHERN AFRICA (COMESA)**

Shamseldin Mohamed Salim
Agricultural Economist
COMESA Centre, Ben Bella Road
Lusaka, Zambia
Tel: +260 97 456208
Fax: +260 1 227318
E-mail: smsalim@comesa.int

Shem Simuyemba
Trade Policy Specialist
COMESA/RATES
P. O. Box 30051
Lusaka, Zambia
Tel: +260 1 229725
Fax: +260 1 225107
E-mail: ssimuyemba@comesa.int

**INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF
THE RED CROSS (ICRC)**

Thomas Gurtner
Head, Economic Security Unit
c/o ICRC
19, Av. de la Paix
CH-1202 Geneva
Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 7346001
E-mail: tgurtner@icrc.org

Ms Zintle Koza
Head of Communications
ICRC Regional Delegation
794 Church Street, Arcadia,
Pretoria
Tel: +27 12 4307334-7
Fax: +27 12 4304471
E-mail: infodiss.pre@icrc.org

**THE NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR
AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT (NEPAD)
SECRETARIAT**

Wiseman Nkulhu
Chairman
NEPAD Secretariat
P. O. Box 1234, Midrand
Halfway House 1685
South Africa

Richard Mkandawire
Agriculture Advisor
NEPAD Secretariat
P. O. Box 1234, Midrand
Halfway House 1685
South Africa
Tel: +27 11 3133338
Fax: +27 11 3133450
E-mail: mkandawirer@nepad.org

Ms Ingrid Kirsten
Researcher
NEPAD Secretariat
P. O. Box 1234, Midrand
Halfway House 1685, South Africa
Tel: +27 11 3133320
Fax: +27 11 3133450
E-mail: ingridk@nepad.org

Ms Mundiala Kuryanda
Publications Manager

NEPAD Secretariat
1234 Hanfuray House, Midrand
Tel.: +27 11 3133161
Fax: +27 11 3133778
E-mail: mundiala@nepad.org

Beatile Thabo Mochebelele
Adviser
P. O. Box 1234
Halfway House 1085
Midrand
Tel: +27 11 3133153
E-mail: mochebelrt@nepad.org

Rapiste Montsmo
Head, Imaging, c/o DBSA
Midrand, Johannesburg
South Africa
Tel: +27 11 3133770
Fax: +27 11 3133778
E-mail: rapitsem@nepad.org

Karim Khalil Taha
Coordinator
NEPAD Coordinator for Market Access and
Agriculture
270 Bomke St., Pretoria
South Africa

OFFICE INTERNATIONAL DES EPIZOOTIES (OIE)

Amadou Samba Sidibe
Coordonnateur régional pour l'Afrique
BP 2954
BAMAKO, Mali
Tel.: +233 2246053
Fax: +233 2240578
E-mail: sambasidibe@oie.pacerf.or

SENEGAL RIVER DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION/ORGANISATION DE LA MISE EN VALEUR DE FLEUVE SENEGAL (OMVS)

Babacar Diagne
Head
Communications, External Relations and
New Technologies
46 Rue Carnot
DAKAR, Senegal
Tel: +221 8234530
Fax: +221 8220163

OBSERVERS FROM INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS OBSERVATEURS DES ORGANISATIONS INTERNATIONALES NON GOUVERNEMENTALES

AFRICAN CAPACITY BUILDING FOUNDATION

Adeboye Adeyemo
Programme Officer
P. O. Box 1652
Harare, Zimbabwe
Tel: +263 4 702931/2
E-mail: a.adeyemo@acbf-pact.org

IPGRI

Coosje Hoogendoorn
Deputy Director General (Programmes)
Maccarese, Italy 00057
Tel.: +39 06 611820

E-mail: c.hoogendoorn@CGIAR.ORG

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE MOVEMENTS (IFOAM)

Ms Elizabeth Wombayare Mokotong
Director (Board)
IFOAM/UNISA
P. O. Box 392, Pretoria 0001
Abet Institute UNISA
Tel: +27 12 4298601
Fax: +27 12 4293638
E-mail: mokotong@yahoo.com

**INTERNATIONAL FERTILIZER
INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION (IFA)**

Patrick Heffer
Executive Secretary
Agriculture Committee, IFA
28 rue Marbeuf, 75008 Paris, France
Tel: +33 1 53930500
Fax: +33 1 53930545
E-mail: pheffer@fertilizer.org

Luc M. J. Maene
Director General
IFA
28 Rue Marbeuf, 75008 Paris, France
Tel: +33 1 53930510
Fax: +33 1 53930547
E-mail: lmaene@fertilizer.org

IFDC

A. H. Roy
President and Chief IFDC Executive Officer
510 Robinhood Drive
Florence AL USA
Tel: +1 256 3816600
Fax: +1 256 3817408
E-mail: aroy@ifdc.org

**INTERNATIONAL LIVESTOCK
RESEARCH INSTITUTE (ILRI)**

Carlos Sere
Director General
P. O. Box 30709
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: 254 20 630743
Fax: 254 20 631499
E-mail: c.sere@cgiar.org

**INTERNATIONAL MAIZE AND
WHEAT IMPROVEMENT CENTER
(CIMMYT)**

Wilfred Mwangi
Regional Economist
P. O. Box 25171, Nairobi
Kenya
Tel: +254 20 524613
E-mail: W.Mwangi@cgiar.org

**INTERNATIONAL SERVICE FOR
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL
RESEARCH (ISNAR)**

Jacques-Paul Eckeбил
Interim Director General
Laan van Nieuw Oost Indie 133
25 BM
The Hague, The Netherlands
Tel: + 31 70 3496206
Fax: + 31 70 3819677
E-mail: j.eckebil@cgiar.org

**WORLD AGROFORESTRY CENTRE
(ICRAF)**

Kebadire Mogotsi
Senior Education Fellow/
Crop Physiologist
P. O. Box 30677
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 2 524000
Fax: +254 2 524001
E-mail: k.mogotsi@cgiar.org

**REGIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS/ORGANISATIONS
REGIONALES NON-GOUVERNEMENTALES**

AFRICA HARVEST (AHBFI)

Florence Muringi Wambugu
Runa Mimosa Vale #215

P. O. Box 642
Village Market 00621
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 2 521671 / 521652

Fax: +254 2 521721
E-mail: fwambugu@ahbfi.or.ke

**AFREMEDEV CONSULTANCY
SERVICES LIMITED**

Ms Bilikisu Lola Musa
Managing Consultant
Plot 334, Ibb Way, Wuse II
Abuja, Nigeria
Tel: +234 9 6719220
E-mail: afremedev@yahoo.com

AGRI SA

Jacob Erasmus Grobler
President
P. O. Box 1104
Bothaville 9660
South Africa
Tel: +27 18 4411104
Fax: +27 18 4411105
E-mail: kkomplaa@intekom.co.za

B. B. M. T. ORGANIZATION

Ike A. Ross
Managing Director
14 Ghandi Square, New Centre
Johannesburg
South Africa
Tel: +27 11 8381746
Fax: + 27 11 8381746

BANA BA MOTHO

Kuomotse Johannesburg Masehla
Managing Director
14 New Street
South Johannesburg, South Africa
Tel/Fax: + 27 11 8381746

**BOKAMOSO RECRUITMENT
ORGANISATION LTD**

Jakes K. Koadane Madikela
Managing Director
P.O. Box 4873, Rustenburg 0300
South Africa
Tel.: +27 11 4502286

Fax: +27 11 4502287

CAB INTERNATIONAL

Dennis Rangi
Director
P. O. Box 633 – 00621
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 20 524462
E-mail: D.Rangi@cabi.org

**COALITION OF AFRICAN
ORGANIZATIONS FOR FOOD
SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT (COASAD)**

Prof. Francis B. Mwaura
Chairman, COASAD
P.O. Box 61028, Nairobi, Kenya
E-mail: fbmwaura@uonbi.ac.ke

ECI AFRICA

Ms Isabel Elsje Liebenberg
115 Klip Street
Hennospark X5, 0157, South Africa
Tel: +27 84 8402402
Fax: +27 84 8021060
E-mail: Isabel.liebenberg@eciafrica.com

Happy Mohane
P. O. Box 409
Wendy Wood, 2144, South Africa
Tel: +27 11 8020015
Fax: +27 11 8021060
E-mail: happy.mohane@eciafrica.com

FOOD GARDENING IN SCHOOLS

Ms Joyce Bhembe
P. O. Box 1568
Tembisa
1632 Gauteng, South Africa
Cell: +27 826 419736
**FORUM FOR AGRICULTURAL
RESEARCH IN AFRICA (FARA)**

Monty Jones
Executive Secretary
FARA
PMB CT 173

Accra, Ghana
 Tel: +233 21 772823
 Fax: +233 21 773676
 E-mail: mjones@fara-africa.org

Papa Abdoulaye Seck
 Chairperson
 B.P. 3120, Dakar, Senegal
 Tel: +221 8322420
 Fax: +221 8322427
 E-mail: dgissa@sia.sn

Myra Wopereis
 Special Assistant to Executive Secretary
 FARA
 PMB CT 173
 Accra, Ghana
 Tel: +233 21 772823
 Fax: +233 21 773676
 E-mail: mwopereispura@fara-africa.org

FERTILIZER SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA (FSSA)

Rod Humphris
 President
 P. O. Box 69888 Bryanston
 Johannesburg, South Africa
 Tel: +27 11 7098888
 Fax: +27 11 7064022

G.C. Hilmar Venter
 Director
 P. O. Box 75510
 Lynwood Ridge 0040, South Africa
 Tel: +27 12 3491450
 Fax: +27 12 3491463
 E-mail: fssamusa@mweb.co.za

FONDATION RURALE DE L'AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST (FRAO)

Fadel Ndiame
 Directeur Exécutif Régional
 Sicap Amitié 3 - No 4318
 CP 13 Dakar-Fann
 Dakar, Sénégal
 Tel: +221 8692741/43
 Fax: +221 8245755

HUMANITY FIRST FOUNDATION

Abednigo Twala
 National General Secretary
 P. O. Box 1847
 Bramley 2018, South Africa
 Tel: + 27 11 836301
 Fax: + 27 11 8365302

LAND BANK

Monwabisi Fadeso
 192 Visagie Street
 Pretoria 0001, South Africa
 Tel.: +27 12 3123600
 Fax: +27 12 3122617
 E-mail: monabisi@fandeso.com

Morué Havenga
 Social Accountant: Client Relations
 P. O. Box 375
 Pretoria 001, South Africa
 Tel: +27 12 3123781
 Fax: +27 12 3123768
 E-mail: mphavenga@landbank.co.za

Petrus Marais
 Manager: ERU
 P. O. Box 375
 Pretoria 001, South Africa
 Tel: +27 12 3123672
 Fax: +27 12 0824133490
 E-mail: pjmarais@langbank.co.za

George Odero Oricho
 General Manager
 192 Visagie Street
 Pretoria, South Africa
 Tel: +27 12 3123743
 Fax: +27 12 3123706

NATIONAL AFRICAN FARMERS UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Motsepe R. D. Matlala
 President
 P. O. Box 12735
 Leraatsfontein 1038
 Tel: + 27 13 6560325
 Fax: + 27 13 6561035
 E-mail: c-plan@mweb.co.za

**POWER FOODS INDUSTRIES
LIMITED**

Ms Anna Joshua Harold Temu
P. O. Box 23437
Dar-es-Salaam
Tanzania
Tel: +255 22 2780553
Fax: +255 22 2113865
E-mail: powerfoods@hotmail.com

**RESEAU DES ORGANISATIONS
PAYSANNES ET DES
PRODUCTEURS AGRICOLES DE
L'AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST (ROPPA)**

Ndiogou Fall
Président
B.P. 269, Thies
Sénégal
Tel: +221 9 511237
Fax: +221 9 512059
E-mail: fongs@sentoosn

Mamadou Cissoko
President d'Honneur
ROPPA
B.P. 269
THIES, Sénégal
Tel: 00221-951-12-37
Fax : 00(221) 951-20-59
E-mail: fongs@sentoosn

**SOUTH AFRICAN
CONFEDERATION OF
AGRICULTURAL UNIONS
(SACAU)**

Roland Charles
Chief Executive Officer
27th Floor, SAAU Building
Cnr Andries and Shoeman Streets
Pretoria 001, South Africa
Tel: +27 12 3226980
Fax: +27 12 3200557
E-mail: roland@agriinfo.co.za

Peter Rammutla
Vice President

27th Floor
SAAU Building
Cnr Andries and Shoeman Streets
Pretoria 001, South Africa
Tel: +27 14 5656472
Fax: +27 12 3200557
E-mail: sacau@agriinfo.co.za

Ajay Vashee
President
P. O. Box 70165
Ndola
Zambia
Tel: +260 2 615272
Fax: +260 2 617767
E-mail: vashee@zamnet.zm

**OVERSIGHT PANEL OF THE FAO
SPECIAL PROGRAMME FOR
FOOD SECURITY**

Bukar Shaib
Chairman
c/o FAO Representative in Nigeria
3 Oguda Close, Off Lake Chad
Crescent
Maitama District
Abuja, Nigeria

SACAU

Rammutla Peter Lewang
Vice President
P. O. Box 2061
Rustenburg
South Africa
Tel: +27 14 5656472
E-mail: sacau@agriinfo.co.za

SANGOCO

Wynand J. Van Der Walt
Consultant
Africa Bio
P. O. Box 853
Irene 0062, South Africa
Tel: +27 12 3476334/6672689
Fax: +27 12 3476334/6671920
E-mail: wynandjudw@telkomsa.net
africabio@mweb.co.za

**SOUTHERN AFRICAN
CONFEDERATION OF
AGRICULTURE UNIONS**

Roland Charles
C. E. O
27th Floor, SAAU Building
CNP Andries & Schoeman Street
Pretoria 0001
Tel: +27 12 3226980
Fax: + 27 12 3200557
E-mail: roland@agriinfo.co.za

SUNGULA

Ms Viola Ntokozo Dubazana
P. O. Box 60003
Langlaagte 2102, South Africa
Tel: +27 11 9582473
Fax: +27 11 9582473
E-mail: ntokozov@intecom.co.za

Ms Momxolisi Leonorah Mathe
Managing Director
P. O. Box 751888
Gardenview, South Africa
Tel: +27 11 4553193
Fax: + 27 11 4553193
E-mail: mathe@telkomsa.net

TAU SA

Tinus Taute
Manager, Commodities
194 James Avenue, Silverton, South Africa
Tel: +27 12 8048031
Fax: +27 12 8042014
E-mail: bedryf@tlu.co.za

TEEAL/AGORA

Gracian Chimwaza
Outreach & Training Coordinator
for Africa
P.O. Box MP 608
1 Jason Moyo St
Harare, Zimbabwe
Tel: +263 4 781343
Fax: +263 4 775005
E-mail: gracian@cyberplexafrica.com

UNISA NGO

Ms Leah Lindiwe Myeza
Tutor and Trainer
469 Ndaba Street, Mofolo South
P. O. Box DUBE 1800, South Africa
Tel: +27 11 9843821
Fax: +27 11 9843821

FAO STAFF

Ms. Neela Gangadharan	Chief, Agricultural Policy Support Service, TCAS, Rome
Mr. Michael Wales	Senior Adviser, Investment Centre Division, TCID, Rome
Mr. Abdul Aziz Sy	Senior Officer for Science and Technology, RAF, Accra
Mr. A. Gebre-Michael	Senior Economist, ESAF, Rome
Mr. Jan Poullisse	Senior Land and Water Development Officer, AGLW, Rome
Ms. Diana Tempelman	Senior Officer, Gender and Development, RAF, Accra
Mr. Weldeghaber Kidane	Senior Policy Officer, SAFR, Harare
Mr. Thomas Price	Senior Programme Officer, Civil Society, TCDS, Rome
Mr. Justin Rushemeza	AU/NEPAD Focal Point, TCAR, Rome
Mr. Brahim Kebe	Crop and Pasture Production Officer, RAF, Accra
Ms. Sylvana Ntaryamira	Liaison Officer (NGO), RAF, Accra
Ms. Brave Ndisale	Policy/Programme Officer, RAF, Accra
Mr. Justin Chisenga	Information Management Specialist, RAF, Accra
Mr. Graham Farmer	Regional Emergency Coordinator for Southern Africa, Johannesburg
Mr. Seatla Nkosi	Assistant FAO Representative in South Africa, Pretoria

CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT

Assistant Director-General/ Regional Representative for Africa	Mr Joseph Tchicaya, RAF, Accra
Subregional Representative for Southern and East Africa	Ms Victoria Sekitoleko, SAFR, Harare
Conference Secretary	Mr Madhy Bamba, RAF, Accra
Conference Affairs Officer	Mr Wariboko West, FAOR/South Africa
Reports Officer	Mr Moise Sonou, RAF, Accra
Information Officer	Mr Paul Fouda-Onambele, RAF, Accra
Conference Documents Officer	Mr Pape Djibi Koné, RAF, Accra
Assistant to Conference Affairs Officer	Ms Bintia Stephen, RAF, Accra
Communications/Technology Officer	Mr Mensah Solomons, RAF, Accra

INTERPRETERS/INTERPRETES

Mr Pierre Fournier Interpreter, GIC, Rome	Ms Samah Iskandar Interpreter
Mr Lucas Amuri Interpreter	Ms Ivette Illas Jeichande Interpreter
Ms Nadia Arafa Interpreter	Mr Eloy Molinero Interpreter
Mr Noel De Souza Interpreter	Ms Naglaa Sirry Interpreter
Mr Omar Sherif Salama Hammad Interpreter	Ms Petronella Ox Interpreter

APPENDIX C**LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

ARC/04/1	Provisional Annotated Agenda
ARC/04/2	Report on FAO Activities in the Region, 2002-03
ARC/04/3	Follow-up to the World Food Summit and <i>The World Food Summit: Five Years Later: Regional Dimensions</i>
ARC/04/4	Implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) of NEPAD
ARC/04/5	Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) for Food Security in Africa
ARC/04/INF/1	Provisional List of Documents
ARC/04/INF/2	Provisional Timetable
ARC/04/INF/3	Information Note
ARC/04/INF/4	Statement of the Director-General
ARC/04/INF/5	Contribution of Agricultural Research and Extension to Food Security and Poverty Reduction in the Africa Region
ARC/04/INF/6	Initiative to Review and Update National Agricultural, Rural Development and Food Security Strategies and Policies
ARC/04/INF/7	The Bushmeat Crisis in Africa: Conciliating Food Security and Biodiversity Conservation in the Continent
ARC/04/INF/8	HIV/AIDS and the Food Crisis in Sub-Saharan Africa
ARC/04/INF/9	International Year of Rice - 2004
ARC/04/INF/10	FAO Strategic Framework for Bridging the Rural Digital Divide

APPENDIX D**STATEMENT BY THE FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL TO THE TWENTY-THIRD
FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA****Johannesburg, South Africa, 04 March 2004**

*Your Excellency Mr Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic,
Distinguished Ministers,
Honourable Delegates,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is for me a great pleasure to be in this country, symbol of Africa's renaissance, to address the Ministers and other leaders of African agriculture participating in the Twenty-third FAO Regional Conference for Africa in this splendid Sandton Centre. I should like to express my gratitude to President Thabo Mbeki and to his Government for their warm welcome and their generous hospitality.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

(State of food and agriculture in the world)

During the first half of the 1990s, the number of hungry declined by 37 million. In contrast, during the second half of the decade, it increased by 18 million. Positive achievements in many countries have been countered by setbacks in many others. In 1999-2001, there were 842 million undernourished people in the world, including 798 million in the developing countries, 34 million in the countries in transition and 10 million in the industrialized countries. At this rate, the World Food Summit's objective of halving the number of hungry people by 2015 will only be achieved in 2150.

In 2003, world cereal utilization totalled some 1,970 million tonnes, exceeding production by 100 million tonnes.

The prices of many commodities that developing countries export are now lower than ever. Coffee and cotton are the most spectacular examples, but cocoa, sugar and bananas have followed the same path. Thus, world coffee prices plummeted from about US\$135 per tonne in the mid-1990s to less than US\$50 in these last two years. Developing country earnings from cotton exports contracted from US\$3.5 billion in 1996 to under US\$2 billion in recent years. Moreover, forty-three countries earn more than 20 percent of their total export revenue and more than 50 percent of their total agricultural revenue from just one agricultural commodity.

After the failure of the Cancun Ministerial Conference, negotiations have resumed following the meeting of the WTO General Council in December 2003. Commitment towards achieving the Doha Development Agenda for agriculture was confirmed at the

Round Table held on this subject on 2 December 2003 during the 32nd Session of the FAO Conference, for a fair trade policy is essential for rural development and food security. In this context, the role of FAO's Committee on Commodity Problems is more important than ever. It is with this in mind that I intend to invite representatives of the ministries of trade to the next session of this Committee in February 2005.

At constant 1995 prices, external aid to agricultural development fell from US\$27 billion to between US\$10 and 15 billion during the 1990s, whereas the amount should be doubled and agriculture's share of national budgets should be increased to make any significant progress in reducing undernourishment.

(Round tables on financing for agricultural development)

It is to mobilize such financial resources that FAO has decided to jointly organize, with the regional development banks, round tables on financing for agriculture to be held in parallel with each of its 2004 Regional Conferences in the developing regions.

(World Food Summit: five years later)

During the *World Food Summit: five years later* of June 2002 in Rome, the Heads of State and Government resolved to accelerate implementation of the Summit's Plan of Action and called for an International Alliance Against Hunger.

National alliances are thus being formed in member countries to mobilize governments, parliaments, NGOs, civil society, the private sector and agricultural organizations.

(Agriculture)

The developing countries need to take up the challenge of agricultural productivity and market competitiveness to improve their food security.

Soil is under accelerated degradation, affecting 21 million hectares of arable land and threatening the irreversible loss of 6 million hectares. In the arid and semi-arid areas that cover 45 percent of the world's land surface, the integrated management of land, water and fertilizer can significantly mitigate this situation.

Urban and periurban agriculture and home and school micro-gardens would rapidly improve the level of nutrition of the urban poor, with relatively modest levels of investment. FAO has undertaken such projects in all regions of the world, using Technical Cooperation Programme resources and TeleFood funds.

Livestock sustains some 800 rural poor and meets 30 to 40 percent of total food requirements.

Transboundary animal diseases, such as foot-and-mouth disease, haemorrhagic fever, Rift Valley fever, swine fever, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia and avian influenza, are sources of concern for trade and public health. Yet some real progress has been made. The number of rinderpest-free countries already exceeds 105 and is growing steadily, but the countries concerned, the regional and international organizations, the NGOs and the donors will have to work in concert to eliminate the last reservoirs of infection. The battle against old and new epidemics is a major challenge that FAO and its partners are seeking to wage under the Emergency Prevention System for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases (EMPRES).

The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources has been ratified by 34 countries. It will come into force upon ratification by 40 countries, probably during the first half of 2004. This is an area in which FAO encourages the safekeeping of indigenous knowledge, especially as regards agrobiodiversity.

(Forestry)

A Ministerial Meeting on Forestry will be convened in 2005 to study the recommendations of the Regional Commissions and to make strategic decisions on the future of the sector.

(Fisheries)

At global level, almost 10 percent of fish stocks are depleted and 18 percent are overexploited, mainly because of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, more efficient new technologies and excess capacity of fishing fleet. The situation is aggravated by the absence of monitoring and surveillance of vessels, particular by means of satellite transponder technology.

FAO will therefore be convening a meeting of Fisheries Ministers in Rome in 2005 to give fresh impetus to the actions needed in this sector.

(Sustainable agricultural development)

As regards sustainable agriculture and rural development, FAO is proceeding with the formulation of a four-year project for mountain regions, in collaboration with 250 civil society organizations in 90 countries, and working closely with 65 governments and intergovernmental organizations.

The International Conference of Small Island Developing States will be held in Mauritius in August 2004. FAO is actively involved in this initiative and will organize a Ministerial Conference on the Development of Agriculture in Small Island States in Rome in 2005.

Although they account for 60 percent of agricultural production in the developing countries, women have unequal access to productive resources. FAO is striving to tackle this problem, devising specific indicators for appropriate policies.

(Emergency situations)

As of end of 2003, 38 countries were faced with serious food shortages requiring international assistance. Yet, food aid in cereals fell to 7.4 million tonnes in 2001-02, down 2.3 million tonnes or 23 percent from 2000-01.

Eight million small farmers and agricultural workers died from HIV/AIDS between 1985 and 2000 in the 25 most affected countries. To deal with this situation, FAO's strategic response is centred on agricultural and rural policies, and on programmes, projects and institutional frameworks.

*Mr President of the Republic,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

(State of food and agriculture in the region)

Africa is the only region in the world in which average *per capita* food production has been constantly falling for the past 40 years. If current trends persist, the number of undernourished persons on the continent will increase between now and 2015, in contrast to the other developing regions.

In 1999-2001, 26 percent of the African population were chronically undernourished, a total of 207 million people.

The current levels of undernourishment and the alarming trends provide ample justification for giving high priority to agricultural development in Africa.

What is more, agriculture accounts for 17 percent of GDP, 57 percent of employment and 11 percent of export earnings.

The continent's countries suffer the consequences of variability of output, relatively low yields and heavy dependence on the export of primary commodities, in a context of low elasticity of supply and high volatility of price. Africa's agriculture is undercapitalized, underperforming and uncompetitive.

There are many root causes for this. There is, for example, the insignificant use of modern inputs, with only 22 kg of fertilizer applied to each hectare of arable land compared to 144 kg in Asia. The level is even lower in Sub-Saharan Africa, which uses 10 kg per hectare.

The selected seeds that spurred the success of the Green Revolution in Asia and in Latin America are barely used in Africa. There is also a profound shortage of rural roads and storage and processing facilities.

Another factor strongly influencing the continent's poor agricultural performance is **water**. Africa fails to make good use of its water resources, whether these be surface waters, ground waters or runoff waters from rainfall. It only uses 1.6 percent of its available water reserves for irrigation as compared to 14 percent in Asia.

Only 7 percent of Africa's cropland is irrigated against 40 percent in Asia, and if we exclude the five most developed countries in this regard – Morocco, Egypt, Sudan, Madagascar and South Africa – the proportion for the remaining 48 countries drops to 3 percent.

Yields from irrigated crops are three times higher than yields from rainfed crops, but agricultural activity on 93 percent of Africa's arable land is dependent on extremely erratic rainfall and therefore seriously exposed to the risk of drought. Eighty percent of food emergencies are linked to water, especially water stress.

This inadequacy of water control and lack of infrastructure constitute the structural limitations that largely explain why Africa's agriculture is unproductive and uncompetitive.

Between 1990 and 2000, the highest average annual loss of forest cover was recorded in Africa, with 0.78 percent, compared to 0.41 percent in South America and 0.2 percent at world level.

During the past ten years, Africa's fish production has stalled and *per capita* fish supply has only diminished. Apparent supply has dropped from 9 to 7 kg per person per year. At the world level, fish supplies are increasingly sourced from aquaculture, which now accounts for almost 30 percent of global output, but in Africa aquaculture's contribution is insignificant.

*Mr President of the Republic,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

(Agenda of the Conference)

(CAADP/NEPAD activities)

This Regional Conference will be called upon to discuss implementation of the NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) which was approved at the Special Ministerial Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa held in Rome on 9 June 2002. This Programme received crucial support in July

2003 at the Second Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly in Maputo, where the Heads of State and Government approved the *Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa*. Since then, FAO has stepped up its assistance to member countries in support of their actions. In September and December 2003, it hosted a meeting of representatives of the 18 member countries of NEPAD's Implementing Committee, the African Development Bank, the World Bank, IFAD, WFP and civil society to examine ways of supporting implementation of the Comprehensive Programme.

Today, you are invited to exchange information on the measures that you have taken individually and collectively to implement the Maputo commitments and the Comprehensive Programme and to examine the question of its financing. FAO will report on its cooperation with Member Nations in this process. Its support has focused on updating national strategies for food security and agricultural development towards the year 2015, and on preparing for 50 countries medium-term programmes and legislative programmes, as well as bankable projects to put before advisory financing groups. It will also help member countries to implement the commitment in the Maputo Declaration to allocate, within five years, at least 10 percent of respective national budgets to agriculture and, importantly, to install a tracking system to monitor achievements.

(Integration of forestry, fisheries and livestock into the CAADP)

The Conference will also examine a precursory proposal to integrate fisheries, forestry and livestock components into the Comprehensive Programme, formulated in collaboration between NEPAD and notably FAO. A draft consolidated text will be drawn up in the light of the Conference's discussions. This document will be examined by the ministers responsible for each sector and will also be submitted for review to NEPAD and the African Union before being submitted in turn to the Heads of State at the Third Summit in July 2004 in Addis Ababa.

(Food security reserve systems in Africa)

In follow-up to the Maputo Declaration, FAO has submitted to your attention a background paper on regional food security reserve systems. This is part of a larger study involving WFP and other partners.

The Special Programme for Food Security, proposed as a NEPAD programme by the Regional Conference in Cairo, should serve as a catalyst, with the Regional Programmes for Food Security, for concrete implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme.

(Implications of CAADP implementation on fertilizer production and use in Africa)

The implications of the Comprehensive Programme on fertilizer production and use in Africa will also be examined. Any rapid improvement in agricultural productivity

will largely depend on the availability and use of fertilizer, drawn mainly from an increase in local production.

(Agricultural trade)

Africa only accounts for 3 percent of world agricultural trade. The international community needs to adopt rules that are fairer to all and that will allow the non-subsidized smallholders of developing countries to find outlets on markets. Producers are at the mercy of fluctuating markets and the support given to agriculture in the developed countries which reached US\$318 billion in 2002. FAO will continue to provide related support to Member Nations, notably in training and information.

*Mr President of the Republic,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

With the right leadership and the political will, Africa must and can change its present agricultural situation. We already have encouraging examples from a number of countries.

This political will was resoundingly affirmed in the historic Declarations of Maputo on agriculture and food security in Africa and of the Extraordinary Summit of Sirte on water and agriculture.

Voiced commitments must now translate into coherent, realistic and effective programmes under preparation with the support of the Organization. We will also need to mobilize internal and external sources of funding.

I wish you every success in your work and thank you for your kind attention.

APPENDIX E**OPENING ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA****Johannesburg, South Africa, 4 March 2004**

The Director-General of FAO, Dr Jacques Diouf
The Independent Chair of Council, Mr Aziz Mekour
Honourable Ministers
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen.

I would like to thank you most sincerely for giving me the opportunity to address this distinguished gathering today. On behalf of the Government and people of South Africa, I extend a very warm welcome to all of you.

It is indeed an honour for South Africa to join the African family of nations in hosting, for the first time, this seminal Twenty-third Africa Regional Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

In his book "Globalisation and its discontents", the Nobel Prize-winning economist, Joseph Stiglitz, says:

"The developing countries must assume responsibility for their well-being themselves ... What is needed are policies for sustainable, equitable, and democratic growth. This is the reason for development. Development is not about helping a few people get rich or creating a handful of pointless protected industries that only benefit the country's elite; it is not about bringing in Prada and Benetton, Ralph Lauren or Louis Vuitton, for the urban rich and leaving the rural poor in their misery ... Development is about transforming societies, improving the lives of the poor, enabling everyone to have a chance at success and access to health care and education. This sort of development won't happen if only a few people dictate the policies a country must follow ... There must be broad participation that goes well beyond the experts and politicians." (Penguin Books, London 2002. pp 251-2.)

Most of us participating in this conference belong to what in some literature is described as the political class. We are part of the political leadership of our countries and continent. One of our responsibilities is precisely to ask the question that Stiglitz tries to answer.

That question is - what is development? In this context, I trust that we would not find it too difficult to agree with Stiglitz - that development is about transforming societies,

improving the lives of the poor, enabling everyone to have a chance at success and access to health care and education, and so on.

I trust we would agree that it is not about helping a few people get rich or creating a handful of pointless protected industries that only benefit the country's elite; that it is not about bringing in Prada and Benneton, Ralph Lauren or Louis Vuitton, for the urban rich and leaving the rural poor in their misery.

We have gathered here to consider the challenges of the agrarian revolution in Africa. Writing about India, Ismail Chaudhury ("Agrarian Revolution Revisited") said: "Industry being the sole and prime concern of the government authorities everywhere, political parties now pay less attention to the peasant question. The official policy of pacifying the rural aggrieved is to distribute doles under pompous schemes, not land ... In (the) curious world of (the) revolutionary strategy (even of revolutionary parties), peasants have no role to play other than to participate in voting."

We, for our part, dare not follow the Indian example, if Chaudhury is correct in his assessment of the attitude of the Indian political parties. We cannot afford to pay less attention to the peasant question, seeing these peasant masses as nothing more than voting cattle to return our parties to power, with no other role.

Where Stiglitz has said that there must be broad participation in defining the development agenda, going well beyond the experts and politicians, the African peasant must be included within this broad participation. The objective situation on our continent and the tasks we have set ourselves within the context of the African Union (AU) and its development programme, New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), make it imperative that we focus on the peasant question, working together with the African peasant masses.

According to one paper on "Africa's Agrarian Transformation", 80 percent of Africa's population is rural. This peasant population includes 70 percent of those on our continent who fall within the category of those who are extremely poor and undernourished.

The figures reflecting the incidence of poverty between the urban and rural African populations confirms the higher levels of poverty among the rural masses. Some relevant figures show that:

In 1991 in Tanzania, 20 percent of the urban population suffered from a standard of living below the National Poverty Line, while the figure for the rural population was 50 percent. The respective figures for Zambia in 1993 were 46 and 88 percent. Those for Mozambique in 1997 were 62 and 69 percent.

The 1990 figures reflecting the size of the labour force in agriculture compared to the labour force as a whole also emphasise the importance of agriculture and the rural areas.

The figures for Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia respectively were 87, 83, 84 and 75 percent.

In the book, "Can Africa Claim the 21st Century?" the World Bank has this to say about the role of women in African agriculture:

"Women play a big role in Africa's agricultural production, performing 90 percent of the work of processing food crops and providing household water and firewood, 80 percent of the work of food storage and transport from farm to village, 90 percent of the work of hoeing and weeding, and 60 percent of the work of harvesting and marketing ... Despite their importance in agricultural production, women face disadvantages in accessing land and financial, research, extension, education, and health services. This lack of access has inhibited opportunities for agricultural investment, growth and income." (p196).

You are, of course, familiar with all the facts and figures about African agriculture that I have cited. But I referred to them to emphasise the centrality of the peasant question in the struggle for the renewal of our continent.

When we say we must achieve a better life for all our people, the overwhelming majority of these are the peasant masses. When we say we must alleviate and eradicate poverty, we refer first and foremost to our people in the rural areas. When we speak of changing the conditions of the working people for the better, we are referring principally to those who work in agriculture. Similarly, when we talk about gender equality and the emancipation of women, our victory can only be won when such emancipation encompasses the rural women.

We quoted Ismail Chaudhury of India as saying: industry being the sole and prime concern of the government authorities everywhere, political parties now pay less attention to the peasant question.

In their 1997 paper entitled "Explaining Agricultural and Agrarian Policies in Developing Countries", Hans P. Binswanger and Klaus Deininger wrote:

"The literature describing urban bias (Lipton 1977, 1993) provides qualitative evidence that government investment has often favoured the rural elite and the urban upper and middle classes rather than the small family operator." (p19).

Joe Stiglitz has said that development is not about bringing luxury goods for the urban rich and leaving the rural poor in their misery.

The Kenyan novelist and writer, Ngugi wa Thiongo put this matter more starkly when he said:

"In the economic sphere, wherever the new (post-colonial ruling) class ensures control of the management of the national wealth by external Western financial factors, they do, in

the political sphere, also find new trust in western governments. Their own people on the other hand are not to be trusted. The masses, the entire working people, became the enemy. Ethnic divisions, to weaken any concerted efforts against the neo-colonial order, are actively pursued. They begin to view their own society, their own history, their own efforts, their own skins, with the same kind of eye and result that we saw articulated in the literature taught in the colonial classroom. A political characteristic of the neo-colonial order is its discomfiture with the masses and its distrust of local initiatives in everything. It measures its success by how effectively it can reproduce and maintain the colonial order in everything from economics to culture." ("Literature and Society" in "Writers in Politics", James Currey, Oxford - 1997).

Binswanger and Deininger also explain the disempowerment of the rural masses, making it difficult for them to challenge the new masters. They write:

"Agricultural producers are separated by large physical distances, which make communication difficult, unless infrastructure - such as roads and telecommunications systems - is well developed. Furthermore, since agricultural activities are seasonal, the potential for concentrated collective action is limited to the slow seasons. These limitations are most pronounced for peasants and other small producers who are widely dispersed, produce a variety of heterogeneous goods for home consumption and the market, are lacking education and access to infrastructure, and lack strong social ties ... The differences in income and wealth generated by discrimination and differential accumulation of social capital in turn reduce the political action potential of the groups suffering from discrimination." (p27).

When Ngugi speaks about the masses and the working people he says we, "the new ruling class", do not trust and see as the enemy, he is also talking about these disempowered people in the rural areas, who constitute the majority of the masses and the working people. And if he is right, obviously we, this "new ruling class", work from our capitals, our urban areas, to reproduce and maintain the colonial order in everything from economics to culture.

I am certain that those of us present in this hall who are part of the African political class, will deny that we are the kind of political animal described by Ngugi was Thiongo. But in a sense, we have a responsibility and a task to ensure that the agrarian programmes we elaborate and implement, rather than what we say, prove that we are not the creatures Ngugi sought to denounce.

In the book we have cited, the World Bank says:

"Though Africa's agriculture has responded to limited reforms, it remains backward and undercapitalised, the result of centuries of extractive policies. Recapitalising the sector will require maintaining and improving price incentives (including by encouraging competitive input markets), channelling more public spending and foreign aid to rural communities (including for local infrastructure), and tapping into the savings potential of

farmers. These changes are also needed to create incentives to reverse severe environmental degradation. Public-private partnerships can make a contribution, including in agricultural research and extension, where a regional approach would also help. And wider access to OECD markets for agricultural products would make a big difference - at some \$300 billion, subsidies to OECD agriculture are equal to Africa's GDP." (p4).

What we had done and not done was criticised more boldly by Binswanger and Deininger, who wrote:

"A group of countries, including Argentina, Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and many other countries, also had agrarian structures dominated by family-farms. However these countries discriminated heavily against agriculture by maintaining overvalued exchange rates, industrial protection, and export taxation. In addition, they provided little support to agriculture, and the support they did provide went primarily to relatively inefficient, but politically powerful large producers. Except in regions with especially favourable agricultural conditions, agricultural output has not kept up with population growth, and rural poverty has increased sharply. Although many of these countries have recently initiated macroeconomic stabilisation programmes and structural reforms, they are reforming agricultural policies, with some notable exceptions, only slowly." (p 7/8).

The centuries of extractive policies to which the World Bank refers, which have left African agriculture backward and undercapitalised to this day, include the colonial period. We must therefore accept that during the years of independence, we have not done the things mentioned by the World Bank, including the allocation of sufficient resources to agriculture, the development of the rural infrastructure, reducing input costs to the agricultural producers, attending to agricultural research and extension, and so on.

To that extent Ngugi was correct to observe that Africa's political class has been content to oversee the reproduction and maintenance of the colonial order, at least in the area of agriculture.

For instance, we ourselves know that our budgetary allocations to agriculture have been very low. To worsen the problem, World Bank and other international transfers to African agriculture have also declined over time. During the years 1992-97, the World Bank support amounted to \$322.1 million annually. By 2000, this had declined to \$173.5 million.

We also know that because of our neglect of agriculture, paying less attention to the peasant question, as Chaudhury put it, dependence on imported food has also increased quite significantly, further entrenching our position as net importers of food.

In 1990 our food exports amounted to \$6.9 billion, with imports standing at \$12.7 billion. By 2000, our food exports had increased to \$7.9 billion, while imports jumped to \$15.2 billion.

I would like to believe that the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) and other decisions that our continent has already taken, including the African Water Vision 2025, and others that are on your agenda, seek to break with a colonial and post-colonial past that has produced the African agricultural crisis which you know very well, elements of which we have mentioned.

To that extent, we can say that, however belatedly, we have drawn the African roadmap that signifies that we are determined to break away from the neo-colonial route that Ngugi wrote about. Accordingly, we can say that we are at one with Joe Stiglitz when he says that development is about transforming societies, improving the lives of the poor, enabling everyone to have a chance at success and access to health care and education, and extricating the rural masses from the misery of poverty and underdevelopment.

The remaining and perhaps more difficult task is to ensure that we implement our decisions. Put briefly, this means that we have to work hard and consistently to guarantee the success of the African agrarian revolution.

In the first instance this is a political rather than a technical task. It is about ensuring that we break with a tradition that has marginalized African agriculture and the peasant masses from our domestic, regional and continental transformation processes.

It is about ensuring that as a political class, we recommit ourselves to the objective of advancing the interests of the masses, the working people of our country, that Ngugi said we do not trust and treat as an enemy.

It means that we must see ourselves and act as revolutionaries, determined to fight against and defeat the inertia and social forces that will inevitably work to ensure that, practically, we treat the decisions we have taken as mere paper decisions we can forget as soon as this Conference comes to an end.

It also means that we must refuse to treat the peasant masses in our countries and continent as mere objects of policies decided by an elite, striving to ensure their active and conscious engagement in a people-driven process of change.

Perhaps the first thing we will have to do, is to inform these peasant masses about what we have decided, addressing them in their native languages. We must also encourage them to have their say as to what they think of our plans and programmes, committed to the view that, as Stiglitz said, that there must be broad participation that goes well beyond the experts and politicians.

In his book, "Development as Freedom", another Nobel Laureate in Economics, Amartya Sen says:

"Hunger relates not only to food production and agricultural expansion, but also to the functioning of the entire economy and...the operation of political and social arrangements that can, directly or indirectly, influence people's ability to acquire food and to achieve health and nourishment." (Oxford University Press, Oxford. 1999 - p 162).

"The Strategic Framework for IFAD 2002-2006" takes these ideas further when it says:

"Poverty is not only a condition of low income and lack of assets. It is a condition of vulnerability, exclusion and powerlessness. It is the erosion of (the people's) capability to be free from fear and hunger and have their voices heard."

I am honoured to have had the opportunity to speak at this important Conference attended by African revolutionaries, who are dedicated to the strategic task to end the vulnerability, exclusion and powerlessness of our peasant masses, determined to ensure that they are liberated from fear and hunger, and that their voices are heard loud and clear.

I declare the Twenty-third African Regional Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization open and wish you success in your deliberations.

Thank you.

APPENDIX F**REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE OF THE
TWENTY-THIRD FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA****Johannesburg, South Africa, 1 – 3 March 2004****I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS****Organization**

1. The Technical Committee of the Twenty-third FAO Regional Conference for Africa met from 1 to 3 March 2004, at the Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa.
2. The Meeting was attended by 135 delegates from 32 Member Nations of the Region, 11 observers from Member Nations outside the Region, 10 representatives of the United Nations Specialized Agencies and 57 observers from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the list of delegates is given as Appendix B.

Opening Ceremony (Agenda Item 1)

3. Dr. Maryam Moustapha Mousa, Minister Plenipotentiary for Agriculture Affairs welcomed participants to the Twenty-third Africa Regional Conference, on behalf of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the outgoing Chair.
4. The FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, Mr Joseph Tchicaya, welcomed the delegates on behalf of the Director-General of FAO, Mr Jacques Diouf. He expressed FAO's appreciation to the Government of the Republic of South Africa for hosting this Conference and for putting at its disposal the excellent facilities at the Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg. He also thanked the National Organising Committee for its preparatory hard work. He also noted that the Conference also provides an opportunity to stage numerous exhibitions, seminars and other parallel events planned by the national authorities that would enhance the participants' stay in the Republic of South Africa, coinciding with the celebrations to mark the 10th anniversary of the end of the apartheid.
5. He referred to the last Conference held in Cairo, Egypt, in February 2002, which unanimously adopted a resolution on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) that was reinforced by the Heads of State and Government during the African Union Summit, Maputo in July 2003, thus providing political support to the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) of the NEPAD.
6. Mr Tchicaya observed that FAO had continued to support member countries in various areas related to its mandate and in particular with technical assistance in support

of investments and collaboration with investors. He requested the delegates' thorough analysis and discussion of the following agenda items:

- a. Implementation of the CAADP;
- b. Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) for Food Security;
- c. Regional priorities in follow-up to the WFS and the *WFS:fyI*;
- d. Contribution of Agricultural Research and Extension to Food Security and Poverty Reduction;
- e. Bushmeat crisis;
- f. HIV/AIDS and the Food Crisis;
- g. International Year of Rice 2004; and
- h. FAO's Strategic Framework for Bridging the Rural Digital Divide/WAICENT.

7. He further referred to the fact that there would be the Round Table on Financing Agricultural Development organised as a parallel session to the Conference.

8. He concluded by stressing that in Africa, the FAO would continue to work on its priorities: food security, poverty reduction and sustainable use and management of natural resources, and with the NEPAD Secretariat, on the implementation of CAADP.

9. In his opening address the Honourable Deputy Minister, Agriculture and Land Affairs, Advocate Dirk du Toit, welcomed the delegates and observers and expressed the appreciation of the Government of the Republic of South Africa for the honour to host the Twenty-third FAO Regional Conference for Africa. He stressed the importance of the event for South Africa, because it allows, South Africa to reflect upon what ten years of democracy means for the country and how that has shaped South Africa's relations with the rest of the continent.

10. He emphasized the need for significant improvement of investment in the agricultural sector, including funding for agricultural research and dissemination of research findings and trade development. He pointed out the strong commitments made by the African Leaders during recent meetings, including: (i) the Maputo Declaration (2003) which adopted the CAADP in the framework of NEPAD and (ii) the Sirte Summit on Agriculture and Water. He further reiterated the decisions taken by African authorities to develop regional food reserve systems and their pledge to allocate at least 10% of national budgets to agricultural development over the next five years. The Deputy Minister called for action.

11. The Deputy Minister continued by stressing the important role of biotechnology in sustainable agricultural development. He indicated that African countries should develop strong partnerships and develop a harmonized approach on biosafety. Advocate du Toit highlighted the need for close collaboration in the fields of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food Security.

12. The Deputy Minister underscored the onerous and complex technical restrictions being placed on trade.

13. He concluded by emphasizing the importance of sound regional collaboration to develop mitigation strategies against the vagaries of nature focusing on implementation and concrete outputs for achieving the common goal of food security and poverty alleviation.

Election of Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Appointment of Rapporteurs (Agenda Item 2)

14. The Meeting unanimously elected Ms Bongiwe Njobe, Director General, National Department of Agriculture of the Republic of South Africa, as its Chairperson.

15. The Meeting then elected, also by acclamation, the rest of the bureau members as follows:

First Vice-Chairperson: Gabon
Mr. Aristide Ongone Obame,
Secretary General of the FAO National Commission
Ministry of Agriculture

Second Vice-Chairperson: Morocco
Mr Moha Marghi, Director of Plant
Production, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural
Development

Rapporteur: Senegal
Mr. Moussa Bocar LY
Minister Counselor
Deputy Permanent Representative to FAO

Co-Rapporteur: Kenya
Mr. Joseph K. Mburu,
Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO

It was also decided to constitute an Informal Working Group called the Friends of the Rapporteur comprising: Angola, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Egypt, Mali, Madagascar, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

16. On assumption of duty, the Chairperson stressed the need for the meeting to be interactive and results orientated. The focus was on discussing implementation of CAADP and other FAO priority programmes in Africa. A key challenge for the Technical Committee was to start a dialogue on improving the effectiveness of intergovernmental governance especially among Permanent Secretaries in Africa.

Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable (Agenda Item 3)

17. The Meeting adopted the Agenda and Timetable with amendments. The Agenda is given as Appendix A, while the list of documents is shown in Appendix C.

II DISCUSSION ITEMS

Implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) of NEPAD: Progress Review (ARC/04/4)

18. The Technical Committee welcomed the presentation of this Agenda Item introduced by the NEPAD Secretariat, which elaborated a progress review of the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). The Meeting took note of the following documents: ARC/04/4.1, ARC/04/4.2, ARC/04/4.3, ARC/04/4.4 and ARC/04/INF/6.

19. Varied progress on CAADP implementation has been realized in all four pillars. Under the Pillar “Increasing Food Supply and Reducing Hunger”, the following activities are being undertaken: NEPAD Food Reserve System Study; Home Grown School Feeding Programmes; the Conference on Agriculture Successes held in Pretoria, South Africa, December 2003; Pan Africa Cassava Initiative. Under Pillar “Land and Water Management”, most RECs have identified programmes in their respective regions. An extraordinary summit has been held in Libya to strengthen the linkages between the agriculture and the water sectors under NEPAD. Under Pillar “Infrastructure and Market Access”, a number of infrastructure programmes have been developed with the support of AfDB. However, it was acknowledged that the market access programmes were not well defined. The Agricultural Research And Technology Dissemination and Adoption pillar is being implemented in association with FARA and the World Bank focuses on the development of the Multi-Country Agriculture Productivity Programme (MAPP). The Technical Committee acknowledges that the involvement of Civil Society Organizations (CSO) is critical, therefore, it was expected that the synthesis report from the consultation of Continental Farmers' Organization on CAADP held in February 2004 in Johannesburg would provide useful input into the CAADP implementation.

20. Progress has also been made by a number of countries on the follow-up of the Maputo commitment of allocating at least 10% of national budgets to agriculture within 5 years. Almost all the countries are being assisted by FAO in updating their national agricultural, rural development and food security strategies and policies and preparing Medium Term Investment Programmes and bankable projects. In addition, a CAADP Support Group has been established to mobilize international financial resources and technical support for its implementation.

21. Delegates gave particular importance to linking and integrating the CAADP and its bankable projects into on-going national development plans and other official frameworks including the PRSPs.

22. The Meeting noted the importance and value in exchange of experiences on notable successes within the continent and expressed the need of exchange of experiences through bilateral consultations that would be built around the South-South cooperation.

23. The Meeting noted the importance of integrating fisheries, forestry and livestock as a companion component to CAADP. However, there is need for further and broader consultation with national governments as well as farmers' associations in order to address their concerns and identify priority areas for intervention and effective investment.

24. The Committee highlighted the urgency of the development of rural infrastructure, including roads and markets in the continent. In this regard, The Meeting agreed that the NEPAD and AfDB infrastructure programme should broaden its focus on rural infrastructure in support of food production and access to markets.

25. The Committee highlighted the need to establish African centres of excellence as the basis of facilitating capacity building.

26. It further urged that the implementation process of the CAADP should consider how to empower the women, taking into account critical elements such as: land ownership, access to financial resources, diffusion of modern technology, market access and information, etc.

27. The Meeting expressed the need to consider the possibility of a peer review of the sector to ensure good governance in the implementation of the CAADP.

28. The Meeting recognized the need for an effective system of implementing CAADP that entails partnerships between the public, the private sector and the civil society, in particular, the farmer's organizations.

29. There is a need for governments to ensure that the 10% mandatory budget allocation yields positive impact.

30. In forging the way forward for the implementation of the CAADP at national, regional and continental level, the Meeting recommended:

- a. The establishment of a Forum of Permanent Secretaries in order to support and ensure the implementation process of the CAADP at the national, regional and continental level in an effective and coherent manner.
- b. The setting up of CAADP focal points at national level to drive the process;
- c. The preparation of annual reports on progress of the implementation of CAADP by the NEPAD Secretariat;
- d. The establishment of a mechanism by NEPAD with the support of FAO for monitoring the progress of the CAADP, including defining performance indicators.

Initiative to review and update National Agricultural, Rural Development and Food Security Strategies and Policies (ARC/04/INF/6)

31. In line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and following the *World Food Summit: five years later* in June 2002, FAO launched an Initiative to Support the Review and Update of National Strategies and Policies for Food Security and Agricultural Development. The purpose of the presentation was to update the Regional Conference on the process followed, to present some of the key results obtained and explore the way forward.

32. So far, 47 draft summary National Strategies for Food Security and Agricultural Development have been prepared for Africa that will provide the overall framework for Medium-term Investment Programmes (MTIP) and bankable projects. Besides, 29 Country Policy Profiles (CPPs) give insight into the areas where there is a need to strengthen Member countries' capacity for policy and strategy formulation.

33. The process helped to identify the main focus of the strategies adopted and the key issues member countries in the region face when trying to develop agriculture and improve food security. The information is consistent with the NEPAD/CAADP and will orient normative work conducted by FAO and other organizations to better meet the needs of Member countries. The results demonstrate the advantages of having a regular information gathering process that could be reviewed by the Regional Conference in terms of identifying needs and priorities.

34. The Meeting urged member countries, who had not done so, to follow up on engagement with FAO to conclude the process.

Integrating Forestry, Fisheries and Livestock issues into the CAADP (ARC/04/4.2)

35. The Technical Committee welcomed the introduction of the paper presented as companion document to strengthen Forestry, Fisheries and Livestock issues in the CAADP. This paper aimed essentially at integrating forestry, fisheries and livestock development into CAADP and mainstreaming environmental sustainability into the programme.

36. The Committee was further informed that each of these components had defined priority areas of intervention and provided preliminary assessment of resource requirements.

37. The Secretariat recalled that this paper was still a draft and requested comments and suggestions from member countries and their development partners to enable its revision and finalization before subsequent submission to the AU Heads of State and Government Summit in July 2004.

Fertilizer's production and use in Africa (ARC/04/4.3)

38. The Meeting recognized the importance of this input in increasing crop production and productivity for greater food security.

39. The Meeting however noted the existence of numerous constraints for smallholder farmers to access this input. Major constraints noted included the high costs of fertilizer and the difficulty of accessing this and other agricultural inputs in the rural areas.

40. The Meeting recommended that FAO should assist member countries to develop sustainable approaches for soil fertility improvement based on integrated natural resources management and greater integration of crop-livestock systems. Attention should be given to the improvement of fertilizer availability, affordability and production in Africa on the basis of regional and sub-regional cooperation and the involvement of the private sector.

Establishment of Regional Food Reserve Systems, including food stocks (ARC/04/4.4)

41. As indicated in the FAO paper, which is an input to a larger study by WFP and NEPAD, the rationale for the establishment of Regional Food Security Reserve Systems in Africa is based on three major grounds. First, poor market integration in the continent has resulted in huge price variations over time and between regions, and production shortfalls cannot easily be accommodated through intraregional or interregional and international trade. Secondly, agriculture in Africa is predominately rain-fed resulting in huge production fluctuations due to inter-seasonal and inter-annual rainfall variations, and recurring droughts and/or floods. As a result there is increased dependence on trade to meet domestic food requirements. Thirdly, during recent years the incidence of

emergencies and the role of safety nets, especially in Southern and Eastern Africa, have significantly increased.

42. After discussion, the Committee agreed that food reserve systems should be established:

- a. in the context of an integrated food security system and their stock size, commodity composition and location should be clearly defined;
- b. if an appropriate policy environment is put in place to encourage and guarantee participation of private sector in domestic and international grain markets;
- c. without distorting domestic prices;
- d. with a size ideally equivalent to one-to-three months of estimated annual import requirements of the major cereal consumed, and in strategic locations; and
- e. as building blocks at country level for regional/sub-regional food reserve systems while avoiding physical reserves at the regional or sub-regional level due to the high management and transport costs involved. At regional level the aim should be financial resource mobilization and emergency coordination.

43. The Meeting noted that further comments could be made on the document and these would be taken into consideration in the finalisation of the study.

Integrated Water Resources Management for Food Security in Africa (ARC/04/5)

44. The Meeting welcomed the presentation of this agenda item and commended FAO for the priority accorded to water management.

45. The Meeting noted that the paper raised issues of regional and national concerns regarding the critical state of food insecurity in Africa while only 4% of the internal renewable water resources were tapped. However, the increasing inter-sectoral competition for water was likely to lead to water scarcity for the agricultural sector. Indeed, each sub-sector was developing its own strategy, without heeding the needs of the others. This fragmentary subsectoral management of water was no longer acceptable in a context of rapidly increasing multifaceted demand and diminishing water resources.

46. The document reviewed the principles underlying integrated water resource management (IWRM) and showed that the objectives of food security can only be achieved, all other requisites being met, within the framework of IWRM. It noted that despite the significant increase in world food output in the past 40 years, some 842

million people in the world were still suffering from hunger, including 23 percent of them in Sub-Saharan Africa.

47. It was further noted that more than three-quarters of the worldwide increase in food production in recent decades has been due to higher yields and an expansion of irrigated area. Africa had 12.7 million hectares under irrigation in 2000, equivalent to about 7 percent of its arable land and one-quarter of its irrigation potential. Agricultural water use already accounts for 85% of all water withdrawals in the continent but some 60 % of the water withdrawn is lost in a variety of ways. Hence there is potential for improving water use efficiency and water productivity.

48. The Meeting acknowledged that IWRM was now considered the most appropriate framework for "good water governance". Indeed, the water policy of many development partners and development financing institutions, was stressing the need for a global water policy framework.

49. The challenges to Africa were to overcome the following constraints: insufficient mobilization of water for agricultural purpose to ensure food security and combat poverty, insufficient research and development activities for the mobilization and management of water resources, insufficient local expertise, insufficient public investment and little effort to marshal the private investment that could significantly stimulate the sector.

50. The Meeting highlighted the risks associated with rain-fed agriculture in semi-arid and drought-prone areas and acknowledged the need for countries to rely on irrigation for food security. It recommended the adoption of drought mitigation measures for those areas subject to frequent weather vagaries leading to famine and food aid requirements.

- a. The Meeting noted, with appreciation, the summary of the Sirte Declaration on the Challenges on Implementing Integrated and Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Water in Africa as was presented by the representative of African Union. The Declaration, which has 25 action points, emphasized *inter alia* the commitment of the AU Heads of State and Government to encourage bilateral agreements on shared water resources and to enjoin the Regional Economic Communities to develop appropriate regional protocols to guide IWRM. In this regard, copies of the Declaration were distributed to the participants.
- b. The Committee specially underlined the need for private sector participation in the development of water resources for agricultural production and other uses. It further called for strategic combination of both public and private investment in water control for food security. It emphasized the role of NEPAD in steering national public investment and official development assistance (ODA) towards IWRM for the achievement of the WFS goals.
- c. The Meeting acknowledged the good performance of South-South Cooperation in the framework of the Special Programme for Food Security and

commended FAO for its assistance in this respect. It further acknowledged the potential for South-South Cooperation within the continent and encouraged FAO to make further use of the potential.

- d. The Committee acknowledged the important role of irrigation in food production and poverty reduction and recommended that it should be integral to any strategy to sustainably increase agricultural output. It further recognized the advantages of small-scale irrigation and requested FAO to assist member countries to expand their water management programmes within the framework of the SPFS. The participants, however, emphasized the need to build environmental and health protection measures into irrigation development programmes and improve water efficiency and productivity through the adoption of water saving techniques and better on-farm water management.
- e. The Meeting recommended the adoption of IWRM as a strategic framework for all socio-economic development activities capitalizing on success stories in the continent. It further called on Member countries to elaborate regional cooperation frameworks for the sustainable management of shared water resources.

Follow-up of the World Food Summit and the *World Food Summit: Five years later* – Regional Dimensions (ARC/04/3)

51. The Meeting expressed appreciation for the initiatives taken by FAO to implement the World Food Summit Plan of Action and the *World Food Summit: five years later*. The Meeting noted, however, that the progress towards the WFS goal of reducing the number of the undernourished has so far been disappointing. The number of undernourished people in Sub-Saharan Africa has increased from 168 million in 1990/92 to 202 million people in 1999-2001.

52. The increase in the number of the undernourished has been more significant in some sub-regions than in others. In Central Africa, the number of undernourished tripled, fuelled by the civil conflict and also increased in East and Southern Africa, due to drought and civil strife.

53. The Meeting raised concern about this situation and especially that under “business as usual scenario” the number may even be higher by 2015.

54. The Meeting made the following recommendations:

- a. Governments should step up their efforts to translate the commitments made at the WFS and at the WFS:*fy/l* into action;

- b. The need for governments to coordinate policies and programmes and have holistic inter-disciplinary approach to tackle food insecurity in all its dimensions.
- c. Governments should accord high priority to food and the agricultural sector within a broad-based development framework, and that development approaches, strategies and programmes be nationally owned;
- d. Regional Economic Communities should explore creating internal funding mechanisms to help implement their respective Regional Programmes for food security;
- e. FAO should ensure that apart from cassava and rice, other staple crops such as maize be given due emphasis in CAADP, in view of its importance in the diet of many member countries; research be undertaken to diversify in the long-term diets in countries where maize is the main food commodity;
- f. FAO should continue to provide its technical assistance to member countries towards the work on grain reserves in view of their importance at national, sub-regional, and regional levels.

Contribution of agricultural research and extension to food security and poverty alleviation (ARC/04/INF/5)

55. The paper emphasized the constraints, opportunities and challenges of technology transfer mechanisms. The Meeting noted the lack, in particular, of long-term research funding, weak agricultural research and extension linkages and insufficient attention to farmers' needs. The opportunities rest in the realm of available strong capacity to conduct agricultural research, the availability of NEPAD/CAADP strategy and well established existing sub-regional research networks and development partners. The effective configuration of endogenous and modern technologies constitutes a special challenge. The paper also refers to the need for private sector involvement and recognizes the relevance of the adverse impact of HIV/AIDS for agricultural technology development and its transfer to farmers.

56. The Meeting agreed that an Agricultural Research Extension System Support Programme which aims to reinforce achievement of the established NEPAD/CAADP goals requires urgent implementation with the assistance of FAO, NEPAD Secretariat, FARA and other stakeholders.

57. The Meeting took note of the proposal for action research for food security involving all relevant stakeholders and funding agencies. The proposal also included a suggestion to co-ordinate activities at the sub-regional level by the existing Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and continental co-ordination by the NEPAD Secretariat.

58. It was also observed that research plays a critical role in the transformation process from subsistence farming to commercial farming. In this regard, the Meeting:

- a) stressed the need for an African research agenda to cover all sub-sectors;
- b) especially underlined the necessity for the effective use of existing technologies and the opportunities provided by “intra-Africa technical cooperation”;
- c) urged FAO to continue its efforts in further enhancing NARS capacity building in the areas of agricultural research, knowledge and technology transfer, and strengthening the linkage between research, extension and farmers to effectively reverse productivity decline;
- d) recognized the urgent need for a “demand-driven” agricultural research and extension agenda that aims at problem solving for intended beneficiaries;
- e) endorsed the critical importance of effective transfer mechanisms for achieving the established CAADP agricultural goals;
- f) endorsed in principle the recommendation to hold sub-regional conferences on agricultural research and extension. The details will be worked out among FARA, NEPAD, FAO and other stakeholders;
- g) recommended that more attention should be given to the funding of ARES in line with the financial commitments made by the Governments, regional and international funding agencies;
- h) urged NEPAD, FARA and FAO to report on progress at the next FAO Africa Regional Conference.

The Bushmeat Crisis in Africa: Conciliating Food Security and Biodiversity Conservation (ARC/04/INF/7)

59. The Committee noted that bushmeat continues to play an important role in providing protein, medicine and in improving income for rural poor. However, population growth and commercial hunting have led many key species to a dramatic decline while others are at the brink of extinction.

60. Delegates expressed the views that in many areas in Africa, bushmeat is crucial for the survival of local populations, such as indigenous people of the Congo Basin Forests. It was also noted that bushmeat is not only food, but also is an important part of social uses and customs. Therefore it was recommended that Governments, FAO and

international Partners should accord particular attention to identify appropriate alternative solutions and help implement them in close collaboration with local communities.

61. Concerns were expressed about impacts of bushmeat on population health. On this issue, the Committee Recommended that FAO, in collaboration with relevant International and Regional Organizations, should initiate studies on sanitary risks and eventual diseases transmitted through bushmeat consumption.

62. The Meeting also noted that a number of African countries had commendable actions aiming at empowering local communities in the management of wildlife and game reserves. It was felt that such initiatives will help better balance the food security and biodiversity conservation issues.

63. The Meeting requested FAO to work with Member countries and development partners to continue sharing experiences on the subject.

HIV/AIDS and the Food Crisis in Sub-Saharan Africa (ARC/04/INF/8)

64. The presentation focused on FAO's response to the changing context of agricultural development, as a result of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. HIV/AIDS is at last being recognised as a humanitarian disaster, with prevalence rates now rising to unprecedented levels of over 30% amongst adults in several countries in southern Africa. The epidemic is a long-term event and unfolds in three waves: HIV prevalence, AIDS deaths and wider impacts. At present the 'impact' wave is developing in Africa. If left unchecked, this situation could give rise to socio-economic calamities of staggering proportions, including widespread food shortages and a weakened capacity for effective governance.

65. The Meeting took note of FAO's responses at macro/meso level or institutional, community and the households/individual level and identified areas, which require further action and follow-up. Two critical areas for FAO's future strategy stand out: one, the prevention of double emergencies of HIV/AIDS and food shortages in Africa and elsewhere; and two, the assistance to be provided to member countries to develop effective agriculture and rural resource-based mitigation and rehabilitation responses to the epidemic.

66. The subsequent discussion illustrated that an increasing number of countries have elaborated National HIV/AIDS Action Plans, with valuable experiences to be shared with others. Some have declared the epidemic a National disaster; other countries are open to pronounce a State of Humanitarian Emergency while others were not disposed to this suggestion.

67. The Meeting recognized that food security and agricultural/rural development are central in addressing the epidemic and commended FAO on its efforts to mitigate its effects. In particular the Committee adopted the following recommendations:

- a. Governments should take urgent action to review and strengthen agricultural policy and programming in order to mainstream HIV/AIDS considerations in sectoral strategies for agricultural development;
- b. Development partners, especially UN/AIDS, WHO, FAO and the World Bank in close cooperation with NEPAD should increase their budget allocation to strengthening the institutional capacity to combat the epidemic through increasing collaboration with governments, NGOs and civil society;
- c. All parties involved should aim to reach an integrated response to cover the emergency-to-development continuum whilst maintaining a humanitarian perspective.

The International Year of Rice (ARC/04/INF/9)

68. The Meeting took note of the presentations by FAO Secretariat with a contribution from WARDA, which underlined the importance of rice-based systems in agricultural development in Africa.

69. The document highlighted constraints hampering production efforts as well as exploiting available opportunities to increase rice production. A set of strategies and policies was proposed to improve rice production for most favourable ecologies considering the needs of women who are often neglected in agriculture despite their considerable contributions to farming.

70. The Meeting took note of the high potential contribution of NERICA to food security and urged Member countries to promote the dissemination of the new rice variety.

71. The Meeting encouraged member countries to observe the International Year of Rice.

FAO Strategic Framework for Bridging the Rural Digital Divide (ARC/04/INF/10)

72. The goal of the Programme is to assist Low-Income Food Deficit Countries (LIFDCs) to bridge the rural digital divide in support of improved food security and reduced poverty through the effective use of knowledge and information.

73. The rationale for the Programme is that the rural digital divide is not only concerned with technology infrastructure and connectivity, but rather is a multi-faceted problem of ineffective knowledge exchange and management of information content, as

well as the lack of human resources, institutional capacity, and gender sensitivity, and these need to be addressed in coordinated manner by various national stakeholders and international partners.

74. The Committee noted the information contained in the document as well as the presentation on South Africa's experience with policy management to facilitate bridging the rural digital divide.

III. OTHER MATTERS

75. The Meeting noted that Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa use other FAO languages to communicate during conferences. This situation is causing serious communication problems particularly in the exchange of information during technical meetings.

76. The Conference recommended FAO to consider the use of Portuguese language during the 33rd Session of the FAO Conference in 2005.

77. The Regional Conference considered the proposal for holding a regional conference on Food Safety for Africa. It noted that the African countries' Permanent Representatives to FAO have started discussion on the matter with the FAO/WHO Secretariats. The Conference supported the convening of a Regional Conference on Food Safety for Africa in principle, and decided that Rome-based Permanent Representatives should continue their discussion with FAO/WHO Secretariat to agree on time and venue of the Conference.

IV. CONCLUDING ITEMS

Adoption of the Technical Committee Report

78. The Meeting considered its report and adopted it with some modifications.

Closure of the Technical Committee Meeting

79. In his concluding remarks, Mr. Joseph Tchicaya, FAO Assistant Director-General/Regional Representative for Africa, expressed gratitude to the Government of South Africa and in particular the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Affairs for the excellent arrangements made for the Meeting, which had largely contributed to the success of the Technical Committee. He particularly commended the Chairperson for her professional and personal support and guidance given. He confirmed that the Final Report of the Committee would be transmitted to the Ministerial Session of the Twenty-third FAO Regional Conference for Africa for appropriate action. Lastly, Mr. Tchicaya thanked the delegates for their contributions and sharing of experiences, which had enriched the discussions and resulted in concrete recommendations.

80. The Chairperson, Ms Bongiwe Njobe, Director-General, National Department of Agriculture, in her closing remarks thanked the Director-General of FAO for the opportunity given to South Africa to host the Twenty-third FAO Regional Conference for Africa and the delegates for their attendance and active participation. She also thanked the FAO Secretariat for the good quality Conference documents and for putting together the report. Ms Njobe looked forward to seeing effective implementation of the recommendations made by the Meeting, which she expected would go a long way towards solving the problem of hunger and poverty in Africa. She thanked all support staff and wished those traveling back home a safe journey.

81. On behalf of the African Permanent Representatives to FAO, the Delegate of Cape Verde thanked the Government of South Africa for the exceptional hospitality extended to all the guests and the excellent arrangements made to ensure the success of the Conference.