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FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS - ROME

E

Twenty-seventh Session
Rome, 6-25 November 1993

FIRST REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

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Agenda for the Session¹

1. The General Committee examined the Provisional Conference Agenda set forth in document C 93/1.
2. The Committee was informed that under item 7 "Activities Related to Environment and Sustainable Development" in addition to document C 93/10 there would be two draft resolutions submitted by the Council to the Conference in document C 93/28. In order to facilitate discussion by the Conference the Committee decided that item 7 should have added to it
(a) sub-item 7.1 "Revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources" and (b) sub-item 7.2 "International Code of Conduct for Plant Germplasm Collecting and Transfer".
3. The Committee was also informed that sub-item 19.1 should be entitled "Abolition of the Panel of Experts on Emergency Action Against the Desert Locust and Other Crop Pests and Abolition of the Advisory Panel on Epizootiology" to make it consistent with the title and content of the Draft Resolution submitted by the Council (C 93/LIM/20), and that a new sub-item 19.4 "Agreement for the Establishment of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission" should be added in conformity with a recommendation of the Hundred and Fourth Council Session.
4. The Committee recommends that the Conference adopt the Provisional Agenda with the additional sub-items 7.1, 7.2, and 19.4 and the change in title of sub-item 19.1.

Establishment of Commissions and Tentative Timetable of the Session²

5. At its Hundred and Third Session, the Council formulated proposals concerning the organization and timetable for the Twenty-seventh Session of the Conference - proposals which were communicated to all Member Nations in document C 93/12. The Committee recommends that the Conference establish three Commissions to consider and report on Parts I, II and III of the Agenda.
6. The attention of the Conference is called to the fact that, in order to accommodate requests for speaking time by Ministers who will be in Rome only during the first days of the Conference, it may be necessary to prolong the General Discussion during those days to 13.00 hours in the morning and 18.30 hours in the afternoon. However, the morning and the afternoon meetings must start on time to obtain any benefit from prolonging the meetings. It is hoped that in this way all the speakers wishing to speak on Tuesday 9 and Wednesday 10 November will be able to do so. Should this prove impossible, an additional meeting could be planned for one evening. The duration of each intervention should not exceed 15 minutes.
7. The Committee recommends that the Conference approve the Tentative Timetable proposed by the Council with the above specifications. It is also understood that this Timetable may be subject to modifications in the light of progress made in the Plenary and in the Commissions.

¹ C 93/1

² C 93/12

Appointment of the Chairmen of the Three Commissions³

8. In accordance with Rules VII-I and XXIV-5(b) of the General Rules of the Organization (GRO) and as indicated in document C 93/LIM/1, the Council at its Hundred and Fourth Session proposed the following candidates for chairmanship of the Commissions:

- Commission I : H. Redl (Austria)
- Commission II : M. Sinaceur (Morocco)
- Commission III : A. Zemaitis (Lithuania)

The Committee recommends that the Conference adopt the Council's proposal.

9. In accordance with Rule X-2(c) GRO the Committee recommends that the Vice-Chairmanship of the Commissions be distributed as follows:

- Commission I : P. Karbasi (Iran, Islamic Republic of)
A.W. Kazi (Pakistan)
- Commission II : C. Paranhos (Brazil)
P.R. Janus (Netherlands)
- Commission III : M. Tabong (Cameroon)
J.P. Rivaud (France)

Resolutions Committee

10. The Council at its Hundred and Third Session recommended the establishment of a Resolutions Committee of the Conference consisting of seven members, one from each FAO region. Its terms of reference are described in document C 93/12, Appendix D, as are the criteria which should govern the formulation of resolutions.

11. The Committee recommends that the Conference adopt the Council's proposal, and that the following Member Nations, identified by the region to which they belong, sit on the Resolutions Committee.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| - Africa | Uganda |
| - Asia | Thailand |
| - Europe | Malta |
| - Latin America and the Caribbean | El Salvador |
| - Near East | Iraq |
| - North America | United States of America |
| - Southwest Pacific | New Zealand |

Delegations of the countries concerned are requested to communicate to the Chairman of the Conference, as early as possible, the name of their representative on the Resolutions Committee.

12. The Committee also recommends that the Resolutions Committee be chaired by the Representative of the Europe Region.

Admission of Observers from Applicants for Membership⁴

13. As is customary, the Director-General has provisionally invited the applicants for membership to be represented by observers until a decision has been taken on their application. The Conference will no doubt wish to confirm the invitations in respect of Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Eritrea, Kyrgyz Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Admission of Observers from Russian Federation and Ukraine

14. The Director-General has received from Russia and Ukraine letters expressing the interest of the Governments in attending the Twenty-seventh Session of the FAO Conference. Invitations to attend the Conference as observers were sent to the Governments concerned, pointing out, however, that they were subject to confirmation by the Conference, in accordance with the Principles Relating to the Granting of Observer Status to Nations (Basic Texts, Section L, para. B-1) which specify that Non-Member States of FAO may on request be invited "by the Conference ... to be represented by an observer at a session of the Conference". The Committee recommends that the Conference confirm the invitations.

Admission of New Member Nations⁵

15. In conformity with the provisions of Rule XIX of the General Rules of the Organization, the following Applications for Membership had been received by the deadline of 6 October 1993:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| - Armenia | - Slovakia |
| - Bosnia and Herzegovina | - Slovenia |
| - Croatia | - South Africa |
| - Czech Republic | - The Former Yugoslav |
| - Eritrea | Republic of Macedonia |
| - Kyrgyz Republic | |

The Committee recommends that should South Africa be readmitted to membership of the Organization, the Conference should, by the act of admitting South Africa, be taken as having decided that its Resolution No. 38/63 should no longer be operative, as from the date on which South Africa commences its participation in the organization.

16. Under Article II-2 of the Constitution, the Conference decides on the admission of additional Member Nations by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast provided that a majority of the Member Nations of the Organization is present. "Votes cast" means votes for and against, and does not include abstentions or defective ballots (Rule XII-4(a) GRO). Membership becomes effective on the date upon which the Conference approves the application.

17. The Committee recommends that the Conference hold the vote for the admission of Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Eritrea, Kyrgyz Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia at the plenary meeting on the afternoon of Saturday 6 November. The result of the vote will be announced on the morning of Monday 8 November and the ceremony for installing the new Members will take place immediately afterwards. As is customary, the Chairman will welcome the new Members and each of them may make a brief

⁴ C 93/19

⁵ C 93/19

statement. In order to gain time and not delay the work of the Conference, the Committee also recommends that this Plenary meeting begin at 09:00 hours and that only one country respond on behalf of each region. The Committee further recommends that the vote on the readmission of South Africa should take place on Tuesday 9 November.

Contributions of New Member Nations

18. In accordance with Regulation 5.8 of the Financial Regulations, the Conference determines the amount of the contribution to be paid by newly admitted Member Nations, beginning with the quarter in which the application is approved.

19. According to the established principles and customs, the minimum contribution due from these new members for the last quarter of 1993 and the advance to be made to the Working Capital Fund are:

| <u>Nation</u> | <u>Contribution</u> <u>Last Quarter</u> \$ | <u>Working Capital</u> <u>Fund Advance</u> \$ |
|--|--|---|
| - Armenia | 118,792.50 | 37,500 |
| - Bosnia and Herzegovina | 39,597.50 | 12,500 |
| - Croatia | 118,792.50 | 37,500 |
| - Czech Republic | 380,136.00 | 120,000 |
| - Eritrea | 7,919.50 | 2,500 |
| - Kyrgyz Republic | 55,436.50 | 17,500 |
| - Slovakia | 118,792.50 | 37,500 |
| - Slovenia | 79,195.00 | 25,000 |
| - South Africa | 372,216.50 | 117,500 |
| - The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia | 15,839.00 | 5,000 |

Appointment of the Director General⁶

20. By the date established by the Council, i.e., 2 April 1993, nine nominations had been received for the post of Director General. These nominations were notified to all Members by Circular Letter G/CF 4/2 of 26 April 1993. Subsequently the Government of Greece on 1 November 1993 informed the Secretary-General of the Conference that it was withdrawing the candidature of Constantin Politis. The text of the notification appears in document C 93/18-Corr.1. Accordingly, the nominees for the post of Director-General are:

- Salahuddin Ahmed (Bangladesh)
- Christian H. Bonte-Friedheim (Germany)
- Gerardus J.M. Braks (Netherlands)
- Edward P. Cunningham (Ireland)
- Jacques Diouf (Senegal)
- Geoff Miller (Australia)
- Rafael Moreno (Chile)
- Maharaj K. Muthoo (India)

⁶ C 93/18; C 93/18-Corr.1

21. Under the terms of Rule XXXVI-1(a) GRO, the General Committee determines and announces the date of the election, it being understood that the appointment of the Director-General at a regular session shall begin and be effected within three working days following the opening date of the session, i.e., before midnight on the evening of Wednesday 10 November 1993. The election is by secret ballot. A candidate who obtains the simple majority of votes cast (abstentions not being counted) is elected.

22. The Committee recommends that the first vote for this appointment should be held on the morning of Monday 8 November 1993 immediately after the Plenary adopts the report of the Credentials Committee, as specified in document C 93/12 "Arrangements for the Twenty-seventh Session of the Conference".

23. The Committee further recommends that, if necessary, balloting should continue throughout the day until the Conference appoints a Director General.

Appointment of the Independent Chairman of the Council⁷

24. By the date determined by the Council, i.e., 3 September 1993, the following nominations had been received for the office of Independent Chairman of the Council:

- José Ramón Lopez Portillo (Mexico)
- Ibrahim Adam (Ghana)

These nominations were notified to all Member Nations by Circular Letter G/CF-4/3 of 10 September 1993.

25. Under the terms of Rule XXIII-1(b) GRO, the General Committee determines and announces the date of the election. The Committee recommends that a secret ballot for this appointment take place on the morning of Tuesday 23 November 1993.

Election of Members of the Council⁸

26. Rule XXII-10(a) GRO provides that the Conference, on the recommendation of the General Committee, shall, not later than the end of the third day of the Conference Session, decide the date of election of members of the Council and the date by which nominations must be submitted.

27. The Committee accordingly recommends:

- (a) that the election begin on the morning of Monday 22 November; and
- (b) that nominations for the Council seats to be filled at the present session be communicated to the Secretary-General of the Conference (B-202) by 12.00 hours on Monday 15 November at the latest, to permit the General Committee to communicate to the Conference the valid nominations received at least three working days before the date selected for the election in accordance with Rule XXII-10(d) GRO.

⁷ C 93/15; C 93/15-Sup.1

⁸ C 93/11

28. In this connection, the Conference will note in particular the following provisions of paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 7 of Rule XXII of the General Rules of the Organization:

- "3. In selecting Members of the Council, the Conference shall give due consideration to the desirability of:
 - (a) including in its membership a balanced geographical representation of nations interested in the production, distribution and consumption of food and agricultural products;
 - (b) ensuring the participation in the work of the Council of such Member Nations as contribute in a large measure toward the success of the Organization;
 - (c) giving to the greatest possible number of Member Nations an opportunity, by rotation of membership, to serve on the Council."
- "4. Member Nations shall be eligible for re-election."
- "5. No Member Nation shall be eligible for election to the Council if it is in arrears in payment of its financial contributions to the Organization in an amount equal to or exceeding the contributions due from it for the two preceding calendar years."
- "7. A Member of the Council shall be considered to have resigned if it is in arrears in payment of its financial contributions to the Organization in an amount equal to or exceeding the contributions due from it for the two preceding calendar years, or if it has not been represented at two consecutive sessions of the Council."

29. All relevant information concerning the seats for which nominations must be submitted, and forms for submitting nominations, will be found in document C 93/LIM/8.

Right to Vote

30. The General Committee notes that the following Member Nations have not paid sufficient amounts of their assessed contributions to retain their vote in the Conference.

| Member Nations | Amounts in Arrears | Years Applicable | Contributions Due for Two Preceding years | Minimum Payment Required to Ensure Vote |
|---|--------------------|------------------|---|---|
| <u>I. Member Nations in Arrears</u> | | | | |
| Bolivia | 87,358.00 | 1990-92 | 59,518.00 | 27,841.00 |
| Burkina Faso | 89,803.72 | 1989-92 | 59,518.00 | 30,286.72 |
| Cambodia | 246,242.00 | 1982-92 | 59,518.00 | 186,725.00 |
| Comoros | 85,596.50 | 1990-92 | 59,518.00 | 23,079.50 |
| Dominican Republic | 668,400.00 | 1987-92 | 238,072.00 | 430,329.00 |
| Gabon | 414,580.42 | 1989-92 | 238,072.00 | 176,509.42 |
| Gambia | 101,365.87 | 1989-92 | 59,518.00 | 41,848.87 |
| Guatemala | 132,933.71 | 1990-92 | 119,036.00 | 13,898.71 |
| Haiti | 111,389.00 | 1989-92 | 59,518.00 | 51,872.00 |
| Iraq | 1,223,012.00 | 1990-92 | 833,252.00 | 389,761.00 |
| Liberia | 122,935.60 | 1988-92 | 59,518.00 | 63,418.60 |
| Niger | 87,358.00 | 1990-92 | 59,518.00 | 27,841.00 |
| Sao Tome and Principe | 72,519.30 | 1990-92 | 59,518.00 | 13,002.30 |
| Seychelles | 78,680.19 | 1990-92 | 59,518.00 | 19,163.19 |
| Sierra Leone | 111,332.14 | 1989-92 | 59,518.00 | 51,815.14 |
| Somalia | 135,422.00 | 1988-92 | 59,518.00 | 75,905.00 |
| Suriname | 147,056.00 | 1987-92 | 59,518.00 | 87,539.00 |
| Yugoslavia | 4,541,812.00 | 1990-92 | 3,241,812.00 | 1,300,001.00 |
| <u>II. Member Nations with Conference Authorized Instalment Plans</u> | | | | |
| Antigua and Barbuda | 166,175.50 | 1988-92 | 59,518.00 | 106,658.50 |
| Chad | 123,971.96 | 1990-92 | 59,518.00 | 64,454.96 |
| Equatorial Guinea | 84,945.60 | 1991-92 | 59,518.00 | 25,428.60 |
| Paraguay | 302,925.73 | 1990-92 | 238,072.00 | 64,854.73 |

31. The Organization has sent many communications to each of these Member Nations and received replies from all but Yugoslavia.

32. The following Member Nations have advised the Organization that a payment has already been made and should reach the Organization shortly:

Burkina Faso
Equatorial Guinea
Sao Tome and Principe

In accordance with previous practice, the Conference has considered that payments in transit or firm undertakings on the part of the Member Nations to effect a payment during the course of the Conference, has constituted a sufficient basis on which to restore the right to vote of the Member Nations. Therefore, the Committee recommends that these three Member Nations be granted the right to vote at the Conference.

33. Information received either directly from the governments or through FAO Representatives indicates that further payments will be forthcoming in the near future from:

| | |
|--|------------|
| Bolivia (after 8 November at the earliest) | Gambia |
| Cambodia | Guatemala |
| Chad | Niger |
| Gabon | Seychelles |

34. Article III.4 of the Constitution states: "A Member Nation which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the Conference if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the two preceding calendar years. The Conference may, nevertheless, permit such a Member Nation to vote if it is satisfied that the failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the Member Nation".

The following Member Nations have requested special consideration and permission to vote under Article III.4 of the Constitution as cited above:

Antigua and Barbuda
Comoros
Dominican Republic
Haiti
Iraq

Liberia
Paraguay
Sierra Leone
Somalia
Suriname

The representative from Bolivia has also informed that should the expected payment not materialize, it too would submit a request for special consideration.

35. The Committee recommends to the Conference that the ten above-mentioned Member Nations be granted the right to vote at the Conference.

36. As information is received by the Director-General from other Member Nations, either with regard to payments made or with regard to a request for special consideration by the Conference or a plan to liquidate their arrears in instalments, such information will be considered by the General Committee for further reporting to the Conference.

37. In the meantime, however, the Committee recommends to the Conference that all Member Nations in attendance be authorized to vote on Saturday 6 November and Tuesday 9 November 1993 on Item 25 of the Agenda (Applications for Membership in the Organization) and on Monday 8 November 1993 on Item 27.1 of the Agenda (Appointment of the Director-General) on the understanding that contacts with them shall be continued with a view to regularizing their arrears situation.

Right of Reply

38. At its thirteen previous sessions, the Conference had decided that, if a delegate wished to reply to criticisms of his Government's policy, he should preferably do so on the day on which such criticisms had been voiced after all those wishing to participate in the discussion had had an opportunity to speak.

39. The Committee recommends that these same arrangements be followed at the present session.

Verbatim Records

40. Rule XVIII-1 GRO lays down that verbatim records shall be kept for all Conference plenary and commission meetings. The right of delegates to check the accuracy of the record of their interventions is expressly recognized in Rule XVIII-2 GRO.

41. The accuracy of the records may be maintained by either correcting typing and other errors, or by amending a word or phrase actually used. In practice such corrections or amendments to statements are accepted only from the delegation which made the statement, and should be submitted within 48 hours of circulation of the draft verbatim record concerned.

42. In 1961 a procedure was formally adopted by the Conference whereby speakers who so desire may have their statements inserted in the record without delivering them in Plenary. This procedure is still followed and is recommended in the interests of saving time.

43. While the Committee sees no objection in principle to the insertion of statements in the records when time does not permit them to be delivered, it recognizes the difficulties which might arise if no occasion is given to delegates to exercise the "right of reply" to any criticism of their government's policy made in the inserted statement.

44. The Committee therefore recommends that the Conference continue to permit the insertion of such statements on condition that:

- (a) the Plenary, or the Commission concerned, is informed by its Chairman that a statement not actually delivered, or a substantive addition to a statement that has been delivered, is being inserted in the record;
- (b) the text handed over the Chairman for insertion is in English, French or Spanish, the languages used in the verbatim records;
- (c) the provisional verbatim record containing the additional statement is circulated at least three days before the close of the Session; and
- (d) delegations attending the Session are able to avail themselves of the right of reply by having an opportunity to make, prior to the close of the Session, a statement relating to the additional statement.

Statements by Heads of Delegations (General Discussion)⁹

45. The Committee recommends that a list of speakers be published daily in the Journal of the Conference, in the order in which they will be called upon by the Chairman, and further recommends that statements be limited to a maximum of 15 minutes.

Admission of Observers from Intergovernmental and International Non-Governmental Organizations¹⁰

46. The list of Intergovernmental and International Non-Governmental Organizations which have been invited by the Director-General to be represented in an observer capacity at this session of the Conference is given in documents C 93/13 and C 93/13-Sup.1. The invitations sent to Intergovernmental Organizations with which FAO does not have a formal agreement and to International Non-Governmental Organizations which do not have consultative status with FAO are extended on a provisional basis and are subject to approval by the Conference.

47. After having reviewed this list, the Committee recommends that the Conference confirm the said provisional invitations.

⁹ C 93/12

¹⁰ C 93/13; C 93/13-Sup.1

Informal Meeting of Observers from Non-Governmental Organizations¹¹

48. The Council recommended that, as at previous sessions of the Conference, observers from Non-Governmental Organizations be invited to attend an informal meeting, so that their advice and suggestions on the Organization's activities and programmes may be communicated to the Conference. It is suggested that this meeting take place on the morning and afternoon of Tuesday 9 November. The Committee recommends that the Conference accept this proposal.

Attendance by Liberation Movements

49. In conformity with the suggestion made by the Council at its Hundred and Third Session, observers from the Palestine Liberation Organization and the African Liberation Movements recognized by the OAU (African National Congress of South Africa, Pan Africanist Congress of Azania) have been invited to attend the Conference. The Committee recommends that the Conference confirm these invitations.

Conclusion

50. Lastly, the Committee recommends that the Conference confirm all the detailed arrangements for the session and that, except for the cases mentioned in paragraphs 6, 7, 17 and 23 above the normal working hours for the meetings of both Plenary and Commissions be 09.30 to 12.30 hours, and 14.30 to 17.30 hours. Night meetings may also be convened from 19.30 to 22.30 hours, if required. The Committee also invites all delegations to observe the working hours with the maximum punctuality.