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CONFERENCE

Thirty-fourth Session

Rome, 17 - 24 November 2007

Report of the Independent Chairperson of the Council to the Conference on Follow-up to the Independent External Evaluation of FAO (IEE)

Background

The Council agreed to submit to the Conference, together with the Report of the Independent External Evaluation (IEE) and Management "Response in Principle", a proposed text of the Friends of the Chair on the Main Elements for a Conference Resolution on Follow-up to the IEE. This includes proposals for a time-bound Committee of the Conference and the need for a Special Session of the Conference in the latter part of 2008. It also requested its Independent Chair to continue his discussions in order to arrive at a fully agreed text of a draft resolution on IEE Follow-up which could be presented to the Conference. The text reproduced below provides 12 paragraphs on which consensus was reached and one further paragraph (paragraph 8 in the text), which represents a proposal of the Independent Chairperson of the Council as Chairperson of the Friends of the Chair with respect of the work programme of the proposed Committee of the Conference.

The Council further noted that it was possible for the Conference to extend the Friends of the Chair arrangements during the Conference, so as to permit further consideration of outstanding matters pertaining to the draft Conference Resolution on the IEE. The Independent Chairperson of the Council stands prepared to do this if the Conference should so request.

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**Agreed Friends of the Chair Proposed Text of Main Elements for Draft Conference
Resolution Number:**

Follow-up to the Independent External Evaluation of FAO

The Conference,

- 1) Recalls its Resolution 6/2005 in 2005 to undertake the Independent External Evaluation of FAO, with a view to “chart the way forward” for FAO.
- 2) Welcomes the IEE report which will provide the basis for Members’ decision making on an integrated package of reform with growth for the Organization. Welcomes also the Director-General’s Management Response “in Principle”, which will further assist Members’ decision making.
- 3) Reaffirms the global mandate of FAO for food, agriculture and the related natural resource bases and welcomes the renewed global emphasis on the important role of agriculture for the present and future wellbeing of all, stressing the importance of the Millennium Declaration and the major contributions which the Organization has to make in supporting the three agreed Goals of Member Nations as stated in the Strategic Framework:
 - overcoming hunger and malnutrition;
 - agriculture’s contribution to sustainable economic and social development; and
 - conservation and sustainable use of the natural resource base.
- 4) Reaffirms its political will and determination to seize this opportunity and to undertake early and well considered action for a programme of FAO renewal, in the overall context of UN system reforms.

The Conference decides to:

- 5) Develop an immediate plan of action and a Strategic Framework for FAO renewal after a systematic review of the IEE report and its findings and recommendations and the management response. The plan of action will address:
 - a) an FAO vision and programme priorities:
 - i) priorities and programme adjustments for the period 2009-2011; and
 - ii) a draft covering the major elements of a long-term Strategic Framework and a draft Medium-Term Plan;
 - b) governance reform;
 - c) reform of systems, culture change and organizational restructuring:
 - i) institutional culture change and reform of administrative and management systems; and
 - ii) restructuring for effectiveness and efficiency.

In addressing each of the actions for reform, the immediate plan of action will specify: the financial implications; targets to be achieved; timetable for implementation; and implementation milestones over the period 2009-2011.

- 6) Convene a special session of the FAO Conference in the latter part of 2008, immediately preceded by a shortened session of the Council. This special session of the Conference will

provide for the entirety of the membership to come together to discuss and decide upon proposals for an immediate plan of action and make decisions on the budgetary implications.

7) Establish a time-bound Conference Committee under Article VI of the FAO Constitution, mandated to complete its work with the presentation of proposals for an immediate plan of action to the Special Session of the Conference in 2008. This Committee will be open to full participation by all Members of the Organization. It will strive for transparency and unity in its work and will collectively decide the final recommendations of the Committee to the Conference, arriving at its decisions to the maximum extent possible through consensus. It will conduct its work in all the languages of the Organization. The functions of the Committee, without prejudice to the statutory functions of the standing committees of the Council, are to:

- a) recommend to the Conference proposals for the immediate plan of action as defined in paragraph 5 above; and
- b) provide ongoing review and feedback on the implementation of all actions, including *inter alia* quick wins, being undertaken by the Director-General, on those areas of the IEE follow-up lying essentially within his authority, recognizing that some actions are subject to the provision of the requisite budgetary resources.

Proposal of the Independent Chairperson of the Council for a Paragraph on the Work Programme of the Conference Committee

8) In order to maintain the necessary momentum in reaching agreement on an immediate plan of action for FAO reform with growth, to request the Conference Committee to initiate its work in December 2007 and develop its working arrangements, indicative schedule of work and timetable of deliverables before the end of January 2008. Considering that the special session of the FAO Conference should be held no later than November 2008, the Conference requests the Committee to Provide [a status report by 1 May 2008 and] its final report before the end of September 2008, and give early attention to:

- a. a detailed review of the IEE report, including each of the IEE recommendations, in order to develop preliminary conclusions to guide the further work of the Committee;
- b. development of information requirements for decision making, including requirements from the Secretariat to assist the Governing Bodies in arriving at conclusions on each of the areas referred to in clause 5 above;
- c. providing guidance for: drafting any agreed governance reforms requiring consideration by the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM); such in-depth studies as may be required; and any immediate proposed adjustments in such areas as the programme of work and budget during 2009, administration, human resources and organizational structure; and
- d. agreement on draft major elements of a strategic framework and medium-term plan; development of suggestions for further follow-up to be undertaken during 2009 and beyond; and any special arrangements of the Governing Bodies required for further development and implementation of a programme of FAO renewal.

Continuation of Agreed Friends of the Chair Proposed Text of Main Elements for the Draft Conference Resolution

9) Appointas Chair and as Vice-Chair respectively of the Committee. The Committee shall appoint its Bureau and co-Vice Chairs respecting regional representation. The meetings of

the Bureau will be open to non-speaking observers and will address exclusively administrative and organizational matters.

The Conference further decides:

10) In the interests of efficiency, the Committee of the Conference will establish such task-defined working groups as it requires to prepare individual inputs for its consideration. The working groups will be made up of a maximum of three member country representatives per region. Meetings of the working groups will be open to observers from the whole of the FAO membership, ensuring transparency, and will conduct their work in all languages of the Organization. In order to assure that all Members may be present at Working Group and Bureau sessions, no meetings will be held simultaneously with the same timings nor will they coincide with Bureau meetings. The chairs of the Committee, the Bureau, and the working groups will ensure that aide-mémoires are available to the FAO membership following each session. The Chairperson of the Committee will present its final report to the Special Session of the Conference.

11) FAO management will provide full support, as requested, to the workings of the Conference Committee, its Bureau and its working groups.

12) In conducting its work, the Conference Committee will decide when necessary to call on the Committees of the Council to give their advice on aspects of the reform process within their mandates.

13) The Conference recognizes the need for additional resources for the 2008-09 Regular Programme Budget of the Organization to fund the implementation of this Resolution, amounting to [US\$4.8 million – to be decided in the Budget Resolution] and provided for in Resolution 7/2007.