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Продовольственная и
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Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

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CONFERENCE CONFÉRENCE CONFERENCIA

Thirty-ninth Session - Trente-neuvième session - 39.º período de sesiones

**Rome, 6-13 June 2015
VERBATIM RECORDS OF MEETINGS OF COMMISSION II
OF THE CONFERENCE**

**Rome, 6-13 juin 2015
PROCÈS-VERBAUX DES SÉANCES DE LA COMMISSION II
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**Roma, 6-13 de junio de 2015
ACTAS TAQUIGRÁFICAS DE LAS SESIONES DE LA COMISIÓN II
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Thirty-ninth Session Trente-neuvième session 39.º período de sesiones
Rome, 6-13 June 2015 Rome, 6-13 juin 2015 Roma, 6-13 de junio de 2015
FIRST MEETING OF COMMISSION II PREMIÈRE SÉANCE DE LA COMMISSION II PRIMERA REUNIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN II
8 June 2015

The First Meeting was opened at 10.53 hours
Mr Khaled Mohamed El Taweel,
Chairperson of Commission II, presiding

La première séance est ouverte à 10 h 53
sous la présidence de M. Khaled Mohamed El Taweel,
Président de la Commission II

Se abre la primera reunion a las 10.53
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khaled Mohamed El Taweel,
Presidente de la Comisión II

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Item 21. Programme Implementation Report 2012-13
Point 21. Rapport sur l'exécution du Programme 2012–2013
Tema 21. Informe sobre la ejecución del programa en 2012-13
(C 2015/8; C 2015/LIM/5)

CHAIRPERSON (Original language Arabic)

In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful, Distinguished Delegates, I would like to extend to you a warm welcome. We have a great mission to conduct today and we are looking forward to prevailing an understanding with regard to the issues here.

Continues in English

Myself and the Secretariat will do our utmost to support the decision-making for the important issues before us. I also have the honour and the pleasure to be able to count on the support of the two Vice-Chairpersons of Commission II, Mr Tazwin Hanif from Indonesia and Ms Marieta Okenková from Slovakia.

Following the discussions on each of the agenda items, I will do a conclusion to facilitate the drafting of the report. I wish to remind Delegates that the first meeting of the Drafting Committee for Commission II will take place tomorrow afternoon in the Lebanon Room. I am sure that with that spirit, we can finish the items before us today.

I have received the following nominations for the Drafting Committee: Mr Spyridon Ellinas from Cyprus as Chairperson; as Members: Australia, Brazil, China, Cyprus, Kuwait, Germany, Liberia, Mexico, Russian Federation, Sudan, United States of America, Zimbabwe.

We were just informed that Pakistan will represent the Asia Group in the Drafting Committee. I trust Commission II can confirm the above nominations?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

The first item on our agenda is item 21, *Programme Implementation Report* and it is presented in document C 2015/8 and relevant Web Annexes 4 and 5.

At its 149th Session in June 2014, the Council endorsed the Programme Implementation Report 2012-13 to be submitted to the Conference for consideration. The extract of the report of the Council on this document is presented in document C 2015/LIM/5. The Council welcomed the progress of implementation of the Programme of Work 2012-13, recognized the unprecedented efficiencies and saving achieved in the 2012-13 biennium, and emphasized the need for FAO members to engage with the United Nations General Assembly and the International Civil Service Commission in efforts to contain staff costs.

The Council appreciated the mainstreaming of gender across FAO activities as well as efforts made in enhancing partnerships and language balance in FAO's products. The Conference is requested to endorse the Programme Implementation Report 2012-13, providing such guidance as is deemed appropriate.

I now give the floor to Mr Boyd Haight, Director of the Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management, to introduce the item.

Mr Boyd HAIGHT (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management)

I will briefly outline the purpose, format and the content of the Programme Implementation Report for the 2012-13 biennium.

The PIR informs the Membership about the work carried out by the Organization over the previous biennium. It is retrospective in nature, reporting on what the Organization has achieved in terms of

programmatic results and financial performance, compared to the targets set out in the Medium-Term Plan 2010-13 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2012-13.

The PIR is divided into three main sections.

The first section reviews four major policy developments in the biennium, relating to FAO's support to the Post-2015 process, the adoption of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure, progress on eradicating hunger, and FAO's transformational change.

The second section, *Making a Difference*, provides an overview of the Organization's achievements in advancing its policy agenda. This covers work under the pre-existing 11 Strategic Objectives and the Functional Objective on Effective Collaboration with Member Nations and stakeholders, and in the field through the Regional Offices, the Decentralized Office Network, and the Technical Cooperation Programme. It includes an analysis of costs and outturn against indicators and targets at the Organizational Result Level, as presented in Annex 4.

The third section, *Managing Resources Wisely*, sets out FAO's managerial performance and combines a review of work done under the Functional Objective on Effective and Efficient Administration, with various financial analyses and other initiatives to improve efficiency. It includes information on the implementation of the FAO language policy in Annex 2, gender and geographical representation of staff in Annex 3, and a list of unscheduled and cancelled sessions in Annex 5.

So what did we achieve during the 2012-13 biennium?

As stated by the Director-General in his foreword, 2012-13 was a biennium of transformational change in FAO. We worked together with you to reorient FAO's strategic direction and priorities, simplifying and bringing clear focus to what we do; to improve how technical units and Decentralized Offices collaborate to solve the most urgent development problems faced by Member Nations. We increased FAO's policy reach, its effectiveness and its efficiency by strengthening partnerships with non-state actors. We worked to establish a value-for-money culture that generated an unprecedented level of savings, and we reinforced the network of Decentralized Offices by integrating development, rehabilitation and emergency functions, improving central oversight and monitoring, and moving activity out of the centre and closer to the front line where it is needed.

In terms of programmatic achievements, the indicators and targets set at the level of Organizational Results represent the formal basis for assessing FAO's effectiveness. In 2012-13, we achieved 80 percent of our targets, up from 76 percent rate in 2010-11. The shortfall was due to changes in interests and priorities of Members and partners, some over-ambitious targets and, in some cases, optimistic assumptions about the cost of data collection and its timeliness and availability.

Moving on to *finance and administration*, budgetary management remained strong with the Organization spending 99 percent of the net budgetary appropriation.

I would like to highlight three significant operational achievements: the proportion of expenditure taking place in the field increased the tangible evidence of the progress on decentralization; USD 71.6 million in efficiency savings were found in 2012-13 – an unprecedented level, 50 percent higher than in the 2010-11 biennium; administrative and support functions were streamlined, which among other things provided resources to pilot six regional initiatives.

A review of past performance is also an occasion to identify opportunities to improve. The main lessons learned involve the structure of the Strategic Framework, its results chain and the design of the indicators. These were addressed during the review of the Strategic Framework and the preparation of the new Medium-Term Plan 2014-17, which were approved by the Conference two years ago, as well as the Programmes of Work and Budget for the 2014-15 and the 2016-17 biennia.

With this I conclude my brief overview of the PIR for the 2012-13 biennium.

Mr Vladimir KUZNESTOV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We are very pleased with the results of FAO's programme for the past biennium, thanks to the transformation process and the Strategic Framework in this document. We would like to focus on the

sixth goal with regard to technical knowledge in the work and services and the standard-setting work of the Organization.

We are pleased with our direction with regard to the Secretary-General's initiative Zero Hunger inclusion in the Post-2015 Development Agenda and focusing on the Voluntary Principles with regard to land tenure and land use as well as water and fisheries resources. We support the balanced support of decentralization and strengthening the human resources in the framework and country offices. We need to also attract the needed technical resources at headquarters. We are also going to look at the different priorities and different groups of countries and we are pleased with the pilot initiatives of agrarian structures for Europe and Central Asia.

Amongst the achievements over the past biennium, we would like to focus on the approval of the partnership with NGOs and Businesses Framework which have to work in this type of structure regarding the international process of FAO. We would like to also focus on working with FAO with the scientific community. We are also pleased with the efficiency gained with the USD 67,000 to USD 76,000 savings. The strict economic policies should not affect the multilingual approach of FAO because this is important for interpretation as well as translation and making sure that publications are published in the various languages.

Ms Elina GRINPAUKA-PETETENA (Latvia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate countries to the EU, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey, align themselves with this statement.

We thank FAO for the second Programme Implementation Report for 2012-13 and we welcome the significant change in FAO that is introducing a greater focus on the results reporting represents. We encourage FAO to continue embedding results-based management across the Organization to ensure that all work at headquarters and country level is aligned with FAO's Strategic Objectives and feeds into FAO's results framework.

We support FAO's ongoing commitment to improve and the significant efficiency savings and streamlining of administrative processes that help to make FAO more effective in delivering its mandate. We are glad to note that the Global Resource Management System has now been deployed in FAO offices worldwide and recognize general progress in strengthening FAO's country offices. We encourage FAO to continue building upon this strengthening impact at country level with better priority-setting in Country Programming Frameworks and improve monitoring and oversight. At the same time, we reiterate the importance of keeping a critical mass of technical expertise at headquarters. FAO should not run any risk to seriously jeopardize its quality as a centre of excellence and main knowledge Organization. We look forward to continuing progress in delivery of results across all Strategic Objectives, as well as Objective 6, particularly in the areas of gender mainstreaming and partnerships, including with the private sector and civil society organizations.

We note, as highlighted by the Council, the future versions will improve the introduction of the new Results Framework and we look forward to a strengthened Programme Implementation Report for 2014-15 next year. Looking ahead to the next biennium Programme Implementation Report, we encourage FAO to continue building on lessons learned and make sure all the results indicators are measurable with attainable, realistic, and time-bound targets. As FAO will play an important role in delivering the Post-2015 Development Framework, we also look forward to reviewing how the Results Framework will respond to monitoring and measuring FAO's contribution to delivering the Sustainable Development Goals.

Once again, we thank FAO for this important report that we are ready to approve. We look forward to working together as FAO continues strengthening its results monitoring and reporting on the basis of achievements so far which are helping to transform the Organization, improving results, and increasing accountability and transparency.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

I will speak on behalf of the Near East.

This is the last PIR of the old programmatic model of FAO which measures results at unit level for each of the 56 Organizational Results of the Programme of Work and Budget 2012-13. We appreciate this report. As an accountability report, the document provides useful information on the progress achieved during 2012-13.

For the Regular Programme, the overall rate of performance targets at the level of Organizational results was 80 percent, as we can see from Table 1, page 21 of the English text. But it was much higher for the 11 Strategic Objectives – 88 percent. The Total Field Delivery Programme, including relevant funds, has also been quite impressive.

We appreciate the section on regional dimensions – paragraphs 226 to 321. Each regional dimension shows progress in some key priority areas, supported by country experience. For the Near East and North Africa, the six areas covered are indeed a priority, especially the regional initiative on water scarcity and enhancing food security and nutrition.

We wish to draw attention to the following four features covered in the PIR. One – efficiency savings amounted to USD 71.6 million in 2012-13, a 49 percent increase over the savings of 2010-11. This saving covers practically all areas of work. Two – extrabudgetary resources including core contributions in support of the Regular Programme reached USD 1.7 billion which is an increase of three percent over the previous biennium.

The share of innovative funds including extrabudgetary resources mobilization reached 37 percent in 2012-13 (Table 17). As stated in paragraph 403, major progress was recorded in GRMS (Global Resource Management System). Three – the percentage of OS to total delivery remained the same in 2012; 2010-11 it was 9.7 percent. But there was an improvement in the rate of reimbursement. It reached 90 percent in 2012-13 compared with 84 percent in the previous biennium. Four – the estimated cost of TSS was USD 99.4 million which is 7 percent of the free delivery, and this amounted to only USD 27.7 million which were recovered. In 2012-13, on average, 28 percent of the Professional time was spent on providing technical support compared with 26 percent in 2010-11.

We appreciate these improvements.

Mr Daguang LU (China) (Original language Chinese)

I thank the Secretariat for providing the biennium report. The Chinese Delegation admires the work result of FAO in 2012-13. Under the leadership of the Director-General, the Secretariat has made considerable effort in all areas of work and has achieved the 80 percent of the performance result targets. To a certain extent, it has also registered an improvement in geographical representation and gender mainstreaming.

Progress was also made in regional efforts; we have also noticed in summarizing problems and the lessons should be learned. The report should come up with more detailed measures to be put into real practice. My Delegation hopes FAO will continue to take active part in the UN Post-2015 Development Agenda which in formulating standards and efforts should also be stepped up to enhance work in sustainable utilization work in the real areas of pertinence to FAO activities.

Resource utilization should be improved and geographical representation and South-South Cooperation strengthened and the strengthening of the TCOs, and also attention should be given to the balance utilization in the work of FAO, especially with regard to Chinese, Arabic, Russian and other languages.

Ms Jo EVANS (Australia)

Thank you for your positioning of the report, that we would like to fully support the statement made earlier by the European Union.

We also very much appreciate the work under the current Director-General to align the work of FAO under the new Strategic Objectives and the introduction of the Results-Based Performance

Framework, and we are very much looking forward to seeing the Organization begin to report on those results in coming years. We also are very supportive of the work done to drive efficiencies without compromising on the technical capacity of the FAO.

So, again, I will just leave it as that short statement of support.

Mr Vimlendra SHARAN (India)

My Delegation recognizes the transformational changes of 2012-13 and considers it as a major achievement for FAO. We stress the need for continuity in the Strategic Direction in order to realize the full impact of the reviewed Strategic Framework.

We also welcome the decentralization efforts undertaken since January 2012 and the need to continue efforts and analysis, in particular with regard to country office cooperation and modalities.

With these comments, we welcome and endorse the Programme Implementation Report.

Mr Faisal RASHID NASIR (Iraq) (Original language Arabic)

The Iraqi Delegation approves and congratulates you for what has been achieved during 2012-13 and all the results on the level of achieving food security and the hunger status in the world, in addition to the results that have been implemented by FAO in the various countries and particularly in the developing countries.

We would like to refer to a paragraph that we would like to take into attention within the FAO programme. There is a clear orientation to genetic and animal resources and there are various proportions between what is allowed and what is forbidden in certain countries in addition to the impacts of those shares and genetic manipulations, so it is important that FAO takes upon it defining standards that will be adopted, while at the same time facing the negative impacts of some of this genetic manipulation.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

We just wanted as well to support the intervention made by the European Regional Group as well as by Australia regarding the importance of the results-based management progress that has been made in the past biennium and we look forward to see the progress that will be even further made in this current biennium, as well as the importance of retaining the technical capacity that is so much at the core of this knowledge-based Organization.

We would also like to welcome the gender mainstreaming that has been done across FAO's activity in the past biennium and we welcome further developments in this regard, including the use of gender disaggregated data as well as targeted indicators, and we look forward for further information and targets for the current biennium as well.

And finally – a point that was made as well by the European Union – the importance of partnerships with civil society and the private sector.

CHAIRPERSON (Original language Arabic)

I can conclude by saying that the Conference welcomed the transformational changes introduced in 2012-13 and stressed the need for continuity in the Strategic Direction of the Organization.

Expressed satisfaction with the implementation of the Programme of Work in 2012-13 within the context of the Strategic Objectives, technical services, and the quality and decentralization effort, while maintaining the technical capacity.

Welcomed the unprecedented efficiencies and savings achieved in the 2012-13 biennium and emphasized the need for FAO Members to engage with the United Nations General Assembly and the International Civil Service Commission in efforts to contain staff costs, noted with appreciation administrative streamlining and the introduction of the Global Resource Management System (GRMS) in the biennium, appreciated the mainstreaming of gender across FAO activities, as well as efforts made in enhancing partnerships and language balance in FAO products and looked forward to continued improvement in this regard, looked forward to enhanced format and presentation of future reports, endorsed the Programme Implementation Report 2012-13.

Ms Jo EVANS (Australia)

I think, if possible, it would be good to pick up the comments from the European Union, Canada and Australia focusing on the desire to see the results from the new performance framework coming through in the current biennium.

Ms Elina GRINPAUKA-PETETENA (Latvia)

The European Union would like to stress that we would like to maintain the technical expertise at headquarters.

CHAIRPERSON

These two issues will be reflected in the summary.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I was not sure if in your summary you mentioned the importance of partnerships with civil society and the private sector. If so, then I will not make any comments. Otherwise, I would like this to be reflected as well.

Mr Vimlendra SHARAN (India)

There is a bit of confusion which I want sorted out. The intervention which Australia made and you made just now, does that mean a change in the resolution or does that mean a recording of their views in the summary?

CHAIRPERSON

This means that the Secretariat will reflect the views expressed by Australia and the European Union in the summary if there is no objection to this from the floor.

Mr Vladimir KUZNESTOV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

As other colleagues were mentioning, we would like to reflect the importance of the cooperation with civil society. In our statement, we also noted the importance of the cooperation with the scientific community as well. We think that the scientific elements in FAO's work are very important and we would like that to be noted.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. This will be noted.

Item 22. Programme Evaluation Report 2015**Point 22. Rapport d'évaluation du Programme 2015****Tema 22. Informe sobre la evaluación del programa en 2015**

(C 2015/4)

CHAIRPERSON (Original language Arabic)

We now move to agenda item 22, *Programme Evaluation Report 2015*, which is presented in document C 2015/4. The report provides a summary of the main evaluation activities of the Organization during the period 2013-14.

In particular, the report summarizes new developments in FAO's evaluation regime and improvement in the Office of Evaluation, outlines FAO collaboration with the rest of the UN System on evaluation matters, roles and common lessons learned from the evaluations that were undertaken during this reporting period, presents a Programme of Work for 2015 and beyond, provides summary briefs on the major evaluations which we completed during the reporting period and presented to the Governing Bodies.

The Conference is invited to provide such guidance as it deems appropriate. I will now give the floor to Mr Masahiro Igarashi, Director of the Office of Evaluation, to present the report.

Mr Masahiro IGARASHI (Director, Office of Evaluation)

Distinguished delegates, it is my pleasure to introduce the Programme Evaluation Report for 2013 and 2014 contained in document C 2015/4.

In my brief presentation, I would highlight some salient findings from the evaluations, explain how the Office of Evaluation is adapting to support FAO, and touch on some critical challenges for us, namely how to enhance the relevance of our evaluations and their use by our broader stakeholders.

In the reporting period 2013 and 2014, our evaluations found that FAO has a relevant role to play, especially in the important areas of its mandate such as crop production, policy advice, agriculture investment, and enhancement of resilience livelihoods.

At the same time, we considered that FAO should better articulate its role and design its interventions according to the different country contexts. For instance, the evaluation of FAO's contribution in crisis-related transitions suggested more differentiated pathways of assistance based on fuller examination of the political economy of specific countries and contexts, taking into account the role of development assistance and the coordinating capacity of the government.

This finding was actually reinforced by some of our ongoing evaluations of FAO's operations in countries facing crisis situations.

Evaluations also suggested how FAO can provide more focused and sustainable policy and technical support. For example, the evaluation of FAO's role in support of crop production found that in supporting extension services, FAO still had a critical role but it should focus more on supporting technical and coordination capacity rather than providing direct assistance.

Let me move to some changes which we have been implementing in the Office of Evaluation since early 2014 to better support the Organization's transformational change processes. First, rather than examining the performance of institutional units, our evaluations now focus on identifying and analyzing the results and the impact of FAO's contributions.

Our upcoming evaluations are now organized in line with the objectives defined in FAO's Strategic Framework as well as Individual Country Programming Frameworks.

We then will ask, in line with these objectives, whether FAO has been doing the right things, whether FAO has been doing it in the right way, and whether FAO has made a difference at the end.

To support this shift towards results-focused evaluations, the Office of Evaluation is placing an emphasis on capacity development of its own staff evaluators. Another emphasis is to enhance the relevance of our evaluations too and their use by a broader range of stakeholders, particularly the government and the cities and countries that FAO supports and the partners it works with.

To do this, we are taking greater strides to enhance ownership of the evaluations by our stakeholders, in particular national government counterparts more closely involved from start to finish in our country programme evaluations.

Today the Office is more closely linked with the global evaluation community, including in the regions. We are extending our partnerships with regional evaluation associations and government evaluation functions, thereby broadening and balancing the perspective in which we evaluate FAO contributions.

We also enhance collaboration within the UN system. In particular with the Rome-based Agencies, we conducted joint evaluations with WFP on food security class coordination and with IFAD on pastoral development.

Distinguished delegates, let me close my statement by introducing that for the global evaluation community, 2015 marks the International Year of Evaluation. The aim of this year is to strengthen the demand for and the use of evaluations to inform and improve public policies.

2015 is also the year in which the international community will embark on their effort towards a new set of international goals, the Sustainable Development Goals. With this in mind, the Evaluation Offices of Rome-based Agencies are planning to organize an international technical seminar in

November, this coming November, on how to enhance the evaluability of SDG2, the goal which is closely related to the mandates of the Rome-based Agencies.

To this seminar, we intend to invite international professional evaluators, national policy makers and evaluation counterparts. This is based on the recognition that, indeed, the key to achieving SDGs rests primarily in national policies and actions which should be informed by evidence-based advice from evaluations.

My closing remark is an invitation to all present and to your many colleagues involved in evaluations to work with us to make evaluations more relevant, useful and utilized.

Mr Moses VILAKATI (Swaziland)

The delegation from Swaziland cannot agree more on the Evaluation Report. The number of issues obviously that have been highlighted which we believe are important, particularly FAO now playing an important role in the development of new partnerships, in particular with the inclusion of the private sector.

The other one is on the provision of technical and economic advice to our governments on policies and legislation which can influence the public and private sector investment which we believe and we are seeing still lagging far behind.

The other one I think that we noted which is of importance is the insufficient support and capacity, particularly at the national level. The capacity issue is still lacking and I think the last one that we have noted as a country is the framework which is sometimes not adequate, I think, to capacity issues.

This is particular with the exit strategies as part of the development framework.

Mr Inge NORDANG (Norway)

Thank you to the Director of the Office of Evaluation for an interesting presentation of the report. I want to start by underlining the importance of project and programme evaluation as a tool for results improvement.

Thus the work with organizations should continue to be highly prioritized. This will also include increased efforts to improve project design and logical frameworks. Norway will support efforts to provide stronger evidence through analysis of impact on ultimate beneficiaries and national institutions.

It is important that logical frameworks are built on high quality theories of change and that they focus on outcomes and impacts with relevant indicators. Furthermore, exit strategies, financial and environmental sustainability, and gender as cross-cutting issues should be important elements in future programmes and projects.

We commend FAO for the role that they have played in investment for food and nutrition security, agriculture, and rural development, and their strong performance in defining, disseminating, and tracking the adoption of global standards.

The Evaluation Report states that FAO still retains an unrivalled advantage in the area. FAO is in the position to play a leading role in developing new partnerships. We would suggest that the role of the private sector is taken more into consideration in future programmes and projects.

We are glad to learn from the report that efforts to mainstream gender into FAO's activities have been well accepted in general. However, the gender issues are not given much attention in the present Evaluation Report which might lead to the conclusion that the implementation of the efforts should be further improved.

The evaluation of FAO's role in support of crop production points to the need of this report to become less fragmented, requiring more strategic orientation and continuity. Furthermore, there are signs that FAO's efforts have lost a significant degree of the technical quality that once characterized it and thus that our review and rebuilding of technical capacities of its human resource base is needed.

Norway supports the recommendations given and in particular for FAO to be more proactive in its relations and interactions with the CGIAR.

Mr Vimlendra SHARAN (India)

India welcomes the report and places on record its strong support to the Office of Evaluation. India as a member of the FAO Programme Committee has seen from close quarters the improved performance of the Office of Evaluation and enhanced quality of its support over the last couple of years, and we congratulate Director Igarashi and his staff for their continued good work.

The report is a snapshot of what is good in FAO but it also shows what needs further attention. While acknowledging the excellent work of FAO in encouraging and supporting public policy for enhancement and investment in agriculture and in setting global standards in this regard, the report clearly underlines the need for further strengthening the Decentralized Country Office to enable them to play a more meaningful role.

FAO's work in supporting crop production has been highlighted as a success story, but this comes with a very interesting advice of integrating the emergency and developmental activities. In this regard, considering that more than 50 percent of the funds under crop production are spent under emergencies, the suggestion regarding strengthening of a cluster approach and the need for reorienting FAO's strategies in middle-income countries is also worthy of note and deliberation.

We welcome the reform process undertaken and look forward to the achievement of the three outcomes it has set for itself on page 12 of the report to achieve its goal for providing credible, useful and evidence-based evaluation.

With these comments, we welcome and endorse the Programme Evaluation Report.

Ms Elina GRINPAUKA-PETETENA (Latvia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate countries to the EU, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey, align themselves with this statement.

We thank the Office of Evaluation for this very useful report highlighting the main findings from the systematic and strategic country and project evaluations completed in 2013-14.

Evaluation affirms the valuable skills and knowledge FAO commands. We encourage FAO to continue developing and supporting staff to ensure that it maintains its strong position in support of investment in agricultural development.

In this context, we expect FAO to disseminate the CFS principle and to provide guidance for their application. We are also pleased to note that FAO has become more active in joint coordination mechanisms and UN Development Assistance Framework processes and is engaged in joint risk reduction programmes with other partners.

We are glad to receive confirmation of FAO's overall progress towards a more inclusive and harmonized management model across the Organization, from headquarters to country offices. One of the most difficult challenges still remains finding the right balance between global priorities and local needs. We encourage FAO to improve the quality of Country Programming Frameworks in order to achieve more strategic coherence between global and country levels.

In order to deliver better results, we highlight the importance of findings on the need to improve project design, including series of change, time frames, and budgets, the development and implementation of exit strategies, timelines, timeliness of project implementation, economic and financial sustainability, feedback on the use and impact of normative and knowledge products, integration of environmental sustainability, capacity development and gender considerations.

We support the Office of Evaluation's reform process, including the focus on country evaluations to demonstrate results at the national level, whether through field projects or through the use of global public goods provided by FAO.

We also look forward to work on providing a strong evidence base through analysis of impact on beneficiaries and national institutions. We welcome the greater cooperation between Rome agencies and international research and academia in the field of agriculture which has led to a number of joint initiatives.

We encourage joint evaluations, training and events such as the seminar in Rome for the 2015 year of evaluation focusing on enhancing the evaluability of Sustainable Development Goal 2.

Mr Readwell MUSOPOLE (Malawi)

I would like, as colleagues from Swaziland did indicate, that we need really to improve the capacities at the country level in terms of coming up with the reliable indicators to track programming in our country policies and strategies and we do recognize the work that the FAO has done, even at the country office level and the support that they are providing in policy discussions with the Ministry and within the agriculture sector as a whole. So we do welcome this Evaluation Report that has been undertaken by the FAO and we consider it as a way forward for improving programming and tracking performance of the programming within the FAO.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

We appreciate the interesting introduction by the Director of the Office of Evaluation. On behalf of the Near East Region, Afghanistan submits the following four observations on the Programme Evaluation Report 2015.

One – section two, *Main findings from the evaluations*, is structured on nine corporate evaluations conducted during 2014-15 which is then repeated in more details in Annex 1, *Evaluation briefs*. In our view, the reviews in the Evaluation Report of 2013 was much better as it had drawn lessons from different evaluations on selected terms such as gender, partnership and capacity development as many of the other delegates have already assessed.

We wish to persist on this issue because it is important to know from evaluation experience whether the programme of FAO is by and large aligned with the 17 outcomes of the Strategic Objectives.

Point number two, we find section three, *A renewed FAO Office of Evaluation* and Annex 2, both interesting and refreshing and we support it. That said, we wish to raise three issues. Ownership of evaluation. We feel that OED must take full responsibility for all corporate evaluation conducted by the consultants or consulting firms. At present, this area is not clear.

Two, validation by OED of Management response reports on the implementation of recommendations that were accepted by Management. This validation is not done by OED at the present time.

Three, an update on the findings of the evaluation and extra-budgetary activities. Table one only shows funding for corporate evaluation submitted by the governing bodies. We would have preferred another table for funding of extra-budgetary resources to complement what is stated in paragraph 44.

Point number three, with respect to Annex 1, *Evaluation Briefs*, there are two elements that were covered in the Evaluation Report of 2013 and 2011 and have been dropped in the Evaluation Report of 2015. These two elements are Management response to evaluation and the response of the governing bodies to evaluation. We regret the elimination of these two elements.

Point number four, we encourage the Evaluation Offices of the three Rome-based Agencies to do more work on joint evaluation.

With these observations, the Near East Group wishes to endorse the Evaluation Report 2015.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Canada takes this opportunity to give credit to the Office of Evaluation for the important work it does and to Mr Masahiro Igarashi for the leadership shown since he assumed his position as Director.

We thank you for this very useful document which we are ready to support and which summarizes some but not all of the important recommendations found in the evaluations conducted by the Office of Evaluation.

One of the recommendations found in the evaluation of FAO's role in support of crop production which is not included in the document is that, and I quote, "FAO to be less timid about taking an energetic role of advocacy for advanced science-based technologies that may at times be controversial,

consolidating its role as a global platform for addressing strategic issues relating to crop production development.”

While we understand that Management did not accept this recommendation at the time, we are very glad to see that progress in this area is nevertheless being made and that FAO will host a symposium on the role of agricultural biotechnologies and sustainable food systems and nutrition in early 2016.

As we did in the Programme Committee, Canada endorses the rolling work plan presented in this document but also as we did in the Programme Committee, we would again like to highlight the importance for evaluations to cover Objective 6 on technical quality, knowledge and services as well as cross-cutting themes including gender.

In the OED reform agenda, *Risks and Mitigation Measures* section of the document, the risk that FAO leadership and governance does not give serious support to evaluations and their use is shown as a medium probability.

Given the importance of improving future projects and programmes towards the achievement of the FAO Strategic Objectives and global mission, Canada looks forward to working with the Office of Evaluation to change this probability to low.

M. MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroun)

Je n'ai pas de texte écrit parce que je ne comptais pas fournir une contribution détaillée sur la nature des évaluations. Permettez-moi tout de même de féliciter le Bureau de l'évaluation sous la conduite de Monsieur Masahiro Igarashi pour le travail fait, ainsi que pour la présentation de tout à l'heure.

Je voudrais cependant faire deux petites remarques. La première concerne la période de la production de ce document sur l'évaluation du programme. Si la période qui est considérée est celle de 2013-2014, selon moi cela ne correspond à aucune année budgétaire au sein de la FAO. Or, nous avons une programmation par biennium et je pense que si l'on veut évaluer un biennium ou le programme dans un biennium, il faut caler cela sur le biennium en question.

Donc, en principe, on devrait s'attendre à trouver, non pas la qualité des évaluations pour une période qui est décalée par rapport au biennium, mais plutôt pour une période incluant toutes les évaluations qui sont à l'intérieur du biennium en question, c'est-à-dire qu'on devrait avoir un rapport sur le biennium 2014-2015.

Maintenant, la deuxième remarque qui tient compte de ce timing est également le fait que la Conférence se situe maintenant au milieu de la deuxième année d'un biennium, comme c'est le cas aujourd'hui; nous avons donc encore six mois dans le biennium. Comment faire alors pour ajuster le rapport de l'évaluation du programme à l'intérieur du biennium? Parce qu'en ce moment nous risquons de ne donner des éléments que sur un an et demi.

Je vous ai fait part de mes réflexions, que nous ne mettrons pas dans le rapport. Je n'insiste pas, mais il faudrait engager une discussion au niveau du Comité du Programme pour voir comment on peut adapter cette question et mettre cela à contribution. Dans ce contexte précis également, il faudrait voir s'il y a une possibilité de s'accorder sur le contenu du rapport de l'évaluation du programme. C'est-à-dire que nous pourrions avoir une matrice qui nous donne les grandes lignes du contenu du rapport de l'évaluation du programme dans ce nouveau contexte.

Ceci dit, le rapport est bien structuré, il résume l'ensemble des évaluations qui ont été parcourues pendant la période considérée et nous en prenons parfaitement note tout en encourageant le Directeur de l'évaluation à continuer sur cette voie pour que le rapport d'évaluation serve d'outil de gestion.

Mr Ahmed BAOMAR (Oman)

We thank the Representative of the Office of Evaluation and emphasize the importance of building capacities of Regional Offices with a view to attaining the objectives of sustainable rural development and attaining the goal of food security. We also need to emphasize the importance of technology transfer towards developing countries.

Mr Masahiro IGARASHI (Director, Office of Evaluation)

Thank you very much, Delegates, for raising a number of issues. And most of all, I am very much encouraged by your expression of support in trying to make the Evaluation Office more focused on results so that we can bring back useful information to you.

I took note of some of the concrete issues made by the Delegate of Afghanistan. In terms of the timing issue that was raised by the Delegate of Cameroon, we are asked to provide a report in the Conference which necessitated us to look back into 2013 and 2014 so there are some ways we can improve that way of doing it.

One thing I would like to note is that, as described in the Evaluation Report, we really initiate from the next round the evaluations by strategic objectives. So within a year or two, then you will have a set of objective evaluations, which, in a sense, synthesizes different project evaluations and country programme evaluations according to the Strategic Objectives, and therefore next time I think we can provide the report much more aligned with the subject areas that you have been looking at.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Many Delegates here raised the issue of capacity development. Could you kindly explain to the Delegates what is the level of the Evaluation Office in training on evaluation? What is their role with respect to the Regional Offices on evaluation? Because, as far as I know, there is no Evaluation Office in any of the Regional Offices.

Mr Masahiro IGARASHI (Director, Office of Evaluation)

Thank you for the very pertinent question. Capacity-building in regular FAO's work is one thing that we evaluate, but capacity development in the evaluation function is very much in our heart. One thing I noticed coming to FAO was that the Evaluation Office does not have an explicit mandate to go out and do capacity development activities as such.

At the country level, agencies such as UNDP, UNICEF, World Bank, they have capacity development, a mandate, and therefore they engage actively in these activities. One feature of that is that those capacity-building activities are focused on ministries such as finance and planning.

When I looked at the Ministry of Agriculture, although there are a number of countries with evaluation capacity in their ministries, the support has not been forthcoming. And, therefore, when we do country programme evaluations, what we now started is to actively engage with the evaluation people in the ministries of agriculture, environment, forestry, etc., and trying to provide a capacity development by doing it together.

Now, later this year, we have the evaluation of the evaluation function, and probably in that context we should, in my view, ask the evaluators to look at this aspect of capacity development. Likewise, in our mandate, in the policy, there is no definition of decentralized evaluation functions. So, in theory, we do not have any evaluation functions in the Decentralized Offices. This is another issue which we may also wish to have reviewed in the context of evaluation of the evaluation function because I know there are other agents that have a different regime and it might be worthwhile to look at this issue.

CHAIRPERSON

I will draw now the summary conclusions.

The Conference:

- a) welcomed the Programme Evaluation Report, including the main findings emerging from the thematic and strategic country and the project evaluations completed during the period 2013-14.
- b) Noted the FAO comparative advantage and important role in food security and agriculture and the need for continued attention to important related areas and activities, including co-production, policy assistance, standard-setting, partnerships, investment in agricultural development, decentralization and country-level capacity-building, and integration of emergency and development efforts.

c) Underlined the importance of making budgetary provisions for evaluations for voluntary-funded projects in line with established policy and encouraged greater collaboration from resource partners in implementing the new arrangement.

d) Supported the reform process initiated by the Office of Evaluation and welcomed the resulting improvement and looked forward to continued enhancement in the shift in focus to evaluating results, better alignment of evaluation with FAO's Reviewed Strategic Framework, greater ownership by OED of evaluation reports.

e) Appreciated the enhanced efforts to promote collaboration on evaluation matters within the UN System, in particular, among the three Rome-based Agencies.

Ms Elina GRINPAUKA-PETETENA (Latvia)

The European Union and its Member States would like to highlight that we encourage that FAO maintains its strong position in support of investment in agricultural development.

In this context, we expect FAO to disseminate the CFS-RAI Principles and to provide guidance for their application.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Latvia. The Secretariat will take note of these remarks.

Ms Elina GRINPAUKA-PETETENA (Latvia)

The European Union and its Member States would like that CFS-RAI be included also. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Latvia. We indicated that the Secretariat will take care of your previous remark.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

What the EU says is correct. But when the election took place, the law was not passed yet.

Item 23. Synthesis of Evaluations of FAO Regional and Subregional Offices

Point 23. Synthèse des évaluations des bureaux régionaux et sousrégionaux de la FAO

Tema 23. Síntesis de las evaluaciones de las oficinas regionales y subregionales de la FAO

(C 2015/10; C 2015/10 Sup.1; C 2015/LIM/16)

CHAIRPERSON

We now go to the next item on our Agenda, item 23, *Synthesis of Evaluations of FAO's Regional and Sub-Regional Offices and Management Views*, as presented in documents C 2015/10 and C 2015/10 Sup.1.

At its 151st Session, the Council endorsed the Synthesis of Evaluations of FAO's Regional and Sub-Regional Offices to be submitted to the Conference for consideration. The extract of the report of the Council on this document is presented in C 2015/LIM/16. In particular, the Council recommended the Conference to endorse an independent technical review of Decentralized Offices to be considered by the Council at its 153rd Session in December 2015. I now give the floor to Mr Igarashi to present this report.

Mr Masahiro IGARASHI (Director, Office of Evaluation)

It is again my pleasure to present the Synthesis Report of the Evaluations of Regional and Sub-Regional Offices. The document in front of you, C 2015/10, contains an executive summary of the full report which can be found on the website indicated in the front page. The report is the result of our evaluation work since 2009. During this period, FAO has made significant progress towards decentralization, shifting functions and resources from headquarters to Decentralized Offices, and also introducing policies and systems to enable a more inclusive and harmonized management model throughout the Organization.

In this report we focused on three main questions that, in our view, would support the strategic level Review by FAO Governing Bodies. We postulated that the purpose of the decentralization process was to better serve the needs of countries. Then we asked whether FAO had adjusted its structure to do this, whether it had adapted its programme to do this and, finally, whether it had the capacity to do this. On the first question, while the Decentralized Office network has certainly been strengthened, the functions and coverage allocated to different offices have not been adjusted enough to be both effective and efficient in serving countries and to meet the changing demands. At this time, therefore, it will be worthwhile to review the structure and functions of the Decentralized Office networks.

Secondly, on the programme side, the biggest change was the introduction of FAO's Strategic Objectives, as well as the Country Programme Frameworks. We found that while this provided a sound basis for coherent and strategic programming, what was discussed at the country level in building the Country Programming Framework had not been sufficiently integrated into the overall corporate planning. At the same time, we recognized that this is the first time that FAO had gone through such a process. We expect lessons to be learned and improvements going forward.

Finally, in terms of capacity, we found that while the progress was made in enhancing the capacity of Decentralized Offices, more efforts needed to be made on improving the mix and level of skills in Decentralized Offices and also on mobilizing resources at the country level.

Distinct Delegates, the report benefitted from our evaluation work over the past five years, but we also recognized that much has changed since then. So we have decided to have an additional snapshot analysis of how far FAO has come in its decentralization process and what remains to be tackled. I hope this has provided useful information to Member Nations, in providing guidance to the Organization on how to further its efforts in this regard.

Ms Anesa ALI-RODRIGUEZ (Trinidad and Tobago)

Trinidad and Tobago wishes to note that overall the decentralization process in FAO has led to a more inclusive and harmonized management model across the whole organization, from headquarters to the country offices. Yet the challenge still remains of finding a right balance between global and local needs.

We acknowledge that the FAO Regional Conferences now play a significant role in corporate priority-setting and we support instituting measures to improve the quality and effectiveness of Country Programming Frameworks to ensure the coherence of the corporate and national priorities. The government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago therefore endorses the implementation of measures to ensure that the benefits of decentralization are optimized.

Ms Manar AL SABAHAH (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

We are speaking on behalf of the Near East Group. The efforts made over the past four years need to be appreciated. This shows that FAO is taking the right way in order to ensure sustainable nutrition and food security and this requires great harmony between headquarters and the offices.

We as representatives of the Near East and North Africa have the following observations to make. First of all, the policies on decentralization in regions are still lagging behind with regard to the effort that is being made by FAO and there needs to be harmony so that they can go side by side, especially in countries in the region that are experiencing protracted crises.

Second, the Regional Office is still lacking in human resources from the countries themselves so that they can conduct their work in the language of the region and reflect better the policies emanating from FAO and applying to the countries themselves. We know that each region has its own specificities including of course the Near East and North Africa.

Third, the Near East Group probably needs greater effort with regard to analysis in relation to trans-boundary plagues and zoonosis and we do not feel that there is enough effort in this regard. That is why we need greater attention to be dedicated to the group.

Mr John TUMINARO (United States of America)

The United States thanks the Secretariat for both the synthesis report of the evaluations of the Decentralized Offices and the paper on Management's views. The United States views the three recommendations contained in document C 2015/10 as useful in further facilitating the decentralization process as agreed to by the FAO's Membership in the Immediate Plan of Action.

As the United States noted at the 151st Council, with regard to the third recommendation, while we support the deployment of the correct mix of technical expertise in Decentralized Offices, we also encourage the FAO Secretariat to pursue this recommendation in the most cost-effective manner possible.

In some cases it may be most effective to have certain technical issues addressed by staff at headquarters which can then disseminate information rather than duplicating capacity at various decentralized levels.

Ms Elina GRINPAUKA-PETETENA (Latvia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate countries to the EU, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey, align themselves with this statement.

We welcome the synthesis of evaluations of FAO Regional and Sub-regional Offices and focus on country-level performance. We support the three recommendations contained in the report and Management's acceptance of these.

We note the Office of Evaluation conclusion that progress has been made over time towards a more consistent model across the whole Organization. This is a key to FAO's delivery of results and we encourage Management in building on improvements made.

With regard to the report's first recommendation, we fully support the Council recommendation to undertake an independent review of the types of representation in the countries with the view to developing a set of criteria.

We look forward to reviewing this review in the Committees and Council. We agree that the rollout of Country Programming Frameworks is important in aligning the work of FAO's country offices with corporate strategic objectives and countries' own development plans.

In line with recommendation two, we encourage FAO to ensure more systematic quality control, providing the necessary support to country offices in developing results frameworks and gender mainstreaming plans, areas highlighted for improvement in the evaluation

While we note that technical and financial capacity in decentralized country offices has increased, we would be interested to hear more from Management on planned measures to address issues highlighted in recommendation three, including ensuring the right level of skill mix.

We would appreciate close cooperation and exchange of technical expertise between headquarters and the Decentralized Offices, providing policy coherence in work and avoiding duplication of structures in the regions.

We also note, however, that the original request was to provide a short synthesis document detailing common critical issues of the five evaluations. We would welcome such a report as reiterated by the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees and supported by the Council at its last session.

We thank Management for their response and agree on the need to take forward evaluation findings and lessons learned, particularly with regard to priority-setting, programming and delivery mechanisms as well as the capacity of Decentralized Offices.

We encourage continued work on improvement that will help FAO to deliver better results.

Mr Márcio José Alonso BEZERRA DOS SANTOS (Brazil)

Brazil welcomes the synthesis of the evaluations of FAO's Regional and Sub-regional Offices. We believe this document and the three recommendations, in particular recommendation one, will

contribute to the strengthening of FAO Decentralized Offices, to the coherence of their work with corporate and national priorities, and their impact on delivering results.

Brazil supports the conclusions in each of these areas and welcomes the findings and lessons learned contained in the report. We especially support an independent technical review of recommendation one and its findings to be submitted to the next session of the Council in line with what was agreed by the last session of the Council.

Brazil also praises FAO Management for the great progress achieved in these areas and for the efforts to make the Decentralized Offices even more efficient and effective. Brazil noted that FAO Management has accepted the three recommendations and recognizes that some implementation issues will require further discussion.

We also believe the Decentralized Office has a fundamental role to play for the implementation of technical cooperation programmes, in particular South-South Cooperation.

Mr Vimlendra SHARAN (India)

India welcomes the synthesis report of the evaluation of FAO's Regional and Sub-regional Offices. We wish to congratulate the evaluation team for this well-crafted evaluation study with a very clear set of findings and recommendations.

We support the recommendations made and Management's views thereon and welcome the Council's recommendation of an independent technical review. We await with interest the follow-up report to see the steps taken by FAO in further strengthening the process of decentralization. We especially look forward to see how FAO makes best use of national capacities which have increased substantially over the years, especially in the countries in the south.

We would also be interested in hearing how FAO has fared cost-wise in its programme delivery through, and as a consequence of, the decentralization exercise.

With these comments, we once again welcome and endorse the report.

M. Marcel KAPAMBWE NYOMBO (République démocratique du Congo)

La République démocratique du Congo apprécie la valeur du rapport de synthèse qui est présenté.

La République appuie les trois recommandations contenues dans le rapport, qui sont tout à fait pertinentes.

La République soutient aussi les efforts et les progrès dans le sens de la décentralisation. Cependant, pour renforcer ces capacités de décentralisation, nous proposons aussi que l'implication du gouvernement soit manifeste, c'est-à-dire qu'il faudrait un comité de pilotage conjoint entre la FAO et le gouvernement, ce qui permettrait à ce dernier de faire le suivi des actions qui se font au niveau de la FAO.

Sinon dans l'ensemble la République est tout à fait satisfaite.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Canada also welcomes the synthesis of evaluations of the FAO's Regional and Sub-regional Offices and the three recommendations outlined in the report. Like others, we support the Council's recommendation that an independent review be undertaken on the types of coverage of representation in countries and locations of Regional and Sub-regional Offices with the view to considering its findings at the 153rd Session of the Council through the Joint Meeting of Programme and Finance Committees.

We also look forward to a further short document outlining common critical issues of the five evaluation reports for consideration by the Programme Committee as agreed by the last session of the Council and ideally at the next session of the Programme Committee.

In this regard, Canada is concerned about the low level of gender mainstreaming in Regional, Sub-Regional and Country Programming Frameworks, either by lack of gender as a topic, as a priority, outcome, output, despite the good gender analysis tool developed in 2010 for the formulation of

Country Programme Frameworks. This is mainly due to inadequate monitoring through robust gender indicators and we look forward to further progress on this issue.

As decentralization of responsibilities further progresses, attention needs to be paid to the capacity of Decentralized Offices to mobilize resources and their technical capacity to support projects through the right skill mix and competencies of staff in order to meet increasing demands.

Mr Daguang LU (China) (Original language Chinese)

I would like to thank the synthesis provided by the Secretariat and OED. The synthesis proposed of five evaluations for 2009 and 2013 and the focus is on the structure, the capability, the constantly changing functions and responsibilities of the decentralization offices.

The Chinese delegation endorses the three recommendations contained in the synthesis. It is our hope that attention will be paid by the Management to building of middle-income country offices and playing a role in the South-South Cooperation and providing technical support to neighboring countries.

In addition, we also hope that the Secretariat continues to assist the member countries in their Country Programming Framework. It should also coordinate the work of the country priority areas.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

Just very briefly to say in respect to the report and the three recommendations that, like others, we fully support the review of the country office coverage and so we look forward to participating in further discussions in the governing committees in autumn continuing that matter.

In terms of the second recommendation dealing with improving the quality of the Country Programming Frameworks, we note Management's response and would agree that there have been some changes made that will hopefully see an improvement in the quality of the CPFs, but I guess we would like to ensure and highlight and Conference to highlight that this is still a critical issue, particularly the alignment between the corporate priorities, the Strategic Objectives, and the CPFs, I think is critical in terms of really making substantial impact. So we would like to ensure that, in this Conference report, we do note the importance of continuing to improve and align the Country Programming Frameworks.

Regarding recommendation three, in terms of empowering Decentralized Offices and in terms of skill mix, we would note that and we also note the point that the USA made about getting that balance right between headquarters and the Regional and Sub-regional and Country Offices and making sure that we do maintain the strong technical capacity here in headquarters.

Mr Cosmore MWAANGA (Zambia)

Thanks a lot for the report presented. Zambia joins the other delegates in supporting the endorsement of the document, and also in supporting the three recommendations presented within the document.

When you look at the three recommendations that have been presented in the document, I think they all point to one thing, that they will make the FAO Regional and Sub-regional Offices more relevant, even to their respective countries, particularly Zambia, because consider when you look at the context of particularly recommendation number three, it does also consider the issues of the local context. So really we do welcome the report and support it.

CHAIRPERSON

I will try to wrap up this item. The Conference:

- a) welcomed the synthesis of evaluations of FAO Regional and Sub-regional Offices as well as the Management views on the recommendations presented in the document;
- b) looked forward to a separate, short document outlining common critical issues of the five evaluations to be submitted to the Programme Committee;

c) appreciated the efforts on decentralization undertaken since 2012 which has led to an improved and more harmonious Organization, recognizing that further enhancements and improvement will still be required in Region-specific cases;

d) welcomed recommendation one and agreed that an independent review of the Decentralized Office Network be undertaken and its findings be submitted along with the views of the Management to the 153rd Session of the Council through the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees;

e) supported recommendation two and the need for systematic quality control in support of country offices and Country Programming Frameworks, CPFs, developed with national governments;

f) appreciated the need to implement recommendation three with due consideration to the balance between headquarters and decentralized locations and with regard to cost effectiveness.

If there are no more comments, we end this item.

I would like to announce that there are two side events, one on *Zero Hunger*, in the Green Room from 12:30 to 13:30 hours and another side event on *Agrifood Trade and Regional Integration in Europe and Central Asia* from 13:30 to 14:30 hours in the Iran Room.

The meeting rose at 12.34 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 34

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.34

CONFERENCE CONFÉRENCE CONFERENCIA

Thirty-ninth Session Trente-neuvième session 39.º período de sesiones
Rome, 6-13 June 2015 Rome, 6-13 juin 2015 Roma, 6-13 de junio de 2015
SECOND MEETING OF COMMISSION II DEUXIÈME SÉANCE DE LA COMMISSION II SEGUNDA REUNIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN II
8 June 2015

The Second Meeting was opened at 14.53 hours
Mr Khaled Mohamed El Taweel,
Chairperson of Commission II, presiding

La deuxième séance est ouverte à 14 h 53
sous la présidence de M. Khaled Mohamed El Taweel,
Président de la Commission II

Se abre la segunda reunion a las 14.53
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khaled Mohamed El Taweel,
Presidente de la Comisión II

- Item 24. Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 (Draft Resolution on budget level)**
- Point 24. Plan à moyen terme 2014–2017 (révisé) et Programme de travail et budget 2016–2016 (projet de résolution sur le montant du budget)**
- Tema 24. Plan a plazo medio para 2014-17 (revisado) y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2016-17 (proyecto de resolución sobre la cuantía del presupuesto)**
- (C 2015/3 and related Information Notes; C 2015/LIM/7)*

CHAIRPERSON

The next item on the agenda, may be the most important but also should be the easiest one. I am certain that with the right spirit we can reach agreement on the issues beforehand very quickly, easily and swiftly. Item 24, *Medium-Term Plan 2014-2017 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-2017*. The relevant documents are the main document C 2015/3 and related information notes as well as C 2015/3 with Annex 8. The extract of the report of the 151st Session of the Council on this document is presented in C 2015/LIM/7, including the recommended Draft Conference Resolution on Budgetary Appropriations 2016-17.

To give you some background, in March 2015 the Council came to three main conclusions with the Director-General's proposal on the Programme of Work and Budget. First, it confirmed its support to continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization in the Medium-Term Plan.

Second, it supported the proposal of the Programme of Work. And third, it reached a historical consensus to recommend the Conference approval of the Draft Conference Resolution on Budgetary Appropriations 2016-17 for the delivery of FAO's Programme of Work with a budget level of USD 1,005.6 million.

As Commission II, we wish to express our gratitude to all the Council members for their hard work which resulted in this unprecedented result reflecting the commitment to support the Organization's vision toward achieving its objectives. Needless to say, that I personally appreciate the consensus and it should facilitate our work today.

In particular, I would like to recall that the Council reached consensus on the budget resolution after a thorough and intense process based on mutual respect and understanding among Members for the special financial conditions for the Members of the FAO and the difficulties that many countries face. At the same time, everyone was united in their purpose to support FAO and its current strategic direction. As a member of the Finance Committee, I was involved with my colleagues, I see many of their faces around the room, in this very spirit, when we examined the Director-General's Programme of Work and Budget proposal. This was also true for our colleagues in the Programme Committee and also when we debated the matter in the Joint Meeting of the Finance and the Programme Committees.

The Council of the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 was debated in the plenary session. It was again debated in an informal meeting which was open not only to members of the Council, but also to Members of FAO. The details of the Budget Resolution was considered in an even smaller group, and then again in the Drafting Committee of the Council, and then passed by a Commission by the plenary session of the Council.

Ladies and gentlemen, friends, colleagues, some might think that all this hard work of our colleagues before us had made our lives easy, which is true, because we reached a consensus line by line on the Conference Budget Resolution. But they have also given us a big responsibility today. They have shown us how Members of the FAO can work together in a responsible and united way and we have a responsibility today to show each one in this Commission II that we can work in the same spirit with mutual respect and understanding to support our Organization, the FAO. I am sure that many of the Delegates will have many comments to make on the Programme of Work and Budget and I will open the floor for your comments. But before I do this, I would like to ask you if we can, in the spirit of consensus and respect, endorse the Draft Conference Budget Resolution recommended to us by the Council.

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. With this Commission to endorse the Conference Budget Resolution recommended by the Council, I will now open the floor for your comments after a brief introduction by Mr Boyd Haight, Director of Office of Strategy, Planning, and Resource Management.

Mr Boyd HAIGHT (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management)

It is indeed heartening that the Commission has endorsed the Draft Budgetary Appropriation Resolution as recommended by the Council. This constructive approach among the Members and with the Management, which was highlighted by the Independent Chairperson of Council and by the Director-General in plenary this morning, allows the Secretariat to focus on moving forward to plan the delivery of the Programme of Work and to keep up the momentum in achieving results. In this regard, I would like to highlight a few key points.

The Reviewed Medium-Term Plan 2014-17 provides the four-year results framework for making progress on FAO's Five Strategic Objectives. That is, the 17 Outcomes and the 50 Outputs with targets and indicators to be achieved by FAO and its Members during the four-year plan.

Four developments emerged from the review of the MTP during 2014 which was its first year of implementation that influenced the Programme of Work for the next biennium.

First, we will maintain the continuity and the strategic direction of the Organization and therefore the momentum to achieve results under our Objectives, Outcomes and Outputs.

Second, our work will take into account the key recent trends in developments relating to nutrition in the follow-up to the Second International Conference on Nutrition; the impact of climate change on agriculture and food security; the control of transboundary plant pests and animal diseases; urbanization and migration, and the emerging Sustainable Development Goals.

Third, and related to the previous point, nutrition will be treated as a cross-cutting theme in the Medium-Term Plan. This will provide for technical leadership for FAO's work on nutrition, the mainstreaming of nutrition across the Strategic Objective Work Plans, and for policy and operational coordination in the UN System.

Fourth, we will apply and continue to develop the results monitoring system. You have seen the first use of the monitoring system in the Mid-Term Review for 2014 which documented evidence-based results at Output level for Management decision-making and accountability to Members. We will monitor and report on progress on achievement of Outcomes, including an assessment of FAO's contribution in the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15 early next year, and many of you made comments in this regard under the earlier item today.

The Medium-Term Plan provides the programmatic basis for the Programme of Work and Budget. The PWB quantifies the cost to carry out the two-year Programme of Work. It also lays out the organizational structure and implementation arrangements and makes provision for long-term liabilities and reserve funds.

The Draft Conference Resolution recommended by Council provides the level of resources to ensure full delivery of the Programme of Work during 2016-17. It also requests the Director-General to prepare adjustments to the PWB for consideration by the Council later this year. We will take the following steps to prepare for implementation of the PWB as from January 2016.

First, the targets are being set to measure delivery of outputs in the next biennium, linked more closely to work at country level through the Country Programming Frameworks and building on experience in the current biennium.

Second, the Strategic Objective Coordinators with the delivery managers at country and regional level and for the corporate technical activities are preparing their biennial work plans. These will take account of areas of emphasis and de-emphasis that are identified in the PWB, fine-tune the location and skill mix of human resources for optimal delivery, adjust resource allocations and leverage

partnerships, including South-South Cooperation. The Work Plans include attention to the cross-cutting themes of gender, nutrition, and governance across the Strategic Objectives and delivering the outputs.

Third, decentralization will continue to be consolidated to ensure effective delivery at country level, taking into account the Independent Review of the Decentralized Offices.

Fourth, the required savings of USD 2.7 million will be identified, taking account of the Council's guidance to contain the cost of staff medical coverage and following closely the outcome of the Comprehensive Review of the UN Common System Staff Compensation Package expected later this year.

And finally, the level and alignment of voluntary contributions supporting the Programme of Work will be updated based on the most recent estimates and the outcome of the Country Programming Framework exercise. The output targets, resource shifts resulting from work planning, fine-tuning posts and structure, and the identification of savings and updated level and alignment of estimated voluntary contributions will be provided in the adjustments to the PWB 2016-17 in November for consideration by the Governing Bodies.

As the Director-General said in his opening remarks this morning, we continue the drive to make FAO more relevant and useful to its Members. The Reviewed Medium-Term Plan for 2014-2017 and the Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-17 aim to consolidate our work while maintaining flexibility to adjust to emerging challenges and to achieve concrete and measurable results.

Mr John SANDY (Trinidad and Tobago)

Distinguished colleagues, let me first of all congratulate and thank the Secretariat for its excellent report. Trinidad and Tobago wishes to congratulate the Director-General of the FAO on the achievements of the Organization. Since, as the Mid-Term Review of the 2014-15 Programme of Work and Budget shows, over 80 percent of FAO's indicators are on track to achieve the results expected and have exceeded expectations in over half of them.

My Delegation wishes also to highlight the significance of the results-based approach in implementing the FAO's Medium-Term Plan since this approach is participative and is based on needs assessments, regional priorities, and FAO's comparative advantage, and acknowledges that in preparing the PWB 2016-17, consideration was given to the guidance provided during 2014 from the Regional Conferences, Technical Committees, Programme and Finance Committees and Council, concerning priority areas of work, identification of areas of emphasis and de-emphasis, and improving means of delivery, including through decentralization.

The government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago therefore notes the review of the MTP 2014-17 and supports the PWB 2016-17.

Sra. Perla CARVALHO (México)

Los países de América Latina y el Caribe desean dejar constancia de nuestro apoyo al proyecto de resolución contenido en el documento C2015/3, referente al Plan de mediano plazo para el 2014, 17, Revisado y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2016 y 2017. Entendemos que el consenso en el último consejo sobre estos documentos marca un hito históricos en la Gobernanza de la Organización. En ese sentido, el GRULAC se complace en el hecho de que la resolución del presupuesto, tal como se aprobara en el consejo de marzo pasado, se apruebe hoy por aclamación.

Consideramos que estos documentos han logrado incorporar las orientaciones dadas por los distintos órdenes de Gobierno de la Organización sobre las esferas prioritarias de trabajo, respetando siempre los objetivos estratégico básicos que se han impuesto los Estados Miembros para el logro de una Organización más acorde con nuestros tiempos y más eficaz. Tenemos frente a nosotros un presupuesto muy bien estructurados y con los elementos necesarios para continuar en la dirección estratégica que necesita nuestra Organización y que incorpora los elementos importantes de nuevas tendencias y desarrollos en el mundo de nuestros días, como son la Agenda post 2015, el cambio climático y la nutrición entre otros.

Felicitemos al Secretariado por la reestructuración del Programa de trabajo en áreas donde se dará mayor y menor atención, entendiendo que esto permitirá que la labor de la FAO tenga mayor coherencia y mejores resultados donde más se necesita. La propuesta de reasignar recursos a las áreas de mayor prioridad, redundará también en mayores beneficios. Nos parece muy importante la reestructuración que se hace de los recursos humanos a efecto de que las oficinas en el exterior tengan nuevos mandatos y fortalezcan el proceso de descentralización impulsado en los dos últimos bienios. Entendemos que este proceso ha aumentado la eficiencia de la organización y una mayor capacidad técnica en el terreno a la vez que se mantiene la capacidad técnica en la sede.

Reconocemos y apreciamos enormemente los esfuerzos realizados por el Director General para garantizar el uso eficaz y eficiente de los recursos. Lo que le ha permitido incluso, la obtención de ahorros significativos, esfuerzos que creemos, deben continuar, entendiendo que la capacidad técnica de la organización en la ejecución del programa de trabajo no se vea afectada.

En el ámbito de la Cooperación técnica, los países de América Latina y el Caribe valoramos el programa de Cooperación técnica de la FAO en la medida de sus posibilidades, hemos contado con la FAO para mejorar proyectos específicos en nuestras regiones. Vemos con agrado el incremento del Programa de Cooperación técnica, principalmente para pequeños estados insulares en desarrollo, alcanzando un nivel del 14 por ciento como la Conferencia lo había pedido desde 1989. La Cooperación técnica incide directamente en las acciones de nuestros gobiernos para mejorar la seguridad alimentaria y nutrición en nuestras sociedades.

La pericia y especialización de la FAO no la tienen otras agencias, por lo que creemos que debería considerarse en el futuro incrementar las posibilidades de hacer mayor cooperación de esta naturaleza. La adaptación a este cambio climático ha sido atinadamente considerada como una de las prioridades del presupuesto, ya que la FAO debe jugar un papel importante en el tratamiento de este tema. Además, la FAO puede tener un papel relevante para asesorar a los países respecto al papel de la agricultura en las negociaciones sobre cambio climático en los foros correspondientes. Ya que este fenómeno afectará, cada vez más a los pequeños agricultores.

La Cooperación Sur-Sur, por su parte, debe seguir siendo considerada de manera importante en las labores de esta organización porque es un tema que contribuye a potenciar su misión. Los países de ingresos medios estamos listos para ofrecer nuestra asistencia, en la medida de nuestras posibilidades, pero necesitamos a la FAO como facilitadora.

En la negociación del nivel de presupuesto, todos los grupos regionales mostramos flexibilidad y nos felicitamos por ello. Hacemos votos para que la aprobación del nivel del presupuesto antes de la conferencia sea la nueva norma en nuestros trabajos. Un presupuesto es una herramienta para implementar una serie de políticas y un plan de trabajo. Plan que incluye un importante componente de planificación, pero que también debe tener cierta flexibilidad para responder a eventos inesperados.

El que por primera vez en la historia de la FAO se haya podido consensuar un nivel de presupuesto antes del inicio de la conferencia es una señal de confianza de la membresía al trabajo y rumbo de la FAO en su conjunto, un mensaje de confianza respecto a la gestión por parte de la administración y confianza que sabrá ajustarse a las necesidades en el futuro, incluyendo la Agenda de Desarrollo post 2015.

Mr Tazwin HANIF (Indonesia)

Indonesia takes note of the FAO budget level for Biennium 2016-17 as agreed upon by the Council at the last session in March which is USD 30 million more than the current budget. In this regard, we commend the Finance Committee and the Secretariat for their hard work. For Indonesia, the budget increase on one hand will give room for the FAO to be able to deliver fully its Programme of Work for the next two years, taking into account FAO's Strategic Objectives and the priorities set out by the Director-General with the concern of Member Nations. On the other hand, however, the budget increase entails more responsibility for Member Nations to provide more contributions. Irrespective of its size, any increase of annual excess contributions will not be easy for Member Nations.

In the context of budget level for the next biennium, we note with concern the significant deficits on the General Fund procured in the current budget, which, principally, due to gaps in the funding of

After Service Medical Coverage Plan and the Terminal Payment Fund, the deficits consequently should be carried over to the FAO budget for the next biennium in which the budget increase of USD 14.1 million to fund the Past-Service Liability should be financed by excess contribution from Member Nations. We therefore fully share the recommendation put forward by the Finance Committee on this particular matter that, to avoid such similar situation in the future, FAO should continue its effort to contain the costs of medical insurance for its staff.

In relation to budget efficiency, we appreciate the Director-General's Transformational Change Programme by which a strong and effective accountability and internal control framework in FAO have been put in place. We also appreciate the Director General's efforts to achieve further efficiency savings in the budget for 2016-17 without negatively impacting delivery of FAO programmes.

Last but not least, Indonesia welcomes the increased budget proposal of USD 6.1 million in the next biennium allocated for the Technical Cooperation Programme; in particular, to support smaller developing states' efforts to adapt to climate change and will be met through voluntary contribution.

Having said that, Indonesia supports the adoption of the resolution by this Conference.

Ms Reem EL DAHSHAN (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

The Republic of Egypt supports the 2014-17 Programme of Work. We support all the items and they are important to all the countries of the world, and mainly developing countries, and nutrition, climate change, and a number of other areas. We also welcome all the savings made by the Organization in the past and we hope they will also make more savings in the future, provided that this does not have a negative impact on the actual implementation of the Programme and Objectives of the Organization.

We welcome the consensus reached last March. It has allowed us for the first time to reach an agreement on the budget level before the Conference. We must say that developing countries have proved to be extremely flexible with respect to the budget for Technical Cooperation, and we once again stress the need that the USD 6.1 million level be guaranteed thanks to voluntary contributions for technical assistance. We need, to this effect, work together and jointly with the Organization to implement Resolution 9/89, saying that the technical cooperation should not come below 4 percent of the overall budget. We hope that this will allow technical cooperation to be enhanced in countries, and namely the Middle East, that do not receive a sufficient amount yet. We also hope that developing countries can thus achieve their development targets.

Once again, we support the Programme and Budget, the Draft Programme and Budget for 2016-17.

Ms Elina DAMBEKALNE (Latvia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate countries to the EU, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey, align themselves with this statement.

We welcome the reviewed Medium-Term Plan 2014-17 and the Director-General's proposed Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 and express our appreciation for the efforts made before and during the 151st Session of the Council to achieve a better understanding of the proposals made.

While we strongly support the implementation of the proposed Medium-Term Plan and the PWB 2016-17 in accordance with the Five Strategic Objectives and Objective 6 that have been agreed, we underline the continued importance of protecting the unique, normative and standard-setting role of FAO as a knowledge organization. FAO's work must build on its comparative advantage in areas within its agreed mandate, including on food, agriculture, fisheries, and forestry, coupled with effective collaboration with other partners to add real value to its work.

We welcome the enhanced emphasis on FAO's real added value in the development of global public goods, norms and standards, including capacity-building. The restructured Strategic Objective 6 reflects this, including in the field of nutrition as a direct follow-up to the ICN2 and in line with earlier recommendations made by the Council. As in other areas, we also strongly advocate for close collaboration with other partners in this field.

We wish to reiterate our appreciation for the enhanced format of the proposed PWB 2016-17. We particularly welcome the inclusion of a description of areas proposed for greater emphasis and those which should be de-emphasized.

Recalling earlier requests for greater support to countries facing the threat of Antimicrobial Resistance, some activities are now envisaged under Strategic Objective 4. While we welcome the joint efforts together with the World Organization for Animal Health and the World Health Organization on antimicrobial resistance, we wish to see more emphasis on this issue in the MTP and in the PWB.

We wish to reiterate our satisfaction with the increased efforts to address nutrition, including nutrition-sensitive agriculture, and increased emphasis on climate change. We consider both areas of critical importance for FAO's future work. On antimicrobial resistance, we wish to see more emphasis on this issue in the MTP and in the PWB.

Recalling FAO's global role, we underline the importance of supporting concrete cooperation between Members from different regions. We note with satisfaction the significant voluntary contributions, particularly from middle-income countries, in support of FAO's efforts to foster South-South Cooperation. In this context, we would appreciate to receive further explanations concerning FAO's support to middle-income countries.

With regard to FAO's role in social protection, we stand by our view that additional resources in this field should be utilized strictly in areas falling within FAO's established mandate. We take note of FAO's collaboration with other organizations within the UN system having a key role in this field as well as of FAO's participation in the relevant coordinating mechanisms which would help to avoid any duplication of efforts.

Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) is a concept which has been elaborated in recent years. Regarding FAO's work on the GIAHS initiative, we would like more detailed information on issues including governance, financial aspects and the concrete collaboration with UNESCO.

Regarding the initial proposal for additional resources for the technical cooperation programme, we welcome the new proposal to generate separate additional funding to support small-island developing states, particularly in adapting to the effects of climate change. We would further like to reiterate our recommendation that, in the future, the presentation of the intended use of TCP resources should reflect distribution across the Strategic Objectives.

We again welcome the fact that FAO is fully participating in and contributing to the functioning of the resident coordinator system. We see this as a clear sign of FAO's commitment, enhanced collaboration and coordination at the country level, and we continue to attach the greatest importance to this. We are pleased to note that progress in the joint programming of support for countries has recently been recognized for the external MOPAN assessment.

We urge for caution to be exercised to ensure that the planned de-emphasis in some areas does not have a negative impact on FAO's normative work. We trust that the de-emphasis in tenure work will not prevent the completion of outstanding global level activities related to the Voluntary Guidelines for the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGT) and that FAO will step up support for application of the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (RAI).

We reiterate the absolute need for getting women and men equal opportunities, both within and outside the Organization. We ask for in-depth information on how FAO intends to translate all cross-cutting themes, including governance, into reality.

We again wish to call for a critical mass of substantive competence in crucial areas to be maintained at headquarters. With regard to the continuing decentralization and the mobility policy, we wish to see a good balance between human resources at headquarters and in the field in order to maintain FAO's global leading role and expertise in food and agriculture, including forestry and fisheries.

In this context, we also urge the Secretariat to proceed expeditiously in filling vacant posts. We would appreciate further explanations and assurances in this regard.

As the strength of FAO depends on its staff, we wish again to underline the importance of attracting and retaining competent staff at the different locations. We are pleased to seize this opportunity to reiterate our thanks to FAO's dedicated staff for their commitment.

With regard to the considerable increases in resources for personnel in the proposed PWB, we would like to receive further information on the possible implications of the latest recommendations and decisions on the International Civil Service Commission resulting from the comprehensive review of the United Nations common system compensation package.

We remain concerned by the deteriorating overall financial health of FAO, primarily due to long-term staff-related obligations. We recognize that this also applies to other UN entities. We therefore recommend that FAO remains fully engaged with others in seeking common solutions. We agree with the recommendation of the Council, as suggested by the Finance Committee, that an amount of USD 14.1 million should again be provided by the Member Nations for the next biennium to reduce, to some extent, the deficit resulting from the funding of the After-Service Medical Coverage (ASMC).

We underline the importance of enhancing the transparency and clarity of the estimated budgetary resource requirements in the two currencies in which Members will be requested to pay their assessed contributions. We therefore recommend that future Programme of Work and Budget documents and, in particular the draft resolutions for the Conference on the budgetary appropriations, state the amounts required separately in USD and in Euro. This could obviate the need for the Conference to agree on a new exchange rate which, in any case, entirely depends on external factors and remain subject to fluctuations during a biennium. This approach could further avoid the current problem of comparisons of the required budgetary resources with previous biennia appearing distorted because the required budgetary resources in the draft resolutions are presented only in USD.

We want to reiterate our commitment to supporting the important work of FAO and the implementation of the agreed Programme of Work 2016-17. As the biggest provider of funding in core and voluntary contributions to FAO, the EU and its Member States expect FAO to continuously improve its overall performance and efficiency and maintain its global leadership for food and agriculture, including forestry and fisheries, in an ever more competitive world.

We fully recognize the continued and significant efforts made by the Secretariat to identify savings which, to some extent, have also been the result of past reforms. In this connection, we would like to recall the agreed one time character of certain costs for implementation of the IPA reform measures and the expected recurrent savings and efficiency gains resulting from the implementation of the IPA measures. These should have been taken into account when establishing a baseline for the calculation of the required resources for the next biennium.

Due to the continued global economic crisis and the financial constraints faced by many Member Nations, serious consideration was needed before we were able to join the consensus on the proposed budget level reached by the Council at its last session. We remain convinced that the proposed Programme of Work will be protected. After they agreed and identified further efficiency gains and savings to be proposed by the Director-General for consideration by the Programme and Finance Committees and approval by the Council at its 153rd Session in December 2015, we are determined that this should not endanger the work of the Organization in any substantive area.

Finally, we wish to confirm that we are ready to engage constructively in a dialogue to reach consensus on issues raised concerning the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 whose implementation we would like to fully support.

Mr Abdul Razak AYZI (Afghanistan)

I am speaking on behalf of the Near East Group. First, the Near East Group wishes to thank you for taking the initiative in your opening remarks by trying to obtain a consensus from the Membership on the level of the budget as proposed by the Council. We thank you for that and I think the agreement was unanimous. That takes a big burden off of us.

That also leads me to make my observations short and limited. One, we observe noteworthy improvements in the MTP 2014-17 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 as compared with the same documents that were submitted to the 38th Session of the Conference.

This is particularly so in the presentation of Strategic Objective 5 and Objective 6 as well as Functional Objective 8. We welcome these improvements.

We also support the inclusion of nutrition as a cross-cutting issue along with gender and governance. This morning the Director-General, in a statement to the Conference, emphasized further work is needed on nutrition by FAO and WHO and he also emphasized the work of FAO for the next biennium is entirely changed.

Two, in the foreword to recommend the document, the Director-General underscores the term consolidation and we fully agree with this term.

Three, we reluctantly agree with the USD 6.1 million increase in the TCP, we find that by the extra-budgetary resources. We hope that there will be only a one time operation.

Four, we welcome the eight areas of emphasis which have been further elaborated in Information Note 4 with a total of USD 14.2 million, especially the additional increase in nutrition, climate change, South-South Cooperation and GIAHS. We are convinced that the areas of de-emphasis will not affect the technical work of the Organization.

Number five, FAO's record on efficiency gains is very good: USD 108.2 million for two biennia, Information Note 2. But it has to be emphasized that the level of the proposed budget is a very tight one and cannot afford a further squeeze on making false savings.

Six, we welcome the modest increase in net appropriation for the five regions. Compared with 2014-15, the increase amount is 3.5 percent and all regions are expected to benefit. We also appreciate the net addition of 35 professional posts for decentralized offices.

Number six, we subscribe to the four adjustments in the organizational structure while the structure of headquarters remains unchanged.

Finally, the dialogue between Management and governing bodies on the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 has been candid, constructive and friendly. Management has responded expeditiously to additional information requested by the governing bodies and this is highly appreciated.

Among the Membership, there is a willingness to move forward and the decision by the Council to recommend a budget level to the Conference for the first time is a shining example.

This morning the Independent Chairperson of the Council underscored the successes achieved through productive dialogue among Members and between Members and Management on issues of priority.

Mr Vladimir KUZNESTOV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We highly appreciate the work of the Secretariat and the high quality work that they have done in preparing the documents that we are discussing today and, in particular, the Programme of Work and Budget on the 2016-17 as well as the information notes.

We endorse the programmes as put in the documents. We agree with the concept of the FAO as formulated by the Director-General as a knowledge organization with its feet on the ground. We support the capacity-building and standard-setting and the links with the emergency humanitarian aid and other works.

We also support the work of the Director-General with middle-income countries. To this end, we appreciate the measures on expanding the decentralization network of FAO into other countries. We also feel that we should see development of FAO's work in development and for good prospects.

We also have to note the fight against animal diseases and pests. We especially note the cross-cutting themes of nutrition as one of the Strategic Objectives.

We also are very happy and agree with the food security topics. Speaking about the financial side, we highly appreciate what was achieved in the 2016-17 budget, the savings by efficiencies increasing of

USD 108 million. We would like to ask the Secretariat to consider continuing doing this and to use the financial means at their disposal in a most effective and efficient way possible that will not threaten the implementation of the programmes.

We highly appreciate the consensus that we have seen on the budget level. This was seen for the very first time during the preparatory sessions of the Council before the Conference. We fully share the recommendations on this issue that were sent to the Finance Committee and Council, including the draft resolution on the budget allocations for 2016-17 and we support the decision that was endorsed by our nation.

Ms Natalie E. BROWN (United States of America)

The United States is pleased to join the consensus on this budget level. We believe that with the combined budget of over USD 2 billion, FAO is now well positioned to meet its mandate to eliminate food insecurity and help free the world from hunger.

We nevertheless encourage FAO to continue thinking about the future and how the Organization should be aligning itself today to meet the challenges of tomorrow. This is particularly important in the face of a changing climate and the increasing demands of a growing population that is living longer. The work and importance of FAO will only continue to grow. The United States would also like to thank the Director-General and the Secretariat for this thorough Programme of Work and Budget that reflects their efforts to continue to promote good governance and fiscal responsibility.

We look forward to working with the Director-General, the Secretariat and all of the Members throughout the rest of the year and in the coming biennium.

Mr Daguang LU (China) (Original language Chinese)

We also thank the Secretariat for the 2014-17 MTP and the 2016-17 PWB. The MTP has widely taken into account recommendations from various regional conferences and technical committees from 2014. From post-2015 development agenda, climate change, control and response to transboundary plant and animal pests and diseases, nutrition, organization migration, an impasse on food systems, food security and nutrition.

The report elaborated on the recent developments in these five themes. We agree with their analysis. We agree that in the 2016-17 PWB, we agree with the eight higher priority areas of work including nutrition, climate change, South-South Cooperation, resource mobilization, support given to the UN Resident Coordinator systems, social protection, gender statistics, agriculture and GIAHS.

The Chinese delegation highly appreciates the fact that the 2016-17 PWB has attained consensus in the 151st Session of the Council. At the same time, we hope FAO will further adopt streamlining and saving measures to increase efficiency and savings.

Mr Chol Min KIM (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea delegation believes that the FAO Medium-Term Plan 2014-17 and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 submitted to this Conference is well revised to contribute to food security and agricultural development of the Member Nations. I also take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the efforts made by the Director-General and the Secretariat.

This Programme of Work and Budget seems to be formulated in a way that operations and the Strategic Objectives of the Organization could focus on eradicating poverty, hunger, and improving nutrition based on the comprehensive analysis of the global trend of agricultural development. In particular, we have noted that 2016-17 budget level agreed before the FAO Conference at first time and the majority is allocated to the elimination of hunger, strengthening of agricultural production, prevention of damage by pests, mitigation of natural disasters, etc.

In addition to increase of USD 6.1 million in technical cooperation programmes is an adaptation to the strengthening of technical assistance to the developing countries. I hope that FAO will pay deep attention to the assistance in the fields of agriculture, fisheries and agriculture of the developing countries in the new programme.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will offer full cooperation for the successful implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 and do its best to fulfil its obligation as a Member Nation.

Mr Inge NORDANG (Norway)

Let me start by making some comments to the reviewed MTP. Norway can support the rephrasing of Strategic Objective 4 and the designation of nutrition as a cross-cutting team under Objective 6.

The growing challenges of nutrition are well documented in the reviewed plan. Norway commends that different aspects like hunger, malnutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, stunting and obesity are addressed in the document. FAO's support to governments in transforming the ICN2 commitments into concrete actions will be important. Development of joint reporting by FAO and the WHO on implementation of their own declaration on nutrition will also be important.

Norway is pleased to note that the reviewed MTP recognized the challenge confronting the Organization in implementing the new SDGs. These global goals have a direct bearing on several of FAO's Strategic Objectives. FAO and the Member Nations should uphold its strong efforts towards food security, nutrition, resilience, and sustainable agriculture and sustainable use of natural resources. Norway also supports the view that small-scale food producers should be the core beneficiaries of the efforts toward climate smart agricultural practices in order to strengthen resilience and adaptation to extreme climate-related events.

Furthermore, climate change requires innovative approaches towards growth and food security, sustainable management of land, water, aquatic and forest resources. We consider that there is a need to create an enabling environment in which people engage in these sectors and act not only as resource users but also as resource stewards. Norway recommends that the reviewed document recognizes different challenges of food security between rural and urban populations and supports that the work of the new food systems must take these differences into account.

Turning to the proposed Programme of Work and Budget, we are pleased that the Council in its March session was able to agree on a budget level and that this was approved by the Commission this afternoon. We are glad that it was possible to keep the cost increases to a minimum and identify further savings, thus avoiding cutting in substantive programmes. Norway can support the budget resolution as agreed by the Council.

Turning to some comments on the Programme of Work, control and response to transboundary plant and animal pests and diseases are serious global challenges of our time. Norway therefore strongly supports FAO's efforts to meet the growing biological threat of Antimicrobial Resistance.

We would urge FAO to find room for this important work in its Programme of Work and financed from its regular resources. At the last Conference, Norway expressed concern that gender mainstreaming could result in streaming gender away and wanted to be able to see how the resources allocated to gender activities were spread among the Strategic Objectives.

Paragraphs 240-242 provide some useful information on this but it is still a bit meagre. Gender is an important issue for development. Denying focus and adequate resources to this issue will only prolong the time it takes to get people out of poverty and thus, in effect, not being cost effective. We therefore would have liked to see a substantial increase in the regular funds allocated to gender in FAO's Programme of Work.

Let me conclude by appreciating that the financing of the US Resident Coordinator System is reflected in the work plan.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Canada was very pleased to join the historic consensus on the budget level achieved at last Council session and is very pleased today to also join consensus on the endorsement of the Draft Resolution.

Regarding the Draft Medium-Term Plan 2014-17 and Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-17, we would like to offer some comments focused on Strategic Objectives 5 and 6. On Strategic Objective 5, Canada is supportive of FAO's focus on preparedness, early warning and disaster risk

reduction. However, given that approximately half of the budget is allocated for activities in ongoing emergency situations and that FAO is increasingly playing a role not just in preparedness but also in emergency response, we would welcome an increased focus on measuring the impact of these emergency programmes. To this end, we would encourage expanding the current focus on measuring the capacity of governments and institutions to include indicators focused on measuring the impact of programming on beneficiaries. This is particularly important in emergency contexts where state institutions may be weak or non-existent.

Turning now to Strategic Objective 6 on gender as was discussed at last Council, we would welcome further information from the Secretariat on how this cross-cutting issue will be reflected or is reflected in the Programme of Work. Canada remains concerned on the level of gender integration into the Programme of Work and Budget. We are supportive of this inclusion as a cross-cutting issue. However, Objective 6 speaks primarily to FAO's work internally to mainstream gender. The outcomes and outputs included throughout Objectives 1 to 5 should also include gender equality results and gender-sensitive indicators given that gender is a cross-cutting theme for FAO. While Objective 3 has well integrated gender, the other Objectives should be revisited, particularly 1 and 4.

We welcome the inclusion of indicator 6.2(a) but would suggest that it is specific that sex-disaggregated statistics exist. And finally, in line with the UN System Wide Action Plan on gender equality, we would encourage FAO to begin tracking funds spent to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women through both its organizational and its development objectives.

On nutrition, Canada is supportive of FAO's efforts to include nutrition as a cross-cutting theme. However, while the additional budget allocated for nutrition is important and welcome, we would encourage FAO to propose concrete activities with measurable results that will contribute to positive nutrition outcomes in the PWB rather than only indicate activities that will be de-emphasized. Regarding the key performance indicators on nutrition, we would hope for more concrete statements that will encourage more accountability for results in this area of work. We also note that there are references to global coordination throughout the document and, given the various global mechanisms and initiatives, including CFS engagement and reach housed out of the WFP, we want to ensure that these processes do not become disjointed.

Finally, on governance, we note that although the cross-cutting theme includes the participation of diverse groups of stakeholders, including civil society organizations and producer organizations to take part in training fora and consultations right from the start of the programme, we would like paragraph 243 to be revisited to see how participation can be taken into account to enhance a more effective treatment of governance issues and include other groups of stakeholders so that participation and effectiveness of policy and governance work at FAO is improved.

And finally, we would like to support the EU's request for further information on the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System as was discussed at the last Council session.

Mr Kenichiro MATSUBAYASHI (Japan)

I would like to start with congratulating the Secretariat and the fellow Member Nations for success in securing consensus so quickly in the proposed Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium. We also would like to join other members appreciating the hard work and efforts by the Secretariat and the Council Members which have brought us to the consensus today so quickly.

Japan supports the priority areas elaborated by the Director-General this morning and by the Secretariat this afternoon at this Commission meeting; in particular, those areas relating to nutrition and climate change. And also we support the emphasis on the gender consideration which was demonstrated by the Director-General this morning. We believe this approach will help FAO maintain and further enhance its relevance and competency in the global context in the years to come. For this reason, we are very happy to join the consensus on the Programme of Work and Budget which reflects those priority areas in an effective manner. We extremely hope that programmes will be implemented in an effective and efficient manner and their implementation will be properly monitored and evaluated with transparency.

Also, Japan supports and highly appreciates the priority placed on the programmes for GIAHS, Globally Important Agriculture Heritage System. We strongly hope that the GIAHS Programme will be enhanced through the necessary measures, including in improved governance enforcement. Japan will remain committed to contributing to these activities relating to GIAHS.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

Mr Chairperson, as you have pointed out in your opening remarks, the Programme of Work and Budget was discussed at length at the Council, and before that at the Programme and Finance Committees, and a consensus was reached at the Council. I think we need to congratulate ourselves for this first time achievement.

I would just like to emphasize a few issues. First, the Transformational Agenda introduced by the Director-General in 2012 and in 2016-17 biennium will provide a period of consolidation of efforts to continue to adjust the ways of working to serve the Member Nations effectively. Consequently, we agree with the Finance Committee's endorsement of the concept of continuity in the strategic direction of the Medium-Term Plan and the consolidation of Transformational Change in the Programme of Work.

An aspect which is particularly welcome is the identification of the areas of emphasis and de-emphasis for the first time in the Programme of Work and Budget document. Among the areas of emphasis, we particularly support the work on nutrition, climate change and South-South Cooperation. We are pleased to note that this exercise has resulted in the re-allocation of USD 14.2 million to priority areas within the Programme of Work and Budget.

We support the organizational restructuring proposals and the importance of consolidation of decentralization efforts in order to reinforce the work of the Organization. We welcome the proposal to source an additional USD 6.1 million in 2016-17 through extra-budgetary resources to be used exclusively to strengthen the TCP Programme in support to Small Island Developing States, particularly to adapt to the effects of climate change. In this connection, we agree that the TCP appropriation in the Programme of Work and Budget of 2018-19 would bring in line with Conference Resolution 9/89 the amount of TCP to be restored to the former level of 14 percent of the total Regular Programme budget.

We note that since 2012 FAO has achieved unprecedented savings of USD 108.2 million and abolished some 235 posts. We see from Information Note 2 that these efficiency gains and savings are of a recurring nature and are incorporated fully in the Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-17. The same information note also identifies some areas of further review but they cannot be quantified at this moment. Consequently, we look forward to the information in this respect. We also need to bear in mind that the largest component of the cost increases in relation to costs is the staff costs and all these increases are outside the control of the Organization and will depend on the ICSC Comprehensive Review which is, I believe, under review.

In this connection, we encourage the Organization to participate actively in the UN Common System's search for an optimum and practical solution to the complex matter of the After Service Medical Coverage Liability.

With these few comments, we support the budget.

Mr Mohammed SHERIFF (Liberia)

Liberia takes the floor on behalf of the Africa Group. First of all, we want to express our thanks and appreciation for the work you are doing and thank all Member Nations who have supported this budget. As you know, the consensus achieved during the budget negotiations indeed underline the collaboration existing between Management and Member Nations. Liberia welcomes the adoption of the report.

We want to thank the Director-General for the direction in which FAO is moving. The importance of continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization in the MTP is indeed very vital and important. The proposed PWB is in line with what Council endorsed and we, on behalf of the Africa Group, want to support the adoption of the budget. Further to that, I want to say that the previous speakers who

have taken the floor actually have expressed most of the concerns that we wanted to highlight and bring forward to this distinguished body. So not to take much of your time, we just want to say that the decentralization efforts by the Organization, as well as that of capacity-building, are high priority for the Africa Region.

We appreciate the Transformational Changes undertaken at the FAO since 2012 and we agree on the importance of full flexibility for the Director-General in the identification of unidentified efficiency gains and savings. We want to commend the Secretariat once again, and all previous speakers who have spoken, as I said, have already expressed the comments the Africa Group would have loved to make and we align ourselves with those statements. The MTP and PWB, we endorse them.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

Like many other speakers, Australia is also very happy to see that we are in this position so early in the Conference. As we discussed in Council, it is a historic moment being able to recommend a budget level to Conference, and obviously it is a significant improvement in efficiency. So, from our perspective, it is very pleasing to see that Members and the Secretariat have been able to join consensus in this manner.

I would also like to thank Boyd Haight and his team and the rest of the Secretariat for all of their work in pulling together the proposed Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium. They have obviously done such a good job in convincing us of the merits of the proposals because we are agreeing to provide an extra USD 30 million. So I think next time I go to negotiate a home loan, I might be calling on the skills of the Secretariat to help me in the negotiation. But to be honest and to be serious, I think also we are in this position because many Members feel that the Organization has perhaps turned a corner and is better placed to fulfil its mandate due to the efforts of the Director-General and his senior management team.

As Australia said in the Council, discussion about the budget level, for us, this has been a difficult choice but one that we made gladly. But just to say that we have shown significant flexibility in joining the consensus on the budget level. From our perspective, and as I said again in Council, this is primarily on the basis that we believe that this USD 30 million increase will support increased impact on FAO's work.

As we have stressed on numerous occasions before, we want to see FAO reclaim recognition as the pre-eminent global food and agricultural organization. And as I have just said, we are seeing some significant changes in FAO in recent years and we fully support these changes because there is a big challenge there for the Organization, and there is still a long way to go, and a lot of countries, as we have heard here today, rely on FAO. It is very important and critical for FAO to play its role in helping them with their agriculture, food, fisheries, forestry and food security needs.

I think like some have already said, including Pakistan most recently, we are very pleased that the Organization has started to genuinely reprioritize and re-allocate existing resources. There has been a lot of talk about this but we are seeing now that it is actually happening, and that it has really got to become a part of an established practice. Limited resources need to be allocated to the best possible use in the achievement of the Strategic Objectives.

We would also support a number of the statements that have been made here today by other Members, including Canada and the EU, particularly one, I guess, stressing just the importance of the normative and standard-setting work here in headquarters and about the need to maintain that technical capacity of what is a knowledge organization. So we would stress that as that is the comparative advantage of FAO and we must maintain that at all costs.

Also, the request for further information that a couple of Members have raised about GIAHS – from our perspective, we have had a number of discussions in previous governing committees and there is still some question marks there. I guess we would like to see information that satisfies us that there will be an improvement in the governance, the transparency, the accountability of this initiative. That is one area that we would be seeking further clarification and information about between now and the autumn governing committee meetings.

I might leave it at that, to say that we are very happy to join the consensus. And from our perspective now, we are really going to have a strong focus on monitoring but also working with the Organization in terms of results, impact and outcomes.

Mr Boyd HAIGHT (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management)

I would like to thank all of the Delegates who have intervened to provide comments. It is really a breath of fresh air to be able to hear your views on the Programme of Work and not get bogged down in the budget discussions which already took place two months ago.

We have listened very carefully to the various comments that you have provided on the areas of emphasis and changes. As the Director-General said on accepting his appointment on Saturday, we aim for more presence at country level and more pre-eminence at global level, and continuous improvement in what we do. I would also like to assure you that in finding the necessary efficiency savings, we will certainly protect the Programme of Work, and we believe developments going forward on staff costs will allow us to find those savings.

Now, there were several requests for additional information or clarifications. I would like to address some of those very briefly. Starting with Objective 6, the EU, Norway and Canada, made some comments and requested further information, particularly on how we are addressing the cross-cutting themes. Recall that Objective 6 has five outcomes that help us to deliver more normative core work. The first two outcomes are on technical quality and on data and statistics for evidence-based decision-making.

The last three outcomes relate to providing the coordination, the standards, the monitoring within FAO, on the integration of gender, on governance and nutrition into our Strategic Objectives.

For example, the governance work is coordinated by a governance unit that reports to the Assistant Director-General, coordinator for economic and social development. We have several outputs in the Strategic Objectives that relate explicitly to work on governance and coordination mechanisms. For example, in Strategic Objective 1 which is to contribute to the eradication of hunger, we have outputs relating to improved capacities of governments and stakeholders for strategic coordination across sectors in food security and nutrition, and that is the type of governance arrangements we are talking about. We have some outputs in Objective 2, also in Objective 3, and these will be elaborated in the indicators that we finalize in the adjustments to the PWB.

In nutrition, which is now just being put in place as a cross-cutting theme, in fact we already have quite a few areas of work that need to be coordinated with the nutrition division on the elimination of hunger and malnutrition in SO1 on the nutritional impact of food and agriculture policies and programmes, in Objective 2 on sustainable production promoting biodiversity and diversification of food production, and Objective 3 on reducing, eliminating poverty, on targeting nutritionally vulnerable families, and so forth.

So we use the units responsible for the cross-cutting themes to ensure that the work plans of our Strategic Objectives address the issues and use the power of nutrition and governance in delivering outputs.

There have been several interventions about how we address gender. There is a short section in the Conference document on the QCPR, the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, which is being considered tomorrow in Commission I. Paragraphs 60-64 of document C 2015/9 cover gender reporting, which is also in the Mid-term Review 2014. We report 14 outcomes, indicators and twenty-two output level indicators that have qualifiers that are either gender-sensitive or present dimensions that allow the monitoring and tracking in gender areas.

We mainstream gender in the Programme of Work in six main areas. The first is in gender responsive policy planning and this is supporting countries to address gender concerns in their policies and programmes, information systems. It relates to particular outputs under Objectives 1, 2 and 3. Also on rural women's economic empowerment, their participation in producer organizations under, for example, Objective 3, and also promoting women's entrepreneurship in the value chain under Objective 4.

We work in terms of providing access to resources by strengthening the capacity of policy makers and other stakeholders to address gender issues through good practices. This is a good example of what an outcome is because it is not FAO that can ensure that policy makers do something. We can provide the capacity. We can build the capacity but it also is a responsibility of governments and their officials to ensure that policies are in place.

We work under most of the objectives to support policies and programmes that reduce women's work burden in agriculture and sustainable management of natural resources. Under Objective 5 in the work on disaster risk reduction to strengthen national capacities to address specific needs of women and men in programmes on risk management, and of course on disaggregated data by providing the technical advice and support to countries to collect and use this information. We can only use it if we are able to collect it.

We have a gender unit in the social protection division that has a leadership role to work with our Strategic Objective coordinators when preparing their work plans to ensure that gender is taken into account in planning the work under the outputs. For governance, the governance unit and nutrition through the nutrition division have the same role.

In terms of the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems programme, there is a display in the Atrium that gives some information on what has been accomplished through this programme, which has been supported technically by FAO for many years, working with resources primarily from the Global Environment Fund but also from some other partners.

As you have seen in the PWB, we are allocating from within our existing resources the time of a senior officer and a support staff to support the programme. The idea is that GIAHS governance will be provided through advice from the Committee on Agriculture. It is a light process, also with a small scientific advisory board to ensure a certain amount of independence in the technical advice. So it is not intended to be a heavy process and all of the actual work on the ground will continue to be supported through voluntary contributions.

On the Technical Cooperation Programme, of course we have taken note of the importance of raising the USD 6.1 million in this coming biennium from voluntary contributions but also for the future biennia to try to bring it up to 14 percent in the appropriation.

The European Union did make a comment about trying to distribute the TCP resources across the Strategic Objectives. Now by definition, the Technical Cooperation Programme is on demand. We have reported the use of the TCP to support Strategic Objectives, but it is very difficult *a priori* to know where it will support the Strategic Objectives. Perhaps in the future, as our Country Programming Frameworks become much more tight and explicit, we may be able to make some estimates. But I would say that the most important thing is to show how it has been used after the end of a given biennium.

On the questions about the support to the middle-income countries, we did provide some information just before the Council in Information Note 4 which was actually on the areas of emphasis and de-emphasis, but there was a section in there on the MICS. But the idea is that we would have a different type of a country presence in the middle-income countries to promote stronger participation of these countries in the work of the Organization, particularly through partnerships, through South-South Cooperation, in other words being those who provide rather than who are receiving.

On the European Union's comment about the presentation of the budget, we are presently bound by the financial regulations. Financial regulation 3.2 obliges the Director-General to present the budget in US dollars and financial regulation 5.6 specifies that the assessments will be made in US dollars and in euro based on an estimate, which is in the Conference resolution of the expenditure in those two currencies.

And finally, let me just say that we are now preparing to implement the PWB for 2016-17. Several of you have commented here and in other fora in this Conference about the need to adapt to the Sustainable Development Goals. Of course we are involved in advising and supporting Members in the process. My office is also represented in a strategic planning network among the UN agencies to ensure that there is coordination in how we address the indicators.

We will also be embarking on a review of the Strategic Framework starting next year because that is the programming cycle, and to prepare a new Medium-Term Plan for 2018-21. That is really when we will be able to see the full impact of these new SDGs, particularly the indicators that countries are committing to achieve.

There were a few questions on financial matters that perhaps Denis Aitken would like to handle.

Mr Denis AITKEN (Assistant Director-General *ad interim*, Corporate Services, Human Resources and Finance Department)

I would like to make a couple of points. One or two delegations raised an issue relating to the After Service Medical Coverage. I just want to confirm that we are working substantially with our colleagues in the UN system. We have representatives both from our HR, human resources, and finance working with the colleagues in human resources. They are working with the colleagues in the United Nations on the issue of resolving this difficult question of the liability for after-service medical coverage.

It stems from the introduction of the international public sector accounting standards that we have all now adopted and that issue of crossing – being a UN system-wide issue, we have all said we need to find a UN system-wide solution.

I have to say that we, in FAO, are working hard ourselves to lead and try to be one of the leading members of that group and we hope to be able to report back to you on a regular basis in the Finance Committee and in the Council on progress in that regard.

On the issue raised by one or two others on the likelihood of the International Civil Service Commission work producing savings, I just want to note that the session of the ICSC is scheduled for the end of July-beginning of August this year that will make formal recommendations to the General Assembly this fall as the Director-General was mentioning this morning in his statement.

It is extremely important that Member Nations at that session of the General Assembly in the fall take due note and consider seriously the impact of the ICSC's recommendations on changes in remediation for staff because, for us, one of the major potential savings comes from a successful outcome of that work. We do not yet know what the outcome will be, but the concentration by Member Nations in, I would say, the months of October and November, as work progresses in New York on that, is a critical issue from the point of view of being able to make further efficiencies throughout the Organization.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. If there are no more comments, I will go directly to the summary conclusions.

1. the Conference: considered the Medium-Term Plan 2014-17 and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17, the observations and recommendations of the Council and the additional information that had been made available by the Secretariat.

2. the Conference:

a) welcomed the spirit of cooperation among Members in reaching historical consensus at the 151st Session of the Council on the recommended budget level for full delivery of FAO's Programme of Work for 2016-17.

b) expressed support for the Director-General's vision for the Organization and underlined the importance of continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization in the Medium-Term Plan 2014-17.

c) appreciated the identification of proposed areas of emphasis, de-emphasis and savings in the document.

3. in considering the substance of the proposed Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17, the Conference:

- a) welcomed the proposal to source an additional USD 6.1 million in 2016-17 through extra-budgetary resources to be used exclusively to strengthen the technical cooperation of the programme in support to Small Island Developing States, particularly to adapt to the effects of climate change.
- b) supported the organizational restructuring proposals.
- c) stressed the importance of protecting the proposed Programme of Work and emphasized the following areas in its implementation:
- i) consolidation of decentralization efforts;
 - ii) use of partnerships to enable the Organization to leverage its comparative advantages;
 - iii) tailored approach to middle-income countries;
 - iv) continued review of the capacity, location and the skills mix of human resources to ensure the optimal delivery of the Programme of Work.
- d) appreciated the transformational changes undertaken at FAO since 2012 and the efficiency gains and savings which it has generated while delivering the approved Programme of Work.
- e) agreed on the importance of full flexibility for the Director-General in identification of further efficiency gains and savings.
4. in addition the Conference:
- a) requested the Director-General's adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 be presented for consideration by the Programme and Finance Committees and approval by the Council at its 153rd Session in November/December 2015.
- b) emphasized the importance of efforts to contain staff costs of the Organization and to appeal to the General Assembly to consider the need for greater vigilance with regard to increases in staff costs across the common system, particularly within the context of the ongoing comprehensive review being undertaken by the ICSC.
- c) reaffirmed the importance of the TCP appropriation in the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19 being in line with Conference Resolution 9/89.
- d) concerning the longer-term financial health of the Organization, the Conference noted and encouraged the ongoing efforts by the Secretariat to improve the financial situation, liquidity and results including through its participation in the UN common system's search for an optimum and practicable solution to the matter of After Service Medical Coverage liabilities.

5. the Conference adopted the resolution as proposed by the Council.

Can we agree to this?

Ms Elina DAMBEKALNE (Latvia)

On behalf of the EU and its Member States, we would like to ask for five minutes' break.

CHAIRPERSON

We can have a five minute break as suggested by Latvia.

The meeting was suspended from 16:41 to 16:50 hours

La séance est suspendue de 16 h 41 à 16 h 50

Se suspende la sesión de las 16.41 a las 16.50

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, we resume our work. Are there any further requests for the floor?

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

Just a clarification. In terms of the questions countries raised regarding gender, are we getting any clarifications?

CHAIRPERSON

I ask the Secretariat to reply to the questions posed by Members.

Ms Elina DAMBEKALNE (Latvia)

We would like that the technical competence be retained at headquarters level.

CHAIRPERSON

This will be reflected in the report.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I am referring to the paragraph regarding protecting the Programme of Work and Budget and if we could have a reference to better gender integration.

CHAIRPERSON

I understand that your suggestion is to include under 3(c) which starts by stressing the importance of protecting the Programme of Work.

Mr Mohammed SHERIFF (Liberia)

We would like some clarification on the proposal made by Latvia. Regarding the decentralization process, the decision-making body would remain at headquarters, is that what I understand?

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

On the issue raised by Latvia and Liberia, I would like to dissociate the decentralization from the issue of maintaining core competence at headquarters. I have no problem with what Latvia says but it should not be linked with decentralization.

Mr Marcio Jose' Alonso BEZERRA DOS SANTOS (Brazil)

We would like clarification on the proposal made by Canada on inclusion of gender. We believe it is a cross-cutting theme in this PWB. There are many points that should be highlighted such as South-South Cooperation, nutrition and others.

Mr Vladimir KUZNESTOV (Russian Federation)

We would like to support Brazil.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

To follow up with discussions and decisions in Council where we supported the PWB but asked further clarification on how gender as a cross-cutting issue is reflected throughout the PWB. We support it as a cross-cutting issue but there could be more work in integrating through each of the Strategic Objectives with more targeted indicators and outcomes and outputs. We think it is still relevant to highlight it in the discussions even if we will receive more information in the future.

Ms Christina BLANK (Switzerland)

I would like to support the intervention made by Canada. During our comments the issue on gender was raised several times.

CHAIRPERSON

For the issue on gender, I will ask the Secretariat to provide more information. On the issue of decentralization, as suggested by Cameroon and Liberia, I would distinguish decentralization from the issue of retaining competence at headquarters. Promoting decentralization is an issue and it should not affect the quality and capacities of headquarters. Is this acceptable by everyone?

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Just a clarification. Are you saying that in your summary you will say the Conference is looking forward for more clarification from the Secretariat on this issue or are you just proposing that this should be done regardless of what is contained in the summary.

CHAIRPERSON

My proposal was to request more information from the Secretariat. I do not see the need to put it in the summary. There was some disagreement about just mentioning gender in point 3(c) but we will request the Secretariat to provide additional information.

Mr Mohammed SHERIFF (Liberia)

Could you please read again the comments made in reference to the intervention by Latvia?

CHAIRPERSON

The two issues of decentralization and the capacity at headquarters will be separated as suggested by Liberia and Cameroon supporting consolidation of decentralization efforts, but we will make reference to the importance of maintaining the capacities at headquarters. I think this should be acceptable to everyone.

The meeting is closed. I thank everyone for their participation.

The meeting rose at 17.13 hours

La séance est levée à 17 h 13

Se levanta la sesión a las 17.13

CONFERENCE CONFÉRENCE CONFERENCIA

Thirty-ninth Session Trente-neuvième session 39.º período de sesiones
Rome, 6-13 June 2015 Rome, 6-13 juin 2015 Roma, 6-13 de junio de 2015
THIRD MEETING OF COMMISSION II TROISIÈME SÉANCE DE LA COMMISSION II TERCERA REUNIÓN DE LA COMISIÓN II
12 June 2015

The Third Meeting was opened at 9.45 hours
Mr Khaled Mohamed El Taweel,
Chairperson of Commission II, presiding

La troisième séance est ouverte à 9 h 45
sous la présidence de M. Khaled Mohamed El Taweel,
Président de la Commission II

Se abre la tercera reunión a las 9.45
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Khaled Mohamed El Taweel,
Presidente de la Comisión II

**Adoption of Report / Adoption du Rapport / Aprobación del Informe
(C 2015/II/REP)****CHAIRPERSON**

I now declare open the Ninth Plenary meeting of the FAO Conference. We are starting our work this morning with the adoption of the Report of Commission II. In keeping with a practice that has been followed at past sessions of Conference, this Assembly will be requested to adopt the Report of Commission II at Commission II.

I would now like to invite the Chairperson of Commission II, Mr Khaled Mohamed El Taweel, Alternate Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt to FAO, to take the Chair in his capacity as Chairperson of Commission II and to provide a few explanatory notes and remarks on the work of the Commission since Monday, and then to propose the adoption of the Report of Commission II to Commission II. I would like to stress that from this point onwards this Assembly is to all intents and purposes a meeting of Commission II.

Mr Khaled Mohamed EL Taweel (CHAIRPERSON, COMMISSION II) (Original language Arabic)

It gives me great pleasure and honour to speak to you on behalf of Commission II for the adoption of its Report. At the same time, I have the great honour to inform other Delegates who were not part of our Commission on the work we carried out.

Continues in English

His Holiness Pope Francis said, and I quote, “effective solidarity is a key to food security”, end of quote. I can comfortably confirm that the message of Pope Francis was perfectly manifested in the work of Commission II. The effective solidarity and understanding between Members of the Commission allowed it to complete its work on the first day of deliberation.

This success was a result of the exceptional work and constructive collaboration of all its Members. In addition, the spirit of consensus and support for the Organization and its objectives prevailed during the Council meetings in March 2015. I am glad to confirm that this exceptional spirit of consensus was matched and echoed in Commission II. I am pleased to report that the historic consensus reached at Council on the budget level for the delivery of FAO’s Programme of Work in 2016-17 was unanimously and by acclamation reconfirmed in Commission II.

On behalf of Members of Commission II, I would like to express our gratitude to Council Members for having facilitated our work and for having set the tone on collaboration, respect and appreciation for the work of FAO.

In particular, I would like to thank the Independent Chairperson of the Council who steered this difficult and long process with his wisdom. In a similar vein, the Commission expressed its appreciation and endorsement for the Programme Implementation Report 2012-13 and welcomed the Programme Evaluation Report for 2015, as well as the Synthesis Evaluation of FAO Regional and Sub-Regional Offices. With regard to the latter, Commission II supported the recommendation to undertake an independent review of the Decentralized Office Network and to present its outcome along with the views of the Management to the autumn session of the Council through the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees.

I will now give the floor to my colleague and friend, Mr Ellinas, the distinguished Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, to report on the proceedings of their hard work and preparation for the Report of Commission II that is before us today.

Mr Spyridon ELLINAS (CHAIRPERSON, DRAFTING COMMITTEE OF COMMISSION II)

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to report on the work carried out by the Drafting Committee of Commission II.

Let me say at the start that it was an honour for me to chair the Drafting Committee of Commission II of the 39th Session of the FAO Conference and to work in the Committee with the distinguished

delegates of Australia, Brazil, China, Kuwait, Germany, Liberia, Mexico, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Sudan, United States of America and Zimbabwe.

I am a relative newcomer of the FAO having been here for just over a year. Ladies and gentlemen, let me say that chairing the Drafting Committee of Commission II this week has been a steep learning curve for me but also a very satisfying one.

We concluded our work in four sessions between Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday evening. Members of the Committee did not spare their energy and efforts in ensuring that the text of the Draft Report of Commission II is a fair reflection of the views of the Members.

In the end, the final text was endorsed by all of the Members of the Drafting Committee. I wish to stress that our hard work was always characterized by a good spirit of cooperation and mutual respect, even when – or I should say especially when – the views of Members diverged.

In the end, I would like to underline that this report of Commission II agreed by consensus within our Drafting Committee should be read as part of, and fully integrated with, the report of Commission I, and therefore of the whole Conference Report.

Our work was supported by the numerous members of the Secretariat and I would like to thank them for their support. Above all, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to my colleagues in the Drafting Committee for their commitment, attention and contributions through long hours of dedicated work, and while they demonstrated seriousness and professionalism required by the importance of their work. I would also like to thank them for always working in a cordial and collaborative spirit and at times with a very good sense of humour.

Members of Commission II, Chairpersons of Commission II and of the Conference, the dedicated work by the members of the Drafting Committee of Commission II has led by consensus to the report which I am honoured to present to you today.

Mr Khaled Mohamed EL Taweel (Chairperson, Commission II)

Mr Ellinas, members of the Drafting Committee of Commission II, thank you. You managed to succeed in your challenging mission. We know that your work was indeed intense but very fruitful and, on behalf of all Members of Commission II, we express our gratitude to all of you.

I personally thank the Secretariat for their strong support and for helping us through the items of the Commission. A large number contributed to making the work of Commission II successful. I thank also the interpreters for facilitating our work.

For me, it has been a most enjoyable and rewarding and exciting experience. That said, I would like to ask you from the floor in your capacity as Commission II Members to adopt the report of Commission II *en bloc*. Thank you.

Applause

Applaudissement

Aplausos

The meeting rose at 9.55 hours

La séance est levée à 9 h 55

Se levanta la sesión a las 9.55



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