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منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة للأمم
المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food and
Agriculture
Organization
of the
United Nations

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

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная
организация
Объединенных
Наций

Organización
de las
Naciones Unidas
para la
Alimentación y la
Agricultura

CONFERENCE

Thirty-eighth Session

Rome, 15-22 June 2013

Arrangements for the 38th Session of the Conference

Executive Summary

This document gives an overview of arrangements for the 38th Session of the FAO Conference (15-22 June 2013). It contains proposals regarding the Provisional Agenda for the session, the theme for the General Debate, elections, resolutions and invitations. The Provisional Agenda for the Session is given in document C 2013/1 and the Timetable in C 2013/INF/1.

The Conference is requested to make decisions on:

- The establishment of two commissions:
 - on Substantive and Policy Matters (Commission I)
 - on Programme and Budgetary Matters (Commission II)
- Candidates proposed by Council for the following Officers of the Conference:
 - Chairperson of the Conference
 - Chairperson of Commission I
 - Chairperson of Commission II
 - Three Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference
 - Seven elected Members of the General Committee
 - Seven Members of the Conference Resolutions Committee
 - Nine Members of the Credentials Committee
- The main theme for the general debate on the state of Food and Agriculture and a five minute time limit for statements made by heads of Delegation under this item
- Invitations to observers to attend the Session in an observer capacity

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Introduction

1. As decided by the 37th Session of the Conference (June-July 2011), the 38th Session of the Conference will be held in Rome from 15 to 22 June 2013¹. The decision to convene the Conference in June was taken in accordance with the *Immediate Plan of Action (IPA) for FAO Renewal* which determined that the Conference be convened in June of the second year of the biennium.

2. The Conference is the ultimate decision-making body of the Organization, determining its overall policy and strategy, and taking the final decisions on objectives, strategy and budget². The IPA underlined the need to make sessions of the Conference action-oriented, focused and attractive to participation by Ministers and senior officials, with emphasis on the distinctive function of the Conference in ensuring coherence in global policy and regulatory frameworks. More specifically:

- Conference approves the Organization's priorities, strategy and budget, having considered the recommendations of the Council;
- formal plenary meetings are focused on issues of vital interest to members;
- side events provide a forum for informal interchange on development issues;
- the report of the Conference concentrates on conclusions and decisions.

Agenda, Theme for the General Debate and Voting

3. A provisional agenda for the Conference is found in document C 2013/1.

4. Two Commissions will be established:

- Commission I on substantive and policy matters; and
- Commission II on programme and budgetary matters.

5. Each session of the Conference usually has one major theme agreed by the Conference, normally on the recommendation of the Council. In this regard, the Council at its 145th Session (December 2012) proposed that the theme for the General Debate of the Conference under Item 9: *Review of the State of Food and Agriculture*, be "Sustainable Food Systems for Food Security and Nutrition".

6. Since only five days are available for work in plenary meetings, and as the majority of Heads of Delegations present at the Conference will wish to make statements under Item 9, the Council recommended that statements be limited to a maximum of 5 minutes each.

7. The election of the Independent Chairperson of the Council (by secret ballot), the election of Members of the Council (by secret ballot), and for the vote on the budget level (by electronic roll call vote) are scheduled to take place on Friday 21 June 2013.

8. In order to streamline procedures and debate, documents for the session will include an executive summary and highlight matters requiring decision by the Conference. Where feasible, this will be done primarily by presenting draft decisions to be taken by the Conference in a form ready for approval and inclusion in the final report of the session.

Composition of Delegations

9. Delegations are normally headed by Ministers. In accordance with Article III of the Constitution (*Appendix A*), each Member of the Organization may be represented by one delegate who may be accompanied by alternates, associates and advisers. Online registration is accessible through the password-protected FAO Permanent Representatives Web site at <http://permreps.fao.org>. Instructions for online registration can be downloaded from the same site. It should be noted that online registration requires the uploading of a recent passport-size digital photograph.

¹ C 2011/REP, para 142.

² Conference Resolution 7/2009.

Constitutional Duties of the Conference

10. In addition to adopting amendments to the Constitution, Rules and Regulations of the Organization, and approving conventions and agreements, the Conference has the following specific constitutional duties:

Admission of New Members

11. The Conference, as the supreme authority of the Organization, admits new Members and deals with all matters relating to membership. At the date of preparing this document, two applications for membership had been received, those of Brunei Darussalam and South Sudan. Under Rule XIX.2 of the General Rules of the Organization (GRO), applications are receivable up to 30 days before the opening of the Conference session, i.e. Thursday 16 May 2013. The admission of new Members is carried out by secret ballot and requires a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, provided that the total number of affirmative and negative votes cast is more than one half of the Member Nations of the Organization. Membership becomes effective on the date on which the Conference approves the application.

Appointment of the Independent Chairperson of the Council

12. In accordance with Article V.2 of the Constitution and Rule XXIII.1 of the GRO, the Conference appoints the Independent Chairperson of the Council.

13. Rule XXIII.1(b) of the GRO provides that the Council determine the closing date of submission of nominations for the office of Independent Chairperson of the Council by Member Nations to the Secretary-General of the Conference and Council. Likewise, the Council also sets the date by which the Secretary-General circulates these nominations to all Members of the Organization. In this regard, the Council at its 145th Session established 12.00 hours on Monday 8 April 2013 as the closing date for submission of nominations for this appointment³. Monday 15 April 2013 was set as the date by which such nominations are circulated by letter and through the Permanent Representatives Web site by the Secretary-General (see document C 2013/9).

Election of Council Members

14. In accordance with Article V.1 of the Constitution, the Conference elects the Members of the Council. Conference document C 2013/11 contains information regarding the election of Council Members, including Nomination Forms. In accordance with Rule XXII.10(a) of the GRO, the Conference decides the date of the election and the date by which nominations for election to the Council must be submitted. It is proposed that the election be held on Friday 21 June 2013. As laid down in Rule XXII.10(c) of the GRO, nominations must be supported in writing by the delegates of two Member Nations to the Conference, other than the delegate of the Member Nation nominated, and must be accompanied by a formal written acceptance of the nomination by the delegate of the Member Nation nominated. Rule XXII.10(d) further specifies that the General Committee shall communicate the valid nominations received to the Conference at least three working days before the date selected for the election. The Council at its 145th Session recommended that the deadline for the receipt of nominations be set at 12.00 hours on Monday 17 June 2013⁴.

Officers of the Conference

15. In accordance with Rule XXIV.5(b) of the GRO, the Council nominates candidates for the offices of: (i) Chairperson of the Conference⁵; (ii) Chairpersons of the commissions of the Conference; (iii) three Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference; (iv) seven Members of the General Committee to the Conference; and (v) nine Members of the Credentials Committee⁶.

³ CL 145/REP, para 41.

⁴ CL 145/REP, para 40(b).

⁵ CL 145/REP, para 42.

⁶ CL 146/REP, para 35.

16. At its 145th Session, the Council nominated His Excellency Mohammad Asif Rahimi, Minister for Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock of Afghanistan, as Chairperson of the Conference⁷. This nomination is expected to be endorsed by the Conference at its opening meeting along with nominations for the three Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference. Nominations for the two Vice-Chairpersons of both Commission I and Commission II will be approved by the Conference through the General Committee.

17. Following past practice the members of the Credentials Committee will commence their work in the 15 days leading up to the Conference.

Resolutions Committee

18. The 146th Session of the Council recommended the establishment of a Conference Resolutions Committee composed of seven members, in practice one from each FAO region⁸. The Council reiterated the view, expressed on previous occasions, that resolutions should be kept to a minimum, and be confined to matters requiring a formal decision by Conference. *Appendix B* sets out the criteria for Conference resolutions and the functions and operating procedures of the Resolutions Committee.

Invitations⁹

19. The United Nations, its Specialized Agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency are entitled to be represented at sessions of the Conference, without the right to vote. Other intergovernmental organizations having concluded an agreement with FAO which contains specific provisions to this effect have a right to attend as observers. Those non-governmental organizations which have consultative status are also entitled to send observers to Conference sessions. Other intergovernmental organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations having specialized consultative status or liaison status, may be invited on a provisional basis by the Director-General.

20. *Appendix C* contains the above provisions as set out in Rule XVII of the GRO and also in the FAO Policy Concerning Relations with International Non-Governmental Organizations (FAO Basic Texts, Volume II, Section M).

21. Observers from non-governmental organizations will be invited to attend informal meetings during the Conference.

22. The 145th Session of the Council recommended that, following previous practice, Palestine be invited to attend the 38th Session of the Conference in an observer capacity¹⁰.

Reducing the Environmental Impact of the Conference

23. FAO is aware of the need to limit the environmental impact of its activities. Conference documents are printed double-sided on 100% ecological paper in a limited number of copies.

24. Participants can further contribute to making the Conference environmentally friendly by:

- **Recycling**, making use of the colour-coded waste bins placed near the meeting rooms.
- **Reducing** consumption of bottled water and cutting plastic waste, by using a refillable bottle for still or sparkling cooled water from one of the water fountains located near meeting rooms.
- **Reusing** documents rather than requesting additional copies from the documents desk.
- **Consulting** documents on line to the extent possible.
- **Travelling** from their hotel to the FAO headquarters using public transport, a bike or a taxi shared with other participants.

⁷ CL 145/REP, para 42.

⁸ CL 146/REP, para 36.

⁹ C 2013/13.

¹⁰ CL 145/REP, para 43(b).

**Appendix A -
Extract from Article III of the Constitution of FAO**

The Conference

[Provisions regulating composition of delegations]

1. There shall be a Conference of the Organization in which each Member Nation and Associate Member shall be represented by one delegate. Associate Members shall have the right to participate in the deliberations of the Conference but shall not hold office nor have the right to vote.
2. Each Member Nation and Associate Member may appoint alternates, associates and advisers to its delegate. The Conference may determine the conditions for the participation of alternates, associates and advisers in its proceedings, but any such participation shall be without the right to vote, except in the case of an alternate, associate, or adviser participating in the place of a delegate.
3. No delegate may represent more than one Member Nation or Associate Member.
4. Each Member Nation shall have one vote. A Member Nation which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the Conference if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the two preceding calendar years. The Conference may, nevertheless, permit such a Member Nation to vote if it is satisfied that the failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the Member Nation.

Appendix B - Criteria for Conference Resolutions and Functions and Operating Procedures of the Resolutions Committee

1. Criteria for the Formulation of Resolutions

Resolutions should be confined essentially to the following formal matters:

- a) Amendments to the Constitution, the GRO, and the Financial Regulations.
- b) Approval or confirmation of conventions or agreements and of amendments thereto.
- c) Establishment of bodies under Article VI of the Constitution and adoption or amendment of the Statutes of such Bodies.
- d) Adoption of the Programme of Work and Budget for the ensuing biennium.
- e) Decisions regarding financial matters such as the Working Capital Fund, the scale of contributions, and adoption of audited accounts.
- f) Major programme and policy matters.
- g) Recommendations to Member Nations or to international organizations.
- h) Matters relating to the appointment of the Director-General and the Chairperson of the Council.
- i) Tributes and commemorations of special importance to FAO.

2. Functions of the Resolutions Committee

- a) The Resolutions Committee shall examine all draft resolutions, whatever their origin, unless determined otherwise by the General Committee.
- b) The Resolutions Committee shall endeavour to keep the number of resolutions to a minimum, and to ensure that resolutions conform to the criteria set forth above. It shall also draw attention to any significant constitutional programme or budgetary implications of draft resolutions proposed for adoption.
- c) The Resolutions Committee may make editorial or similar amendments not affecting the substance of draft resolutions. The Committee may recommend such other amendments as it may deem appropriate. With the consent of the sponsors, the Committee may amend draft resolutions moved from the floor in the course of the Conference session.

3. Operating Procedures of the Resolutions Committee

- a) Meetings of the Resolutions Committee shall be convened, as often as necessary, by its Chairperson or by the General Committee. Except as provided in paragraph (e) below, meetings of the Committee shall be held in private. The Committee shall maintain close liaison with the General Committee on both substantive and procedural matters.
- b) Draft resolutions shall be transmitted to the Resolutions Committee before they are submitted to a Commission or a Plenary meeting of the Conference for discussion and approval.
- c) If a draft resolution does not meet the criteria set forth above, the Resolutions Committee will suggest that the substance be incorporated into the narrative text of the Conference Report.
- d) If the Resolutions Committee has doubts regarding the likelihood of agreement in the substance of a draft resolution, the Committee may decide that the substance be debated in the appropriate forum, and that after this debate and a decision on the substance, the draft resolution be returned to the Resolutions Committee for consideration.
- e) The Resolutions Committee may invite the sponsors of a draft resolution to participate in its deliberations and, subject to the consent of such sponsors, may make such amendments to draft resolutions as it may deem appropriate.

- f) The Resolutions Committee may delegate its Chairperson or one or more of its members to attend the debate where a draft resolution is discussed, either to explain the Committee's views and reasons for any proposed changes, or to follow the debate so as to be able to inform the Committee of the Background when the text of the draft resolution is submitted to the Committee.
- g) The Resolutions Committee shall submit reports on all draft resolutions which have been referred to it, and such reports shall be circulated as Conference documents. Amendments to draft resolutions recommended by the Committee in its reports shall be deemed to be amendments within the meaning of Rule XI-3 of the GRO and, if necessary, shall be considered by the appropriate Commission or at a Plenary meeting on the day on which the relevant report is circulated.

Appendix C - FAO Policy Concerning Relations with International Non-Governmental Organizations

Rule XVII of the General Rules of the Organization

Participating International Organizations

1. A representative of the United Nations and a representative of any specialized agency of the United Nations, accompanied by advisers and assistants, may attend the plenary meetings of the Conference and the meetings of any commission, of any committee of a commission, and of any committee established under Rule XV. Such representatives may, without vote, speak and participate in the discussions and may circulate to the Conference, without abridgement, the views of the organizations which they represent.
2. An observer of any other intergovernmental organization with which an agreement has been concluded providing for representation, accompanied by advisers and assistants, may attend the plenary meetings of the Conference, and the meetings of any commission, of any technical committee of a commission and of any technical committee established under Rule XV. Such observer may, without vote, speak and, upon the request of the Chairperson, participate in the discussions. They may circulate to the Conference, without abridgement, the views of the organizations which they represent.
3. An observer of any international non-governmental organization having consultative status, accompanied by advisers and assistants, may attend the plenary meetings of the Conference and the meetings of any commission, of any technical committee of a commission and of any technical committee established under Rule XV. Such observers may, without vote, speak before such commissions and committees, participate in the discussions therein upon the request of the Chairperson and, with the consent of the General Committee, speak before plenary meetings of the Conference. They may circulate to the Conference, without abridgement, the views of the organizations which they represent.
4. The Director-General shall determine provisionally what other international organizations shall be invited to any session of the Conference and shall submit the list of such organizations to the Conference for approval.

Extract from the FAO Basic Texts, Volume II, Section M

FAO Policy Concerning Relations with International Non-Governmental Organizations

General Arrangements

5. The Organization established relationships with certain international non-governmental organizations in order to secure their advice and to associate them effectively with the work of the Organization.

Organizations eligible for consultative status

6. In order to be eligible for consultative status, an international non-governmental organization shall:
 - a) be international in its structure and scope of activity, be sufficiently representative of the field of interest in which it operates, and be of a recognized standing that renders its views on policy a matter of great interest to governments and to FAO;

- b) be concerned with matters covering a substantial portion of FAO's field of activity;
- c) have aims and purposes in conformity with the general principles embodied in the Constitution of FAO;
- d) have a permanent directing body, authorized representatives and systematic procedures and machinery for communicating with its membership in various countries.

Organizations eligible for specialized consultative status

7. In order to be eligible for specialized consultative status, an international non-governmental organization shall:

- h) be international in its structure and scope of activity, and representative of the specialized field of interest in which it operates;
- i) be concerned with matters covering a particular portion of FAO's field of activity;
- j) have aims and purposes in conformity with the general principles embodied in the Constitution of FAO;
- k) have a permanent directing body, authorized representatives and systematic procedures and machinery for communicating with its membership in various countries.

Organizations eligible for liaison status

8. In order to be eligible for liaison status an international non-governmental organization shall:

- a) be international in its structure and scope of activity and be sufficiently representative of the field of interest in which it operates;
- b) be concerned with matters covering a portion of FAO's field of activity and be in a position to give practical assistance in that field;
- c) have aims and purposes in conformity with the general principles embodied in the Constitution of FAO;
- d) have a permanent directing body, authorized representatives and systematic procedures and machinery for communicating with its membership in various countries.