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منظمة الأغذية
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联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations

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

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Twenty-eighth Session • Cent vingt-huitième session • 128° período de sesiones

**Rome, 20-24 June 2005
VERBATIM RECORDS OF PLENARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL**

**Rome, 20-24 juin 2005
PROCÉS-VERBAUX DES SÉANCES PLÉNIÈRES DU CONSEIL**

**Roma, 20-24 de junio de 2005
ACTAS TAQUIGRÁFICAS DE LAS SESIONES PLENARIAS DEL CONSEJO**

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COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Twenty-eighth Session Cent vingt-huitième session 128° período de sesiones
Rome, 20-24 June 2005 Rome, 20-24 juin 2005 Roma, 20-24 de junio de 2005
FIRST PLENARY SESSION PREMIÈRE SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE PRIMERA SESIÓN PLENARIA
20 June 2005

The First Plenary Meeting was opened at 10.15 hours
Mr Aziz Mekouar,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding

La première séance plénière est ouverte à 10 h 15
sous la présidence de M. Aziz Mekouar,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la primera sesión plenaria a las 10.15 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Aziz Mekouar,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

LE PRÉSIDENT

Mesdames et Messieurs, je déclare ouverte la première session de la cent vingt-huitième session du Conseil de l'Organisation.

Permettez-moi tout d'abord d'accueillir les représentants des Etats qui ont entamé ou renouvelé leur mandat de Membre du Conseil depuis 2005: l'Algérie, la Bolivie, le Brésil, le Canada, le Cap-Vert, Cuba, les Emirats Arabes Unis, les Etats-Unis, l'Erythrée, le Mali, Malte, le Mexique, Oman, les Pays-Bas, la Slovénie et Trinidad et Tobago.

Nous avons l'honneur et le privilège d'accueillir à l'ouverture de notre session son Excellence Monsieur Patrick Levy Mwanawasa, Président de la Zambie. Au nom du Conseil, je lui souhaite la bienvenue. Avant de lui donner la parole, je voudrais inviter Monsieur le Directeur général à nous présenter le Président.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to His Excellency President Levi Patrick Mwanawasa, President of the Republic of Zambia and Mrs Mwanawasa who have kindly agreed to join us here today.

Certainly, few could be better qualified to address such a meeting. For while President Mwanawasa is probably best known for his work as an internationally recognized lawyer and as a politician of strong principles and firm commitment, what many may not know is that he is also a very keen and active farmer. Thus, it is not surprising that since his election to office in 2001, President Mwanawasa has made agriculture a priority in Zambia's National Development Programme. So much so, that in the 2002-2003 growing season the country enjoyed an excellent harvest for the first time in many years. Not only this, but he has also championed the fight against HIV/AIDS which as you all know has a great impact on agriculture and food security. The President has also demonstrated a strong commitment to promoting gender equality.

Of the 60 percent of the country's land classified as medium to high potential for agriculture and a contribution of agricultural exports to non-traditional exports increasing from 21 percent to 41 percent in the decade 1990-2000, the agricultural sector clearly holds the key to Zambia's future social and economic development.

For the past 26 years, FAO has been working with the Government of Zambia in its efforts to realize more of the sector's potential. The Organization has, during this period, supported some 249 projects in crop, livestock, fisheries and the environment among others, and I wish to assure President Mwanawasa of FAO's readiness to strengthen further its cooperation with his Government.,

H.E Levy Patrick MWANAWASA, President of Zambia

I wish from the onset to congratulate your election, Mr Chairman, as Independent Chairman of the past Session of the Food and Agriculture Organization Council of Ministers. I do so because this is the first time I am appearing before you so they say "better late than never". I also wish to express my appreciation to Dr Jacques Diouf, Director-General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization for his kind invitation extended to me to address this august assembly.

I am sure that you will agree with me that this Session of the FAO Council is both timely and significant. It provides an opportunity to review the efforts of many governments around the world to achieve the global target to announce the food security as agreed by the Millennium Summit in 2000.

We all endorse the Mandate entrusted to FAO to lead one of the Millennium Development Goals which is to reduce by 50 percent world hunger by 2015. In this regard, the Council's deliberations at this Session will support the review process on the progress made in the implementation of the 2000 Millennium Declaration that will be held in New York from 10 to 16 September 2005.

I would like to commend FAO for its untiring effort and commitment to attainment of food security by all nations. For us in the developing world, achievement of sustainable food security is of paramount importance.

It is also true that our achievement of food security largely lies in the exploitation of our agricultural resources. Agriculture plays a central role in most of our developing economies, especially in Africa, where large segments of our populations eke a living from famine. In our efforts to fully exploit agriculture most of our countries have well articulated policies and strategies, which emphasize noble objectives like attainment of food security, maximizing farm incomes from wanting sustainable agricultural practices and enhancing private sector involvement in input and output markets.

It is against this background that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations country assistance programmes in Member States should play a catalytic role. Through its Mandate the Food and Agriculture Organization has made the availability of national agreement resources the basis for its programmes in the developing world, including my country Zambia.

A number of our developing countries are also still grappling with a problem of debts and favourable terms in agricultural trade with the developed world, which are manipulated in low prices for primary agriculture exports and high prices of imported agricultural requisites, such as agricultural machinery, fertilizers and agrochemicals.

Our farming systems, especially in the sub-Saharan Africa, are also still heavily dependent on rainfall which has become erratic leading to high variability in production. We all need to recognize the fact that the old weather patterns are changing and global warming is a phenomenon that is becoming more pronounced. Therefore, prudent use of our natural resources for agricultural production is a must for our countries

The developed countries have a duty to help in transferring skills and knowledge that will add value to our natural products. For instance, there are huge amounts of fruits and vegetables that go to waste in developing countries whilst there is a huge market for these commodities in the developed world. It is thus logical that developing countries need to develop a capacity for processing, packaging and shipping of these products to the markets in the developed world. This synergy should be established.

Despite the above challenges, we all have a common understanding, aspirations, to reduce hunger in the world in line with the World Food Summit commitment and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

My administration regards the Food and Agriculture Organization highly placed with respect to its established competences in technical and policy areas, in such diverse areas as crop production, livestock rearing, fisheries and forestry management. The FAO country offices in Member States need your support in their efforts to flag these issues in Member States. I therefore wish to call upon this Organization and other UN agencies to reposition themselves in providing increased funds for agricultural development around the world if the problem of hunger is to be effectively overcome.

On the question of the MDGs allow me to share with you the experiences of my country.

For us the Millennium Development Goals are a synthesis of Zambia's long-term aspirations whose achievements are being pursued through the implementation of a five-year development programme that has been developed in a very participative manner involving all stakeholders.

Given Zambia's abundant resources, that is land, sunshine, water and the people, my administration has placed agriculture at the centre stage of the country's economic development agenda. This is based on our appreciation of the importance of this sector in the development of our economy. My administration is aware of the immense potential of the agrarian sector to the national development. Agriculture is currently accounting for 18 percent of the GDP.

With the attainment of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative, HIPC completion point in April this year, my administration is committed to releasing more resources to the agricultural sector. Before the attainment of the HIPC completion point very limited resources were allocated to priority sectors of our economy. After HIPC more resources are now being earmarked to the social sector such as health and education. However, while acknowledging the challenges in the social sector, it is important that more resources be channelled also to sectors that would generate economic growth like agriculture and industry. This will directly lead to poverty reduction and wealth creation.

I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the Prime Minister of Britain, Mr Tony Blair, for the initiative that he has taken to galvanize the support of the other G8 countries and other bilateral and multilateral lending institutions in cancelling African debt. This will go a long way in keeping resources, which will now be ploughed in poverty reduction efforts.

Since coming into office in 2001, we have put in place a number of programmes aimed at revitalizing the agricultural sector. These include those aimed at improving timely access of the smallholder farmers' to agricultural inputs and also that offers a ready market for the farmer's produce. We are also opening up new farming blocks to help ease acquisition of farm land.

My administration is also committed to developing its agricultural potential to mitigate rainfall shortfalls and to encourage all-year round production of agricultural produce.

We need to encourage irrigation seriously. Therefore, we need assistance from FAO and other UN specialized agencies so that we change the mindset of people that believe that they can only engage in famine when there is adequate rainfall. For example, Zambia has abundant water resources that are not used to irrigate crops, in fact it is said that 40 percent of the water in southern Africa is located in Zambia but we see the flow to seas and oceans and unutilized there. Consequently, rainfed crops often fail when this country rainfall is experienced, in other words our people still believe that there is a difference between water and rain and, therefore, fail to utilize abundant water resources to sustain their livelihood.

My administration is determined to change the mindset of the people so as to make them make good use of abundant water to grow crops. In emphasis, our people need to be taught that water and rain are the same resource. We have no excuse in blaming drought for crop failure. Our plea is, therefore, to be assisted in constructing dams and canals and acquiring mechanical power of transporting the water from rivers and dams to fields on which we grow our crops.

There is also urgent need for me to appeal to your organization and other cooperating partners, to assist my country with support in the fight against livestock diseases. Zambia suffers from continuous livestock diseases such as contagious bovine Pleura-Pneumonia (CBPP), Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), corridor and East Coast Fever.

The country lacks the means to produce its own vaccines especially for FMD and has to depend on the services of laboratories outside the country. It is our wish to obtain our own means of producing vaccines against all these diseases, as livestock is key to the success of agriculture.

As can be seen from the above, my administration is thus moving away from just talking about its agricultural potential to realizing it and ensuring that the sector records significant growth and contributes to food security, poverty reduction and wealth creation.

Several countries in the southern African region are this year, faced with the prospects of food shortages as a result of the drought situation. Some of the countries will thus be looking to those with surpluses and the outside world for food assistance.

The pattern of adverse weather conditions in the region seems to be repeating itself with increasing frequency in the past few years. We need therefore, to develop strategies that will help deal with this problem.

I would like to call upon FAO and indeed other cooperating partners in the developed world to closely work with us in implementing long-term solutions to the problem of variability in our agricultural production systems.

What we desperately need are increased financial resources, investment and expertise to move the sector forward. We have the natural resources (i.e. land, sunshine, water and the people) that are capable and willing to work to make this happen.

As I end my speech, I would like to encourage you not to relent in your noble task of assisting countries improve the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors in various parts of the world.

I call upon all of us, Member States of FAO to support the efforts and programmes of this important UN organization in addressing the issue of agriculture and food security in the world.

Finally, I wish to once again thank the Director-General for inviting me to this important Conference.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

LE PRÉSIDENT

Monsieur le Président, je vous remercie de nouveau pour bien avoir voulu nous faire part de vos vues sur des questions aussi importantes, je suis certain que votre discours guidera notre réflexion tout au long de cette semaine.

Nous allons maintenant suspendre la séance quelques minutes afin de permettre à Monsieur le Président Mwanawasa de prendre congé.

The meeting was suspended from 10.40 to 10.50 hours

La séance est suspendue de 10.40 à 10 h 50

Se suspende la sesión de las 10.40 a las 10.50 horas

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je donne la parole au Secrétaire général adjoint qui a une brève annonce à faire concernant la participation de la Communauté européenne.

LE SECRÉTAIRE GÉNÉRAL ADJOINT

La Communauté européenne participe à cette session conformément aux paragraphes 8 et 9 de l'article II de l'Acte constitutif de la FAO. J'ai été prié de vous informer que la Déclaration relative aux compétences et au droit de vote de la Communauté européenne et de ses Etats Membres figure dans le document d'information CL 128/INF/6 qui a été distribué à tous les membres du Conseil. J'attire votre attention sur cette déclaration.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

It is my pleasure to welcome you once again on the occasion of the opening of the Hundred and Twenty-eighth Session of the Council.

The last six months, since the previous session of the Council, have unfortunately been marked by the tragedy of the Tsunami which affected so many countries with a total loss of over 300 000 lives and damages estimated at US\$7 billion. The period has also been very busy for the Organization with the important meetings with the various Committees of the Council, two Ministerial Meetings, the preparation of the Summary Programme of Work and Budget for 2006/07 and the review of FAO's contribution to the Millennium Development Goals.

During your deliberations this week, you will consider the reports of the Committees of Fisheries and Forestry and of the related Ministerial Meetings, but also the reports of the Committees of Agriculture, Commodities and Food Security. Among several issues, particular attention should be given to the problem of monitoring fishing vessels to ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the International Cooperation to Control Forest Fires, the

convening of an International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, the exchange of information on good agricultural practices and FAO's contribution to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and its involvement in the preparation of the Millennium Review Summit.

Council will have to focus on the discussion of the Summary Programme of Work and Budget 2006/07. As requested at your November 2004 Session, the programmes and budget spell out the impact of Zero Real Growth, Zero Nominal Growth and the Real Growth Scenarios.

I should mention that FAO is the only – I say only – UN agency that has been requested to prepare three budget scenarios. FAO is also unique – I repeat unique – in producing a Medium Term Plan and a Summary Programme of Work and Budget before the full Programme of Work and Budget. This planning process is too cumbersome, and I would like to applaud the Programme and Finance Committees for embarking on an initiative to review and streamline the process.

I hope that the information in the Summary Programme of Work and Budget will give you – you who are representing the membership of FAO – the means for discharging your challenging responsibility of reconciling programmes with resources and for ensuring that budget levels are not disconnected from programmes and objectives.

When reviewing the SPWB scenarios for 2006/07, I wish to ask you to remember that these proposals come after a real-terms budget cut of US\$51 million, representing 6.4 percent, in 2004-2005. The Real Growth proposal that I made does not even offset these reductions. Therefore, the Joint Meeting of the Finance and Programme Committees held last month recommended that I prepare, in the full PWB, a higher real growth scenario as well.

The Committees of the Council are engaged in a review of the Technical Cooperation Programme and a follow-up to the evaluation of decentralization. At the same time, a process is in motion to better ensure the contribution of FAO to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, defining its role as a knowledge Organization engaged completely in the fight against hunger and poverty within a framework of sustainable development. In these challenging moments, the Organization is also participating in the UN Reform Process, at Headquarters through its participation on the Chief Executive Board, and in the field within the framework of the UN Resident Coordinator System.

I must stress that FAO is vastly more efficient today than it was twelve years ago with efficiency saving of around US\$120 million per biennium, compared with 1994 already achieved. We are continuing vigorously in our efforts to do even better, because improved productivity is part of a management process, not an isolated event.

But the fact is that we face an extraordinary contradiction. The demand for FAO services is increasing in a world where 850 million human beings go to bed hungry and 5 million children die each year of causes related to malnutrition, a world struck by more natural and man-made disasters. Your goal to reduce by half the number of hungry by 2015 will be achieved only in 2150 if present trends continue, and yet, the funding that is needed for FAO to make a unique contribution (for example, in advocacy and technical assistance) has declined by 24 percent in real terms over the past dozen years.

Can we deliver more focused and better services? Can we serve our members more efficiently with less and less resources, where at the same time, the number of members increased from 171 to 188? The answer is certainly no. I, therefore, hope that the member countries will show strong leadership in charting the course of FAO's actions in the international arena, but also in providing the means to fulfill your goals.

I. INTRODUCTION – PROCEDURE OF THE SESSION**I. INTRODUCTION – ORGANISATION DE LA SESSION****I. INTRODUCCIÓN – CUESTIONES DE PROCEDIMIENTO****1. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable (CL 128/1; CL 128/INF/1; CL 128/INF/6)****1. Adoption de l'ordre du jour et du calendrier (CL 128/1; CL 128/INF/1; CL 128/INF/6)****1. Aprobación del Programa y el Calendario (CL 128/1; CL 128/INF/1; CL 128/INF/6)****LE PRÉSIDENT**

Nous allons passer au premier point de notre ordre du jour "Adoption de l'ordre du jour provisoire et du Calendrier de la session tels que présentés dans les Documents CL 128/INF/1 et CL 128/INF/6. J'aimerais vous informer que le Directeur général n'a reçu aucune demande d'admission à la qualité de membre de l'Organisation depuis notre dernière session. Par conséquent, le point 16.2 de l'ordre du jour provisoire intitulé "Demande d'admission à la qualité de membre de l'Organisation" peut être supprimé. Le Conseil se souviendra que la demande du Bélarus d'être admis à la qualité de membre a été présentée lors de sa 127ème session.

Est-ce que nous pouvons considérer que l'ordre du jour de la session est adopté?

Ewald WERMUTH (Netherlands)

On behalf of the European Community, we are very much looking forward to working with you this week and make it a constructive week and we are looking forward as well to work with all of our colleagues here on the floor.

I would like to remind you Mr Chair and all our colleagues that in the last CFS meeting in may of this year, it was concluded by the Committee on World Food Security that the Secretariat would be requested to submit a document to the upcoming high level Plenary of the UN General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals in September 2005 highlighting FAO's contributions to the MDG's. The conclusion of the CFS continues by stating: "in order to allow the Council to be informed of the contents of that contribution the Secretariat was requested to include an agenda item on this subject at the forthcoming June 2005 council session."

We do understand that it was difficult, given the time lines involved, to include this item on the Provisional Agenda of this Council meeting. However, we do feel that it is a very important and a potential meaningful point for all of us to discuss. So I would request you how you want to go about this.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, je propose qu'au moment de la présentation du rapport du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire, Madame Killingsworth introduira et fera des remarques, sur les objectifs du Millénum, au cours de cette discussion. Si cela vous convient, ensuite, peut être que les délégations, si elles veulent faire des remarques, ou si elles veulent faire des interventions à ce sujet, elles auront le loisir de le faire. Si cela vous convient, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, je pense que cela serait une bonne solution.

Très bien, y a-t-il d'autres remarques? Non? Donc, je considère que l'ordre du jour est adopté. Merci.

En ce qui concerne le calendrier de la session à projet provisoire qui figure dans le document CL 128/INF/1, est-ce que le calendrier proposé est approuvé par le Conseil? Pas de remarques? Très bien, merci. Le calendrier de la session est adopté.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je profite de cette occasion pour faire appel à votre coopération afin que soit respecté notre emploi du temps et que nos réunions puissent ainsi commencer strictement à l'heure. Nous avons un ordre du jour chargé et peu de temps à notre disposition. Par ailleurs, pour des raisons financières nous ne pouvons pas nous permettre de prolonger nos séances au-delà de l'heure prévue.

Je serais gré à ceux d'entre vous qui souhaitent faire une déclaration durant notre débat de bien vouloir donner à l'avance au secrétariat une copie du texte qu'ils entendent lire. Ceci, afin que les interprètes puissent rendre au mieux leurs textes dans les quatre autres langues.

2. Election of Three Vice-Chairpersons, and Designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee

2. Election de trois vice-présidents et désignation du président et des membres du Comité de rédaction

2. Elección de tres Vicepresidentes y nombramiento del Presidente y los Miembros del Comité de Redacción

LE PRÉSIDENT

Nous passons maintenant au point 2 de l'ordre du jour: "Election des trois Vice-présidents et nomination du Président et des Membres du Comité de rédaction. Après consultations entre les Groupes régionaux, nous disposons des propositions suivantes pour les trois postes de Vice-présidents du Conseil:

Son Excellence Nasreddine Rimouche (Algérie);

Monsieur James Melanson (Canada);

Son Excellence Monsieur Ricardo Santa Cruz Rubí (Guatemala).

Y a-t-il des objections?

Je tiens alors à féliciter les trois Présidents pour leur élection.

En ce qui concerne le Comité de rédaction, les groupes régionaux ont proposé Monsieur Willem Brakel des Etats-Unis comme Président et les Représentants des Etats Membres du Comité: l'Angola, l'Australie, l'Egypte, les Emirats Arabes Unis, les Etats-Unis, le Japon, l'Indonésie, le Mexique, les Pays-Bas, le Pakistan, le Panama, la Roumanie, le Royaume-Uni, l'Ouganda.

Y a-t-il des objections?

Très bien, donc nous avons le Comité de rédaction et nous avons son Président. Merci.

IV. CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS

IV. QUESTIONS CONSTITUTIONNELLES ET JURIDIQUES

IV. ASUNTOS CONSTITUCIONALES Y JURÍDICOS

16. Other Constitutional and Legal Matters, including:

16. Autres questions constitutionnelles et juridiques, notamment:

16. Otros Asuntos constitucionales y jurídicos, en particular:

16.1 Invitations to Non-Member Nations to attend FAO Sessions (CL 128/LIM/2)

16.1 Invitations d'États non membres à participer à des réunions de la FAO (CL 128/LIM/2)

16.1 Invitaciones a Estados no miembros para asistir a reuniones de la FAO (CL 128/LIM/2)

LE PRÉSIDENT

Très bien. Conformément à notre programme de travail, nous allons maintenant examiner le sous point 16.1 de l'ordre du jour: invitation d'Etats non membres à assister à des réunions de la FAO. Le document pertinent porte la référence CL 128/LIM/2.

Je donne la parole à Monsieur Rouighi, Secrétaire général adjoint de la Conférence et du Conseil qui va nous renseigner sur ce point.

LE SECRÉTAIRE GÉNÉRAL ADJOINT

Merci M. le Président. Une demande de participation aux travaux de cette session du Conseil a été reçue de la Fédération de Russie et une invitation a été envoyée le 25 mai 2005 sous réserve de l'approbation du Conseil. L'approbation du Conseil est donc requise pour que la Fédération de Russie puisse participer en tant qu'observateur à cette cent vingt-huitième session du Conseil.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Est-ce que je peux considérer que le Conseil est d'accord pour que la Fédération de Russie assiste à cette session en qualité d'observateur? Très bien, pas de remarques. Il en est ainsi décidé.

Je souhaite, par ailleurs, vous informer que depuis la dernière session du Conseil la Fédération de Russie a été invitée à sa demande à participer aux réunions de la FAO indiquées dans le document CL 128/LIM/2. A moins qu'un délégué ne souhaite s'exprimer à ce sujet, nous allons passer à l'examen du point suivant de l'ordre du jour. Permettez-moi d'attirer votre attention sur le document CL 128/1/7 qui porte sur l'application des décisions prises par le Conseil à sa cent vingt-septième session et sur les informations nécessaires sur les méthodes de travail du Conseil, que vous pouvez consulter sur les sites Internet que vous trouvez au comptoir de la documentation.

II. ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP**II. ACTIVITÉS DE LA FAO ET DU PAM****II. ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y EL PMA****7. Report of the 31st Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)**

(Rome, 23-26 May 2005) (CL 128/10)

7. Rapport de la trente et unième session du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale (Rome, 23-26 mai 2005) (CL 128/10)

7. Informe del 31º período de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial (CSA) (Roma, 23-26 de mayo de 2005) (CL 128/10)

LE PRÉSIDENT

Le point 7 de l'ordre du jour a trait au rapport de la trente et unième session du Comité de sécurité alimentaire mondiale qui s'est tenue à Rome du 23 au 26 mai 2005. Le document pertinent porte la référence CL 128/10. J'attire votre attention sur les paragraphes 9, 15, 17 à 20 et 26 et 27 du document qui contiennent les recommandations du Comité, que le Conseil est plus particulièrement appelées à examiner. J'invite à présent M. Søren Skafte, Vice-président du bureau du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale à introduire ce point de l'ordre du jour. Monsieur Skafte.

Søren SKAFTE (Committee on Food Security)

It is a distinct pleasure for me to present the report from our recent, very constructive and innovative Thirty-first Session of the Committee on World Food Security.

Regarding the World Food Security situation the Committee, well assisted by a very good analytical document from the Secretariat, made a series of recommendations addressed to

Governments, as well as, to FAO as just mentioned by the Chairman. You will find the specific recommendations in paragraph 9 of the Report, document CL 128/10.

As you will see, the CFS recommended Governments inter alia – to increase allocations and investments in the agricultural and rural sector, to promote a better investment environment for the private sector and to implement, where appropriate, the twin-track approach.

The CFS recommends that FAO should – inter alia – contribute along with other UN agencies within the framework of the UNDAF to the timely achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and that FAO should assist Member States with the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for food security.

The CFS also agreed on a revised and simplified format for members reporting on the Plan of Action from WFS. The FAO Secretariat, I believe, is right now testing the new format before implementation this September.

The really innovative element of the CFS Meeting was a Multistakeholder dialogue on the preparation of the Special Forum to be included in the next meeting in CFS on the Mid-Term Review in September 2006. At this occasion, representatives of some 25 NGOs and CSOs took the opportunity to speak on equal footing with Governments during the discussions. As you will see from paragraphs 17 to 20, the Committee – based on the outcome of this discussion, as it is summarized in Appendix E to the report – recommended the broadest possible participation of Stakeholders, including NGOs, CSOs and private sector associations at the Regional Consultations and Regional Conferences in 2006, and naturally, in the Special Forum itself in September 2006.

For consideration of the Consultations and the Regional Conferences, the FAO Secretariat will elaborate a framework document taking into consideration a number of events and inter alia. Also FAO's adoption of its programmes to the Millennium Development Goals as it is presented in the document, *The Road Ahead*, and as mentioned by the Chairman, we will shortly have a more thorough introduction to this document.

Finally, regarding the International Alliance Against Hunger, I will just mention that during the debate the CFS stated that the IAAH reports to the CFS, and therefore, does not represent a parallel mechanism as claimed by some members.

In concluding this introduction I strongly recommend that the Council endorses the Report and the constructive recommendations from the CFS.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Pour faire suite à la suggestion du Comité, je demande maintenant à Madame Killingsworth pour le Secrétariat, de brièvement informer le Conseil de la situation concernant la revue de la contribution de l'organisation aux objectifs du millénaire pour le développement.

Ms Kay KILLINGSWORTH (FAO Secretariat)

All FAO Members received, in the latter part of May, the paper which was just referred to, *The Road Ahead*. This represents a preliminary output from a process now underway to review FAO's present and future contribution to the achievement of the goals embodied in the UN's Millennium Declaration, in the context of the reform of the UN System.

The paper was presented at a special event during the meeting of the CFS (Committee on the World Food Security) and it is intended to stimulate discussion among members and partners about FAO's future role, as a specialized agency and a global knowledge organization, in assisting countries to achieve the MDGs. It is therefore, at this point, only a draft. It is not formally submitted for discussion to the Governing Bodies, nor will it be presented at the high-level meeting of the UNGA in September.

I have to interject here that there are actually no procedures envisaged for individual specialized agencies to formally table documents at the Millennium Summit. However, the Director-General

will be leading the FAO Delegation to the Summit and FAO will be making publications and documents available to interested Delegations.

Comments on the paper have been requested, as you know, from countries and a questionnaire has also been sent out to all FAO Members with a request for responses by the end of June. In the meantime, the Council may be interested in some background about the process followed so far and still underway.

Mr Chairman, as you know, the Millennium Declaration was adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2000. The eight Millennium Development Goals, with their 18 targets and 48 indicators, were crystallized following the adoption of the Declaration, based also on work by the United Nations, the OECD and the World Bank.

Now, at that time the FAO Strategic Framework covering the years from 2000 - 2015 had only recently been approved. It was approved by the Conference in 1999, and it did reflect an analysis of the same external environment. It was, therefore, not considered necessary or appropriate to revise the Strategic Framework, as the consistency between the MDGs in the areas of FAO's mandate and FAO's own corporate strategies in the Strategic Framework is very high. However, this may have led to the impression that FAO was not working toward the MDGs.

When the United Nations Chief Executives Board met in October 2004, it discussed how the UN system could more effectively contribute to the Millennium Development Goals. The emphasis at that meeting was on changes taking place in the wider development cooperation environment and specifically in aid policies. These, in turn, called for further adjustments in the way the UN System works to support countries.

The Director-General therefore concluded that FAO needed to take a more proactive stance and he ordered a review, both of FAO's response to the MDGs so far, and also of its participation in UN reform initiatives. The purpose of this review was initially to determine the nature and the extent of FAO's current contribution, and secondly, to examine where and how the Organization should change its programmes and structures to allow it to contribute more effectively.

Late in 2004 the Director-General established a team to work on the review, supported by a broad based Interdepartmental Advisory Group. The team had as advisor to the project Professor Bo Bengtsson of Uppsala University. The initial task was to collect data – we knew there was a very strong correlation between FAO's programmes and the MDGs, but it had never been quantified.

In December we developed and sent out two questionnaires internally. The first was sent to FAO's Programme Managers and dealt with the direct and indirect contributions to achieving the goals. To make sure that the issues and questions were reasonably well understood several presentations were made to staff in early January with a discussion on the approach to be taken in responding.

The second questionnaire dealt with FAO's participation in the UN System in related activities at country level, including through the Resident Coordinator System, the Common Country Assessments, UN Development Assistance Frameworks, Joint Programmes, as well as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and Sector-wide Approaches. This questionnaire was sent to all of FAO's decentralized offices.

The responses to the two questionnaires were fed into the development of the paper over the period February through April. In mid-March first drafts of various sections were circulated for comment and were discussed by the Inter-Departmental Advisory Group and a revised draft of the entire document was widely distributed within the Organization for comment before it was finalized and translated.

Now the initial results of the review, particularly those of a factual nature, and I could stress that it is the first such review carried out within FAO specifically addressing the MDGs, are presented in the Annex to the paper. It is hoped that this information will be of use to all members and partners in understanding the nature and extent of the Organization's response to date, which has been carried out within the framework of its approved programmes.

The paper itself, which is entitled *The Road Ahead*, takes off from this review and suggests a way forward to position the Organization to play its part in a collective response by the UN System to the global challenge which the MDGs represent. Its premise is that changes in the wider context require changes in the way FAO acts to serve its members, both developed and developing. What is outlined in this paper is not a plan, it's not a comprehensive programme of work, it is a strategic approach to ensure that the knowledge, the experience and the capacity of the Organization are mobilized to contribute to this joint effort.

The intention now is that the approach will be reviewed and refined, following comments and reactions on the paper and receipt of the responses to that questionnaire, which was sent out to all FAO members individually.

I would stress that this questionnaire asks Member Nations, among other things, to indicate what role they see for FAO in helping them to achieve the MDGs and also what types of services they would expect to need from the Organization in the coming years. Obviously the replies to questions like these are crucial to determine the direction which FAO should go and it would be premature to finalize any strategy before examining the responses received, so FAO would therefore encourage members to send in their replies as soon as possible.

The outcomes of the Sessions of the Economic and Social Council in July of this year and then of the Millennium Summit of the UNGA in September will also be important inputs in further refining the strategy. As I mentioned, the Director-General and Senior Officials will be attending both the Millennium Summit and the meeting of the ECOSOC in July and playing the advocacy role which is outlined in the paper as a major thrust of the approach envisaged for the Organization in the future. In this effort, cooperation with other Rome-based food agencies should maximize the impact of our common message.

Finally, Mr Chairman, further progress will also depend on the implementation of the recommendations of the independent evaluation of FAO's decentralization and also on Governing Bodies' decisions on the Programme of Work and Budget for 2006 - 2007. Once the strategic approach is agreed, measures required to implement the actions may be taken and will be taken by the DG when they are within his management prerogatives and submitted to Governing Bodies where there are policy or cost implications. The longer term implications will need to be addressed in the revision of FAO's Strategic Framework, scheduled for the coming Biennium.

Ewald WERMUTH (Netherlands)

The Netherlands is speaking on behalf of the European Community and its twenty five Member States. The exceeding countries Bulgaria and Romania associate themselves to this statement.

The EU endorses the report of the thirty-first Session of the Committee on World Food Security which met in Rome from 23 - 26 of May of this year, and we would like to express our thanks to the FAO Secretariat and Mrs Killingsworth for her oral presentation.

At international level there is a mounting consensus on the need to reconsider the role that agriculture and rural development, very much neglected in the past decade, should play in fighting against poverty and food insecurity. Economic growth in rural areas is key to sustaining social services, income and employment and the sustainable management of natural resources. The EU concurs with FAO on the need to scaling up investments in rural areas. Lessons learned should however warn against repropounding old concepts and schemes that have been ineffective in the past. Plans and programmes have to be founded in an integrated approach aiming at sustainable economic, social and ecological development.

The fight against hunger remains top priority for the European Union. The FAO list of hunger hot-spots is tragically long and depicts the devastating impact of human-made disasters which often trigger or worsen that of natural calamities. The EU appreciates the focus by FAO on conflicts now recognized as the most common cause for food insecurity and the disturbing fact that the number of conflict-related food security emergencies is increasing. EU welcomes the

special attention to coping with other shocks to food insecurity, arising from plant, animal and pest diseases, HIV-AIDS, and the impact arising out of climate change.

The EU recommends that FAO further engages in developing assessment tools, not only focusing on needs but also coping capacity of affected populations and the capacity of existing institution, tailor-made to the above situations, as well as those of transition and instability in association with sister UN agencies, and in particular, WFP.

Mr Chairman, the role safety nets can play is very important, not only in coping with shocks, but also in situations of chronic food insecurity, in order to take care of those most vulnerable and lift up those in absolute poverty, making them active partners in development. Safety nets are the primary responsibility of governments and societies and therefore must be viable in the long-run. Disaster preparedness and mitigation strategies should be incorporated in national development strategies. Therefore, the EU supports the assistance of FAO and its partner agencies in this regard.

If hunger is not addressed effectively and timely, after relief efforts are over, there is a serious risk that food insecurity might become chronic and therefore undermine recovery, rehabilitation and ultimately development. Hence, it must be recognized that food security has a central role to play in the assistance provided by governments and the international community to those populations striving to rebuild their livelihood after a crisis. Special focus is needed on vulnerable groups.

In order to be able to learn from the experiences of other countries we also look forward to a revised reporting format by the Secretariat for the follow-up of the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action. The EU welcomes a reporting format with reflective improvements in terms of clarity and reduced number of indicators.

The EU warmly welcomes to present its format and modalities of the 2006 Special Forum, following the President of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development. The EU has always welcomed a structural involvement of stakeholders in FAO meetings, including the CFS, and we support broad and active participation from governments, relevant international organizations and actors of civil society, including NGOs, CSOs and private sector associations. The main focus of this Special Forum should be in exploring ways for improving dialogue, consultation and understanding among all stakeholders in the future for halving the hunger by 2015.

The EU concurs with FAO on the primacy on food security in the fight against poverty and the attainment of all MDGs. The EU welcome the results of the CFS special event and appreciates the substantive discussions on ways and means to further the implementation of the WFS and the MDGs. The EU considers it crucial that FAO contributes to the Summit in September, in particular highlighting the contribution of the FAO to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration.

At the international level FAO should increase its efforts to liaise and cooperate with other UN organizations and the international financial institutions. The EU believes that the challenges are tremendous, to fight against hunger has to be an integrate part of the overall development agenda. The EU calls upon the FAO to adequately capture the overriding need for an enabling political, social and economic environment. Mr Chairman, it takes political will to ensure the achievement of the goals of the WFS and the Millennium Declaration, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Tony P. HALL (United States of America)

The United States concurs with the report of the Committee on World Food Security. We look forward to participating in next year's mid-term review of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

I would also like to take this opportunity to address FAO's Publication entitled "FAO and the Challenge of the Millennium Development Goals," which was highlighted during a special event on the occasion of the CFS. My Government will address these issues in greater detail in our response to the Secretariat's Questionnaire to Member Nations on the Role of FAO.

The United States is very committed to the achievement of the internationally agreed goals of the Millennium Declaration. We believe that the most effective way UN organizations can contribute to this process is by focusing on those areas in which they have a unique or a comparative advantage.

Three-quarters of the world's poor and hungry are located in rural areas. These people depend directly and indirectly on agriculture and agriculture-related activities, not only for their food, but also for their incomes. Increasing agricultural productivity must have high priority in any effort to promote rural development, reduce malnutrition, eradicate poverty on a sustainable basis and achieve all of the goals of the Millennium Declaration, not just the first one.

I would, however, introduce a cautionary note here: although the time-bound, measurable indicators and achievable targets of the Millennium Declaration provide a useful framework to help countries and the international community to address some of the challenges before us, they do not represent the complete development agenda. For instance, they do not deal with middle income countries, inequality and the wider dimensions of human development and good governance. We must, therefore, not let the current focus on the Millennium Declaration Goals, which we welcome, distract our attention from broader areas.

We believe that FAO can contribute most effectively to the goals of the Millennium Declaration and broader development challenges over the longer term by focusing on four key areas, where it can make the most difference.

First, FAO's normative work: FAO has not only a comparative, but a unique, advantage in its normative work. The internationally recognized standards for food safety and plant health facilitate trade and protect consumers. The "State of the World" compilations on food and agriculture, forests, fisheries and aquaculture represent the latest analyses on major areas within FAO's competence. FAO's comprehensive data on agricultural commodities, forestry and fisheries products and its policy guidance help its members increase agricultural productivity and rural development. This guidance could be put to even better use as members increase their budgets to support agricultural development, as the African Union has committed to do.

Second, FAO's response capacity and emergency assessments: FAO's agricultural and livestock response capabilities in pest outbreaks, natural disasters and other emergencies are crucial to helping communities rebuild their livelihoods. This is a capacity that needs to be strengthened and utilized even more.

Third, FAO's role as a neutral forum: FAO is the only international body with sufficient expertise, membership and mandate to tackle such problems as over-fishing and deforestation. While it might seem removed from the task of cutting hunger in half, the work of Codex Alimentarius allows food to flow across borders and to hungry households.

Fourth, FAO's promotion of science and technology: we welcomed FAO's latest report on the *State of Food and Agriculture*, which explored the potential for agricultural biotechnology to address the needs of the world's poor and food-insecure. We support a greater emphasis on increased agricultural research and development, an important part of which is the application in developing countries of new technologies, including biotechnology. Additionally, simple practical steps can go a long way toward increasing productivity.

FAO has a broad and important mandate. The goals the Millennium Declaration focus our attention on important objectives in helping those who are less fortunate. FAO can and should work within the UN system to accomplish these goals, but only as they play to FAO's strengths. The Independent External Evaluation will help us determine those precise areas of strength. Creative ideas like the International Alliance Against Hunger, will be required so that FAO and all of us can achieve the lofty goals that we have set for ourselves. People are depending on our success with their very lives.

Ms Rodha SINGH (India)

The delegations of the Committee on World Food Security are of special interest to India as the war on hunger and malnutrition finds the highest priority in the country's national and sub-national policy initiatives.

Our major policy plans for insuring national and household level food security are maintaining the temple of food production providing opportunities for income generation to insure for choosing for and maintaining adequate stocks for operating a public distribution system for providing easy access to food grains for urban and rural poor at affordable prices. These major initiatives are supplemented by special programmes for food security for vulnerable groups. The total food grain production during 2004-2006 is estimated to be 210 million tonnes. This is well within the projected requirement of 199 million tonnes.

Around 25 million tonnes of food grain were sold among the urban and rural poor at affordable prices through the public distribution system. This was in addition to more than 13 million tonnes made available, free of cost, to generate rural employment to provide for loss of employment due to natural calamities, for midday meals in government elementary schools and under various welfare schemes for the old and the infirm. These initiatives have contributed immensely to strengthen the country's food security and upgrade nutritional levels. Food grain forms part of wages under certain major schemes directed towards toppling seasonal unemployment in rural areas. A national food for work programme has been launched in 150 most vulnerable districts of the country displaying a high incidence of rural seasonal unemployment and higher than average rate of rural poverty. Under the programme, labour intensive works for water conservation and asset creations are taken up with individual wages having a food grain component.

The body forum with the regard to the National Alliance Against Hunger has since been operationalized in India.

Much useful incites have already been gained in the fields of hunger mapping, shift of emphasis from food to nutrition security and convergence of safety nets for deliberations at this common forum of Government and NGOs.

We have every reason to believe that this forum will lead to the evolution of a more comprehensive action agenda for improving quality of life through food security.

We do hope that in future the Committee on Food Security in conjunction with the Statistics Division of FAO and other constituents of the UN Development Group will develop well defined parameters of progressively assessing food security scenarios in areas of chronic distress around the world.

India has come a long way in achieving self sufficiency food production, using food grains as an important tool in its development process. We will be more than happy to share our experience and extend our help to such Member States of this Organization as may require such assistance. We have also indicated our intent on this behalf to WFP. With these comments, India endorses the recommendations of this Committee for adoption.

Suthiporn CHIRAPANDA (Thailand)

My delegation fully supports the organizing of a Special Forum for all the stakeholders of food security so that the progress of the implementation of the Plan of Action could be shared and learned in order to improve and, even to devise, new approaches to meet the MDGs in 2015.

My delegation welcomes the opportunity that regional conferences can provide for the preparation of the Special Forum. The participation of non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations at the Forum is also welcomed.

One point that needs to be raised for FAO's consideration and which may be included in the Forum's agenda for discussion is crop insurance.

Thailand suggests that FAO undertakes an overview study of updated crops insurance schemes across countries, as we have seen that droughts, floods and other natural disasters have often led to poor production, resulting in a higher incidence of poverty and under nourishment. We believe that crop insurance could help mitigate such problems. I have also been informed that the World Bank is also interested in the kind of scheme and, therefore would like to ask FAO to collaborate with other international agencies as well.

I wish to inform the Council that Thailand has established a National Alliance Against Hunger (NAAH) in the name of the National Committee on Food Security. I encourage other Member Countries who have not done so to do likewise. The fight against hunger cannot be compromised, and the right to food is basic. I sincerely hope that the world hunger problem will eventually be alleviated so that the lives of our people, especially our children, will be better off.

Sra. Moira PAZ ESTENSSORO CORTÉS (Bolivia)

Quiero aprovechar la oportunidad para endosar las recomendaciones reflejadas en el informe del 31^o período de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial. Asimismo felicitar a la FAO por la elaboración del documento sobre el Desafío de los Objetivos del Desarrollo del Milenio y el rol que cumple la FAO en la contribución para lograr la Declaración del Milenio. Es importante el análisis que hace y, sobre todo, la honestidad con la que enfoca este informe, la honestidad intelectual al darse cuenta de que tenemos todavía mucho camino por recorrer y que la FAO tiene que ajustarse a una nueva realidad si es que queremos que concurra en el logro de los objetivos del Milenio. Una de las afirmaciones más crudas que se hace en este momento es, que no obstante las autoridades de los Países Miembros muchas veces no dan la debida importancia al desarrollo agrícola y rural en las estrategias internacionales y nacionales, a pesar de que hay pruebas convincentes que son requisitos imprescindibles, no sólo para la seguridad alimentaria y la reducción de la pobreza sino también para el crecimiento económico y el progreso social de los países, la agricultura constituye una de las bases de la economía. Tal vez faltaría incluir que la paz mundial dependería también de estos elementos.

El objetivo de mi intervención es, tal vez, sugerir qué debería hacer la FAO después de recibir las respuestas al cuestionario que se ha enviado a todos los países, con la experiencia, con el "expertise" como dice el Embajador de Estados Unidos, con que cuenta la Organización y que es reconocida mundialmente. Creo sea importante que intervenga directamente en el proceso de planificación de los Países Miembros. La estrategia de la lucha contra la pobreza elaborada inicialmente por el Banco Mundial como base para que un país pudiera acogerse a las iniciativas de alivio de la deuda (HIPIC), el documento indica que, aunque no fuera la intención original, los documentos de estrategia de lucha contra la pobreza, que ahora son 56, se consideran instrumentos a través de los cuales los países en desarrollo pueden trazar sus estrategias para alcanzar los objetivos del Milenio. Creo que es importante enfatizar que son los países, junto con el Banco Mundial y el apoyo de la Comunidad Internacional, que elaboran sus estrategias de lucha contra la pobreza y este es el elemento fundamental donde tiene que entrar la FAO en el futuro. En muchos países como Bolivia donde tenemos el reconocimiento de los gobiernos locales, hay una descentralización efectiva del presupuesto nacional tratamos de respetar un proceso de planificación de abajo hacia arriba, donde efectivamente son las comunidades y los gobiernos locales que definen sus prioridades para la inversión; tendría que ser en este pleno que la FAO pueda intervenir directamente, para que los gobiernos locales definan la agricultura y el desarrollo rural como estrategia general en el proceso de desarrollo de un país.

Vladimir HERNÁNDEZ LARA (México)

Los temas evaluados durante el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial nos permitieron apreciar el insuficiente progreso en cuanto a la seguridad alimentaria mundial y la necesidad de movilizar los recursos suficientes para aplicar políticas y programas con el propósito de reducir la pobreza y el número de personas que padecen hambre, mediante la aplicación de acciones que contribuyan al desarrollo de los países. Por ello es necesario redoblar esfuerzos para desarrollar una acción coordinada que permita combatir el hambre y la pobreza conforme a los objetivos de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación de 1996, los cuales están en concordancia con los

objetivos de desarrollo del Milenio. Ello, a fin de sumar los esfuerzos nacionales e internacionales para alcanzar la meta de reducir el número de personas hambrientas para el 2015. Asimismo, para mejorar la sostenibilidad es necesario combinar la agricultura y el desarrollo rural sostenible, lo cual permitirá mejorar el acceso directo de la población más necesitada a los alimentos, lo cual dará como resultado la creación de oportunidades para que las personas desnutridas las aprovechen mejor.

Por otro lado, es necesario adoptar estrategias en los planes de desarrollo para hacer frente a las catástrofes, mediante la creación de redes de seguridad que permitan mitigar los efectos de las crisis alimentarias a través de las inversiones al sector agrícola y rural y puedan salir de su situación de vulnerabilidad.

La Delegación de México apoya la propuesta de elaborar estudios para lograr una mejor comprensión de las determinantes fundamentales de la vulnerabilidad y la inseguridad alimentaria a largo plazo. Igualmente, se está de acuerdo con el formato revisado de presentación de informes ya que facilitará la elaboración del informe y fundamentos pertinentes para el seguimiento de la aplicación del Plan de Acción y del progreso realizado para alcanzar los objetivos de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación.

Mi delegación apoya las recomendaciones contenidas en el informe del 31º período de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial.

Ms Nasrin AKHTER (Bangladesh)

Bangladesh delegation thanks the FAO Secretariat and Committee on Food Security for presenting important documents and coming up with recommendations related to world food security. My delegation finds that the eight recommendations under paragraph 9 addressed to governments of Member Countries are very pertinent to overcome the problem of food insecurity and attain the Millennium Development Goals.

The Government of Bangladesh is already in line with some of the recommendations, like involvement of the private sector in participating in poverty eradication programmes. In this connection, we would like to inform this Council about the micro credit programme of Garmin Bank, BRAC and other private and non-governmental organizations which was already lauded by the global community.

However, in order to achieve the other seven recommendations that were made, we feel that LDC countries like Bangladesh need support and cooperation from FAO and other international agencies.

Bangladesh feels that regional groupings of neighbouring countries and building regional food security resources are very important considerations to ensure food security.

The Bangladesh delegation would like to recourse this Council to endorse and prioritize the seven recommendations addressed to FAO, especially to undertake studies to assist countries to arrive at a better understanding of key determinants of vulnerability to food insecurity; to improve understanding of how shocks affect vulnerable households and the impact on their long term food security; to design policy frameworks for the promotion and household resilience to shocks, as well as enhanced economic independence for food security; and to assist Member States with the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to eradicate food in the context of national food security. Having said this, Bangladesh would like to endorse recommendations 15, 17 and 20 and would also request to come up with a decision for the Finance and Programme Committees in this regard.

Ahmed Suleiman AL-AQUIL (Saudi Arabia) (Original language Arabic)

I would ask you to give the floor to the delegation of Kuwait; they would like to take the floor on behalf of the Near East Group. Thank you very much, Kuwait please.

Ms Lamya AL-SAQQAF (Observer for Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the Near East Group I would like to say that the Group goes along with all the recommendations in the Report of the Thirty-first Session of the Committee on Food Security. Some of the Members of the Near East Group live in conditions of instability and conflict and this means that it is very difficult to have food security in certain areas in those countries.

We also believe that we ought to have sustainable rural development to make sure that there is food available for all of the population so there ought to be a form of food aid allowing for balanced agricultural processes; there ought to be a proper environment to make sure that there is investment in this sector, to make sure that there is food security.

The Near East Group would like to urge FAO to double its efforts to make sure that there is cooperation with all other organizations and with non-governmental organizations to make sure that the objectives of food security are achieved. We have to strengthen the Regional Office in the Region and make sure that it is put in the conditions of playing a proper role and putting in place a food security strategy.

Veli-Pekka TALVELA (Finland)

Finland is speaking here on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark, Iceland, Norway Sweden and Finland. We also wish to align ourselves with a statement presented hereby by the Kingdom of the Netherlands on behalf of the European Union and its 25 Member States.

We consider it opportune to comment on the role of the Millennium Development Goals for FAO in this connection.

We compliment FAO for preparing the document "FAO and the challenge of the Millennium Development Goals – the road ahead" and thus opening the discussion on this important topic. The document was discussed also at the meeting between the Nordic Ministers and the Director-General of FAO earlier this month in Stockholm, and I would like to reiterate the summary of Nordic opinions expressed in that meeting:

The delegations were pleased to note that FAO is actively involved – directly and indirectly – in the work on the MDGs. In this context, FAO's agenda is broad, consisting of essential elements of hunger and food production, but not confined to those alone. This is an important message and should be clearly communicated.

The delegations welcomed the document "FAO and the challenge of the Millennium Development Goals". The delegations see the study on an FAO strategy on MDGs as a first step in preparing the Organization for its future role as a major, pro-active player within the UN system. This will call for re-examination of both its role and future major tasks. FAO should clarify its comparative advantages amongst stakeholders. In this context, the Nordic delegations underline that FAO as a global knowledge organization has the task to assist developing countries in their accomplishments on MDGs both in a theoretical and in a practical way.

The delegations stress the concept of FAO being a global knowledge organization, having an important role to play also for international negotiations, regulatory systems and so on. The new, emerging concept implies an integration of normative and operational activities to serve both a global, technical agenda and the needs of different categories of countries and, in particular, the LDCs.

Agriculture and rural development are changing rapidly in many countries, although several developing countries are still heavily dependent on agriculture for providing income and employment to the majority of their populations. This implies an urgent need for FAO to prioritize, since human and financial resources will not be sufficient to serve all countries and cover all subject matters.

The major task and the type of agriculture, forestry and fisheries that can be envisaged by FAO in the next decade call for priority-setting of global activities to be managed or handled by a future FAO.

There is a great need to clarify FAO's role within the UN system, at country level and the way it supplements other UN organizations, including the bilateral donors. The delegations encourage FAO to be pro-active prior to the UN meeting in September by clarifying its own tentative position within a reformed UN System.

The Nordic countries stand ready to support commitments and endeavours aiming at refining criteria for intervention, increased focus and streamlining activities in areas where the Organization has comparative advantages.

According to the delegations, FAO's core activities should be sufficiently funded from the regular budget. The delegations called for the work on the MDGs to be integrated into FAO's Programme of Work and Budget.

The country presence of FAO should primarily be in the poorest countries, especially in Africa.

And finally, the Independent External Evaluation is supported by the Nordic countries as an important contribution to FAO's future development. The delegations underlined that the evaluation has to be conducted in an open and transparent manner. This was the message conveyed by the Nordic Ministers to the Director-General, and I wanted to bring it up to the attention of the Council today.

Alfredo Néstor PUIG PINO (Cuba)

Hace sólo pocas semanas nos reunimos en el 31º período de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria para debatir sobre el estado de la inseguridad alimentaria en el mundo. En esa ocasión dedicamos el análisis a valorar el efecto de los conflictos, los desastres naturales, el VIH-SIDA y otros fenómenos sobre la seguridad alimentaria mundial.

Los debates del 31º período de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria mostraron una vez más que los avances en el logro de los objetivos de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación están aún muy lejos de alcanzarse. El reconocimiento de esta triste realidad debe de llenar de profundo pesar y preocupación a toda la comunidad internacional. Sin embargo, resulta un imperativo que al tiempo de preocuparnos, debemos ocuparnos más intensamente en la tarea de erradicar la pobreza y el hambre en el mundo. Es por ello que nuestra delegación desea destacar una vez más la necesidad de encontrar soluciones verdaderas al problema del hambre y la malnutrición, las cuales pasan indudablemente por la aplicación de políticas nacionales de carácter económico y social que prioricen el bienestar del ser humano y corrijan las extremas inequidades en la distribución de la riqueza que existen en nuestro entorno.

Sin embargo, la aplicación de políticas nacionales que permitan erradicar el hambre y la malnutrición, si bien es una condición necesaria, no resulta suficiente. Es necesario que se adopten políticas que permitan el establecimiento de un orden internacional más justo y equitativo en el cual los países desarrollados comprendan definitivamente la responsabilidad histórica que tienen con la situación en la que se encuentra hoy la mayoría de los países en desarrollo.

En este sentido llamamos una vez más la atención acerca de los aspectos vinculados al comercio y su influencia en la seguridad alimentaria que deben constituir un tema permanente en el debate de los principales órganos de la FAO, incluido el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria, así como la necesidad de que la FAO trabaje aún más por tener un papel más importante en las negociaciones comerciales e internacionales con organismos especializados en el tema de la agricultura y la alimentación.

De igual forma nos preocupa que en ocasiones se presenten las situaciones de conflicto en los distintos países como causas fundamentales de inseguridad alimentaria. Si bien los conflictos crean o agudizan situaciones coyunturales de crisis alimentarias, las verdaderas causas del hambre, la pobreza y la malnutrición tienen orígenes mucho más profundos, y mientras no seamos

capaces de comprender esa realidad, será totalmente imposible erradicar esos males definitivamente.

Respecto a la aplicación de un nuevo modelo para darle seguimiento al cumplimiento de los objetivos de la Cumbre Mundial, apoyamos esa decisión, pero consideramos que ese modelo, tal como lo han expresado otras delegaciones, debe contener la menor cantidad de indicadores posible que permitan una menor carga para los países en desarrollo y den la medida más exacta posible del avance alcanzado en el cumplimiento de estos objetivos.

De igual forma, apoyamos la realización del foro especial con participación amplia, para realizar un examen a mitad del período del cumplimiento de los objetivos de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación el cual deberá estar precedido de un intenso trabajo de gestión de recursos extrapresupuestarios por parte de la Secretaría, para garantizar su celebración y resultado.

Finalmente, estamos de acuerdo con las recomendaciones contenidas en este informe.

Noah M. NKAMBULE (Swaziland)

From the onset, I thank you for giving me the floor and also express my appreciation to the FAO Secretariat for the excellent documentation before us.

With respect to Document CL 128/10, I wish to refer myself to paragraph 5c on the Green Revolution in Africa. May I on behalf of my delegation and country express my sincere appreciation to the Director-General, Dr Diouf, for having invited my Head of State to participate in that important side event. It is my country's belief that Africa indeed will realize the Green Revolution once all the challenges facing that continent are fully understood and addressed.

In paragraph 9 of the document under discussion my delegation fully endorses the recommendations for governments as well as for FAO.

Some of these recommendations to governments are already receiving active attention by my Government. We are for instance, preparing a policy and legislation to address disaster preparedness to avoid ad-hoc responses, as was the case in the past.

In line with the Declaration and Resolution by all African Heads of State and Government in Maputo, Mozambique in July 2003, my Government will be increasing the allocation to agriculture of appropriate resources to reach at least 10 percent of the national budget within the next few years. We are also planning to convene a national job creation summit next month, after which we hope to provide a better investment environment for the private sector which would improve and implement prospects for our people and also reduce the already high poverty level in our country.

Lastly, I wish to express my country's appreciation for the joint FAO/WFP assessment missions during the severe droughts that have hit my country in the last four years.

Denis CANGY (Mauritius)

The Mauritius delegation thanks the Secretariat for the preparation of document CL 128/10 and wishes to join the other delegations in expressing its preoccupation with the current rate of progress for WFS goal of halving the number of the world's hungry by 2015 will not be reached.

My delegation also appreciates the efforts of the Secretariat for having invited special guests to the meeting of the CFS and notes the concern they express regarding the potential non-achievement of the WFS target. Indeed, their statements emphasize the efforts made by the developing countries faced with hunger and malnutrition to come out of this difficult situation, as well as the efforts that have been taken by the more industrialized countries to help the poorer countries in overcoming this food disaster.

As a consequence of the forgoing remarks, my delegation feels that the time has come for the Secretariat to evaluate the reasons of this failure to reach the WFS target. We need to study carefully, to go deeper in the question of political will and its constraints in the measures which should be taken by all parties and all countries and the means of the disposal of the interested

countries to overcome their food security problems. To this end, regional reports could certainly represent a valuable source of information.

Finally, the Mauritius delegation fully supports the recommendations of the Committee on WFS, particularly paragraph 9, 15, 17 to 20 and 26 to 28.

Muhammad Ismail QURESHI (Pakistan)

Pakistan broadly concurs with the report of the Committee on World Food Security. This report, however, points to a troubling and stark fact that the world food security goal of halving the number of world's hungry by 2015 would not be attained.

Pakistan, therefore, emphasizes that this report needs further analysis to identify and quantify the reasons for this critical failure in reaching a key objective. Pakistan's situation is slightly different from the average case. Fortunately, Pakistan is in a good position to achieve WFS targets. Relating this Committee's report to Pakistan's situation, one should note that Pakistan's recent Medium Term Development Framework 2005-10 has adopted an integrated framework to deal with the shocks as well as the long term food situation. Pakistan emphasizes mitigation measures, general support of agriculture and targeted programmes. Its trade negotiation position also reflects this stance.

The report notes that coping with key shocks is an essential element of food security, but it somewhat falls short of explaining different kinds of possible shocks and measures to be taken to cope with them. The Tsunami illustrates an example of localized shocks for which aid is not often organized adequately. The report rightly recommends further work by FAO on this.

The proposed actions especially broader consultation with civil society and private sector deserves support. There should, however, be a bottom up approach, consultation within a country at the regional level and then at the world level. Additional resources need to be allocated to support the process at each level to achieve better results.

Measures such as school feeding programmes are crucial but do not reach out to families which do not send children to school. There is also the need to emphasize the role of expanding primary education as a tool to make school feeding programmes effective to fight hunger. In general, Pakistan supports the initiatives of food security.

Pakistan also appreciates FAO's strategic approach as captured in its report on the Road Ahead. While the IEE will identify area strength for FAO's future interventions, we must recognize the crucial role that FAO plays today and, therefore, should lend it full support both at political and financial levels to help achieve the ambitious task you assigned to it. We will be also submitting our formal comments on this report on the Road Ahead by end of this month.

MDGs have been agreed by UN Member States including Pakistan as a commonly accepted framework for measuring progress. The eight goals focused the world community's attention on achieving significant and measurable improvements in people's lives. The first seven goals are mutually reinforcing and are directed at reducing poverty in all its forms. The last goal, global partnership development, is about the means to achieve the first seven. The Pakistan Millennium Development Goals report 2004, the first of its annual series to follow, makes an assessment of Pakistan's performance in relation to each of the MDGs. The report presents the current status, outlines the challenges and lays out the road map towards returning the MDGs.

Pakistan's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) has been fully operationalized and as a first step its targets and indicators have aligned towards attaining the MDGs. Reasons for PRSP framework Pakistan economy has gained significant strength, quality of life indicators have been showing visible improvement and rising trends and poverty appears to have been arrested and that reversal has begun to take place. In the five year period 1999-2004 the Government has spent over US\$15 billion on the development of the social sectors and poverty related programmes. The continuing form process aims at limiting the Government's direct economic role, expanding the space for civil society, including the private sector, devolving power and placing human

development at the center of our total development effort. I am pleased to report that Pakistan is well-placed to meet most of the MDGs and targets.

The PRSP process has set the stage for taking the economy on a high growth path of around 8 percent in the medium term framework; we are now working on the five-year plan for 2005-10 which will subsume the PRSP process and move further to give a dynamic push to the realization of the MDGs.

As a country which has recently emerged from a serious debt trap, Pakistan's commitment to goal 1 to 7 critically depends upon the availability of resources. While our Government clearly sees our responsibility in tax reform and effective governance to prevent leakages and wastages in spending, as well as to ensure outcomes, we stand ready to work with our development partners for progress on Goal 8 aid especially in enhancement of grant resources and market access.

The success of current negotiations on agriculture is, therefore, very crucial for the future of agriculture, food security and rural development.

Ms Judy BARFIELD (Australia)

Australia is also disturbed by the main message expressed at the CFS meeting and interventions made this morning, but as we near the halfway mark to 2015 goal of halving hunger, it appears increasingly likely that we will not only miss the goal but miss it by a wide margin. Equally disturbing to Australia is the fact that our own region, Oceania, was identified in a recent United Nations report as having the second worst record after sub-Saharan Africa in reaching the Millennium Development Goals.

Australia strongly supports the Committee on World Food Security's recommendation that governments implement the Doha Development Agenda in agriculture. This will significantly address issues of world food insecurity.

Australia supports the recommendation that governments renew efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts and promote good national and international governments. This will contribute to addressing the problems in the Pacific region. One of the main focuses of Australia's aid and development support is the Pacific region. Australia has recognized the problems caused by civil unrest and conflict in some countries of the region by seeking to assist in establishing sustainable reform particularly in the areas of governance. Good governance across the political, economic and environmental spheres is the cornerstone of sustainable development in the Pacific, and the quality of governance has a decisive influence on development, particularly in Small Island Developing States, with limited economies of scale and few opportunities for diversification.

The Committee on Food Security report noted the impact of the Tsunami disaster on food security in the affected countries and key role played by FAO and other agencies in the recovery stage.

Included in the range of Australia's responses to the Tsunami disaster have been commitments to expand the region's tsunami identification and alert system. Australia has taken immediate steps to strengthen its own systems and these enhancements contribute significantly to region's preparedness.

Australia has provided approximately US\$70 million in our 2005-2006 budget for strengthening tsunami warning systems incorporating the Indian ocean to west and northwest of Australia and a contribution to the Pacific early warning system targeting the southwest Pacific.

Sergio ISUNZA BECKER (Chile)

Mi delegación comparte la preocupación expresada por el CSA en cuanto a que al ritmo actual de progreso no se alcanzaría el objetivo de la CMA de reducir a la mitad el número de personas que padecen hambre para el año 2015; coincide con la segunda meta del primer objetivo de desarrollo del Milenio. A este propósito nos parece que podría ser útil que hubiera una mayor coincidencia, una mayor convergencia en el seguimiento, sea de la CMA que de los objetivos del Milenio, que han sido adoptados en el 2000 por 189 países como un compromiso para combatir la desigualdad y mejorar el desarrollo en el mundo. Se trata de una carta de navegación con el horizonte 2015

para erradicar la pobreza y el hambre, universalizar la educación primaria, promover la igualdad entre sexos, mejorar la salud, revertir el deterioro ambiental y fomentar una asociación mundial para el desarrollo. El logro de los objetivos de desarrollo del Milenio de la CMA sigue siendo lento y desigual. Un gran número de naciones, en especial aquellas menos adelantadas, no conseguirán alcanzar estos objetivos pese a los esfuerzos nacionales, a menos que reciban considerables recursos y apoyo del exterior. Un reciente documento publicado por la CEPAL, denominado "Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio: Una mirada desde América Latina y el Caribe", indica que en los últimos 5 años se ha seguido avanzando en el combate al hambre, en mejorar diversos aspectos mencionados y que son parte de los objetivos de la CMA y del Milenio: sin embargo, señala que es preocupante que en los países más pobres, donde la población tiene mas problemas para acceder a los alimentos, sean precisamente los que avanzan poco. La CEPAL pone también en evidencia otro objetivo en el cual no se han logrado avances significativos, es el que se refiere a la ayuda que los países industrializados prometieron transferir a los países en desarrollo, el 0,7 por ciento del Producto Interno Bruto, que actualmente llega al 0,25 por ciento.

Por otro lado, una compleja trama de barreras impide las exportaciones de la Región a los países mas desarrollados. Teniendo en cuenta, como lo señala el Informe del CSA, que la lucha contra el hambre exige un conjunto integrado de medidas que hagan frente simultáneamente a las causas de la inseguridad alimentaria, creemos que también es importante poner el acento en el problema de los recursos necesarios para obtener los objetivos planteados. A este respecto quisiera mencionar que para contribuir a acelerar los progresos en la erradicación del hambre y la pobreza, el Presidente de Brasil junto a sus homólogos de Francia y Chile, a las que se han sumado España y Alemania, han lanzado la iniciativa contra el hambre y la pobreza, que se propone identificar fuentes de financiación que ayuden a que tengamos una globalización que incorpore mas gente al progreso económico. A este respecto, el Presidente Lagos ha señalado que "las cifras las conocemos; sabemos cuales son las urgencias presupuestarias; los 50.000 millones de dólares EE.UU. por año que faltan para cumplir las metas del Milenio en el tema del hambre y la pobreza no son difíciles de encontrar si miramos a los volúmenes financieros del proceso de la globalización. La ausencia, mas bien, esta en una decisión política capaz de dar a esta tarea una alta prioridad; cada año que pasa es mas difícil cumplir con esta meta".

Nosotros pensamos que la FAO podría tomar en consideración establecer una relación estrecha con los promotores de esta iniciativa, que presentarán a la reunión de Naciones Unidas en septiembre sobre las metas del Milenio las proposiciones con mecanismos financieros innovadores, que se sumarían a la ayuda oficial de desarrollo y que probablemente con un trabajo conjunto de estos países con las principales agencias que tienen que ver con este tema fundamental, podrían evidentemente contribuir a una proposición mejor y mas efectiva.

Paul MURPHY (Canada)

My delegation wishes to comment on the paper *FAO and the challenge of the Millennium Development Goals*. We thank the Secretariat for the preparation of this paper.

The Millennium Development Goals are well accepted in Canada and form the overall objectives of Canada's development cooperation programming. We believe the four proposed action areas, that is: advocacy, targeting, partnerships and strategic support to countries are appropriate and should inform ongoing discussions, for example, on FAO decentralisation and the review of the Technical Cooperation Programme. We believe that targeting will be particularly relevant in this context. My delegation also welcomes the clear statement on FAO's intention to participate in UN reform efforts.

In line with comments by, among others, Denmark and the United States, there was one area where my delegation would suggest further elaboration. This is the issue touched on in paragraph 5 of the paper, that is the relationship between the FAO's global public goods and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Finally, my delegation has some questions about how the results of the open-ended survey questionnaire will be used in the context of FAO priority setting. Can the Secretariat describe the way in which the survey results will feed into priority setting work within FAO?

Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

Let me first of all welcome FAO Secretariat efforts for preparing this study *FAO and the challenge of the Millennium Development Goals* - the road ahead. This important report is now under careful examination by the Brazilian Government. The Brazilian delegation has recent written preliminary comments on FAO as a knowledge organization which I would like briefly to reiterate. It is within the context of multilateralism that Brazil understands FAO's role as a repository of knowledge as well as its production and publication of studies. FAO's role as a knowledge organization has to contribute to the benefit of all Member States.

Last May member states expressed at the CFS our generalized concern that the World Food Summit Goal of halving the number of the worlds hungry by 2015 will not be attained. Of particular note was the common feeling expressed then that the fight against hunger belongs within the framework of development. Development policies must simultaneously address the transitory and chronic causes of food insecurity, in other words emergency and structural measures are equally important.

For Brazil our fight against hunger means striving vigorously and resolutely against underdevelopment. Global food security will only become a reality if measures are urgently taken under the ethics of a comprehensive commitment of the international community to development.

Social exclusion and income concentration have lead to poverty and hunger. Today, as we are well aware, more than 800 million people face hunger and undernourishment. It's a moral outrage and an economic disaster provoked by an unbalanced process of development. We live in an unequal world.

To overcome the present situation we need to commit ourselves to a sensible and comprehensive development agenda in a broad process that demands actions *inter alia*; to increase the volume of funds dedicated to development assistance; to develop sound rules for international financial flows; to promote a fair and balanced system of commerce; to overcome unfair commercial barriers and trade distorting policies on the basis of Doha development agenda; to provide general access to information, knowledge and technology; to enforce economic, social and human rights.

Brazil is glad to see that the CFS has recommended that the FAO Secretariat should help Member States within the implementation of the voluntary guidelines to support the progress realization of the right to adequate food.

Brazil understands that the implementation of the right to food demands the involvement of all stakeholders. That the rationale informing the Brazilian national food security policies which re-established the National Council for Food Security, the (CONSEA) as a fundamental instrument in a fight against hunger. The National Council and the corresponding state Councils congregate representatives from the Government, Civil Society, the private sector and academia.

We have experienced positive results with this particular participatory instrument. It has proved democratic and effective.

Brazil's particular experience in the fight against hunger or in the implementation of the right to food is not necessarily applicable elsewhere. However, it's a national commitment of both the Brazilian people and the government to promote international cooperation. We will be honoured to present some of our national experience during the Council special event on the Implementation of Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Adequate Food. This special event is going to take place in the Green Room tomorrow at 12.30

Last May the Committee on World Food Security tried a new and successful way of discussing the arrangements for the 2006 mid-term review of the World Food Summit Plan of Action. The CFS multistakeholder dialogue is a welcome new modality of work within FAO. The space of

dialogue created has received Brazil's full support and we hope that it will bring other fruitful results in the future.

Next year as the Special Forum undertakes the assessment of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, it should also discuss new forms of future interaction through consultation and enhanced dialogue with representatives of the civil society.

Ms Maryam Ahmed Moustafa MOUSSA (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the African countries we would like to thank the Secretariat. We should also like to thank the Organization for its continuous effort in fighting hunger and poverty in the African continent. We should like to stress the need for continuous efforts on the part of the Organization to fight food insecurity and which is to a large extent due to climate change. We should like to commend FAO activity in fighting desert locust which brought about a calamity in the African countries.

We should like to stress the need for a proper balance between rural development and agricultural development. In this connection we should like to stress the importance of FAO in support of NEPAD and for helping countries to establish fundable development programmes.

The Sharm el-Sheik meeting held recently in Egypt, in which more than thirty African leaders took part, this indeed bears witness to the strong commitment on the part of the African leaders for the sake of the Millennium Development Goals and development in general.

Hubert POFFET (Suisse)

La Suisse se félicite du rapport de la trente et unième session du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale et remercie le Secrétariat. Nous nous réjouissons de disposer prochainement d'un nouveau modèle de rapport amélioré sur le suivi du Plan d'action du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation afin d'augmenter la participation des Etats Membres. Nous appuyons également les modalités et le format du Forum spécial pour l'examen de mi-parcours en 2006.

Permettez-moi de faire trois commentaires spécifiques:

- premièrement, comme nous l'avons déjà relevé lors de la réunion du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale, nous estimons indispensable que la FAO mène son action, en collaboration avec les autres agences de l'ONU, dans le contexte de la mise en œuvre des objectifs du Millénaire pour le Développement. A cet égard, selon nous, une attention particulière doit être accordée à une meilleure coordination des activités opérationnelles au niveau national;
- deuxièmement, le document "La FAO et le défi des objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement – la voie à suivre" représente pour nous une première étape devant préparer la FAO à jouer un rôle actif important dans le cadre du système de l'ONU. A notre sens, le Programme de travail et budget de l'Organisation devrait être orientés dans cette perspective;
- troisièmement, En ce qui concerne les Directives sur le droit à l'alimentation, j'aimerais relever que la Suisse, comme déjà souligné lors du dernier CFS, est favorable à un examen régulier de la mise en œuvre de ces Directives par le Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale. A nos yeux, ce thème doit figurer comme un point spécifique de l'ordre du jour du CFS, par exemple dans le cadre de l'examen de la mise en œuvre du Plan d'action du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation.

Mohamed Said Mohamed Ali HARBI (Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

The Kuwait delegation spoke on behalf of the Near East Group and I should like to state here that some countries suffer from Civil problems and conflicts. I do not quite understand the word used political strife or problems. We in Sudan after January 2005 have agreed to a peace agreement with the rebel movement and this indeed is a new beginning. On 18 June, 2 days ago, thanks to the generous initiative from our neighbour Egypt, we were able to yet again sign a peace agreement with a democratic front and Nigeria is trying its best within African Union to bring about a peace with the Darfour rebel movement in order to bring about peace.

On the second issue, that voluntary organizations and NGO's have contributed a great deal, I would like to add that my President at the World Food Summit did state a position and reference was made to the situation in Darfur. We believe that some of the NGOs are not respecting or observing the sovereignty of nations. I believe that if our sovereignty and laws are respected then we shall have another position towards such NGOs.

We should focus on the substance matter of this Committee. The distinguished delegate from Kuwait did indeed express the views of this Regional Group, however, I wanted to clarify the position of my country in order to shed some light on the circumstances of the Sudan.

Per Harold GRUE (Norway)

My delegation would like to support the Swiss proposal regarding the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food and their inclusion on the CFS agenda.

Ms Mary Margaret MUCHADA (Observer for Zimbabwe)

I wish to comment the statement made by the President of Zambia on the state of the food security situation in my region. I thought it summarized most of the issues that we would have made as a Member State. I also feel that much of what he said is in response to a large extent concerning to the outline of the CFS report regarding irrigation requirements, crop inputs, assistance to farmers, markets and diversification in agriculture. I would like to add that with regard to my country we are encouraging participation of farmers through strengthening farmer organizations and training them and empowering them both in assisting their members to assess inputs and know-how.

At the same time, we look at the commitment that was made by the Member States in Maputo. In the last year, my country committed over 16 percent to agriculture, and this year we are looking to spend much more. This is in line with trying to increase our investment in agriculture. Much of this investment is going into rehabilitating old irrigation schemes, building new ones in small-scale irrigation systems at the village level, encouraging commercial farmers to rehabilitate or construct irrigation schemes on their farms and, at the same time, rehabilitating our livestock herd.

We are quite in tune with the report that was submitted to the Thirty-first Session of the Committee on World Food Security. However, we would like to appeal at this same meeting that we, as a Member State try to make an input in empowerment of our colleagues through hosting of the Regional Food Security Conference in early October. It is not clear whether FAO or its partners are in a position to assist Member States from Africa who intend to attend the Conference. Without such assistance on their part, we know that it will be very difficult for most African delegates to attend the conference. This is one way of empowering ourselves in food security and improved value addition and distribution of food in diversification in agriculture. Unless we make a full commitment to such initiatives, we would end up not being able to make full utilization of the programmes that we are implementing through FAO.

We want to end hunger. We want to end poverty but some of us can only end them if they can sell and make a sizable income from their use. This comes from adding value to what they are producing and being able to distribute those with a longer shelf life.

I appeal to you and I hope through you FAO and its partners will be able to help us in this way. I wish to thank the other speakers that have spoken in respect to Africa and those others that have made some useful statements that help our region in becoming fully self-sufficient.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je vais suspendre la séance. Cet après-midi on passera la parole au Nigéria et au Japon et ensuite on écoutera la réponse de Monsieur de Haen.

On reprendra la session cet après-midi à 14 h 30.

The meeting rose at 13.00 hours

La séance est levée à 13 h 00

Se levanta la sesión a las 13.00 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Twenty-eighth Session Cent vingt-huitième session 128º período de sesiones
Rome, 20-24 June 2005 Rome, 20-24 juin 2005 Roma, 20-24 de junio de 2005
SECOND PLENARY SESSION DEUXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEGUNDA SESIÓN PLENARIA
20 June 2005

The Second Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.50 hours
Mr Nasreddine Rimouche,
Vice-Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La deuxième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 50
sous la présidence de M. Nasreddine Rimouche,
Vice-président du Conseil

Se abre la segunda sesión plenaria a las 14.50 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Nasreddine Rimouche,
Vicepresidente del Consejo

LE PRÉSIDENT

Mesdames et Messieurs, je déclare ouverte la deuxième séance de la cent vingt-huitième session du Conseil. Avant de poursuivre nos travaux de l'après-midi, nous allons assister à une présentation vidéo sur les mesures de sécurité.

Video Presentation on FAO Security Measures

Présentation vidéo des mesures de sécurité de la FAO

Videopresentación sobre las Medidas de Seguridad de la FAO

Nous allons maintenant poursuivre le débat inachevé sur le point 7 de ce matin. Je donne la parole aux délégations qui souhaitent s'exprimer. J'ai sur ma liste les délégations suivantes Nigeria, Japon et Angola.

II. ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP (continued)

II. ACTIVITÉS DE LA FAO ET DU PAM (suite)

II. ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y EL PMA (continuación)

7. Report of the 31st Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) (Rome, 23-26 May 2005) (CL 128/10) (continued)

7. Rapport de la trente et unième session du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale (Rome, 23-26 mai 2005) (CL 128/10) (suite)

7. Informe del 31º período de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial (CSA) (Roma, 23-26 de mayo de 2005) (CL 128/10) (continuación)

Ms Amal PEPPLE (Nigeria)

The Nigerian Delegation commends the Secretariat for the paper and particularly the recommendations. The relationships between poverty and food security is well known. These twin problems are the basis of the difficulty being faced by most countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Nigeria looks forward to the Mid-Term Review of the implementation of the plan of action of the World Food Summit. We look forward to a full analysis of the factors mitigating against the realization of world food security. FAO should strengthen its interventionist capacity for emergencies such as trans-national and trans-boundary pests and animal diseases. Safety nets are also very important for immediate relief, but this rule lies with the World Food Programme. Therefore, FAO is urged to work closely with the WFP because where the immediate relief ends is where long-term recovery begins and this is where FAO is crucial. The forthcoming evaluation will, we hope, raise issues that will stimulate improved funding.

At this point, Mr Chairman, permit me to use this medium, to commend the G8 countries for the recent decision to cancel the debts of 14 African countries. We hope this is just the beginning and my country is obviously looking forward to being taken on board in near distant future.

Finally, my delegation joins the Chair of the African Group in endorsing the recommendations contained in paragraphs 9, 5 and 17.

Hideo INOMATA (Japan)

I carefully observed the interventions made by several delegates under this agenda item and would like to ask for the floor, in order to express my views on some of the points already introduced by the floor.

First of all, Japan is prepared to endorse the Report of the Thirty-first CFS session, which includes the Mid-Term Review of the Plan of Action and Multistakeholder Dialogues. In particular, I am looking forward to receiving a broad and in-depth analysis of the current status of World Food Security for our useful discussion in the year 2006. For your reference, I would like to add that my endorsement will be made based on the understanding that these initiatives will be implemented within available resources, as was already agreed upon at the previous sessions.

I would also like to touch upon the discussion related to the Right-to-Food issue. I would like to express my appreciation for the considerable efforts made by the members and individuals concerned. Therefore, I do not put serious objection against the proposal just made before.

Nevertheless, I would like to underscore the fact that the guideline adopted is voluntary in its nature and it is under the discretion of each government, regarding how they utilize the guideline within its territory. I remember, last year we worked with each other on this basic common understanding and finally reached the agreement in the spirit of cooperation.

With regard to the Millennium Development Goals and our contribution to these objectives, Japan is very much interested in this issue, in particular, in light of the Organization's future. Since this is a quite sensitive issue, I would like to understand how this issue will be handled among us, as was questioned by my Canadian colleagues.

As for the questionnaire that FAO seems to have sent to each member, I am not sure that the appropriate authority of Japan has in fact received it. Therefore, unfortunately, I am unable to make comments on this. In summary, this issue is too big to introduce any determinative results in this session. Perhaps we should continue our discussion in this regard, in an organized and transparent manner, at the future session on appropriate forum in the Organization.

Kiala Kia MATEVA (Angola)

Monsieur le Président, puisque ma délégation intervient pour la première fois, elle voudrait vous féliciter, voire au sein du bureau, féliciter les autres Membres du bureau ainsi que ceux du Comité de rédaction. Nous voulons également féliciter le Secrétariat pour la qualité du document qu'il a présenté.

Monsieur le Président, mon intervention va se limiter sur trois points:

- le premier point est d'approuver le rapport qui a été élaboré à la suite de la tenue de la session du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire.
- le deuxième point concerne l'Alliance internationale contre la faim. Nous voulons informer le Conseil que notre gouvernement a manifesté sa volonté de créer l'Alliance internationale contre la faim. Le processus a déjà commencé, il est sur le bon chemin. Nous avons eu des sessions de travail au siège de la FAO à Rome et nous pouvons dire que notre Alliance pourra voir le jour le 16 octobre 2005, journée consacrée à l'alimentation.
- le troisième point, qui est le dernier: ma délégation appui l'initiative de la réalisation d'un Forum spécial en 2006.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Voici le dernier orateur inscrit sur la liste et le débat est donc terminé. J'invite à présent Monsieur de Haen, Sous-Directeur général, chargé du département des Affaires économiques et sociales, à répondre aux différentes questions soulevées lors de ce débat.

Hartwig de HAEN (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Department)

First of all, I wish to thank you all on behalf of the Secretariat for your very positive reaction to the Report of the CFS and the many suggestions made to the Secretariat for the implementation of the recommendations that are listed in that report. We have listened carefully, taken note and will now, once Council has approved the report, go ahead and implement those recommendations as far as we can and as efficiently as we can. And this will include certainly points raised today.

I did not note many questions, but there are maybe two or three points on which response on the part of the Secretariat is appropriate, prior to asking you to give the floor to Ms Killingsworth, who will reply to the questions related to the document on the MDGs.

Several of you made reference to the Mid-Term Review planned for next year in the context of a special forum with a multi-stakeholder approach. We will be testing, in July, the questionnaire that will use the revised reporting format. Following that short test, we will be sending the questionnaire to all Members by the month of September, and I might say that our ability to draw

conclusions and provide a synthesis report on the state of implementation of the WFS plan of action will very much depend on the return of completed questionnaires from our members. Therefore, I appeal to all of you to please fill in these forms fully and carefully and hopefully we will get them back from all members of FAO on time for us to provide you with a synthesis document for next year's session of the CFS.

Several countries, Brazil, Switzerland, Japan, and some others made reference to the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security. I can confirm that the Secretariat has responded to your call at your last session to mainstream the work related to these guidelines into the Programme of Work and Budget. The PWB before you contains a provision for the establishment of a small unit and a programme entity that will enable us to assist members in the implementation of these guidelines. We certainly will also have to rely on extra-budgetary resources and the two together will hopefully help us to respond to your request in this regard.

I draw your attention to the special event that will take place tomorrow at 10:00 hours in the Green Room and I hope that we will have sufficient participation. I do not know whether you have seen the Agenda, but the event will be chaired by Minister Mr Sama Monde, Minister for Food and Agriculture of Sierra Leone. There will be a statement made on the experiences in Sierra Leone and Brazil and there will also be a report by the German Secretary of State from the Ministry of Consumer Protection Food and Agriculture, reporting about a conference that was held last year on the implementation on the guidelines. Therefore, tomorrow 10:00 hours, Green Room.

I have also noted in this context that Switzerland mentioned that they wished the implementation of the guidelines to appear on Agendas of the CFS. We are certainly in the hands of the Council to give us guidance for future sessions of CFS.

Two final points. Thailand asked what FAO is doing in assisting Member Countries in crop insurance work and providing an overview, a worldwide overview of experiences with crop insurances and to do such work in collaboration with other agencies. I am pleased to report that we are working in an interagency mechanism. At least, with full participation by The World Bank, in which crop insurance is one of the issues under a more broadly defined theme which is risk management. We are working with these other agencies in order to understand better and promote more new developments that could be of interest to Member Countries, in the field of addressing various forms of risks to their agriculture.

Finally, the Distinguished Delegate of Zimbabwe made reference to the Pan Regional Conference of Food Safety Regulators for Africa that will be held in Zimbabwe in early October and asked about the state of preparations. I am glad to report that preparations are on their way. However, she also addressed the issue of funding and I can only confirm that so far no donors have yet indicated the availability of funds, which would enable us to support travel of participants. We will use the occasion of the CODEX Alimentarius Commission and any other occasion that may come up to address this with individual donors but I would call on all those who are interested in this event that they would perhaps consider some financial support for this event. We have not set up a defined cut-off point but I would say that by the end of July we need to have clarity as to what kind of funds are available for us so that we can give the final green light for this event. However, until then we assume that this will be possible and therefore the Secretariat works closely with the WHO in preparing this event.

Ms Kay KILLINGSWORTH (FAO Secretariat)

Just to address some of the points raised during the debate concerning the MDG paper entitled *The Road Ahead*. First of all, could I express thanks on behalf of all of those in the Secretariat who participated in putting together this document, for the very positive comments about it, recognizing that it is the first step in a process which will be continuing in the months to come. We note that in several interventions members proposed to send in their written comments on the document and I would like to say again that the Secretariat looks forward to receiving these. They

will be very important in the process of refining the strategy through consultations as is the intention of the Director-General in the near future. That is with regard to the document which was sent out by Note Verbale to the main addressees of each Member Country.

A second issue is the questionnaire, on which several questions were raised. The questionnaire was sent out at the beginning of May and I would like to clarify that it was addressed to those government authorities which have been designated as the official focal points for correspondence with FAO. However, the questionnaire relates to FAO's entire mandate which may be broader than that of the main addressee for correspondence. So, the ministries and departments concerned are requested to consult with other government units, particularly those dealing with policy, planning, development cooperation, finance and the sectoral ministries dealing with agriculture, forestry, fisheries, environment and nutrition, if they are not the formal addressee. I am sure that you will agree that the problem with sending a questionnaire like this is to try and collect the broadest possible responses from the governments concerned, which obviously require a certain amount of intersectoral dialogue and consultation. So that, perhaps, could be the explanation requested by the Delegate of Japan with regard to who received the questionnaire.

With regard to the content of the questionnaire, there are three sections in it. One section requests views on the global goals of the Organization and it is clarified that this is in relation to the preparations for the revision of the Strategic Framework in the coming Biennium. A similar questionnaire was sent out in 1998 with similar questions and we would like the responses of members on the goals as they were agreed on in the Strategic Framework.

The second section is entitled *The Role of FAO in the Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals*, and this, of course, is the issue which is most relevant to the document that we are discussing at the moment. There are a number of questions there regarding the views of individual members on the role of FAO, in the future, in providing support in order to meet the various goals and targets.

The third section is deals with the services desired from FAO by Member Nations in the future. This of course is relevant for the Millennium Development Goals, but is also of specific importance in the follow-up to the independent evaluation of FAO's decentralization, because it aims to collect the views of members as to what services and in particular, in which disciplines, they would anticipate requiring FAO support in the coming years.

Now, we have requested answers by 30 June or as soon as possible thereafter. We are expecting, once we have a good enough response, to begin analysing the responses in the light of all three of these objectives which we set in sending the questionnaire out. In other words, preparation for the revision of the Strategic Framework, an assistance in developing the strategy for addressing the MDGs, and the follow-up with regard to the independent evaluation on the decentralization.

So, if I could attempt in this way to answer the question of the Delegate of Canada, the responses will be used in all three of these separate but interrelated processes. As soon as the analysis is ready, it will be made available in the appropriate fora and in the appropriate documentation for these three different processes. When that will be, I am not in a position to say - I can only encourage all Members to reply as soon as possible. I would hope that the Council would note the suggested deadline of 30 June and would like to reiterate the Secretariat's interest in receiving the widest possible response from Members on these questions which could be of great import in charting the future course of the Organization.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Merci. Vous venez d'écouter les réponses du Secrétariat. Je ne sais pas si les Membres du Conseil sont satisfaits, ou bien ont d'autres commentaires à faire. Je vois le Brésil. Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, vous avez la parole.

Flávio MIRAGAIA PERRI (Brazil)

Allow me, for the record, to go back to an issue referred to by the Director-General and included in this morning's discussion, regarding FAO's response to the Millennium Development Goals.

The subject of the MDGs is too important to be left to a few minutes of debate. You know that the Secretariat is waiting for more comments and we will be prepared to send you more comments on the excellent paper you prepared.

The point which I would like to make now, is that in our written comments, as the initial reaction to the Director-General, we remarked on the necessary relation between multilateralism and the concept of FAO's knowledge-based Organization, which is only useful if its results are applied equally to all Members States and every nation.

This idea of the knowledge-based Organization needs further development, so that the Secretariat's initial excellent effort may be placed on the proper context of FAO's fora, where all Members have a say. The issue needs to be further examined as a matter of general interest of all Member Countries, on equal footing. Any research project involving the production of knowledge should never be limited to the inputs of a particular group of countries, including donor countries.

Ms Lamya AL-SAQQAF (Observer for Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

I just wanted to say that when we were giving our comments we did not have any specific country in mind.

Neil FRASER (New Zealand)

One quick question, where can I find an electronic copy of the Questionnaire Ms Killingsworth has just been talking about?

Ms Kay KILLINGSWORTH (FAO Secretariat)

The Secretariat will be happy to provide a copy electronically of the Questionnaire to the delegate to New Zealand. It is not on the web, unlike the paper, but we do have electronic copies.

Neil FRASER (New Zealand)

We do not want any special treatment, just a copy for us. I think it should go to all members but, I am a bit surprised to hear the answer because in the Questionnaire we are told that we can return it by E-mail. I am not quite sure how anybody was going to return this hard copy by E-mail.

Ms Kay KILLINGSWORTH (FAO Secretariat)

Well, the delegate from New Zealand has me over a barrel because I did not personally send this out. However, my understanding is that electronic copies were made available - if I am wrong I will have to correct myself - and that it was not on the web because it was addressed to individual countries. There should have been a hard copy plus an electronic copy. If that has not been the case then we will make sure action is taken as soon as possible.

4. Report of the 17th Session of the Committee on Forestry (Rome, 15-19 March 2005), and the Ministerial Meeting of 14 March 2005 (CL 128/8; CL 128/INF/12)

4. Rapport de la dix-septième session du Comité des forêts (Rome, 15-19 mars 2005) et de la réunion ministérielle tenue le 14 mars 2005 (CL 128/8; CL 128/INF/12)

4. Informe del 17º período de sesiones del Comité de Montes (Roma, 15-19 de marzo de 2005) y de la Reunión Ministerial del 14 de marzo de 2005 (CL 128/8; CL 128/INF/12)

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je ne sais pas si le délégué de la Nouvelle Zélande est satisfait de ces réponses et, si c'est le cas, nous allons clore le débat sur cette question.

Je remercie Monsieur de Haen et Madame Killingsworth de leur collaboration. Nous allons passer à l'examen du point 4 de l'ordre du jour qui s'intitule "Rapport de la dix-septième session du Comité des forêts" qui s'est tenu à Rome du 15 au 19 mars 2005 et de la Réunion ministérielle tenue le 14 mars 2005.

Mesdames, Messieurs, nous allons aborder cette question. Les documents pertinents portent la référence CL 128/8 et CL 128/INF/12. Comme vous le savez, la dix-septième session du Comité des forêts a réuni les délégués de 129 pays dont vingt-huit Ministres et dix-neuf Vice-Ministres et quatre-vingt-dix Chefs de Services forestiers nationaux. J'attire votre attention sur les paragraphes du rapport qui contient les recommandations du Comité que le Conseil est appelé à examiner en particulier. Je voudrais demandé à Monsieur El-Lakany, Sous-Directeur général chargé du Département des Forêts, de présenter le Rapport du Comité ainsi que les résultats de la Réunion ministérielle.

Hosny EL-LAKANY (Assistant Director-General, Forestry Department)

Three months ago, 700 delegates from 127 countries and 30 major organizations gathered in Rome for the third Ministerial Meeting on Forests and the Seventeenth Session of the Committee on Forestry. Delegates included 47 Ministers and Vice Ministers, and 90 Heads of Forestry. Speakers included His Excellency Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of Congo, His Excellency Matti Vanhanen, Prime Minister of Finland, and Madam Wangari Maathai, 2004 Nobel Prize Laureate.

The Ministerial Meeting adopted a Statement that calls on FAO to: develop a strategy for international cooperation on wild land fire; expand capacity building for sustainable forest management; play a lead role in facilitating the international forest dialogue; continue its leadership of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

As for the Seventeenth Session of COFO, COFO commended FAO for the high quality of the State of Forestry (SOFO) 2005.

COFO called on FAO to strengthen its Regional Forestry Commissions, which have been meeting at regular intervals for over 50 years, and to expand the scope of the commissions to serve as for a for regional forest policy dialogue. The Organization will be inviting FAO Member Countries, CPF members and representatives of Civil Society to participate in the Regional Forestry Commission meetings next year and we hope that we will see the same level of interest and participation witnessed at the 2005 session of COFO.

Furthermore, COFO also agreed with the Director-General's proposal for FAO to provide leadership in developing Voluntary Guidelines on Wildland Fire Management.

COFO called on FAO to take a lead role in forest rehabilitation in areas affected by the Tsunami in December 2004 and in the low forest-cover countries; and broadly endorsed the proposed FAO Programme of Work in Forestry included in the PWB 2006-07.

We would like to thank FAO's Member Countries for their encouraging and supportive comments on the format and content of the Seventeenth Session of COFO. We hope that this session demonstrated the capacity of FAO to serve as a neutral forum for discussing and reaching agreements on key forestry issues and an organization that can respond to the evolving needs of the international forestry community and the future international arrangements on forests.

Memed GUNAWAN (Indonesia)

Before I make comments on Forestry I would like, on behalf of the Aceh Indonesian people to thank you for FAO's quick response to the Tsunami disaster in Aceh.

This is the worst natural disaster that ever happened in Indonesia, around 300 thousand people died and a hundred thousand children lost their parents and their families.

An FAO team, together with other nations and NGO teams, have been working hard to identify the necessary action and design programmes for Tsunami relief and the reconstruction of Aceh.

The findings and suggestions of FAO have been very valuable and become input for national programmes in the reconstruction of Aceh.

Regarding the report on the Seventeenth Session of the Committee on Forestry, Indonesia supports the Committee's recommendation that RFCs should address, among others, a key issue of developing and associated trade of forest products.

Indonesia supports the Committee's request that FAO provide support for countries to develop and consolidate their national fire management systems and to build the technical and operation required to engage effective international cooperation.

During the Seventeenth Session of COFO Indonesia urged FAO to stimulate the development of a international agreement on forest fire management, as an umbrella to the cooperation, and identify and develop action plans for the cooperation.

Indonesia supports the Committee's requests that FAO should continue its leadership role in the collaborative partnership of Forests; increase assistance to countries to develop and implement national forest programmes, including in partnership with the National forest programme activities; assist countries to better incorporate forestry in poverty reduction strategies to enhance forest low enforestment, including affected wildlife and to strengthen capacity for conducting national forest assessment, and building forest information systems.

During the Seventeenth Session of COFO, Indonesia put emphasis on the monitoring assessment reporting. Indonesia urges FAO to integrate reports related with monitoring and assessment process on one basis for many purposes and interest of global importance.

Furthermore, Indonesia calls FAO to support national forest inventory within framework of national forestry information.

Indonesia also calls for FAO to continue its leadership on collaborative partnership on forests; develop a strategy to enhance international cooperation on wildland fire; expand capacity building for the implementation of sustainable forest management; and play a lead role in facilitating the international forest policy dialogue

Under agenda, my intending international commitment to sustainable forest management, Indonesia conveyed the five priority programmes of the sector, emphasized the importance of international cooperation to combat illegal logging and its associated trade as forestry sector role in reducing community poverty.

Indonesia also supports the role of CPF in which FAO is a leading partner to mobilize financial resources, as well a transfer of environmentally sound technology.

José A. QUINTERO (Cuba)

Felicitemos a la Secretaría por la calidad del documento que nos ha presentado. Cuba concede prioridad al mantenimiento, cuidado y ampliación de su área de bosques, la cual constituye un elemento de gran importancia para garantizar la conservación de la biodiversidad existente en nuestro país. En ese sentido, apreciamos con satisfacción los resultados de los trabajos del Comité de Montes y ratificamos la importancia del mismo dentro de la estructura orgánica de la FAO.

Nuestra delegación apoya la recomendación del Comité de Montes para que la FAO aumente la asignación de recursos a las Comisiones Forestales Regionales y fortalezca su labor, tanto en las Oficinas Regionales como en las de los países, de forma las Oficinas Regionales de la FAO cada día adquieran mayores responsabilidades en la concepción de nuevas iniciativas y en la ejecución de los proyectos de la FAO. Destacamos en ese sentido, que una de las prioridades en la labor de esta Organización debe estar relacionada con el apoyo que brinda a los países en desarrollo para el enfrentamiento de los incendios forestales que, cuando ocurren, destruyen cientos de áreas de bosques y, en consecuencia, afectan severamente la biodiversidad y las fuentes de alimentos dificultando el trabajo encaminado a la erradicación de la inseguridad alimentaria.

Al respecto, nos sentimos complacidos por el apoyo recibido de la FAO a través de un Proyecto Regional para mejorar la preparación contra incendios forestales en América Latina, en el cual Cuba participa. Sin embargo, deseamos llamar la atención acerca de que aún los recursos destinados a esta esfera resultan insuficientes para poder contrarrestar el incremento de los

incendios forestales en nuestra Región. Es por ello que apoyamos la propuesta contenida en el párrafo 28 del documento, para que la FAO, en colaboración con los Países Miembros y otros asociados internacionales, elabore una estrategia para reforzar la cooperación internacional para combatir los incendios forestales.

También apoyamos la propuesta contenida en el párrafo 32, dirigida a que la FAO proporcione apoyo a los países para preparar y consolidar sus sistemas nacionales de manejo de incendios y cree la capacidad técnica y operacional necesaria para hacer más efectiva nuestra lucha contra los incendios forestales y sus graves consecuencias, así como, para contribuir a evitar la ocurrencia de éstas. Destacamos la importancia de la iniciativa del mecanismo para apoyar los Programas Forestales Nacionales y transmitimos nuestro reconocimiento a la FAO por el apoyo que brinda a los países en desarrollo a través del mismo, del cual Cuba también se beneficia y que ha permitido implementar pequeños proyectos que contribuyen a aumentar la capacidad técnica del país para la aplicación de la legislación forestal y la concientización sobre la necesidad del cuidado de los bosques y las medidas a aplicar para evitar los incendios.

Deseamos plantear nuestro pleno apoyo a los resultados de la Conferencia Ministerial sobre Montes, efectuada recientemente en la FAO y ratificar nuestro respaldo a la Declaración que resulto de la misma.

Bandar Ben Abdel Mohsin AL SHALHOOB (Saudi Arabia) (Original language Arabic)

I would like to give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Kuwait, who would like to speak on behalf of the Near East on this item.

Ms Lamyia AL-SAQQAF (Observer for Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the Near East Group we would like to express our thanks to the Forestry Department for everything that they have done to help the Near East region by: providing information so that we can produce a bulletin on the status of forests in that region; provide information on training programmes that promote mangrove forests, preserve our forests; and also work towards the Millennium Development Goals.

Our Group is very appreciative of the efforts being made by the Organization to strengthen international cooperation in forestry matters; strengthen capacity in the region so that we can study the status of forests in all countries of the region; and continue to protect our forests. We, of course, endorse all the recommendations that appear in the document.

Willem BRAKEL (United States of America)

We were very pleased with the structure and format of the Seventeenth Session of the Committee on Forestry. The organizers struck a good balance, we thought, between the regular work of the Committee and the side events, which were topical, well attended, and effectively complemented the Committee's work.

We would like to highlight a few of the items on the list of matters requiring attention by the Council in the Committee's Report.

We support the recommendation of the Committee to place greater emphasis on Regional Forestry Commissions. We encourage continued focus on fire, invasive species and best practices to achieve sustainable forest management.

FAO Forestry's joint work with the Collaborative Partnerships on Forests (CPF) partners is outstanding, notably in work on streamlining country reporting, information on financing for forestry and on a recent project with the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) on best practices for addressing illegal logging, forest law enforcement and governance.

As discussed in the Ministerial Session, we concur with the emphasis on greater international cooperation on fire management. We do not, however, see the need for an international accord or agreement on fire. In our view, this issue is far better addressed through existing national and regional processes, and through enhanced cooperation among the CPF partner organizations.

We concur with the Ministerial Meeting's emphasis on increasing the important contribution forests make to poverty reduction and sustainable development.

We were very pleased to join others as a donor in the National Forest Programme Facility, which provides a basis for effective partnerships in global forestry.

The United States, while recognizing the importance of raising the profile of forest issues internationally, does not support, however, the proposed International Year of Forests at this time. We believe our best efforts should be focused on implementation at the national and regional level, rather than on more talk that will distract from real action.

Finally, we would like to recognize the important work FAO is doing in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of forest areas in countries affected by the December 2004 tsunami.

Hans HOOGEVEEN (Netherlands)

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania align themselves to this statement.

First of all, the European Union would like to thank FAO for its work in preparing the Ministerial Meeting on Forests in conjunction with the Seventeenth Session of the Committee on Forestry in March of this year. The Ministerial Meeting stressed the importance of maintaining international commitment to sustainable forest management, as well as the need for international cooperation on forest fires. In addition, the European Union welcomes the attention paid by the Committee on Forestry to the contribution of forests to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This topic is particularly relevant in the context of the Millennium Review Summit scheduled for September of this year.

Mr Chairman, 2005 is a crucial year for the ongoing international forest dialogue. Indeed, in May of this year the world met in New York to make a decision on the mandate and format of future arrangements on forests. To the European Union's grave disappointment it turned out that the Fifth Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests was not able to come to an agreement. This throws into doubt our ability "to maintain" our commitment to sustainable forest management, let alone "reinforce" this commitment. The sixth session of UNFF is scheduled to meet in New York next February to finalize the matter. The European Union remains optimistic that agreement can be reached on a greater strengthening and improvement of the current international arrangements on forests, linked to a limited number of clear, objective targets associated with the existing Millennium Development Goals. In this respect, the European Union commends FAO for the support provided to the UNFF and stresses the central role of FAO in the International Arrangement on Forest. Furthermore, the European Union appreciates the offers by Panama and Argentina to host the thirteenth World Forestry Congress in 2009, which are for consideration of this Council.

Implementing sustainable forest management remains foremost a matter of national forest policies, priority-setting and coordination among economic, social and environmental policies. In this respect, the European Union welcomes FAO's lead role in the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and its National Forest Programme Facility, which is designed to offer assistance to developing countries that wish to embark on processes of forest sector policy reform.

At the global level, the European Union believes that the setting of clear objectives, associated with measurable targets is an important step in focusing the attention of the global political agenda on forest-related issues. Linking these objectives and targets with the global development agenda spelt out in the Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation reinforces the pertinence of such a process. Meanwhile, effective mechanisms for technology transfer and access to financial resources need to be put in place to implement the principles of sustainable forest management. Mainstreaming sustainable forest management projects in national development strategies, including poverty reduction strategies, is an example of a mechanism which needs to be further developed to this end.

In respect to the work done at the Seventeenth Session of the Committee on Forestry, the European Union is pleased with the 2005 Report on the State of the World's Forests and appreciates the emphasis given to enhancing the economic viability of forests. We also welcome FAO's use of the Regional Commissions in implementing the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action and the CBD programme of work on forest biological diversity.

The European Union fully supports the four areas identified for the FAO action plan and its Medium-Term Plan and Programme of Work, namely: Forest and Bio-energy; the Forest Sector Outlook studies; Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting on Forests, and last but not least, FAO's role in the International Arrangement on Forests.

While the European Union welcomes the report of the Seventeenth Session of the Committee on Forestry, we also note with concern however, that resources allocated for forests appear to be insufficient to cover new priority areas and emerging issues identified by the Committee, especially those related to the role of forests in fighting poverty. The European Union regrets that budgetary allocations for ongoing programmes such as "forests, poverty alleviation and forest security" and "participatory forestry and sustainable livelihoods" stagnated for 2006 - 2011. The European Union would welcome greater budgetary support for these areas in the future and urges FAO to consider how best to address these concerns within its final and financial framework.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je suis persuadé que le Secrétariat a pris note de vos commentaires et de l'offre pour abriter le treizième Congrès forestier mondial en 2009.

Manabu YASUHARA (Japan)

Japan would like to support as a whole the report of the Seventeenth Session of the Committee on Forestry and the outcome of the Ministerial Meeting on Forests, which appropriately reflects and summarizes the results of the discussions. During the Fifth Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests last month in New York a large number of Member States, including Japan, noted and stressed that the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) should play an important role in the international framework on forests. In this regard, we recognize that further coordination and collaboration among CPF members is extremely important for each CPF member, in order to achieve maximum outcomes within their limited budgets and human resources, and we do expect that FAO as a leading agency of CPF, shows a strong initiative on these tasks.

Flávio MIRAGAIA PERRI (Brazil)

As the Secretary-General of the United Nations has pointed out, the Millennium Development Goals do not encompass all aspects of development. The preparation of the document which we referred to before to be submitted to the upcoming High Level Plenary of the United Nations General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals in September 2005 highlighting FAO's contribution to the MDGs, should necessarily complete the initial work and establish a wider agreed benchmark for future action. This point applies also to forests, where the idea of a knowledge-based organization is a valid one. If we consider what is still left to be defined and understood on the concept of sustainable forest development it is sensible to think of forests as national resources to be dealt with by national governments on the basis of sound scientific and technical knowledge.

Last March, at the Ministerial Meeting on Forests it was recognized that forests should be high on the global political agenda, in order to accelerate the implementation of agreed decisions and enhance action at all levels.

In Brazil, since President Lula da Silva took office, the forestry issue has become a central issue in our development agenda, engendering cross-cutting actions among various areas of government. Despite intense work and high political commitment, the country still faces major battles, particularly in combating deforestation.

Brazil recognizes the central role of FAO in the field of forestry, as also confirmed by the Ministerial Meeting. Aside from its work on forestry information, monitoring, assessment and reporting, FAO must continue to play a leading role in facilitating the international forest policy dialogue, including through its leadership of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). The Organization is also fundamental in providing technical assistance to Member Countries, particularly to the National Forests Programme Facility.

Keeping up with the central role of FAO in the forestry area, the Committee on Forestry has discussed important issues, such as the international cooperation in forest fire preparedness, the contribution of forests to the Millennium Development Goals and an action programme for FAO in forestry. Brazil endorses all decisions and recommendations on the Report of the Seventeenth Session of the Committee on Forestry. In so doing, Brazil attaches particular importance to the support that the Organization can provide to the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals, a process in which we are firmly engaged. In that sense, we recall the need of developing countries for new and additional resources, improved access to financial resources and technology, as well as technical cooperation and capacity building. As national assets, forests are subject to national sovereignty and thus forestry issues are to be seen primarily from the point of view of cooperation. For such cooperation to be effective it requires transparency, a coherent concept of sustainable forest development and, in particular, the reduction of asymmetries among nations. Good governance, including at the international level, is an important element for forestry action.

On the issue of fire management, we also believe that sustainable development is the key. Although fire management is a national responsibility there is a clear need to bridge technology gaps and strengthen international cooperation. Brazil welcomes FAO's effort to develop a strategy to enhance international cooperation on forest fire preparedness in line with the IPF and IFF decisions.

Finally, Brazil would like to express its firm support to Argentina's candidacy to host the Thirteenth World Forests Congress.

Vladimir HERNÁNDEZ LARA (México)

La Delegación de México desea reiterar que para asegurar un manejo forestal sostenible, un incremento de la superficie forestal y la reducción de la tasa de deforestación es deseable definir el futuro arreglo para los bosques. Para ello, la FAO, como organismo especializado para los bosques en el Sistema de Naciones Unidas deberá tener un papel de liderazgo que permita aprovechar su experiencia y conocimiento que redundará en favor de la ordenación sostenible de todo tipo de bosques.

Mi delegación considera que uno de los principales retos es la coordinación del sector ambiental con las demás áreas del gobierno encargadas de aspectos sociales y productivos, lo que permitirá que las acciones que se tomen para combatir la pobreza no sean a costo de un mayor deterioro del ambiente y, en particular, de los recursos forestales.

Asimismo los objetivos de desarrollo del Milenio y las metas definidas son, sin duda, una ambiciosa iniciativa internacional para avanzar hacia el desarrollo sustentable señalando claramente la importancia de los bosques y la efectiva integración de la componente ambiental.

Por último, deseo señalar que para nuestro país es de suma importancia que se consideren en la agenda del sector forestal mundial aquellos temas que tengan relación con el manejo forestal sustentable, como el pago de servicios ambientales, las plantaciones forestales, la capacitación y asistencia técnica, la promoción y comercialización de productos y servicios no maderables y el comercio internacional de estos productos.

Yassar Abdel Rahman SOROUR (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

To start, I would like to express our gratitude to the Secretariat for preparing the document now before us, and in this regard, I would like to underscore the very favourable welcome received by the African Group of the decision to include the forestry sector within the NEPAD initiative. We hope that there will be wide collaboration between FAO and NEPAD. This would be beneficial to the African continent. The attainment of the Millennium Goals to meet the challenges of developing countries is a must.

During our previous session, we discussed the role of forests within the framework of the alleviation of poverty, and it is in this connection that we stress the importance of international collaboration for the development of the forestry sector, and all this should include capacity building through FAO. The Secretariat of the Organization, the experts and know-how of the Organization will certainly contribute to providing assistance to Africa in its promotion of the forestry sector.

The convening of the Ministerial Conference on Forestry shows how much interest the Organization has for this sector. We welcome all that is stated about FAO's drawing up guidelines to curb forest and woodland fires and the management of forests after fires.

We hope that the Organization may include a specific agenda on this item at the forthcoming meeting in Mali. We thank the Secretariat and we hope that the collaboration between FAO and Member States will further the forestry sector and help combat fires.

Ms Judy BARFIELD (Australia)

Australia was disappointed at the progress made at the Fifth Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests held in New York in May, which failed in its efforts to reach agreement on the future international arrangement on forests.

Australia is concerned that UNFF will not be able to find a way forward as the issues which countries have not been able to agree on over the years are still outstanding. Hence, Australia believes that it should focus on implementation within the Asia-Pacific region.

Australia supports FAO's Committee on Forestry as a leading forum for discussion on international forestry issues. At the 17th Session of COFO, Australia supported requests for strengthening the regional forestry commissions. These commissions play an important role in linking national issues to the broader global agenda on forests and sometimes the only fora for small nations to voice their views. Regional forestry commissions are crucial in defining forestry issues of relevance to a region and promoting on the ground action to address them. Australia would like to see regional bodies play a greater role in a future international arrangement on forests.

The Australian Government is interested in practical actions that promote sustainable forest management. We would like to see more resources go to the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission for their important work, particularly in light of the lack of progress at UNFF-5. We believe that practical outcomes can be achieved at the regional level. Key regional issues of interest to Australia are harmonization of monitoring and reporting, forest law enforcement and governance, mutual recognition of certification schemes, work on invasive species and implementation of the proposals for action under the UNFF.

Australia supports the March Ministerial Meeting outcomes on the need for international cooperation in forest fire preparedness. Australia supports FAO taking a leading role in international cooperation through supporting countries to develop and consolidate national fire management systems and to build technical and operational capacities.

Young-gu LEE (Republic of Korea)

On behalf of the Korean delegation I would like to acknowledge the Secretariat for the documentation of this excellent report. My delegation is very pleased with the report, and in endorsing it, would like to emphasize a few points.

We believe that the sustainable forest management is an efficient way to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by way of reducing hunger, security in food, providing energy and reducing global warming.

The Republic of Korea has experienced tremendous deterioration of forests in the early part of the 20th century. The Forest Act and the Erosion Control were enacted, respectively. Based on these Acts, the Korean Government reinforced the National Forest Plans, in which all the public have actively participated. During the First and Second National Forests Plans about 2 million hectares of forests were rehabilitated and restored.

The Republic of Korea has been successful in accomplishing nationwide greening in a short period. We believe that the strong Forest Acts and our National Plans have led to a successful forest restoration in the Republic of Korea.

Since 2000, we have been taking the initiative to restore the forest, especially in the east Asia regions through close bilateral cooperation relationships. We will make aggressive efforts to take part in contributing to coniferous technical and training support for global forest restoration. We are also making many efforts for the rehabilitation of the Tsunami damages and desertification in Southeast Asian countries, based on our experience of successful reforestation.

We believe that FAO should play a significant role in reinforcing international efforts on global forests restoration and strengthening international cooperation. Especially, I would like to emphasize two points.

First, FAO should strengthen its technical assistance to countries to improve governance, strengthen institutional framework and promote sustainable community based on forest management.

Secondly, as mentioned in the report, Shaping an Action Programme, FAO should continue its efforts for regional and national networks to manage fire as well as insects and diseases, in collaboration with relevant organizations such as the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the Global Wildland Fire Network.

Emile ESSEMA (Congo)

La délégation de mon pays, la République du Congo, remercie le Secrétariat de la FAO pour la qualité excellente du rapport de la dix-septième session du Comité des forêts et de la Réunion ministérielle du 14 mars dernier qui nous a été soumis. Je voudrais saisir cette opportunité pour remercier le Directeur général de la FAO pour son aimable invitation au Président du Congo, Son Excellence Denis Sassou Nguesso à venir prononcer une déclaration à la Réunion ministérielle sur les forêts. Le Président Denis Sassou Nguesso, qui venait de recevoir le Deuxième sommet des chefs d'Etats sur la conservation et la gestion durable des écosystèmes forestiers d'Afrique centrale, a fait une déclaration de haut niveau sur la coopération internationale dans le domaine de l'aménagement durable des forêts.

Monsieur le Président, le rapport qui nous a été soumis, d'une qualité irréprochable, met un accent tout particulier sur les Commissions régionales des forêts. Le Conseil est invité à accorder une place de choix à cette recommandation à la FAO: augmenter les ressources et le soutien accordés aux activités des Commissions régionales des forêts, notamment en consolidant les bureaux Régionaux de la FAO. Il en est de même de la déclaration de la Réunion ministérielle sur les forêts qui invite la FAO à poursuivre son rôle de premier plan en faveur du partenariat de collaboration sur les forêts.

Avant de terminer, Monsieur le Président, je voudrais attirer l'attention du Conseil sur la déclaration de la Réunion ministérielle sur les forêts adoptée à l'unanimité par l'ensemble des participants; déclaration qui résume l'engagement sans faille des ministres responsables des forêts ou de leurs représentants. Nous demandons alors au Conseil d'approuver l'ensemble des recommandations qui se trouvent dans le présent rapport.

Mohamed Said Mohamed Ali HARBI (Observer for Sudan)

Those who have the welfare of forests at heart and scientists, who say there is no tree that is harmful or detrimental to nature, show that it is only man who can damage the environment. The Hibiscus Brasiliensis, he said, has caused no harm, but in Sudan it has caused a great deal of damage, though scientists say that no tree can be harmful. Though this tree is a wonderful windbreaker it has become an infestive and invasive species depleting the water resources of the area, whose scanty resources can be very useful to other species. However, the hibiscus as it is called in the region can provide fruit and feed for animals. This tree in Brazil bears fruit and is used for medicinal purposes. The Forestry Department has therefore studied the tree in Somalia, in the Sultanate of Oman, in Sudan and in other countries, and we would like to say to Dr El-Lakany that after extensive studies what can we say about the tree or the damage or devastation it has caused in my country. It has caused a great deal of damage to agricultural areas and has destroyed some fertile land.

Sra. Victoria GUARDIA DE HERNÁNDEZ (Observador de Costa Rica)

Tengo el honor de hablar en nombre del Grupo de países de América Latina y el Caribe, en relación con el ofrecimiento de la República Argentina para hospedar el XIII Congreso Forestal Mundial y en vista del apoyo recibido por este Consejo solicitamos que este ofrecimiento quede firme y sea un acuerdo de este Consejo.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je crois qu'on en a terminé avec les Membres du Conseil ainsi qu'avec les observateurs. Maintenant j'invite Monsieur Hosny El-Lakany à répondre aux différentes questions soulevées ou à apporter les éclaircissements nécessaires.

Hosny EL-LAKANY (Assistant Director-General, Forestry Department)

On behalf of the Forestry Department I would like to thank all of the delegations for their encouragement and their nice words about the Department and its work.

Most of the recommendations came from the interventions by the distinguished delegates. I would say most of them are in our Programme of Work and Budget for 2006-2007. However, allow me just to reemphasize some points extracted from the discussion.

Firstly, I think everybody recommended the strengthening of the Regional Forest Commissions and the technical capabilities of the Regional offices with which we agree and we are working in this direction. Especially, as related to implementation.

Secondly, is the development of guidelines for international cooperation for International Cooperation on Forest Fire Management and the strengthening of the national capabilities in this regards.

Thirdly, is the strengthening of the National Forest Programmes, supporting countries in developing and implementing National Forest Programmes especially in collaboration with the National Forest Programme facilities. At this point I would like again to thank the donor countries for the NFP facility.

Fourth, the structure and format of COFO was appreciated and we are very happy that we have started this process and we will continue along this line.

Fifth, there was a general recommendation to strengthen our contribution and leadership of the Collaborative Partnership on Forestry and our support would be the international arrangements on forest and the continuation of our support of UN affairs. Certain areas of collaboration among members of the CPF are very important for us and they are part of our programme as well.

The issue of the role of forestry, in poverty alleviation and sustainable development is also part of our programme and the role of forestry in the rehabilitation after the tsunami is also under way.

Again, there were a lot of recommendations regarding emphasizing the role of forestry in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and you can see from the document that we

have reemphasized this, and hopefully, this will reach the report to be submitted to the General Assembly.

A very important point that was raised by the distinguished delegates was the hard work on good governance at the international level and law enforcement. I am very glad to hear this and it is emphasized in our programme. Also important is, the balancing between the environmental, social and economic functions of the forest this year, as I mentioned. SOFO dealt mainly with the economic value, but we will maintain the balance between the three functions.

And finally the role of forestry in implementing the NEPED is also part of our work.

As for the discussion and comments on invasive species, allow me to address my good friend Prof. Al-Harbi distinguished representative of the Sudan in Arabic.

(original language Arabic) "Well we have tried to carry out studies on these invasive species in many countries now with respect to that species the hisbicus you mentioned which is developing and wide spread in Sudan, we would be very happy to have bilateral talks with you on this point."

LE PRÉSIDENT

Maintenant que l'on a terminé avec l'examen de ce point de l'ordre du jour, vous avez entendu les commentaires de Monsieur El-Lakany, Sous Directeur général, Département des forêts, je ne sais pas si il y a d'autres demandes d'intervention, d'autres commentaires à faire, sinon nous allons passer à l'examen du point 4.1 relatif au treizième Congrès forestier mondial de 2009.

Comme vous le savez, le Conseil se souviendra que le Comité des forêts n'a pas fait de recommandations sur la question du pays hôte pour le treizième congrès forestier mondial. Il y avait deux pays candidats: l'Argentine et le Panama. J'ai le plaisir de vous annoncer que la question est maintenant résolue puisque le Panama a retiré sa candidature et que l'Argentine est le seul pays candidat pour accueillir le treizième Congrès forestier mondial en 2009.

Puis-je considérer que le Conseil entérine une seule candidature. Nous félicitons l'Argentine et nous remercions le Panama de son intérêt pour cet événement important.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

4.1 Thirteenth World Forestry Congress 2009

4.1 Treizième Congrès forestier mondial 2009

4.1 XIII Congreso Forestal Mundial (2009)

Vladimir HERNÁNDEZ LARA (México)

Solamente quisiera solicitar que se permita a Argentina comentar este tema.

Victorio J. M. TACCETTI (Observador de Argentina)

En primer lugar quiero expresar en nombre de mi Gobierno nuestro agradecimiento y satisfacción por la elección de Argentina como sede del XIII Congreso Forestal Mundial a celebrarse en el año 2009, agradecimiento que muy calurosamente hago extensivo al Gobierno de Panamá por su generosa decisión de renunciar a la aspiración que en su momento había presentado de ser sede de este evento.

La celebración del Congreso Forestal cuenta en Argentina con el beneplácito y el decidido apoyo de la Presidencia de la Nación, del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Comercio Internacional, del Ministerio de Economía, de la Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Pesca y Alimentación, de la Secretaría del Ambiente y Desarrollo Sustentable, de la Administración de Parques Nacionales, de los Gobiernos Provinciales y Organizaciones no Gubernamentales vinculadas con el sector forestal de mi país. Es decir, que la organización del Congreso será el fruto de un gran esfuerzo mancomunado, todos los organismos mencionados se empeñarán en lograr una exitosa realización de este encuentro.

Creo oportuno aprovechar esta oportunidad para destacar que en esa ocasión podrán complementarse en Argentina las actividades propias del Congreso con visitas a regiones forestales de diversos tipos, de gran atractivo tanto por la actividad económica que se desarrolla como por sus valores paisajísticos y por su contribución a los servicios ambientales estratégicos.

Quiero transmitirles que mi país desearía contar en oportunidad del XIII Congreso Forestal Mundial, con una significativa presencia de delegaciones de todos los países, especialmente de los países en desarrollo. Para tal fin, se efectuarán todos los esfuerzos posibles en la búsqueda de fórmulas y alternativas que así lo permitan. Iniciaremos asimismo, a la mayor brevedad, las pertinentes negociaciones con la Secretaría de la FAO a fin de coordinar las estrategias a seguir y regular los compromisos que ha de asumir el Gobierno Argentino para la realización del evento. Valoramos enormemente la posibilidad de contribuir con hechos concretos al desarrollo sustentable del sector forestal y maderero basado en el manejo racional y la conservación de nuestros bosques.

Por todo ello y para concluir, Argentina desearía proponer a este Consejo que considere la declaración del año 2009 como el año de los montes y los bosques, para facilitar un esfuerzo global, para elevar la conciencia de la contribución potencial de los bosques y los montes y su manejo sustentable, para el desarrollo global y así ayudar a alcanzar los objetivos de desarrollo del Milenio.

Como este año coincidirá con el Congreso Forestal Mundial que se realizará en Argentina, tal y como este Consejo ha apenas endosado, nuestros propios esfuerzos para el Congreso crearán seguramente sinergias para que tenga un mayor impacto a nivel global.

Hosny EL-LAKANY (Assistant Director-General, Forestry Department)

The World Forestry Congress is held every six years. The last two meetings were held in Turkey in 1997 and in Canada in 2003. Each Congress was attended by over 4 000 people representing a broad spectrum of sectors, organizations, countries and regions. The Congress is a partnership between FAO and a host country. The partners develop the technical programme together and the financial responsibilities for the event rest on the shoulders of the host country. Usually the host country signs a Unilateral Trust Fund Agreement with FAO to provide Secretariat services including the review of papers submitted to the Congress and documentation.

FAO is pleased that Argentina has offered, and the Council accepted, to host this important event. Argentina is one of the leaders in forestry in the Latin American region. The country has over 35 million hectares of forest land including over 1 million hectares of planted forests. These forests face serious threats including an average of about 5 000 wild fires every year. Argentina has made good progress towards improving the management of its forests.

One of the highlights of the World Forestry Congress is the opportunity for participants to visit the forests of the host country, and Argentina offers many examples of beautiful and productive forests, as well as progressive forest management.

Argentina recently hosted the Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission, as well as the Council of parties for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Argentina has already demonstrated its capacity and capability to host major international events.

We in the Forestry Department of FAO are looking forward to working with Argentina towards a successful World Forestry Congress in 2009.

Horacio MALTEZ (Panamá)

A nombre de la República de Panamá quiero felicitar a la República Argentina por haber sido escogida como sede de este XIII Congreso Forestal Mundial y pido a todos los Países Miembros del Consejo su apoyo y participación por el éxito de este Congreso en el año 2009.

3. Report of the 26th Session of the Committee on Fisheries (Rome, 7-11 March 2005), and the Ministerial Meeting of 12 March 2005 (CL 128/7; CL 128/INF/11)

3. Rapport de la vingt-sixième session du Comité des pêches (Rome, 7-11 mars 2005) et de la réunion ministérielle tenue le 12 mars 2005 (CL 128/7; CL 128/INF/11)

3. Informe del 26º período de sesiones del Comité de Pesca (Roma, 7-11 de marzo de 2005) y de la Reunión Ministerial del 12 de Marzo de 2005 (CL 128/7; CL 128/INF/11)

LE PRÉSIDENT

Comme je l'ai dit, nous allons maintenant examiner le point 3 de l'ordre du jour relatif au Rapport de la vingt-sixième session du Comité des pêches qui s'est tenue du 7 au 11 mars 2005 et de la Réunion ministérielle qui s'est tenue le 12 mars 2005 qui font l'objet du document CL 128/7 – CL 128/INF/11 et CL 128/INF/11-corr.1.

La vingt-sixième session du Comité des pêches a réuni cent dix-sept Etats représentés par 748 délégués ainsi que 6 Organisations du système des Nations Unies, et 51 Organisations intergouvernementales ainsi que 28 Organisations non-gouvernementales. Ce qui constitue un record qui reflète l'intérêt croissant de la communauté internationale, pour les questions concernant la pêche et l'aquaculture.

Le Comité des pêches a formulé des Recommandations qu'il a adressé aux gouvernements, aux Organes régionaux des pêches, aux organisations non-gouvernementales, à la FAO et à la communauté internationale.

J'attire particulièrement votre attention sur la liste des questions soumises à l'attention du Conseil qui se trouve au début du Rapport du Comité: document CL 128/7.

J'invite maintenant Monsieur Nomura, Sous-Directeur général des pêches, à présenter son Rapport et le Rapport du Comité et à nous exposer les résultats de la Réunion ministérielle.

Ichiro NOMURA (Assistant Director-General, Fisheries Department)

Before I explain the result of the Committee on Fisheries, I would like to refer you to CL 128/INF/11-Corr.1. This is as a result of an improved effort for better translation from the English version and we hope, as a result of this corrigendum, we have a better version of the translation in French and Spanish without any change of substance.

The Twenty-sixth Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) was Chaired by Mr Glen Hurry (Australia) and Mr Kapil Pereira (Sri Lanka), First Vice-chairperson. The session reviewed fisheries and aquaculture issues of an international nature and the Fishery Department Programme of Work and Budget. The meeting was characterized by a number of significant outcomes.

The Committee discussed the impact of the Tsunami of 26 December 2004, especially in terms of its effects on coastal communities in the Indian Ocean. It focussed its attention on how to address the short-, medium- and long-term needs of these communities with a view to promoting recovery and facilitating reconstruction of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors in the affected countries. In this connection, the Committee endorsed FAO's medium- to long-term rehabilitation strategy.

The Committee stressed that continued efforts were imperative to further promote the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related instruments developed to encourage responsible fisheries. In other words, the Committee agreed that from now on, there should be a stronger focus on implementing the instruments concluded since UNCED, rather than seeking to conclude new instruments.

The Committee endorsed the reports of a number of FAO technical and expert consultations, including the Technical Consultation to Review Progress and Promote the Full Implementation of the International Plan of Action to Prevent and Deter IUU and the International Plan of Action for

the Management of Fishing Capacity. The Technical Consultation to Review Port State Measures to Combat IUU Fishing, the Technical Consultation on the Use of Subsidies in the Fishery Sectors and the Technical Consultation on Sea Turtle Conservation and Fisheries. It was also agreed that FAO should convene a workshop to promote the further implementation of the IPOA for the conservation management of sharks and workshops to encourage regional and national elaboration of plans of action.

The Committee also acknowledged that there was a need to strengthen port state measures as a means of combating IUU fishing.

Given the high global importance of tuna fishing, the Committee welcomed the proposal on a joint meeting of the Secretariats of the tuna Regional Fishery Management Organizations and their members, to be held in 2007.

The Committee expressed concern at the proliferation of international fora addressing fishery matters, some of which lacked sound technical and scientific basis for discussion. It underlined that FAO should continue to provide leadership and maintain an assertive role in fisheries.

Regarding trade issues, the Committee adopted the Guidelines for Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries and recommended that international guidelines also be prepared by FAO under ecolabelling of fish and fishery products from inland fisheries.

Concerning aquaculture and small-scale fisheries, the Committee highlighted the importance of these sectors. It pointed out the need for technical and financial assistance to developing countries. The Committee noted the challenges that the management of deep water demersal fisheries posed and requested FAO to provide the UN General Assembly with appropriate information and technical advice on these fisheries and, in general, to provide leadership in this field and to participate actively in the relevant international fora.

Furthermore, the Committee noted that all Fisheries Department activities were too important not to be undertaken, and it underscored the need for additional allotments to be made to Major Programme 2.3 Fisheries.

The Council is invited to review the conclusion of the Twenty-sixth Session of the Committee on Fisheries and provide guidance so as to enable FAO to maintain its capacity to carry out its approved fishery programmes. The Twenty-sixth Session of COFI was followed, on 12 March 2005, by an important Ministerial Meeting on Fisheries that was convened by the Director-General. I would like to highlight a number of important issues arising from that meeting:

Firstly, the Ministerial Meeting discussed FAO's strategy for medium- and long-term fisheries and aquaculture rehabilitation and reconstruction activities in countries bordering the Indian Ocean that were affected by the Tsunami of 26 December 2004. The meeting stressed the need to rebuild fisheries and aquaculture in these countries in a responsible and people-centered manner that ensures the sector's future sustainability in line with the principles of FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. The need for FAO to play a leading role in advising and supporting the governments of affected nations on the rehabilitation and reconstruction was stressed.

Secondly, the meeting discussed Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing and Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS), including Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS), as an integral part of fisheries management and as a tool to combat IUU fishing.

The final products of the Ministerial Meeting were two declarations. The Declaration on IUU fishing demonstrated the strong commitment of the international community to raise awareness of the importance of the use of VMS to ensure that all large-scale fishing vessels operating on the high seas be fitted with VMS no later than December 2008, promote capacity building in MCS on VMS in developing countries, strengthen the work of regional fishery management organization.

Memed GUNAWAN (Indonesia)

The Indonesian Delegation would like to extend its appreciation for the work of the FAO Secretariat in preparing this important document for the Council member's meeting. In line with

this report, the Delegation would like to express its full support to the 2005 Rome Declaration on Fisheries and the Tsunami, and the 2005 Rome Declaration on Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported Fishing. Indonesia is fully committed to the use of all resources provided by the international communities to rehabilitate Aceh in an accountable manner in accordance with the need of Aceh people in line with cultural and relational aspects, in code of conduct for responsible fishing. Indonesia continues to increase their ability in monitoring the operation of fishing vessels in its territory, in order to protect from practicing of illegal fishing by foreign fishing vessels in Indonesia.

We are also improving the national management in exploring fisheries resources by incorporating country regulations and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of FAO so that we can protect the national interests in terms of food security, poverty alleviation, multiple opportunity and foreign earnings.

Ms Judy BARFIELD (Australia)

Australia supports FAO's Committee on Fisheries, COFI, as a leading forum of discussion of international fisheries issues and was encouraged by the performance and outcomes of the Twenty-sixth Session of COFI Meeting in March 2005. We believe COFI is re-emerging with a strong mandate to deal with global fisheries issues. Australia considers the outcomes of the COFI meeting as important steps towards sustainable marine eco-systems, and the competitive Australian fishing industry. Australia thanks the COFI membership for the confidence they have shown in Mr Glen Hurry, by electing him COFI Chair for the next two-year period.

Australia would like to highlight some of the important outcomes of the COFI meeting. Australia is very supportive of the push for a decade of implementation. After ten years of agreements and resolutions that have been developed following the adoption of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishers, in October 1995, Australia proposed an independent External Review of the performance of Regional Fisheries Management Organizations, RFMOs, particularly with regard to the fisheries management competence. We have committed to funding FAO's preparation of a background paper which will assist what issues are associated with undertaking a review of our RFMOs, and provide options for suitable review processes.

Australia welcomes the adoption of the guidelines on ecolabeling of fish and fishery products. The guidelines will assist in the development of credible voluntary ecolabeling schemes for fish and fishery product, ensure ecolabeling is not used to create barriers to international trade and increase the legitimacy of ecolabels.

Australia supports the adoption of the FAO guidelines to reduce sea turtle mortality in fishing operations by States and RFMOs. The Committee noted that these measures were intended to be voluntary and should not affect trade in fish products from fisheries interacting with sea turtles.

Australia supports the Committee's call for the development of a code of practice, guidelines for fishing practices and a review of the legal framework to support the conservation and management of deep water fisheries.

The development of a code of practice is the beginning of a solution to address the current gaps in the legal framework for managing and conserving marine resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction. However, Australia is also aware that such initiatives can only achieve their aims on the high seas and a robust international government structure, including the use of regional agreements.

Australia agreed that the use of marine protected areas should be scientifically based underpinned by a strong legal framework and supported by effective monitoring and enforcement.

Australia also supported the Committee's recommendation to develop technical guidelines on design implementation and testing of MPAs.

Australia appreciated the additional opportunities for high-level interaction presented by the FAO Ministerial Meeting on Fisheries and congratulates FAO for organizing the meeting. This meeting

provided Australia's Fisheries Minister with the opportunity to reiterate our strong belief of the economic environmental and social affects of IUU fishing and the need for political commitment as well practical measures to address the problem.

Australia was a strong supporter of the Ministerial Declaration which committed Member Countries to renew their efforts to more effectively implement existing fisheries management and conservation measures.

Australia was pleased to see recognition that transshipment at sea must be regulated, support for increased efforts to address flag of convenience vessels by requiring that a genuine link be established between states and fishing vessels flying their flags and improving the efficacy of RFMOs.

Australia urged countries to strengthen international law to allow countries to take action against vessels flying flags of convenience in waters covered by RFMOs, and encouraged states to join and cooperate with RFMOs before they begin fishing in high sea areas.

Mohamad Ridha SULEIMAN (Oman) (Original language Arabic)

In the name of God, the merciful and compassionate, I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Near East Group, and I would like to express my appreciation for the efforts made by the Fisheries Committee, and compliment them on the report they have produced, and of course they have noted all of the recommendations which they made as a result of that meeting. In that context, we would like to recall the following points.

The need to pursue efforts to implement the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing and everything that is related to that implant in different countries and also stressing international cooperation if we want to have Sustainable Development in Fisheries and Aquaculture.

FAO should hold a workshop on the problem of shark fishing and make recommendations to the regional fisheries organizations including tuna fish, so that we may also help combat IUU fishing. Sustainable development should be based on the best possible management of fisheries and consequently, measures need to be taken. We would also like the situation of developing countries to be taken into particular account, especially when it comes to fisheries management and trade. We would also like their capacity for marketing to be increased so that the quality of their fishery products may be improved and therefore acceptable in the international market.

Coming now to aquaculture, this constitutes an important source of income and is a part of our plans to achieve sustainable food security. Therefore, we need increased attention from FAO. The members of our group also stress the importance of small-scale fisheries and their importance in the countries involved when it comes to promoting sustainable rural development and in their attempt to increase employment and reduce poverty.

The group also notes the challenges in deep sea fishing and also a certain number of challenges involving biodiversity and also stresses the need to put the Code of Conduct into practice, in particular, the plans of action of all countries involved in that kind of fishing. We also reaffirm the importance of marine protected areas, if we are to manage fisheries properly and we also need to take the technical aspect into account before drawing up plans.

We would like to express our appreciation for the efforts made by the Organization with respect to the priority to be given in the next Biennium's budget on fisheries without forgetting other related activities.

Willem BRAKEL (United States of America)

The United States welcomes the Report of the Twenty-sixth Committee on Fisheries and the two declarations that ensued from the Ministerial Meeting on Fisheries. There was a full discussion of a wide range of issues during the COFI meeting, and we will not repeat the important points that were made at COFI again here today. Besides, our colleagues from Australia and Oman have already done an excellent job highlighting some of the major issues that we would just like to

reinforce. We would like, however, to reiterate a few issues that arose from the COFI meeting, for the Council today.

We would like to reiterate our full support for efforts to end IUU fishing and in that regard we would like to highlight the global fisheries enforcement workshop to be hosted by the government of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur in July this year. We were pleased to be able to join with other COFI members in contributing to the funding of this important meeting.

We welcomed the special focus given during the Fisheries Ministerial Meeting and in COFI to the rehabilitation of the fisheries sector in coastal communities affected by the Indian Ocean tsunami. We remain engaged in this effort, working together with our partners in the region.

The United States regrets that COFI was unable to reach consensus on a memorandum of understanding between the Secretariats of FAO and CITES, the convention on international trade and endangered species. These two organizations had invested considerable effort over many months crafting a cooperative approach to ensuring that the two organizations contributed to inform decisions about trade in marine species. We urge all COFI members to work together to try to resolve this matter.

Finally, we wish to underscore the valuable work that was done on ecolabeling. We note, however, that there was some misunderstanding at COFI and several countries protested that COFI was forcing them to adopt voluntary ecolabeling guidelines. For the record, we would just like to state, once more, that the guidelines adopted by COFI are just that – they are guidelines and they are voluntary, so it is up to each sovereign state to decide whether or not to use ecolabels, if it's consumers request them.

Tom MUGISA (Uganda)

The Uganda Delegation would like to join others in commending the Director-General for organizing a successful Ministerial Meeting for Tsunami and combating of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing. We identify with, and support the Rome Declarations on both Tsunami and IUU.

Uganda would also like to join others in congratulating the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) for the excellent report on the Twenty-sixth Session and recommends the endorsement of the report.

We have interests in inland fisheries and aquaculture in order to contribute to our domestic economy and food security and for export. To this end the, government has made strides in reforming our fisheries and aquaculture policies, institutions and processes so as to better implement the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and the International Plan of Action (IPOA) on IUU and fishing capacity.

Fishery concerns are now better reflected in our Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. However, there is a felt need for support in removing constraints to the speedy development of the aquaculture industry.

Uganda welcomes the adoption of the guidelines on ecolabelling of fish and fishery products from marine capture fisheries. It is our hope that FAO will support development of similar guidelines for freshwater fisheries and aquaculture.

Uganda identifies the importance of aquaculture development in Africa, including its integration into irrigation systems that requires technical and financial assistance which was noted in the COFI report and we urge all to give it due attention.

We commend FAO for the improvement made in the presentation of the Medium Term Plan and Preliminary Programme of Work Proposals and to accommodate fisheries priority areas in the budget for 2006-2007. We hope the Fisheries Department will support developing countries sustainably to manage our fisheries resources and revolutionize aquaculture production for the benefit of our people.

Kasem PRASUTSANGCHAN (Thailand)

Thailand commends the interest of the Committee on Fisheries regarding the setting up of various guidelines on Code of Conduct on Fisheries. We support the idea of having guidelines for smallscale fisheries, considering the overwhelming benefit to the developing countries.

Furthermore, we agree with the suggestion to explore the possibility of holding future sessions of the subcommittee on fish trade in developing countries so that we can fully participate. However, we need to list our concerns on the binding nature of the Port state measures. While some binding measures may ensure the adherence to the guidelines specifications, such measures must reflect the differences, responsibility, readiness and the national laws of different countries.

There are some issues that my delegation would like to propose for consideration to be included in the Programme of Work and Budget of this coming Biennium. We recommend FAO to study the impact of subsidy elimination on fishery resources and social economic conditions of fisheries in developing countries marketing efficiency of smallscale fishing communities should also be improved. Furthermore, it is necessary for FAO to develop guidelines on post harvest handling at sea. The sanitation control system is another area for FAO to improve and strengthen, emphasizing on capacity building mechanisms. The increasing energy cost calls for FAO to conduct research on the possibility of food and consumption reduction for energy saving on fishing vessels and finding alternative resources that would reduce production costs, especially for the benefit of smallscale fisheries. The Monitoring, Control and Surveillance system is crucial for reducing IUU fishing and we as Member Countries should implement the MCS in as far as possible.

Vladimir HERNÁNDEZ LARA (México)

La Delegación de México desea felicitar los trabajos del Comité de Pesca realizados en marzo pasado y agradece la preparación de los documentos que estamos examinando. Al respecto, la Delegación de México apoya la aprobación del informe del Comité de Pesca en el cual la CITES ha reconocido la función capital de la FAO y las organizaciones regionales de ordenación pesquera en lo que concierne a la ordenación de la pesca y que a esa convención le corresponde la reglamentación del comercio internacional. En este sentido, el Comité Permanente ha colaborado con la FAO en la redacción de un Memorandum de Entendimiento entre la CITES y la FAO con miras a establecer un marco de cooperación. Auguramos la próxima firma del Memorandum de Entendimiento entre la FAO y la CITES, pero deseamos señalar que, si bien el texto conciliatorio preparado por el grupo de trabajo ya contiene algunos puntos expresados por México en el 13° período de sesiones de la Conferencia el año pasado, aún no contiene información sobre la periodicidad de la evaluación del mismo. Asimismo, consideramos que en las disposiciones del Memorandum de Entendimiento debe precisarse que no existe preeminencia de una organización sobre la otra.

Por lo que se refiere al tema de la pesca en aguas profundas, la Delegación de México desea reiterar la importancia de aplicar el criterio de precaución respecto a las prácticas destructivas que tienen efectos adversos para los ecosistemas marinos hasta que se adopten medidas adecuadas de ordenación.

En cuanto al tema de la conservación de las tortugas marinas y pesquerías, deseamos destacar la importancia del trabajo de la Convención Interamericana para la Protección y Conservación de las Tortugas Marinas llamada CIT, en particular, las acciones que promueve para buscar la conservación integral de esta especie. Al respecto, México es parte de la citada Convención y me complace informar que será la sede de la Tercera Conferencia de las Partes de la CIT a celebrarse en Guajaca en septiembre de 2006. A nivel nacional, mi país considera como una actividad prioritaria la protección y conservación de las seis especies de tortugas marinas que anidan en territorio nacional. Para tal efecto, desarrolla diversas acciones con el fin de evitar la disminución de poblaciones de tortugas marinas provocada por la captura incidental por actividades pesqueras. Es por ello que México cuenta con un Programa Nacional de Tortugas Marinas el cual establece medidas y políticas entorno a su manejo, conservación, protección, uso e investigación.

Por último, invitamos al Comité de Pesca a revisar los trabajos del Convenio sobre Diversidad Biológica a fin de contar con mayor información, evitar duplicidades, aprovechar las sinergias y apoyar el cumplimiento para promover los trabajos en materia de conservación y ordenación de las poblaciones de tortugas marinas.

Saulo ARANTES CEOLIN (Brazil)

Brazil welcomes the Report of the Twenty-sixth Session of COFI. The positive results of the Ministerial Meeting on Fisheries, as well as the substance of the various suggestions and recommendations put before the Council by COFI today, are evidence of FAO's continued relevance in promoting responsible fisheries. FAO must strive to maintain its role as the leading international forum in world fisheries, working on the basis of sound and technical work to help develop sustainable fisheries.

In that sense, we would like to reiterate our support to the recommendations regarding the following issues:

First, an enhanced international cooperation, including transfer of technology, financial and technical assistance, in particular for the development of Monitoring, Controlling and Surveillance (MCS) capabilities;

The development of a comprehensive global record of fishing vessels within FAO;

The assistance to developing countries in the implementation of their commitments in preventing, deterring and eliminating IUU fishing, acknowledging their legitimate development aspirations and efforts toward the sustainable management and development of their fisheries sectors; and also the enhancement of the effectiveness of RFMOs, especially in their role in preventing, deterring and eliminating IUU fishing.

In relation to aquaculture, Brazil notes that aquaculture responds now for a significant share of world fisheries production. Aquaculture is an important source of economic activity and food security in developing countries. We seek to have the FAO budget allocation for aquaculture-related programmes reflect this importance. In that sense, Brazil also would like to recall the strong recommendation that a post for Aquaculture Officer should be established in the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, in order to assist Members in aquaculture activities in our region.

Finally, we would like to align ourselves with the Mexican declaration regarding the CDB and also CITES.

Ms Nasrin AKHTER (Bangladesh)

Bangladesh welcomes the Report of the Twenty-sixth Session of the Fisheries Committee and extends its gratitude to FAO for organizing back-to-back the Ministerial Meeting from the Member States and the outcome of these meetings.

I take this opportunity to outline in broad terms the course of the Bangladesh Government to optimize the harvest of all living marine resources at the same time to conserve the resources for future.

Bangladesh is a signatory, and as such, has taken a keen interest to implement provisions of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. For this reason, attempts have been made to adapt the local requirements based on scientific information and have been included in the many fisheries strategies.

Bangladesh is keen to take all the necessary measures nationally to protect IUU fishing. We hope to fully implement the provisions of FAO's CCRF adapting it to our local conditions. For this reason, Bangladesh desires the technical support of FAO and its regional bodies.

The country needs technical assistance of FAO in its plan to develop and fully adapt an effective Monitoring, Control and Surveillance.

Bangladesh would like to especially welcome and highlight the decision regarding enabling responsible small-scale fisheries through the creation of a supportive environment and requests FAO for its continued support in this area in line with FAO's mandate to the Millennium Development Goals.

Bangladesh extends its gratitude to the FAO Secretariat and Committee of Programme of Work and Budget for accommodating and prioritizing small-scale fisheries and aquaculture for the year 2006-07.

Ms Maryse COUTSOURADIS (European Community)

I have the pleasure to speak on behalf of the European Community and its 25 Member States. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania align themselves to this statement.

The Community is satisfied with the results of COFI and the Ministerial Meeting, which largely met their objectives. The EC welcomes the large and active participation of FAO members and the importance of the decisions taken.

Nevertheless, the EC also notes that on many issues, COFI could not reach consensus and believes that this situation was due, to a large extent, to COFI's time constraints. However, it is also the result of an organization of work that does not really promote active exchanges among members with differing views towards compromise solutions. The Community believes that COFI's vocation to become a central forum in matters pertaining to international fisheries requires exploring flexible working arrangements for future sessions, affording a real debate among Members and conducive to the maximum possible number of consensus conclusions of its discussions.

Regarding the Ministerial Meeting, the Community wishes to underline the good understanding reached on the central role to be played by FAO on the Tsunami issue, and the importance of the Ministerial Declaration on Illegal, Unregulated and Undeclared Fishing.

Regarding the meeting of COFI, the Community would like to highlight the importance of the following documents adopted on a Model Port State Scheme which may now form the basis for work at Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMO) level, as appropriate; technical guidelines on ecolabelling; technical guidelines on sea turtle conservation and fisheries and also the recommendations to undertake work on: the development of technical guidelines and code of practice on deep sea fisheries and related data-collection, legal review work; the development of technical guidelines on marine protected areas; and the development of technical guidelines on small-scale fisheries contribution to food security and poverty alleviation.

More particularly, the Community wishes to stress that technical guidelines on ecolabelling adopted by COFI should be the result of a balance compromise and receive as much support as possible. In this regard, the EC is willing to actively participate in future work in the framework of COFI and its Sub-committee on Trade to improve these technical guidelines and address the concerns expressed by certain Members, in particular developing states, at the time of their adoption last March.

Regarding the technical guidelines and code of practice on deep sea fisheries, the EC also wishes to emphasise the role of RFMOs as the proper framework for the adoption of binding measures that can be enforced. RFMO's mandates should be reinforced to cover the management of these fisheries and new RFMOs should be established in areas not yet covered.

Carlos Alberto AMARAL (Angola)

En premier lieu, ma délégation félicite le Secrétariat pour la préparation et la présentation du document concernant le rapport du Comité des pêches.

Le rapport synthétise bien les principales difficultés et les mesures approuvées par le Comité. En particulier, en ce qui concerne la mise en œuvre du Code de conduite et les plans d'action internationaux, principaux instruments pour une pêche durable.

L'amélioration des statistiques est bien soulignée dans le Rapport. Leur importance pour des évaluations, la planification, la gestion durable des pêcheries est reconnue. Il faut accorder une attention adéquate et le budget nécessaire à cet effet et ainsi comme à la pêche artisanale tenant compte de leur rôle en terme d'emploi, de revenus et de sécurité alimentaire.

Monsieur le Président, la pêche illicite, non contrôlée et non réglementée constitue une préoccupation universelle. Il a été l'objet de l'analyse particulière de la Réunion ministérielle de février 2005. La déclaration issue de cette Réunion a été un pas important au niveau du contrôle des bateaux de pêche battant pavillon de complaisance et a souligné qu'il faut que l'Etat du pavillon contrôle effectivement ses bateaux pour éviter qu'ils se consacrent à la pêche illicite et provoquent des préjudices aux ressources halieutiques.

Il serait également important de considérer la mise en œuvre de la base de données sur les mesures du ressort de l'Etat du port en incluant des listages des bateaux qui pratiquent la pêche illicite. La publication de ces listes pourrait démotiver les armateurs contrevenants, de continuer à la pratiquer.

Monsieur le Président, sur cette matière de pêche illicite, ma délégation aimerait rappeler au nom du Groupe africain et, demander qu'il soit retenu par le Conseil, le point 82 du rapport du COFI sur la nécessité d'entamer des négociations internationales sur le suivi des navires de pêche dans le cadre de l'application du Code de conduite pour une pêche responsable afin, notamment, de lutter contre la pêche illicite, non déclarée et non réglementée et d'assurer l'assistance aux pêcheurs en danger.

Monsieur le Président, en ce qui concerne les directives sur l'étiquetage écologique du poisson et des produits de la pêche, nous nous rappelons bien des difficultés trouvées pendant les négociations sur ces directives dans la Consultation technique et dans la Réunion du Comité des pêches. Pour cette raison, nous sommes de l'avis qu'il faut tenir compte des principales préoccupations soulevées par les pays en développement, notamment en ce qui concerne les besoins du temps pour la mise en application et l'assistance financière et technique pour pouvoir participer et bénéficier de ces étiquetages écologiques et éviter qu'ils deviennent des obstacles pour ces pays.

En ce qui concerne la collaboration entre la FAO et la CITES, ma délégation note avec satisfaction l'amélioration de la collaboration et que la CITES a tenu compte des principales recommandations de la FAO concernant l'application des espèces exploitées à des fins commerciales. Tenant compte que les Etats Membres qui participent dans les deux Organisations sont les mêmes, nous encourageons les deux Secrétariats à tout faire pour se mettre d'accord, dans un bref délai, sur le Texte de Protocole consensuel.

Monsieur le Président, une équipe intergouvernementale des pays membres de la FAO travaille actuellement sur les Termes de références pour la réalisation d'une évaluation externe indépendante. Nous pensons qu'il serait opportun que l'équipe d'évaluation externe analyse et donne son avis sur l'équilibre actuel et désirable dans le futur entre les différents secteurs de la FAO, notamment l'agriculture, la pêche, l'élevage et les forêts en ce qui concerne leur visibilité, le nombre du personnel et budget.

Ma délégation soulève cette question, entre autres raisons, pour lire dans les paragraphes xxxii et xxxiii romain - page 6 de la version française - que le Comité des pêches s'est inquiété de la prolifération des fora internationaux traitant des questions liées aux pêches et la nécessité de la FAO de continuer à assurer le rôle de chef de file dans le secteur de la pêche et agir avec fermeté. D'un autre côté, dans la Réunion précédente du Comité des pêches, les Etats Membres, en général, demandent un renforcement du budget pour les programmes des pêches.

Monsieur le Président, avant de terminer, ma délégation voudrait remercier le Département des pêches pour l'appui donné à la réalisation de la Réunion des Ministres africains des pêches sur le Nouveau Partenariat pour le développement de l'Afrique, plus connu sous le nom de NEPAD, pendant la réunion du COFI, qui a permis aux responsables ministériels d'actualiser les connaissances sur le Programme et connaître des expériences d'autres pays. Nous espérons que les

organes compétents de la FAO, en particulier le Département des pêches, continueront à accorder une attention spéciale à ce Programme en tenant compte de la contribution pour la réduction de la faim et de la pauvreté dans le continent africain qui continue à enregistrer des indices d'accomplissement des objectifs du Millénaire les plus bas.

Ma délégation approuve le rapport du Comité des pêches et demande au Conseil de tenir compte de l'importance du secteur des pêches pour la plupart des pays et dans le secteur d'allouer des ressources budgétaires appropriées aux programmes des activités du Département pour qu'ils puissent accomplir leurs responsabilités.

Ricardo SANTA CRUZ RUBÍ (Guatemala)

En primer lugar quisiera aprovechar la oportunidad para expresar nuestra solidaridad con las naciones que fueron afectadas por el Tsunami en el pasado mes de diciembre. Y en seguida manifestar que nuestra delegación apoya lo expresado en el informe del Comité de Pesca, pero enfatizamos la importancia de catalizar la cooperación técnica y financiera para el desarrollo de la acuicultura, particularmente la desarrollada, porque es posible desarrollar en cuerpos de aguas continentales, muchas de las cuales están al alcance de comunidades ribereñas de pescadores artesanales y que constituyen una forma de proveer proteínas de alta calidad y una fuente alternativa de ingresos para la población rural. Estimamos que esto contribuye significativamente a los objetivos del milenio en cuanto a seguridad alimentaria. Reiteramos también nuestro compromiso con las iniciativas para la pesca responsable que contribuyan a la sostenibilidad de los recursos. Nos adherimos a lo expresado por algunas delegaciones en cuanto a limitar y reglamentar el uso de pabellones de conveniencia porque esto podría constituir una vía para eludir el código de conducta en cuanto a la pesca responsable, sin descartar que eventualmente genere conflictos comerciales entre operadores, e incluso entre naciones.

Hideo INOMATA (Japan)

Under this agenda item I do not intend to make a long statement because we already exhausted our discussions on the appropriate agenda item at the previous session of the Ministerial Meeting and the Committee on Fisheries. Therefore, I refrain from picking up a variety of items which highlights the results of the meetings. I think all we have to do, at this stage, is to adopt the report, including the declaration and the recommendations as they are.

But one thing I would like to remind all of you is the prescription of the FAO Constitution and its limitations. In other words, FAO cannot undertake activities which are outside its mandate. It seems that some of the points highlighted are too ambitious in reality and step outside the mandate of the Organization. For example, some of the issues regarding Monitoring, Control and Surveillance seem to fall within the purview of the regional fisheries management organizations and national governments. I think what FAO should do is to coordinate and facilitate policies already initiated and implemented among the regional fisheries management organizations and national governments. In addition, I think FAO's advantage is its global and comprehensive nature in the international fisheries as a United Nations specialized agency. I believe that FAO's presence among the United Nations organizations is important in terms of sustainable fisheries, but at the same time, taking into account the vertical and horizontal distribution of roles and responsibilities of fisheries related fora and mechanism, I hope FAO pursues its leading role in line with its mandate.

Mme M. Hint MOHAMED (Observateur de Mauritanie)

Je vous remercie de nous donner la parole et nous vous félicitons pour votre présidence de ce Conseil. Je commencerais à exprimer ma satisfaction des efforts louables fournis par le Secrétariat en ce sens que le document était judicieusement élaboré. Je joins ma voix à l'intervention du Représentant du Proche-Orient, ainsi qu'à celle de l'Angola. Monsieur le Président, nous joignons notre voix à toutes les voix qui ont appuyées les recommandations incluses dans le document à l'examen et particulièrement pour ce qui est de la page 10 - aux barrières sur la voix des échanges commerciaux ainsi que la nécessité d'observer une période de transition de deux mois avant de commencer de mettre en vigueur les lignes directrices.

Je souligne également la teneur du paragraphe 82 relative à la nécessité d'entreprendre des négociations pour le contrôle de la chasse illicite non déclarée et non réglementée.

Svinn A. BJÖRNSSON (Iceland)

I wish to complement the Secretariat for a very good report from the last Fishery Committee meeting. It was an important meeting and the numerous participants only showed that the work of the Fisheries Committee is undoubtedly increasing in our Member Countries.

We are also pleased that we adopted the ecolabelling rules and so the meeting was successful.

I also wanted to mention the very good Ministerial Meeting which was organized by the Director-General and the Secretariat, and I must especially thank the Secretariat for having organized this important meeting. I have heard from Ministers that they were very pleased with the meeting and the outcome of it and the participation in the meeting only shows how important it was.

Regarding the IUU, I only wanted to revert to the declaration that Ministers adopted and which is for us, the FAO Member Countries, a very important document for us for the future.

Moussa Bocar LY (Observateur du Sénégal)

Monsieur le Président. Permettez-moi de vous féliciter, ainsi que les autres Membres du bureau, pour votre élection de même d'ailleurs, que les Membres du Comité de rédaction qui vont nous aider dans ce travail difficile.

Monsieur le Président, je crois que nous devons rendre hommage à la délégation de l'Australie pour l'initiative prise et également au Secrétariat de la FAO pour avoir su relever le défi d'organiser cette Réunion ministérielle sur la pêche. La question de la pêche illicite non déclarée et non réglementée, ainsi que les systèmes de suivi de contrôle et de surveillance, sont partie intégrante de la gestion des pêches et je crois que c'est un outil aussi pour combattre ce fléau et il était temps que les Ministres puissent se pencher sur cette question et nous appelons à la mise en œuvre de leurs recommandations. Cette réunion a été l'occasion aussi pour le Ministre de l'économie maritime du Sénégal, au nom de tous ses collègues de la Commission sous-régionale des pêches des Etats de l'Afrique de l'ouest, de faire état de l'expérience de notre sous-région dans ce domaine et de poser les besoins en matière d'assistance technique et financière. Également, comme l'a dit le Représentant de l'Angola, que nous appuyons dans toutes ses déclarations qui reflètent la position africaine, les Ministres africains de la pêche ont pu se réunir dans le cadre du NEPAD et nous appelons aussi au suivi, de cette réunion importante dans le cadre du NEPAD.

Monsieur le Président, nous pensons qu'il est dans le mandat de la FAO de poursuivre le travail normatif, qui est le sien, et dont ce matin même nous nous sommes félicités. Le code de conduite pour une pêche responsable, je crois a été salué par tous et c'est là un travail normatif. Le fait de demander, comme l'a fait l'Angola, comme l'a fait la Mauritanie, le lancement de négociations internationales sur la surveillance par satellite des navires de pêche permettrait la mise en application effective du code de conduite pour une pêche responsable et permettrait de lutter avec une plus grande efficacité contre la pêche illicite non déclarée et non réglementée. Nous pensons donc que cela s'inscrit dans le mandat de la FAO parce que cela vise son travail normatif. Nous voulons donc appuyer à nouveau ce paragraphe 82 et tous ceux qui se sont exprimés dans ce sens.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Nous avons terminé maintenant avec la liste des orateurs et je vais maintenant donner la parole à Monsieur Nomura pour qu'il puisse répondre aux questions suivantes.

Ichiro NOMURA (Assistant Director-General, Fisheries Department)

Many delegations referred to the need for more work and prioritization on small-scale fisheries and aquaculture inland fisheries, this has been always so. We have received unequivocal messages from our governing bodies. Several delegations referred to the status of the memorandum of understanding between the CITES Secretariat and FAO. We are also very sorry that we could not reach the consensual view with FAO to what version of text we are referring. What is important is

that the ball is now in the court of CITES Secretariat and we are waiting for the result of the Standing Committee discussion, the result of which will have to be discussed again in our governing body; that is the Sub-committee on Fish Trade, which is going to be held next year. Hopefully our CITES Secretariat will provide a good draft report that our Sub-committee can agree to. It is up to the CITES Committee, but we hope to sign it as soon as possible. With or without regard to the MOU we will try to strengthen our cooperation with CITES Secretariat.

Various delegations also commented on their understanding about Ecolabelling which we adapted for capture marine fisheries and also some concern about the implementation.

I would like to endorse the way the U.S. delegation interpreted the ecolabelling as a voluntary document. Also we fully support the message which was conveyed by the European Community delegation, that we try to work more for the improvements of the scheme, particularly in light of the difficulty which several developing countries may face in implementing and we are looking forward to improving those guidelines. Again it is a live document; it is not an end by itself.

In this connection, we note that the delegation of Uganda referred to the expectation that also ecolabelling would be developed by FAO on Inland Fisheries as well as on Aquaculture. The development of Ecolabelling on Aquaculture was already tasked by the last COFI for Inland Fisheries, but why not also include Aquaculture. But again, Aquaculture may impose an additional burden for our work, but we just take it for granted that if resources permit we will also aim to study for the feasibility of developing at least a preparatory study for developing guidelines for aquaculture as well.

Some delegations, particularly Thailand, raised some concerns about the mandatory nature of Port state measures. What technical consultation of Port state measure decided and which was endorsed by the Committee on Fisheries, is the modern scheme of Port state which you can use as binding as a component of regional fishery management organization or regional agreements, or not binding, etc. It is up to you for implementation. So I don't believe Thailand's concern should be so great.

If I understand correctly, the delegation of Thailand also asked us to study the impact of fisheries subsidies, particularly on Artisanal Fishery and economic and social impact and aspects of fishing. I can assure you that our work plan and future study on subsidies, which has been endorsed by COFI, include that element.

The delegation also referred to the need for the study of energy consumption in light of soared fuel costs and their impact on that activity. That is probably the new issue which had not been fully discussed in COFI, but again, we are aiming at studying what we can be done.

I wish we could have a budget scenario, so that we could have an aquaculture officer in the Santiago office as requested by the Brazilian delegation.

The European Community delegation said that there should be some study how to make COFI more efficient in the sense that we could have more consensus building up. Probably may depend on what kind of specific agenda item we chose for COFI, but we agree to their perspective and we will try to explore how we can structure COFI, if at all, in a better way, in consultation with various members.

Several delegations referred to paragraph 82 for the need of International Negotiations on VMS and we tried to explore how we can make this paragraph more concretized in consultation with the delegation.

Lastly, the Japanese delegation warned against broadened mandates which, in their view, may be outside of FAO, and they may be right. We have no intention to make COFI a forum where we can intervene the sovereign rights of respective nations. So that is one thing, but on the other hand, you may know also that other organizations also would like to discuss fisheries issues. This concern was well reflected in paragraph 31, 32. What we understood was that there is a strong message that COFI and the Fisheries Department should be responsible for making international

discussions on fisheries be conducted on good science-based with good experts, and we do our best.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je vous remercie de votre contribution au débat. Je remercie aussi Monsieur Nomura pour ses commentaires. Je crois que ceci conclut le point 3 de l'ordre du jour. S'il n'y a pas d'interventions, de commentaires, je peux dire que nous avons terminé avec l'examen de cet ordre du jour. Donc, je peux dire que nous avons terminé nos travaux pour cet après-midi, mais avant de clôturer la réunion, permettez-moi d'attirer votre attention sur l'événement spécial prévu demain matin à 10 heures dans la salle verte sur le thème "Mise en œuvre des directives volontaires sur le droit à une alimentation adéquate". Par ailleurs, une présentation que fera Monsieur Eric Bost, Sous-secrétaire du Département de l'agriculture des Etats-Unis d'Amérique, sur les directives nutritionnelles aura lieu dans la salle de l'Iran, au rez-de-chaussée du bâtiment B, à 13 heures demain. En outre, l'événement spécial sur la mise en œuvre du traité international sur les ressources phyto-génétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture se tiendra dans la salle verte vendredi matin à 11 heures. Toutes les délégations sont invitées à prendre part à ces événements. Enfin, je vous souhaite une très bonne soirée et vous prie de noter que nous reprendrons demain à 9 heures 30 précise. La séance est levée.

The meeting rose at 17.35 hours

La séance est levée à 17 h 35

Se levanta la sesión a las 17.35 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Twenty-eighth Session Cent vingt-huitième session 128º período de sesiones
Rome, 20-24 June 2005 Rome, 20-24 juin 2005 Roma, 20-24 de junio de 2005
THIRD PLENARY SESSION TROISIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE TERCERA SESIÓN PLENARIA
21 June 2005

The Third Plenary Meeting was opened at 10.00 hours
Mr Aziz Mekouar,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding

La troisième séance plénière est ouverte à 10 h 00
sous la présidence de M. Aziz Mekouar,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la tercera sesión plenaria a las 10.00 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Aziz Mekouar,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je déclare ouverte la troisième séance de la 128^{ème} session du Conseil.

Avant d'entamer le programme de travail de ce matin, permettez-moi d'attirer votre attention sur l'événement spécial prévu à 10 heures dans la Salle Verte sur le thème: "Mise en oeuvre des directives volontaires sur le droit à une alimentation adéquate". Voilà, donc il y a un événement spécial à la Salle Verte, pour ceux qui sont intéressés à y participer.

Nous allons maintenant examiner le point 11 de notre ordre du jour, portant sur le Rapport de la Réunion conjointe de la Quatre-vingt-treizième réunion du Comité du programme et de la Cent neuvième session du Comité financier, qui s'est tenue à Rome le 11 mai dernier. Nous verrons à cette occasion le sous-point 11.1 "Economies et gains d'efficience en matière de gouvernance". Le document pertinent porte la référence CL 128/4.

III. PROGRAMME, BUDGETARY, FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

III. QUESTIONS RELATIVES AU PROGRAMME, AU BUDGET, AUX FINANCES ET À L'ADMINISTRATION

III. ASUNTOS DEL PROGRAMA Y ASUNTOS PRESUPUESTARIOS, FINANCIEROS Y ADMINISTRATIVOS

11. Report of the Joint Meeting of the 93rd Session of the Programme Committee and 109th Session of the Finance Committee (Rome, 11 May 2005) (CL 128/4)

11. Rapport de la réunion conjointe de la quatre-vingt-treizième session du Comité du programme et de la cent neuvième session du Comité financier (Rome, 11 mai 2005) (CL 128/4)

11. Informe de la Reunión Conjunta del Comité del Programa en su 93^o período de sesiones y del Comité de Finanzas en su 109^o período de sesiones (Roma, 11 de mayo de 2005) (CL 128/4)

11.1 Savings and Efficiencies in Governance

11.1 Économies et gains d'efficience en matière de gouvernance

11.1 Economías y eficacia en el ejercicio del gobierno

LE PRÉSIDENT

J'aimerais inviter Monsieur Roberto Seminario Portocarrero, Président du Comité financier, qui a présidé la session de mai du Comité conjoint à présenter le rapport. Je lui demande de ne pas présenter le Sommaire du Programme de travail et budget 2006-2007 puisque celui-ci fait l'objet du point 10 de l'ordre du jour que nous aborderons cet après-midi.

Roberto SEMINARIO PORTOCARRERO (Presidente del Comité de Finanzas)

Me es grato presentar a ustedes el Informe de la Reunión Conjunta del Comité del Programa en su 93^o período de sesiones y del Comité de Finanzas en su 109^o período de sesiones celebrada en mayo pasado. Dos fueron los temas abordados: el primero de ellos se refiere al Resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto 2006-2007, asunto que trataremos en horas de la tarde; y el segundo que concierne a las economías y eficiencias en el ejercicio del Gobierno, asunto sobre el cual me referiré ahora. En este orden de ideas, la Reunión Conjunta de los Comités de Programa y Finanzas centró su atención en examinar las mesas redondas en el marco de las conferencias para luego abordar el asunto de las actas taquigráficas. Como recordarán en el 32^o período de sesiones de la Conferencia en el 2003, se celebraron por primera vez tres mesas redondas; para el 33^o período de sesiones de la Conferencia a celebrarse en noviembre próximo, se ha previsto la celebración de dos mesas redondas en vista de la reducción de su duración de 9 a 7 días. Al

respecto, la Reunión Conjunta acordó que las mesas redondas se unieran a los dos eventos especiales previstos, pero que se celebrarán debates con los Grupos Regionales en relación con los temas propuestos.

Los Comités opinaron que en los futuros períodos de sesiones de la Conferencia debería haber únicamente dos mesas redondas, y que la decisión de celebrar o no mesas redondas, se debería adoptar antes del período de sesiones en cuestión.

En lo que concierne a las actas taquigráficas, permítaseme recordar que en la Reunión Conjunta de los Comités de Programa y de Finanzas celebrada en septiembre de 2004, se efectuó un análisis pormenorizado de las economías en la producción de las actas taquigráficas, sobre el particular la Reunión Conjunta tomó nota de las explicaciones proporcionadas por la Secretaria con respecto a la preparación de las actas taquigráficas, y manifestó su interés en recibir un informe detallado sobre las disposiciones adoptadas y las propuestas sobre la adopción de medidas eficaces en función de los costos para ser examinado en más detalle en el mes de mayo próximo.

Hans HOOGEVEEN (Netherlands)

I am speaking on behalf of the European Community and its 25 Member States. The exceeding countries Bulgaria and Romania align themselves with this statement.

The European Union has taken note of the Joint Meeting report with interest and welcomes the ongoing discussion on savings and efficiencies in governance. We have appreciated the consultation of the Director-General during the Committee on Food Security on the relevance and format of side events which are held in conjunction with the technical committees and other Governing Bodies meetings.

While emphasizing the usefulness of these side events, one should bear in mind that for many delegations it is indeed difficult to attend at the same time the side events and the Plenary Sessions over a Governing Body meeting. As it might negatively impact the attendance, side events should not interfere too much with the Governing Bodies. More generally, organization and funding of side events should not come at the expenses of the Organization of technical committees and other Governing Bodies.

Important subjects should also be preferably discussed in meetings of the Governing Bodies. The paper, *FAO and the Challenges of the Millennium Development Goals: the Road Ahead*, which was the subject of a special side event at the CFS, provided a clear illustration in this respect.

Side events provide an opportunity to have more interactive dialogues amongst the memberships and with other stakeholders whilst at the same time raise the political profile of a topic.

The European Union, therefore, encourage the Joint Meeting to continue to evaluate in close collaboration with the Secretariat the number, focus and format of future side events so as to tailor them to Membership needs.

In this year's meetings of the Committee on Commodity Problems and the Committee on Agriculture, the European Community initiated a discussion on the prospects of alternative arrangements for the CCP and COAC.

One of our proposals was transforming both Committees into one Committee. We are looking much forward to the Secretariat's assessment of the positive and negative aspects of alternative arrangements, which will be discussed by the Joint Programme and Finance Committees in September 2005 and the subsequent Council.

The European Union believes that the work of both Committees is intrinsically related and we would further appreciate steps forward towards enhancing attendance and thereby saving and efficiencies in FAO's governance.

Guo HANDI (China) (Original Language Chinese)

The Chinese delegation noted that the two Committees did not attempt to reach a consensus on the budget level of the three scenarios presented in the 2005 SPWB. We think that it is quite

normal for Members States to have different views, and we do believe that after consultation and compromise a consensus will surely be made at the Conference to be held at the end of this year.

Our delegation fully agrees with the comments made in paragraph 11. It is indeed a trend that we have more and more pages of PWB planning documents and substantial duplication put undue burdens on both Members and the Secretariat. We highly appreciate matters proposed in paragraphs 12–17, to improve the planning process.

In terms of the savings and efficiencies in governance, we have no objection to their arrangements during the Thirty-third Session of the Conference at the end of this year. However, we like to highlight some of our opinions.

FAO has achieved a lot in terms of efficiency savings, but there are still some existing problems. I would like to take one as an example.

The renovation project of the main building has been lasting for several years already, and we have noted that there will be more workers during large scale meetings, less workers during small scale meetings, and no workers at all during closing sessions and there is no sign at all of completion. Due to the long time construction, both the Members and the Secretariat can not utilize the original service facilities and are even under the threat of all kinds of dangers. For example, fire and traffic problems due to road blockage.

We think that the Secretariat as a main user and manager of these premises has the responsibility to supervise and urge the implementation of the construction project, no matter where the financial resources are from for the renovation project. Financial resources are to be properly managed and efficiently utilized. We hope that before the convention of this Thirty-third Conference the renovation project could be completed so that both the Members and the Secretariat could utilize the facilities to prove the substantial progress made in the efficiency savings of FAO.

Ms Radha SINGH (India)

We strongly support a higher and more robust Real Growth Budget for 2006/2007. We believe that the Real Growth Scenario presented by the Director-General of barely 2.5 percent is neither in keeping with institutional requirements and needs of the large majority of its Members, nor would the objectives of the strategic framework and Medium-term Plan. We, therefore, support the plea for an additional budget scenario of Real Growth Plus.

I trust there will be general agreement among this informed audience that whereas FAO is unique in the UN system in planning documents covering different time horizons and in preparing more than one budget, actual scenario decision on resourcing bear little relation to the contents of the documents.

Indeed, the treatment meted out to FAO by its Membership in terms of budgetary allocations has been much more severe than in comparable organizations. There is substantial scope for review and amendment of the planning and budget process and we encourage the Programme Committee to work in this direction.

We strongly believe that FAO's planning exercises and budget decisions can and must be better aligned. We agree that adequate security must be provided to FAO's staff and property, but urge that this should not be done at the expense the Work Programme of the Organization.

We also agree with the recommendation of the Committees regarding a shorter and more analytical full PWB 2006/2007. While not burdening the Membership with details of programme entities, the focus should be on the substantive trust of the proposals, reflection of express priorities of Members and response to recommendations of technical committees and their main bodies.

Having a comprehensive set of planning documents covering different time horizons and in preparing more than one budget scenario, actual decisions on resourcing bear little relation to the contents of the document.

We agree that adequate security, as I have said earlier, must be provided to FAO staff and property, but urge that this should not be done at the expense of the Work Programme. We also agree with the recommendations of the Committee regarding a shorter and more analytical full PWB for 2006/2007.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Merci, Madame la déléguée de l'Inde. Y a-t-il d'autres interventions? Non? L'Australie.

Je voudrais, quand même, avant de passer la parole à l'Australie, attirer l'attention sur le fait que nous traiterons du Sommaire du Programme de travail et budget 2006-2007 au point 10 de l'ordre du jour qui sera abordé cet après-midi.

Je dis cela parce que les intervenants précédents ont abordé ce sujet. Monsieur le délégué de l'Australie, si vous voulez bien prendre la parole, en tenant compte de mon observation.

David INGHAM (Australia)

Australia supports the Report's recommendations to improve the planning process and the associated documentation, including recommendations in paragraph 13, for a shorter and especially a more analytical approach for the full Programme of Work and Budget for 2006/2007, and recommendations in paragraph 15 for a shorter and more focussed Summary Programme of Work and Budget for future planning cycles.

I note that the report of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees indicates that the Joint Meeting agreed that only two round tables should be held in conjunction with the Thirty-third Conference in November 2005.

The paper further indicates that some discussions should take place with the regional groups regarding the proposed themes.

Australia notes that the topics for the November Conference have already been finalized, and the discussion has not taken place for the Southwest Pacific Regional Group regarding proposed themes.

Australia notes that members themselves initiated a discussion of the concept of round tables as a means to encourage interest and genuine debate on issues of mutual interest, as opposed to presenting and listening to set paced speeches.

The opportunity to interact in meaningful debates is potentially an attraction to the ministers, who might consider the set paced speeches could be presented just as well by their officials.

Therefore, it is important that we chose these topics carefully so as not to miss such an opportunity. Topics should be selected which will attract high level participants.

We also note that where a Governing Body has responsibility for a topic, it is more appropriately discussed in that forum. Round tables should also be timed so that small delegations are not excluded from participation.

J. Michael CLEVERLEY (United States of America)

Although the Summary Programme of Work and Budget (SPWB) was an important topic of discussion in the Joint Committee, we recognize the Chairman's request that we confine our comments to the session earmarked for that purpose this afternoon. Therefore we will defer our comments on the SPWB discussion in the Joint Committee to that time.

During the Round Table Discussion which we had in the Joint Committee and which has been presented by the Chairman of the Finance Committee in this meeting, on Agenda Item 3: Savings and Efficiencies in Governance, we addressed the number of Round Tables to be held during the Thirty-third FAO Conference. I would like to take this opportunity to comment on the increasing number of special and side events that take place during FAO's Technical Committee meetings, as well as the annual and semi-annual Conference and Council Meetings. Although these meetings have been interesting and informative, we must be careful to ensure that firstly, they do not divert

attention away from FAO's scheduled meetings and Committee work, and secondly, topics are carefully chosen to enrich the understanding and the dialogue among member delegations.

Kiala Kia MATEVA (Angola)

Le rapport synthétise bien les deux questions fondamentales à analyser, à savoir: "Le programme de Travail et Budget 2006–2007" et "Economies et gains d'efficience en matière de gouvernance".

Nous pensons que tenant compte de la situation qui se vit et l'extrême importance de la sécurité, nous sommes d'accord sur la création d'un nouveau chapitre, le 9, à l'intérieur du PTB pour couvrir les "dépenses de sécurité". En ce qui concerne la première question nous soutenons la proposition d'un programme de travail et budget de croissance réelle de 9,2 pour cent tenant compte de:

- la nécessité et la responsabilité de la FAO de répondre de façon appropriée, pour atteindre les objectifs du Millénaire; de la réduction de la faim et la pauvreté; l'augmentation des coûts de sécurité selon le nouveau chapitre 9 créé pour satisfaire ce besoin;
- de pouvoir correspondre aux propositions présentées par les Comités du Conseil qui obligent à des travaux accrus de la part du Secrétariat et des consultants;
- la volonté des Etats Membres que la FAO continue à jouer le rôle de chef de file au niveau mondial en ce qui concerne les domaines de l'agriculture, des forêts et des pêches lesquels imposent des dépenses accrues; et surtout pour la possibilité pour la FAO d'augmenter sa participation et son assistance aux pays afin de faciliter la mise en œuvre des principales décisions et instruments internationaux approuvés par le Conseil et la Conférence.

Il serait important de simplifier la présentation des scénarios du PTB pour diminuer les coûts de la documentation, éviter la duplication des efforts de la part du Secrétariat et finalement faciliter les débats. Il est plus facile de se concentrer sur ces deux propositions alternatives.

Nous sommes d'accord pour continuer à débattre sur l'aliment entre la planification et le budget comme suggère le point 17. Une session informelle pouvait être utile pour permettre aux Membres du Comité de Programme et Financier d'écouter des opinions et recevoir des contributions des pays qui n'appartiennent pas à ces Comités.

En ce qui concerne le terme "Economies et gains d'efficience en matière de gouvernance", ma délégation est d'avis qu'il serait opportun de repenser le rôle des tables rondes et des "événements parallèles" en général en tenant compte des coûts, quelquefois la duplication des discussions et surtout la démobilisation des délégations sur les thèmes de l'ordre du jour des sessions plénières des Comités, Conseil et Conférence.

Il faut analyser également le fonctionnement, le temps de la portée et la programmation accordés aux réunions des différents comités, aussi bien que sur la nécessité de l'existence même de quelques comités. L'évaluation externe indépendante, certainement donnera des indications à ce sujet. Toutefois les Etats Membres devraient réfléchir sur cette matière. La simplification et l'objectivité du travail des Comités peuvent signifier des gains de temps, opérationnalité et efficience de l'Organisation.

Ibrahim Bocar DAGA (Mali)

Nous voulons d'abord féliciter nos représentants au niveau de ces deux Comités pour ce document qui nous a été soumis; un document synthétique, très précis, d'ailleurs cela augure peut-être d'une politique d'efficience pour l'avenir qui nous interpelle d'une manière ou d'une autre. Les recommandations nous semblent pertinentes. Nous croyons que les leçons tirées des expériences antérieures, qui nous sont ici décrites, permettront certainement à l'avenir de mieux travailler. Mais cela nous permettra surtout de mieux nous comprendre. A la lecture de ce document j'ai l'impression qu'enfin nous arrivons à un moment où tout le monde sait pourquoi nous sommes là. Tout le monde sait ce que nous attendons de notre Organisation, tout le monde sait où nous voulons que notre Organisation aille, en évitant parfois le nombrilisme qui nous a toujours bloqué.

Alors, j'ai constaté simplement que quelque part les Comités ont été un peu frileux. Je me dis que quand on parle de la croissance, le temps est venu de ne plus avoir peur, le temps est venu d'être objectif, le temps est venu en temps pour les Membres de cette Organisation de dire "oui, nous avons beaucoup donné, on demande encore davantage donc il faut que nous recevions davantage". Il n'est pas logique de continuer à demander à cette Organisation de faire des efforts, et Dieu seul sait si elle en a fait, et d'hésiter toujours, faut-il oui ou non lui en donner les moyens? Je crois que les Comités auraient pu être beaucoup plus directs, beaucoup plus fermes pour une fois, j'ose espérer que cette nuance qui est dans le document n'augure pas d'autres discussions inutiles stériles, le consensus doit être fait qu'au jour d'aujourd'hui, la FAO a effectivement besoin d'une réelle croissance pour atteindre les objectifs qui lui sont assignés. Nous demandons trop, nous donnons peu, ce n'est pas sain, ce n'est pas correct.

Ahmad Suleiman AL-AQUIL (Saudi Arabia) (Original Language Arabic)

We have studied this issue within the Near East Group and we have indeed sensed the need for this Organization to have an increase in its resources in this Programme of Work and Budget. If we compare this Organization to other organizations we see that the activities of this Organization have been increasing gradually, particularly now that it has the need to perform certain activities, in order to meet the objectives of the Millennium Declaration. We believe that the Real Growth scenario would add an additional burden on us in terms of our contributions. Specifically, that we have witnessed an increase in our own contributions, however, we believe that there is a real need for an increase in the resources of the technical TCP.

There are also additional costs to be borne by the Organization such as the medical costs for the retirees which are in the range of US\$30 million. There is also the cost of security. Therefore, our Near East Group believes that this security issue should be placed within one chapter, Chapter 9, within the Budget.

We believe that there is a need for further activities in the field of animal health. This is the position of the Near East Group.

As for the nomination of the External Auditor, we believe that the External Auditor from India should be renewed for two additional years.

These are our preliminary observations and we have reserved our right to come back to this issue at a later stage.

Roberto SEMINARIO PORTOCARRERO (Presidente del Comité de Finanzas)

Básicamente hemos tomado nota de las intervenciones hechas por la Unión Europea, Estados Unidos, Australia, Malí y diferentes países.

Ms Mary Margaret MUCHADA (Observer for Zimbabwe)

I have taken the floor as the Representative of Africa on the Finance Committee.

We fully support the Report of the Joint Committee Meeting and its recommendations. Particularly, its intentions to improve the planning and the preparation of the Report of the Programme of FAO. We fully align ourselves with the contents of paragraph 6. Let me explain our rationale. We believe that Member States should equip the Organization with a budget scenario that responds to its mandate. Therefore, FAO should be capacitated by a budget level higher than the previous nine biennia. This came in the work of the current efforts by many world leaders, who are fighting to meet the achievement of the MDGs by the year 2015. Particularly, MDG number 1, that is, the Halving the Number of Hungry by 2015 and Eradicating Poverty; and the MDG number 4, Reducing Infant Mortality Rates. The situation we have in my continent is grave. World leaders in recent weeks have called the need to address the situation urgently. In Africa the Blair Commission has been established under the leadership of the incoming year chair to give more focus to the continued problems related to hunger on the Continent. We, therefore, in FAO, cannot claim to reduce hunger without capacitating the UN Agency, that is charged with the responsibility of doing so, otherwise it would be paying lip service to the whole exercise.

Last week, those Member States who participated in the World Food Programme Executive Member Board Meeting, asked the WFP to work with other UN agencies that should take over the Recovery Programme, after the initial emergency period in all post-war, post-drought and other emergency situations that are rural in nature. The agency that plays the leading role to agricultural recovery is FAO. Therefore, unless FAO is adequately resourced and can move with meaningful crop recovery programmes WFP would be bogged down in recurring hunger situations.

In view of the foregoing, and realizing that the Director-General's proposal fell short of the growth rate that would accommodate and try to speed up the Recovery Programme for the African continent as a whole. The Africa Group strongly urges the members of FAO to go the extra mile this year and complement other world initiatives that are seeking to make a difference in the African continent, in which three quarters of the hungry people live and over a million children are dying annually from nutrition-related illnesses.

We are in agreement with most of the suggestions of the Report. In particular, we accept that security should be in the hands of this Organization, but we would like to appeal to our partners that already the Programmes are under-funded and there is already a strain on the Programmes, so such an enhancement of the security measures should not come at the expense of Programme financing.

We are very much in tune with the other scenarios regarding the Budget and Programme, but we would rather reserve those comments to the time when we discuss the Programme and Budget proposals.

Ahmed Ali EL HASSAN BASHIR (Observer for Sudan) (Original Language Arabic)

I am sorry to have come late from Sudan today because my country has suffered a wave of torrential rains and this might be a good omen for the African continent indeed. I do hope that this will also usher us in a new era of peace and prosperity for my country and the rest of the continent. May I ask the Almighty to bring about more rains and more prosperity and more food security in the African continent.

Mr Chairman, food security has been stressed earlier on and as was stated by my colleagues, we do not believe that security measures should be financed to the detriment to other programmes and activities of the Organization. We do support the participation and direction between the various members of this Organization. Some important issues are dealt within the side events and for small delegations, we are deprived of this opportunity because they are organized at the same time as the main meetings.

Roberto SEMINARIO PORTOCARRERO (Presidente del Comité de Finanzas)

Hemos tomado debida nota de lo manifestado por los señores delegados con respecto a las economías y eficiencias en el ejercicio del gobierno. Algunos señores delegados han hecho, y nos han dado, algunos alcances sobre el resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuestos para el 2006-2007. Este tema lo vamos a ver esta tarde y me reservo lo que tengo que decir al respecto para esta tarde.

En cuanto a la consulta de Australia, la Secretaría nos ha informado que sí ha habido algunas consultas de los grupos regionales sobre este tema.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je vous remercie Monsieur Seminario. Ceci conclut le point 11.

Nous passons maintenant au point 12 de notre ordre du jour relatif au Rapport de la quatre vingt-treizième session du Comité de Programme qui s'est tenu à Rome du 9 au 13 mai 2005.

**12. Report of the 93rd Session of the Programme Committee
(Rome, 9-13 May 2005) (CL 128/11)****12. Rapport de la quatre-vingt-treizième session du Comité du programme
(Rome, 9-13 mai 2005) (CL 128/11)****12. Informe del 93º Período de Sesiones del Comité del Programa
(Roma, 9-13 de mayo de 2005) (CL 128/11)****LE PRÉSIDENT**

Le document relatif à ce point porte la référence CL 128/11. Je demanderai à son Excellence Monsieur Wermuth, Président du Comité du Programme, d'introduire le Rapport à l'exception de la partie portant sur le Sommaire du Programme de travail et budget 2006/2007, qui sera examiné cet après-midi au point 10 de l'ordre du jour, comme je l'ai déjà expliqué précédemment.

Ewald WERMUTH (Chairman of the Programme Committee)

Let me briefly report on the Programme Committee being actually Chair for the second consecutive year now to Programme Committee, I feel it is a privilege to work closely with colleagues from all regional groups as within the Programme Committee, I think we achieved a kind of cooperation so as to enable us to overcome some political differences, divergences of use on the programmes of the Organization and make an honest attempt, collectively, to strengthen FAO and render its programmes and activities more effective. Actually, throughout the last meetings we embarked on a number of landmark discussions on issues which are very topical such as, the decentralization evaluation, the Technical Cooperation Programme. This afternoon, I will actually report on the Programme Committee's deliberations on strengthening, streamlining and strategizing the planning and budget cycle of FAO.

Therefore, I would like to limit myself to a number of issues we discussed other than the Summary Programme of Work and Budget.

While doing that I would like to point out that a number of these issues actually should be seen as work and progress will actually come back in our September meeting on the basis of further work and preparations by the Secretariat. I would like to take the opportunity to commend the Secretariat for the very skilful and collaborative support throughout our meetings. They have done an excellent job and we welcome very much the presence of the successor of Tony Wade, Mr Juneja Manoj who participated for the first time in our meeting. We are saddened by the departure of Mr Wade during our meetings due to health circumstances and we wish him all the best.

You might recall that we earlier reported on the issue of prioritization in the Organization, the issue of priority settings and actually we proceeded with that matter understanding that this Council and other Governing Bodies have actually endorsed three main criteria to be used by FAO management to assist in establishing relative priorities.

I just want to put them to you for your recollection. It is actually the relevance of programmes to the strategic framework, the focus on members expressed priorities, in the governing bodies and the embodiment of FAO's comparative advantage.

We noted, however, in the Programme Committee throughout our discussions that there is still some discontent with FAO's delivery. One thing we explored is that there might be an issue that resources of which FAO disposes are too thinly spread across various activities, and whether the current programme entities activities had sufficient critical mass to lead to effective results.

We explored that issue. We have stated that the issue of lack of sufficient critical mass, so as to actually render FAO's programmes more effective, is not an issue which you should oversimplify. Therefore we asked the Secretariat to elaborate on that and provide us with more documentation before we could actually bring this item to a conclusion and advise the Council accordingly.

What we noted as well, and I think it is very important to mention to you, is that this issue of priority-setting in the context of the absence of sufficient critical mass should not be linked to the mechanism of auto-evaluation. Auto-evaluation is actually the process by which programme managers themselves evaluate and assess the achievement of their own programmes within a certain period of time. We understood and satisfied ourselves that this was a very useful instrument and was seriously applied throughout the Organization. But as such, we concluded that it is primarily a valuable tool for learning and decisions on individual entities, rather than a tool to set priorities throughout the Organization. The reason is that results of these auto-evaluations is partially covering the programme of a certain year, whereas priority-setting should be taken on the overall programme level of FAO in its integrality. Therefore, you can expect from the Programme Committee further work on this issue of lack of sufficient critical mass. We requested the Secretariat to do some further work. Now that might come back to the Programme Committee in September or otherwise May next year in the context in the Medium-Term Plan. We will discuss that with the Secretariat.

We discussed the evaluation of livestock production and many delegates of this Council and earlier Committees acknowledged the importance of livestock for agriculture development.

I would like to bring to your attention that a number of years ago the livestock division (AGA) significantly restructured its programme. It is now organized on the basis of development goals instead of previous production system orientation. We welcomed it and applauded the restructuring and reorientation towards development. Therefore, the new approach focuses now on the role of livestock development in effecting three key global public goods: equity and in particular over-evaluations, so that the programmes have achieved more focus; sustainability of the environment and natural resources; and veterinary public health. In this area we do feel that FAO has a comparative advantage in relation to organizations like WHO and OIE. Whilst acknowledging the reorientation of this Division, we felt that there is still need to further increase its feasibility, as it really retains some preparative advantage to FAO.

For that reason we suggested in the Programme Committee that livestock should become the standing item on the Agenda of the Committee of Agriculture.

So I leave that with you for reflection but it could be one way of increasing the profile of FAO's livestock work.

I would like now to proceed to the review of the Technical Cooperation Programme. You might remember that the Technical Cooperation Programme is subject to much discussion amongst the Members and approximately runs at a budget of US\$100 million a biennium therefore it really is one of the flagship programmes of FAO and for good reasons.

I would like to applaud the Secretariat on having had an extensive consultation internally, and we could base our discussions, as well, on the value of TCP on an independent review by FAO Evaluation Service.

What we actually did is set aside any discussions on the required budget level of TCP. We understand there are divergent views amongst Members on the appropriate level for TCP. However, we felt that at this stage of the review of TCP we should not focus on the required budget level for the biennium but embark on a discussion on how we could reform the programme in such a way that its effectiveness could be enhanced. In terms of improvement in project design, the implementation processes and, first out of foremost, its catalytic effect, so as to ultimately strengthen the sustainability and the impact of the Technical Cooperation Programme at the country level. For that reason the Committee noted that the primary challenge facing TCP was to align it with the national priority frameworks. This is a key concept which comes back in the decentralization evaluation as well. Therefore I just want to underline this very important notion

that in order to strengthen FAO's effectiveness at a country level, it is very important that its programmes and TCP aligns itself to national priority frameworks so that it corresponds actually with the priority set by national governments. Not only that, but also to ensure FAO's normative activities and technical assistance are mutual re-enforcing. This is the dual challenge the technical cooperation faces.

We have discussed throughout recent months the importance of the Millennium Development Goals and the Committee acknowledged that a Secretariat now takes as a very important contextual political factor, not only the World Food Summit targets but the Millennium Development Goals as well. But, if you do so, the question is –and that is the issue which we will discuss in our September meeting: – What does it mean if you want to align TCP in a stronger mode to the World Food Summit targets and the Millennium Development Goals? What does it mean in terms of country eligibility, in terms of regional and interregional programmes and criteria? Therefore, you can expect advice from the Programme Committee for your November meeting on the concrete recommendations which will be submitted by the Secretariat to us in our September meeting.

I have already briefly mentioned FAO's decentralization but I just want to repeat that there is very much work in progress. We anticipate a follow-up and a more thorough management response in our September meeting. We will benefit of the presence of the two evaluators, Ms Chinery-Hesse, who used to be Deputy Director-General of ILO and Mr Sands Smith who worked throughout his career for the Development Department in DFID in the UK and was Permanent Representative as well here to FAO. Two outstanding and very skilful people standing very strong by their recommendations and we will benefit again from their involvement in our September meeting.

Having said that, I should express that in the Programme Committee there was some disappointment by the slow progress on this issue. We would have anticipated a more in-depth management response, and we would have liked to see in the Secretariat response, more visions on how decentralization would increase FAO's effectiveness.

We did understand, however, and was amply explained to us by the Secretariat that it is a complex issue. If you want to focus FAO more on expressed priorities at a country level, that requires a restructuring of the Organization; that it demands a reflection on FAO's current cooperate culture; that it entails to allow more authorization to the representatives of FAO at regional, subregional and local level; that the balance between the activities at HQ and at a regional and local level should be reviewed.

Therefore, these are pretty fundamental potential impacts and consequences on FAO's current method of work which need to be carefully considered by the Secretariat and by the Governing Bodies. We anticipate a more detailed, time-bound, costed management response in our September meeting. Whilst acknowledging the complexity of this whole issue ultimately there is a profound belief throughout the Committee that decentralization could increase FAO's relevance and feasibility at a country level and ultimately, the developing countries will benefit most from that.

We did acknowledge, however, that normative activities are of a global nature and very much headquarter driven. So we have to balance that as well.

We found the key to the success of decentralization to the extent to which Human resource management practises within FAO could be reviewed. We felt that the Secretariat needs to pay greater attention to competency profiles of FAO Representatives and other decentralized staff and that their selection should be undertaken in a transparent and competitive manner.

We will come back to the Council in November, hopefully, with more detailed advice on all aspects of this decentralization evaluation and we will closely work with the Secretariat on the basis of a management response which includes more vision, which is more detailed, will be time lined and costed.

I just wanted to highlight these issues again, I would say very fundamental discussions we had in a very open way with all members of the Programme Committee. I do hope that we can report further progress on many of these issues in the November session of this Council.

Ibrahim Bocar DAGA (Mali)

Moi, je reste un peu sur ma faim après ce résumé du Président du Comité de ce Programme. J'ai noté beaucoup de déception de la part du Comité, beaucoup d'insatisfaction de la part du Comité, une absence de masse critique. En un mot, je voudrais que le Président du Comité nous dise, est-ce que son compte-rendu est un compte-rendu consensuel du Comité, puisque nous avons quand même des Représentants au niveau de ce Comité qui n'ont pas l'air d'être tant déçus que cela. Est-ce qu'il y a des choses qui vont dans cette maison sur lesquelles il faudrait mettre l'accent voire les renforcer parce que, j'avoue qu'en tant que Membre de ce Conseil, ce résumé sibyllin ne me satisfait pas.

J. Michael CLEVERLEY (United States of America)

The United States would like to address two of the several issues which the Chairman of the Programme Committee raised and the Committee discussed during their recent sitting in May: Follow-up to the Independent Evaluation of FAO's Decentralization, and the other issue, the Policy and Operational Framework of the Technical Cooperation Programme.

When the report of the Independent Evaluation of FAO's Decentralization was first presented to the Programme and Finance Committees in September 2004, both Committees welcomed the depth and independence of the evaluation. The Committees praised the wealth of analysis, the suggestions, the ideas, and they welcomed the frank and open discussions that had taken place between senior management and the evaluation team. Both Committees recognized the importance that decentralization has to field programmes and that field programmes have to reaching and achieving the mission of FAO.

Committee Members looked forward to an indepth discussion of the report and, particularly, senior management's response which was scheduled for the May 2005 meetings. After this initial optimism, we were disappointed that the follow-up discussion in May was not as fruitful as had been expected. The evaluation addresses important issues that need to be considered, including matching FAO's decentralized capacity to those countries and areas of work where it could expect the most impact; increasing decentralization of authority to improve responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness while strengthening FAO's unity and coherence; ensuring that international and national staff have necessary competencies; identifying areas of potential efficiency savings; and ensuring that decentralization remains compatible with FAO's normative work and overall mission.

We hope that the next meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees will have a more indepth discussion of the evaluation, including a costed and timebound implementation plan that would build on the recommendations of the report, as well as management's proposals for addressing issues through alternative means.

The effectiveness of FAO's decentralization is linked to the effectiveness of the Technical Cooperation Programme, and this is the other point we would like to address.

Since the Technical Cooperation Programme is highly valued by many FAO Members it is important to implement reforms in order to strengthen its value, its impact and its sustainability. We agree with many of the conclusions and recommendations of the Independent Review of the TCP, particularly TCP projects need to be better linked to national frameworks for rural and agricultural development. The criteria for TCP projects should reflect FAO's comparative advantage and transferring knowledge internationally and bringing high quality, unbiased advice to countries on request. Gender must be better integrated into TCP projects and the methods for determining country resources allocations need to be transparent.

We also believe that several ideas should be further explored, including linking TCP support to co-financing opportunities, increasing the involvement of NGOs and the private sector and increasing delegation of TCP-related responsibilities to FAO Representatives.

The United States continues to believe that FAO's unique and comparative advantage is also in its normative activities. We believe that additional funding for TCP projects should come from voluntary contributions. We look forward to further the Secretariat's follow-up report on the Ninety-fourth Session of the Programme Committee.

Hans HOOGEVEEN (Netherlands)

I am speaking on behalf of the European Community and its 25 Member States. The acceding countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey associate themselves with this statement.

Our comments will focus on the Summary Programme of Work and Budget, the Follow-up to the Independent Evaluation of FAO's Decentralization and the Review of the Policy and Operational Framework of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP).

The European Community welcomes the discussion initiated by the Programme Committee, and subsequently taken up in the Joint Meeting of the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee, about ways of improving the planning and budgeting process in FAO. The progressive overhaul of arrangements for planning, budgeting, reporting and evaluation since 1997 has brought a number of benefits. In particular, FAO now has a better appreciation of the external environment in which it operates; the concept of results-based management is firmly embedded; and the programme and cross-organizational strategies provide a much more powerful analytical framework for describing the outputs of the Organization and the management processes. This will support their delivery.

That said, the new arrangements are cumbersome and expensive. Even with four documents: the Strategic Framework, the Medium Term Plan, the Summary Programme of Work and Budget and the Programme of Work and Budget itself, there is still a wide range of views among the membership about priorities; and the budget setting process has been largely unaffected by the new arrangements. Nor is it clear that FAO can successfully manage its resources allocation process in three dimensions – strategies, technical and economic programmes and departments. We therefore support the proposal that the arrangements for planning and budgeting should be reviewed in the light of best practices elsewhere in the UN system, but also more broadly. We look forward to a well-informed discussion of the issues and options later this year.

Although the European Community understands the complexity of the issues relative to decentralizing FAO's structure and operations, we would like to echo the Programme Committee's concern with the follow-up management response. The management response was deficient in providing a clear vision and conceptual response to the decentralization challenges as outlined in the Independent Evaluation. The recommendations were neither translated into timebound and costed implementations plans for the short and medium term. The European Community looks forward to some questions raised by the Programme Committee getting answers during the MDG-consultation, which was initiated by the FAO Secretariat through the publication of the Report *"FAO and the challenge of the Millennium Development Goals: the road ahead"*.

We share with the Programme Committee the view that decentralization will strengthen FAO's contribution to country led processes and its cooperation with other partners at the country and field level. This requires first and foremost the need to accurately identify country level demand through National Priority Frameworks within the context of national poverty reduction strategies in those countries where such strategies exist. It requires also to develop an appropriate and enhanced staff skill mix in the decentralized offices so as to provide the services and knowledge that countries need, for example in the area of policy assistance.

Decentralization will reach its full potential only with a major shift in the organizational culture. Less ex-ante control and greater empowerment of and autonomy for decentralized staff are required without, however, compromising accountability. Partnering with other UN agencies,

multilateral actors, donors and other stakeholders should be sought by FAO local offices as it provides a promising way of leveraging FAO's impact at the field level. In conclusion, we are looking forward to a more elaborated and comprehensive management response at the September Programme Committee meeting and subsequent Council session.

The last item, not only the decentralization issue is work in progress, but so is the management response to the review of the Technical Cooperation Programme. We appreciate profoundly the open and indepth discussion in the Programme Committee on the TCP review, between members themselves and with the Secretariat. The European Community is committed to making the Technical Cooperation Programme more effective as it is one of the main tools for FAO to deliver its services to the developing countries within the overall context of achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

In conclusion, TCP, in our view, can maximize its impact when it responds to the dual challenge it faces. It needs to align itself with the expressed needs and priorities of recipient countries, in particular as expressed in poverty reduction strategy papers in many countries. At the same time it should ensure that FAO's normative activities and technical assistance are more mutually reinforcing. Sustainable impact will be increased by integrating the TCP priority-setting process into the National Priority Frameworks that management proposes in response to the Decentralization evaluation. Given FAO's scarce resources, we encourage the Programme Committee to pursue its discussion, in particular on the criteria for appraisal of requests for TCP assistance and on country eligibility. We are looking forward to management's final recommendations for the next Programme committee meeting and we would like to reiterate our interest to work with all regional groups on enhancing the effectiveness of FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme.

Ms Radha SINGH (India)

India is happy with the new compact format of the SPWB. In the full PWB that will be presented later in the year we expect to see a reflection of Members' expressed priorities and recommendations of technical committees and regional conferences.

We would also like to see a clearly identifiable thread from the Strategic Framework through the Medium Term Plan to the PWB. The Programme Committee has correctly seen the need to review the planning and budgeting processes of the Organization. Indeed, the way the final budget decision is taken without relation to the preceding planning and the scenario setting process is not entirely desirable. FAO is unique in presenting alternative budget scenarios, but the final decision on the budget level is usually the result of last minute negotiations. Moreover, as the budget level is decided in the Conference so close to the beginning of the new biennium, the biennial implementation is reformulated in rushed and ad hoc conditions.

A thorough review and overhaul of the process would result in major savings in time and effort. The introduction of auto-evaluation has turned out to be a useful exercise. Auto-evaluation is a valuable learning tool and it should be accompanied by a coherent system of dissemination and internalization of evaluation lessons. The experiment with auto-evaluation, however, may be jeopardized by budgetary constraints if resources are to be made available only from departmental allocations. We would prefer that resources are provided for auto-evaluation out of the budget of the Evaluation Service.

Technical Cooperation Programmes are important to developing countries as a means for gaining access to FAO's normative work and technical expertise. While we are appreciative of TCP, we recognize the need to enhance its effectiveness and strengthen the sustainability and impact of projects. We strongly support the proposal to closely integrate TCP with national priority frameworks and to establish processes at the country level for setting priorities in consultation with governments and stakeholders.

We look forward to the report of the Programme Committee on its subsequent deliberations at the next session of the Council.

The Independent Evaluation of FAO's Decentralization is a valuable exercise which has come up with substantive findings and recommendations. The FAO management should move forward on the recommendation towards an enhanced policy of decentralization. This will entail far-reaching actions, including greater empowerment and a shift in Organizational culture.

We look forward to seeing the next report of the Programme Committee on the matter.

Kenichi BESSHO (Japan)

Japan would like to comment on the Follow-up to the Independent Evaluation of FAO's Decentralization.

Japan's thinks that FAO's decentralization is important in order for FAO's work to be more effective and efficient by streamlining its workload. Decentralization will also help FAO to raise its presence at country and community level. From this viewpoint Japan would like to request the Secretariat to continue its efforts in finalizing its definitive work, and Japan expects to receive further progress in September's meeting and November's Council meeting. We also point out that it is important that the timeframe for the implementation is set and the possible impact on financial and personnel resources is indicated.

José A. QUINTERO (Cuba)

Sobre el Tema 12 referido al Informe del Comité de Programa, nuestra delegación tiene los siguientes comentarios.

Agradecemos a la Secretaría por la calidad del documento presentado, reconocemos el papel que juega el Comité de Programa en la implementación de las estrategias definidas por los Estados Miembros para el trabajo de la FAO y apoyamos las recomendaciones contenidas en este documento.

Acogemos el trabajo desarrollado por la Secretaría para presentarnos un resumen de PLP más breve y claro y estamos de acuerdo con la recomendación de que el siguiente resumen continúe centrándose en las principales oportunidades y dificultades financieras, presupuestarias y operativas del bienio teniendo en cuenta que tales elementos no se examinan en el Plan a Plazo Medio.

Nos preocupan las reducciones realizadas en el PLP como consecuencia de la presentación de una hipótesis de crecimiento nominal cero, ya que tales reducciones influirán negativamente en la capacidad de la Organización para cumplir con el mandato otorgado por los Países Miembros.

Reconocemos el trabajo llevado a cabo por el Comité de Programa destinado a que varias áreas del trabajo de la Organización no quedarán afectadas por las reducciones presupuestarias en una hipótesis de crecimiento nominal cero tales como el PCT, nos congratula que en una hipótesis de crecimiento nominal cero los programas principales técnicos, los de pesca y montes hayan sufrido recortes ligeramente menores que los demás programas. Nos preocupan los efectos negativos que puedan tener en el presupuesto de la Organización el aumento de los gastos para fortalecer los mecanismos de seguridad en la sede de la FAO y consideramos que sería necesaria que la Secretaría informe más detalladamente a los Estados Miembros acerca de sus implicaciones presupuestarias.

Apoyamos la inquietud presente en el informe acerca de que la decisión final sobre el nivel presupuestario adoptado en la Conferencia es fruto generalmente de negociaciones en el último minuto con las consiguientes necesidades de reformular el Plan de Ejecución bienal en condiciones de gran apremio y afectando las prioridades establecidas por los Países Miembros, tal y como sucedió en el 32^o período de sesiones de la Conferencia.

Apoyamos la significación que el Comité de Programa le concede al PCT por su importancia para los Estados Miembros como un medio para acceder a la labor normativa y los conocimientos técnicos de la FAO en apoyo de sus necesidades y prioridades de seguridad alimentaria y alimentación de la pobreza dentro del contexto general del marco estratégico de la FAO y de los objetivos de desarrollo del Milenio y estamos de acuerdo con la introducción de reformas en la

concepción y aplicación actuales del programa con el objeto de aumentar su eficacia, fortalecer la sostenibilidad y el impacto del PCT, mejorar el diseño de los proyectos y los procesos de aplicación e incrementar sus efectos catalizadores. Sobre las recomendaciones específicas para fortalecer este PCT, nos preocupa la sugerencia de que los recursos de este programa deben orientarse específicamente sobre los países más necesitados o solamente los países de bajos ingresos y con déficit de alimento. Consideramos que todos los países deben tener derecho a recibir apoyo del PCT, tanto para proyectos de asistencia técnica como para proyectos de emergencia y/o regionales; aunque lo decisivo es que se incrementen los recursos globales para el PCT y responda más a las prioridades nacionales de los beneficiarios. Apoyamos la recomendación acerca de que la asistencia de emergencia debe quedar excluida del proceso de establecimiento de prioridades del PCT ya que este tipo de asistencia no es posible planificarla. Consideramos que la FAO debe lograr que este tipo de asistencia sea más flexible y responda a las necesidades de los países que lo reciben.

David INGHAM (Australia)

Australia appreciates the opportunity which the Programme Committee had to discuss the TCP. The TCP appropriation had more than US\$100 million, which represents a significant proportion of FAO's expenditure, around 14 percent, and it is proper that Members have access to information analysis of its effectiveness. We have been disappointed previously with the amount of disclosure on the Programme. For instance, in the Medium-term Plan 2006-2011, a document of almost 200 pages which Council considered last year, had only two and half pages of information on the TCP.

Australia notes the Programme Committee's guidance on management's recommendations in its report. We strongly applaud the Programme Committee's request that the Secretariat prepare final recommendations for strengthening the TCP for the next Programme Committee meeting. Crucial to this task, in Australia's view, is to reconsider the US\$400 000 financial ceiling, the 24 month limitation on projects and the no duplication requirement.

In Australia's view the US\$400 000 financial ceiling is much too low. The upper limit of the TCP when it was introduced in 1976 was US\$250 000. To maintain the purchasing power of US\$250 000 in 1976, you would need around US\$850 000 in 2005. Therefore, if we just wanted to maintain the level of the upper limit in real terms compared to when the TCP was introduced, we need to increase it to around US\$850 000 in 2005, as opposed to US\$400 000 which is being proposed.

Agencies involved in providing development assistance in Australia insist that follow-up activities are crucial to ensure the success of the proposals. Projects involved in delivering one-off activities which assist recipients for a short term and then having no follow-up very rarely achieve lasting outcomes because the people who have been trained move on without passing on their skills, etc. Therefore, the 24 month limitation and the no duplication specification are counterproductive in Australia's view.

Australia supports recommendation two on country eligibility as there is a need to carefully target funds. Australia supports funds to needy countries.

Finally, Australia would also like to support strongly the Programme Committee's listing of high priority evaluations contained within the indicative rolling work plan of Strategic and Programme Evaluations for the 2006-2009 period.

Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

Under item 12 of Council Agenda Member States are invited to review the Report of the last session of the Programme Committee. Regarding Programme of Work and Budget 2006/2007, the Brazilian delegation stressed the importance for developing countries that FAO continues to provide Technical Cooperation Programmes. Technical assistance is essential and should not be modified. Any possible change in TCPs should seek only the improvement of their implementation, not reduction of financial levels.

We would also like to highlight the importance within the PWB 2006/2007 of those programmes with special social impacts, such as those related to organic agriculture.

The Brazilian delegation stresses its concern about the Organization's progressive dependency on extra budgetary resources. This trend must be reverted in order to allow FAO to fulfil its mandate, as well as to ensure multilateralism. Multilateralism is a principle which cannot be undermined. Decisions regarding the development of programmes and studies by FAO must be taken by all Member States, ensuring proper political decisions in accordance with the Organization's multilateral nature.

Next November when the Conference approves FAO's new PWB, Members States should know that the Organization will need more than a frozen budget to guarantee the maintenance of technical assistance to developing countries.

Nasreddine RIMOUCHE (Algérie)

Nous félicitons les Membres du Comité du Programme et son Président pour le travail réalisé. Nous avons pris note du fait qu'aucun consensus ne s'est dégagé lors de la Réunion du Comité du Programme sur le cadre budgétaire notamment sur un tel ou tel scénario. Nous estimons que les discussions se poursuivront notamment en tenant compte d'un niveau budgétaire plus positif donc une autre option qui pourrait être intégrée pour faire partie de l'examen du cadre budgétaire afin de permettre à la FAO de répondre efficacement aux différentes demandes des pays, aux préoccupations des ces pays et pour lui permettre aussi de jouer pleinement son rôle. Mon propos porte aussi sur une autre question qui est importante pour ma délégation et celle du Programme de coopération technique. Nous faisons part de son inquiétude vis-à-vis de la recommandation 2 sur l'admissibilité des Pays considérant que c'est un exercice dangereux car il remet en cause la vocation même et l'objectif du PCT. Nous sommes d'avis que les pays doivent travailler davantage avec l'Organisation pour définir à l'échelle des pays les priorités au titre du PCT, et ce pour une meilleure utilisation des ressources du PCT, telles que reflétées dans la recommandation 3. S'agissant de la recommandation 4 sur l'aide d'urgence au titre du Programme de coopération technique, cette question nécessite d'avantage de discussions et une étude approfondie. Enfin, la question du renforcement mutuel du PCT et des opérations normatives, nous estimons qu'il est important de renforcer l'équilibre entre ces deux activités.

James MELANSON (Canada)

A number of previous speakers have noted the full menu of initiatives that the Programme Committee is considering with regard to increasing the effectiveness of FAO's decentralization as well as the Technical Cooperation Programme. We would join our voice to those who have already spoken and who are looking forward to a full articulation of these potential reforms as suggested in the Programme Committee report.

We would note that since the May discussions of the Programme Committee, the Secretariat has presented its very interesting paper on the Millennium Development Goals and their relation to FAO's activities. This report has been discussed in generally positive terms earlier in this Council meeting.

We would encourage the Secretariat to consider the four-pronged strategy suggested in the MDGs paper with regard to further thinking on the decentralization and TCP files, and in fact to take explicit account of whatever proposals are brought forward to the September meeting of the Programme Committee.

A number of delegations have commented on some of the disadvantages of the planning and budgeting processes currently practiced in FAO. Like others, we will read with interest the comparative study of UN Organizations that the Secretariat has undertaken and will keep an open mind with respect to possible changes.

Gabriel LOMBIN (Nigeria)

Nigeria, being a member of the Programme Committee, fully endorses the report.

I am endorsing it not on the basis of the fact that Nigeria is a Member, I am endorsing it because I was thoroughly satisfied with the harmonious way our deliberations went through. The way conclusions were reached were most amicable, so let there be no mistake whatsoever that our discussions were enriched though some times intellectually taxing and too much, but at the end of the day, we were satisfied that we were giving the best service to this Council.

I would like to lend my voice only in support to one to two other areas, other than to my general support for the report itself. The TCP – the Chairman's report has captured everything that one needs to say except to mention the overall importance of this Programme to the developing countries already well stated that it has been articulated in so many fora that I think it is belabouring the point to waste time on it.

Funding is an area that has attracted attention even at the level of our Committee and particularly with respect commended by the delegate from the USA this morning, where he said that maybe the TCP should be funded not only through the Regular Programme, but also we should explore the possibility of co-financing. I think that is an innovation that merits some concentration. In our view, those of us who are mainly the beneficiaries of this scheme are of the view that the Programmes in themselves are not the end, they are usually very small. So within the context of a nation, it may not be big but the catalytic effects and the ability to sensitize the government to adopt good practices are even more important. To that extent, therefore, it might be useful for both the Council and Management to explore the possibility of co-financing because there are some implications in evaluating the question of co-financing of TCPs. I think that the idea is in principle fairly attractive to my delegation. I would like to see how the Secretariat would articulate that and bring it forward to see whether it is feasible.

With respect to the auto-evaluation, I must commend FAO for pursuing the auto- evaluation process. The only comment I would want to add there is the one that my Indian friends have already echoed: the funding of the auto-evaluation itself. The mechanism at present is not the most comfortable. Maybe we should revisit it in the context of the total evaluation funds of the Evaluation Service last mentioned by India.

With respect to the decentralization, this is an issue that I think would be too much to take on any issues specifically, except to say this: again, to add those of us who are beneficiaries is not simply a matter of posting staff from headquarters to stay in the state capital; it is much more than that. One can, therefore, to some extent understand the difficulties the Secretariat is facing in implementing this Programme. But the implementation has to be thorough indeed because as some of us have always mentioned, the role of FAO to the developing countries through the technical programmes is not simply a matter of getting projects. It is to be able to take the role of an advocate and be able to be the voice of the agricultural sector within the policy formulation framework of each country.

At present, there is the tendency in most developing countries that agriculture and development sectors are normally not given high profile in development strategies and policies. We hear a lot of rhetorics about the importance of agriculture within the context of development. When it comes to actually placing it with other sectors, it is not at par. This is where we think FAO will help us within the discussion in the various countries and you cannot do that without demonstrating your relevance and your value in context.

The decentralization, therefore, must be pursued with vigour but with diligence and caution so that at the end of the day, FAO becomes the voice of the agricultural sector in our countries.

Muhammad Ismail QURESHI (Pakistan)

As a member of the Finance Committee our views are contained in the reports of the Finance Committee and the Joint Meeting of the Finance and Programme Committees. However, we would like to focus on some of the issues which need special flagging.

In considering the report of the 93rd Session of the Programme Committee, Pakistan would like to draw the attention of the house and endorse the findings of the Committee's report that many savings have been achieved in the past and that efficiency saving targets for 2006/07 should be realistic.

Pakistan notes the concern expressed by the Committee that the final decision on the budget level did not have a relation to the preceding planning process and led to the biennial plan being free from reformulation in rushed conditions.

Pakistan would recommend that this needs to be addressed adequately so that the PWB is a culmination of the planning process and not necessarily intended to match the resource level at the eleventh hour. We would like to hear more on this from other Members.

In our opinion, a workable solution could be in putting up only a Real Growth scenario in SPWB in future. This is in line with the real possibility of an enhanced global development assistance to achieve the MDGs. The Millennium Plus Five Summit later this year could set trends for the next ten years of global development assistance levels on the basis of the report of the Millennium Project.

Pakistan supports the full implementation of the recommendations by the Independent Evaluation of FAO's decentralization. Pakistan notes that an allocation of an additional resource of US\$3.9 million to FAO regional and country offices has been made in SPWB 2006/07.

The Secretariat has, however, not clarified its relevance to the process of decentralization and we would like clarification in this regard. We would recommend that the allocation be further increased if the proposed evaluation does not take into account the needs related to decentralization in next biennium.

In the context of decentralization, Pakistan would also like to highlight the Business Process Review undertaken by the World Food Programme since 2003. The results of this Business Process are encouraging, we should recommend that the BPR of World Food Programme be considered by the Programme and Finance Committees for the purpose of serving as a tool of effective decentralization in FAO, as appropriate.

Guo HANDI (China) (Original language Chinese)

I would like to thank the Chairman of the Committee for his report on the Ninety-third Session of the Committee and we would also like to express our congratulations and gratitude to the entire membership of the Programme Committee for having undertaken effective work. In terms of matters raised in the report, we have the following to say:

Whilst this is not the time and place to raise specific matters on the SPWB for 2006/2007 we would like to emphasize that our point of departure for preparing the budget should be the actual resources needed by the Organization to fulfil its mandate as well as the ability of Member States to bear this scale of assessments. We do not agree with any approach to link the projected average growth rate of GNP of major contributors and the budget level.

We have also taken note of the proposal to study and improve the planning and budgeting process. We express our approval of this proposal and to conduct works in this area in order to eliminate problems in this field such as that of the determination of the final budget level being separated from the planning and budgeting process, as well as the increase in workload and wastage in resources arising from the rushed manner in which the Secretariat has to rectify the programme of work after determining the budget level.

In terms of policy and operational framework of the TCP we agree with your opinion expressed by the Programme Committee but we have also taken note of the difference of opinions on recommendations of country eligibility. On this issue we think that each Member State has the right to solicit support from the Organization on this programme as this is an equal right for each Member State. We also have to stress the point that in its actual operation the resources of the TCP should be made available to satisfy the needs of developing nations, especially the poorest, low income and food deficit nations, so as to help them realize the objective of food security and poverty alleviation.

We support the recommendation of a secretariat to study the issues of funding and studies of eligibility and we recommend the adoption by the Council of this report.

Sudaryanto TAHLIM (Indonesia)

Our delegation highly appreciates the work of the Programme Committee in improving the programme and budgetary framework of FAO.

With regard to this TCP framework we also share and support the views of other delegations that the TCP should be more in line with country priorities and also share and link these initiatives with other organizations work.

Considering the contributions of the TCP, particularly for the developing countries, we recommend that FAO should allocate more resources to this programme.

Vladimir HERNÁNDEZ LARA (México)

Mi delegación agradece el informe que nos presenta el Comité de Programas y la presentación que hizo el Embajador Wermuth. Deseo solamente hacer referencia a que el Programa de Cooperación Técnica nos parece un área fundamental de las labores que realiza la Organización, por lo que consideramos pertinentes todas las recomendaciones que son tendientes a fortalecer su eficacia y sostenibilidad; así también, nos parece adecuado que los PCT se adecúen cada vez más a los marcos y prioridades de los países. Sin embargo, deseo resaltar como lo hizo el delegado de China en relación a la recomendación 2, que debe mantenerse el derecho de todos los países a recibir asistencia del PCT, un área fundamental para que nuestros países estén en condiciones de superar las condiciones de pobreza y subdesarrollo.

Abdul Rezak AYAZI (Observer for Afghanistan)

As a member of the Programme Committee I should not be speaking, but after what the delegate of Mali said, whether there is a consensus among the Programme Committee on two very controversial issues, that is decentralization and TCP, I want to assure him that this is still business unfinished.

I do not think we have come to any agreement in the Programme Committee on these two complex issues. It requires further analysis. It requires more information from the Secretariat. It requires another part to digest this information, to find out what are the implications in terms of budgetary, so we are in no position to offer any recommendation at this stage to the Council.

Are you in doubt if you can offer any recommendation in September, because the Programme Committee agenda is so loaded in September? In any case, there have been some other interesting issues raised, for instance my colleague from Canada mentioned what is the link between decentralization and TCP for the road ahead. This is a very important question and this is something that we must consider. So I would like to emphasize that this is still business unfinished and we have to come to recommendations which are thorough, meaningful and are acceptable to the whole Council.

On another issue, I think somehow the impression was given that the livestock evaluation, one of the recommendations from the many recommendations, was they should move from technology-orientated work to policy-orientated work. I think this was agreed to, but may I point out to Paragraph 36 of the Programme Committee Report which says and I quote "the recommended

shift of emphasis from technology based to more policy based support was discussed, with general agreement that the goal is to achieve the right balance between the two."

And that is the decision of the Programme Committee.

Sergio ISUNZA BECKER (Chile)

Muy brevemente quisiera reiterar lo que otras delegaciones ya han mencionado, que teniendo en cuenta la enorme responsabilidad que la FAO tiene en el cumplimiento de las metas de la CMA y del objetivo de las metas del Milenio, un instrumento tan importante como el PCT, requiere ser analizado en vista de cómo se mejora y cómo se potencia, ya que es un elemento fundamental para transferir a los Países Miembros las experiencias que la FAO acumula en su actividad normativa y también en la actividad que desarrolla en cooperación con los otros países; consecuentemente una cuestión de esta envergadura requiere contar con los recursos adecuados y por lo tanto, el presupuesto que en definitiva se adopte tiene que tener en cuenta y responder a estas necesidades.

Ahmed Ali EL HASSAN BASHIR (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

May I express my appreciation to the Programme Committee for the valuable work it has undertaken.

I would like to focus in my intervention on the TCP. This Programme is one of the most important programmes, which is of great help in the field of agriculture and other fields and therefore we deem it important to buttress this programme in a valuable way in order to help it achieve its goals and targets.

The value of this TCP lies in the transfer of skills and knowledge to the benefit to the developing countries. We believe that developing countries should take part in the benefit to be gathered from this programme. We believe that this programme should be buttressed even if this entails and increase in the contributions.

Helmy BEDEIR (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

First of all, I should like to thank the Chairman of this Committee and the members of the Programme Committee. I do appreciate the importance and difficulty of the discussions of the Programme Committee.

I have a number of points. The first point has been raised by a number of delegates before me and I believe that this issue is related to the consensus within the Programme Committee, as apparently there are different views. I believe that the report states that there are a number of opinions as far as number of issues. The problem does not lie here, the multiplicity of opinions might be a healthy state of affairs and I believe that this issue does need more effort and scrutiny.

My second point is that it might be more useful if the report focussed on the main points discussed and the main points where consensus was not received. The relevant countries obviously stated that they do need further analysis. Developing countries should be invited to give their views to the Programme and Finance Committees so that the whole picture would become full and complete. A number of ideas were expressed concerning the various points, the most important of which is the decentralization of TCP.

Technical Cooperation Programme is of vital importance particularly for developing countries and I refer here specifically to the African countries. We could even say that the TCP is the most important tool of this Organization and each and every eligible country should benefit from this TCP, particularly those most in need and those affected by hunger and poverty.

This leads me to the problem of priority setting. While we do agree with the points referred to this issue in the report there is yet a point which might be discussed in the future. Mainly the issue of the programmes and the issue of the budget. The link between the programmes and the need to safeguard the necessary funding to these programmes. So far we don't have a clear view concerning this issue. Do we start with preparing the programmes, not only the TCP, but the

majority of programmes referred to in this report and thus, once we set and design these programmes, we put a scenario concerning the necessary funding, and how are we going to receive these fundings, either from the Member Nations or from voluntary contributions? Or do we set the budget on the basis of the real growth, zero nominal growth, zero real growth and on the basis of this budget scenario we can then locate the various resources to the programmes either for the TCP or other programmes.

I do believe that we still have ample time to discuss these issues and we shall go back to revisit this issue when we deal with the Programme of Work and Budget.

Manoj JUNEJA (Director, Programme of Budget and Evaluation)

The Secretariat, of course, has taken a careful note of all your comments during this rich debate. We are also sensitive to comments made by the Representatives of Mali and Egypt about what may seem to be an apparent dissatisfaction or lack of consensus in the Programme Committee. Certainly on the part of the Secretariat I would very much like to associate myself with the comments that have been made by the distinguished Representatives of Nigeria and Afghanistan, both members of the Programme Committee. It is always rather difficult, when there are complex issues to be discussed and when matters remain work-in-progress, to arrive at a position that does not appear to be divergent. I am confident that as we progress with the rather complex initiatives that have been so well presented by the Chairman of the Programme Committee - the initiatives on decentralization, the TCP review, priority setting and critical mass, there will be much greater convergence and consensus.

I would like to pick up on two areas that have been raised by several members: auto-evaluation and priority setting, and secondly, the TCP review. There were several comments also made on the SPWB but with your permission, I would simply appreciate the comments at this stage that were made on the Programme and Budget process, and respond more specifically during the discussion during this afternoon.

So, turning first to the interesting work on priority setting and auto-evaluation, I should like to, first of all, underline the role of auto-evaluation in furthering the implementation of Results Based Management in FAO. In fact, the Representative of the Netherlands, on behalf of the EC, made reference to the work that FAO has done in this area since 1997.

Auto-evaluation is a very important compliment to independent evaluation. We have completed the first year's experience that has been reported to you by the Chairman of the Programme Committee, and this experience has been very much supported by managers at all levels. I should emphasize, in response to questions that were raised in particular by the Representatives of India and Nigeria, that this area would receive additional funding in 2006/2007. So far, it has largely been funded from extra-budgetary resources, but there would be some provision in the Programme of Work and Budget 2006/2007 in this regard. It would be centrally funded, which I hope also responds to the concerns that were raised earlier - central funding in the Evaluation Service, to be precise.

Auto-evaluation, of course, is a valuable tool for learning, as has been mentioned by some speakers. It does provide, and will provide, an opportunity for programme adjustment by managers.

The Chairman of the Programme Committee mentioned that Auto-evaluation could not be used for priority setting. Indeed, the debate on priority setting remains work-in-progress and I suspect that the next formal report to the Programme Committee is likely to be in May 2006.

However, in the meantime, the Organization has made good progress in the recent past in the area of priority setting. I would refer, in particular, to the priority setting work that was carried out in connection with the Medium-term Plan 2006-2011, which was reported in paragraphs 183-192 of that document.

The Chairman of the Programme Committee referred to three criteria approved by the Council in determining priorities. If I take, for example, the very important criterion on comparative advantage, this is assessed along three important dimensions.

It starts with looking at synergies through collaboration and avoidance of duplication with other institutions, in order to determine whether in each programme entity FAO is the sole significant player or alternatively, whether FAO faces competition with others. It assesses the track record which can be determined by the length of proven track record of achievements and also, thirdly, the need for neutrality and global outreach.

For each of the priority setting criterion that had been established by Council, the Organization has gone through a process of improvement and refinement in order to ensure that these priority setting criteria are adequately implemented.

I should re-emphasize that is done for all programme entities, so it is comprehensive with regard to the Technical and Economic Programmes.

Now, with the implementation of the new programming model for the Non-Technical Programmes as well, we have a further enhancement of the resource setting and priority setting framework.

With regard to the immediate future on priority setting, critical mass and fragmentation, I should emphasize that even before the matter comes up formally for discussion at the Programme Committee, we would seek, in the full Programme of Work and Budget, to demonstrate, perhaps not a reduction in the number of programme entities, but at least some trends in the number of biennial outputs that are planned by Programme Managers in the Organization.

I must say that the Secretariat also shares the concern of the Programme Committee that successive resource reductions may lead to further fragmentation and therefore, we are ourselves committed to looking into this matter in greater detail.

I should then like to turn to the second item, which is the TCP review. The Representative of the United States mentioned that the ongoing work on the decentralization follow-up must be linked to the TCP review, and that is indeed the case.

One of the main areas where we find this linkage is in the recommendation on TCP priority setting processes at country level, which several speakers, including the Netherlands, India and Indonesia, have referred to. The Committee has strongly endorsed that recommendation.

The recommendation is to involve governments, FAO and other stakeholders in establishing these TCP priority-setting processes at country level and more specifically, in fully integrating these TCP priority setting processes into the national priority frameworks that Management had proposed in response to the Independent Evaluation of FAO's Decentralization. This is, of course, an area of work-in-progress.

The Representative of the United States and others referred to many other initiatives which are on-going and I will touch on some of them. For example, linking TCP to co-financing is indeed one area where the Secretariat is committed to providing further information and clarification at its next session in September 2005. With regard to increased delegation of TCP to FAORs, some recommendations have already been put forward and considered favourably by the Programme Committee, but there will be more recommendations and more proposals in this regard in response to paragraph 42 of the Report of the Programme Committee.

There was also a recommendation for adding funding from voluntary contributions, and here again, I would draw attention to the deliberations that took place in the May session of the Programme Committee, where it considered emergency TCP assistance and was favourably inclined to selective reimbursement of TCP through extra-budgetary resources with regard to the emergency programmes.

Ewald WERMUTH (Chairman of the Programme Committee)

As Chair of the Programme Committee, it is actually very gratifying to note that many of the deliberations that we have in the Programme Committee at this moment on very topical issues are subject to wider discussions among membership, and actually I would encourage you to continue to do so, as it will benefit the input to our work in September, as many of the issues we have discussed and on which I have reported today are work-in-progress.

Your comments have been very encouraging. I have listened very carefully to a number of comments you have made on the Programme Committee items, some of which were cautioning the Programme Committee, for instance on TCP in terms of country eligibility. I noted with interest the observations made by Algeria, China, Mexico and others on this issue. I can assure that we will take that into consideration in our next meeting.

Also interesting were the comments made on how we could innovate the Technical Cooperation Programme through co-financing, so that could be taken on board, as well. We await further recommendations on this issue from the Secretariat. Again, much of our work is work-in-progress, but I am very confident, given the collegial atmosphere in the Programme Committee and the analytical way we discuss issues, that we can find common ground on many of these potential contentious issues and come back hopefully with a consensus view in November of this year.

Given the profile of these issues and past views expressed by Members, you should not be too afraid when the Programme Committee sometimes shows its muscles a little bit to the Secretariat.

If we have expressed some disappointment, it was actually about the progress of the management response on decentralization, but that is not a bad thing, as such. If it is done a constructive way and in a way actually to encourage the Secretariat to speed up its response and fulfill its promises to the Programme Committee in terms of delivering a time-bound costed action plan, where all the implementation dilemmas are included so that we can discuss them so as to advise to Council, it is not in itself, I think, an issue that we should dramatize. Some strong words showing some muscles to encourage the Secretariat should actually be perceived as supporting further work by the Secretariat so as to capacitate the Programme Committee to deliver proper and full advice to this Council.

I am very much looking forward to working with the members of the Programme Committee on all these issues, and I feel generally supported in the avenues we explore. Ultimately, it is a political decision that should be taken by the Council, but we will do what ever we can do and put our best efforts so as to put all the dilemmas, and I would say in their entirety, to you so that you can make your own judgement within your regional groups and in capitals.

I think that is actually the work of the Programme Committee: to analyze the issues, to discuss them in a constructive way amongst the membership and with the Secretariat and then, come up, hopefully, with a consensual advice to this Council so that you feel actually supported in making decisions you need to make.

I would like to leave it with these words. I am looking forward to working with my colleagues in the September meeting and would encourage again the Secretariat to support the Programme Committee in its work by advancing the management response on, for instance, the TCP and the decentralization.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je voudrais donner la parole à Monsieur Harcharik qui pourrait nous donner quelques éclaircissements sur la décentralisation.

David HARCHARIK (Secretary-General of the Council)

Let me just say that I have noted what I should call the encouragement of the Council that the Secretariat move in a much faster and visionary way in developing the implementation plan for

the decentralization. We received similar encouragement from both the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee, probably even in a stronger language that was used in the Council here today.

Let me just reiterate some of the remarks that the Programme Committee Chair made in his introduction to this item, and that is that the decentralization report is itself an extremely comprehensive and complex document. If I am not mistaken, it includes some 80 recommendations, if you count all of the sub-recommendations.

Do not underestimate the task involved here. To implement this report requires a fundamental change and a great deal of work for this Organization. The report addresses, for example, programme development and how that starts at the country level and moves up to our Sub-regional and Regional Offices, takes advantage of advice from the Regional Conferences and then it is fed into our Programme of Work and Budgeting process. It deals with how we support that programme, including the technical staff needed, and the types of staff needed. And it suggests in some cases that we don't have the right type of staff and that we need to recruit different types of people. It suggests a change in where our technical staff would be located. That in itself is a fundamental undertaking.

The report gets into a variety of personnel matters: recruitment of staff, competencies of staff and all locations but particularly in our country offices, and the evaluation, performance evaluation and monitoring of staff.

It addresses things like authorities and in particular, the delegation of authorities, and therefore, the risks associated with that. We have to look at the risks to make sure that we have in place proper oversight. That, therefore, deals with our auditing work.

To implement this report in its entirety requires a great deal of attention to the synergies between the Operational Field Programme and the Regular Programme. It touches on the work we have underway and how it can be improved with our partners, bilateral donors and multilateral international organizations.

There are budgetary impacts, despite the fact that the report itself suggests that this is a budget neutral exercise, we don't think that it is, and just about every recommendation in the report requires somebody to look in detail at the budgetary implications before we can be exactly clear how we can go forward on it.

Some people said today that it requires indeed a change in organizational culture, and I think that it does.

You will see that it also links with the work that we are doing on the Millennium Development Goals. That needs to be factored in.

I can assure you that it is work-in-progress and better than that, it is intensive work-in-progress.

We have a number of teams in place, we are aggressively looking forward to implementing this decentralization report. We look forward to getting back to Programme and Finance Committees in September and, of course, eventually to the Council.

Let me assure you, in closing, that we are not, in any way, going slow on this, even though it has taken a little longer than we anticipated. We are aggressively and intensively trying to implement this report and we do look forward to getting back to you. It is indeed a comprehensive and complex undertaking. I think that you need to understand that.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Ceci conclut le point 12 de notre ordre du jour.

Nous passons au point 13 de l'ordre du jour: "Rapport de la cent neuvième session du Comité financier" qui s'est tenu à Rome du 9 au 13 mai 2005. Le Rapport du Comité est contenu dans le document CL 128/13. J'aimerais souligner que les questions qui requièrent l'attention du Conseil sont notamment présentées dans le tableau qui se trouve au début du Rapport de la cent neuvième session du Comité.

13. Report of the 109th Session of the Finance Committee (Rome, 9-13 May 2005) (CL 128/13)

13. Rapport de la cent neuvième session du Comité financier (rome, 9-13 mai 2005) (CL 128/13)

13. Informe del 109º período de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas (Roma, 9-13 de mayo de 2005) (CL 128/13)

13.1 Status of Contributions and Arrears (CL 128/LIM/1)

13.1 État des contributions et des arriérés (CL 128/LIM/1)

13.1 Estado de las cuotas y de los atrasos (CL 128/LIM/1)

13.2 Budgetary Performance 2004

13.2 Exécution du budget 2004

13.2 Ejecución del presupuesto en 2004

13.3 Scale of Contributions 2006-2007

13.3 Barème des contributions 2006-2007

13.3 Escala de cuotas para 2006-2007

13.4 Other Matters Arising out of the Report

13.4 Autres questions découlant du rapport

13.4 Otras cuestiones planteadas en el informe

LE PRÉSIDENT

Le point 13 de l'ordre du jour comprend quatre sous points qui sont les suivants:

- le sous-point 13.1 est intitulé: "Etat des contributions et des arriérés". Le document pertinent porte la référence CL 128/LIM/1;
- le sous-point 13.2 concerne l'exécution du budget 2004;
- le sous-point 13.3 concerne le barème des contributions 2006/2007;
- enfin, le sous point 13.4 porte sur les autres questions découlant du Rapport.

Permettez-moi d'introduire certains de ces sous points avant de laisser la parole au Président du Comité financier et au Directeur du Bureau du Programme du budget et de l'évaluation.

Le sous-point 15.1 sur la situation des contributions et des arriérés est illustré par le document CL 128/LIM/1. Ce document a été préparé par le Secrétariat et est présenté au Conseil pour information afin de mettre à jour des informations fournies dans le Rapport de la cent neuvième session du Comité financier.

Au vingt juin 2005, l'Organisation a reçu plus de soixante-seize millions de dollars et plus de soixante-trois millions d'euros au titre des contributions de l'année 2005. Cela représente 44,95 pour cent des contributions en dollars et 36,18 pour cent des contributions en euros dus pour l'année et ces chiffres sont de peu supérieurs aux contributions des deux dernières années.

L'Organisation a reçu le montant total de 8,8 millions de dollars et 1,6 millions d'euros en arriérés, montant inférieur aux sommes reçues l'année dernière à la même époque.

Ainsi, au vingt juin 2005, quatre vingt dix-sept Etats Membres soit 51 pour cent des Membres de l'Organisation, n'ont pas encore versé leurs contributions en dollars pour l'année 2005 et 106 Etats Membres, soit plus de 56 pour cent des Membres de l'Organisation, présentent encore des arriérés pour leurs contributions en euros pour 2005. En outre, quatre-vingt Etats Membres n'ont pas encore payé leurs contributions pour 2004 et les années précédentes. Le montant des arriérés de trente-sept Etats est tel qu'il ne leur permettrait pas de participer au scrutin de la prochaine Conférence, conformément à l'Article 3.4 de l'Acte constitutif de l'Organisation.

En ce qui concerne le sous-point 15.4 de l'ordre du jour, relatif au barème des contributions 2006/2007, j'attire votre attention sur le paragraphe 31 du Rapport de la cent neuvième session du Comité financier, qui figure au document CL 128/13 – le projet de barème se trouve plus particulièrement à l'Annexe 2 de ce document. Comme par le passé, le barème proposé, dérive directement des quote-parts des Nations Unies en vigueur en 2004.

Le Conseil est appelé à formuler des recommandations à la Conférence et je vous prie de noter qu'un projet de résolutions se trouve au paragraphe 31 du Rapport du Comité financier.

Enfin, je voudrais attirer votre attention sur les paragraphes 32 à 34 du même Rapport qui contiennent un projet de résolutions sur la prolongation du mandat du Commissaire aux comptes.

Monsieur Seminario Portocarrero, Président du Comité financier, va introduire le point 13 et ses différents sous-points. Monsieur Mehboob, Sous-Directeur général, chargé du Département de l'administration et des finances, et Monsieur Juneja, Directeur du Bureau du Programme du budget et de l'évaluation, sont présents pour assister le Conseil.

Comme précédemment, je demande à Monsieur Seminario Portocarrero, à Monsieur Mehboob et Monsieur Juneja de ne pas introduire le Sommaire du Programme de travail et budget 2006/2007 qui sera examiné au point 10 de notre ordre du jour cet après-midi.

Monsieur Seminario, vous avez la parole.

Roberto SEMINARIO PORTOCARRERO (Presidente del Comité de Finanzas)

Ha sido para mi un privilegio presidir el Comité de Finanzas donde distinguidos colegas han trabajado con ahínco y de manera constructiva en las discusiones relacionadas con los temas financieros de la Organización.

Bajo la premisa de trabajar a favor de la Organización y de nuestras regiones se han abordado una variedad de temas que se refieren a cuestiones presupuestarias, financieras y administrativas que atañen y afectan a la situación general de la Organización.

Permítaseme presentar el informe del 109^o período de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas celebrado del 9 al 13 de mayo del corriente año. En este período de sesiones debemos señalar que fue elegido al Sr. Anthony Beattie como Vicepresidente del Comité de Finanzas.

En lo que respecta al estado de las cuotas y de los atrasos, me refiero al Documento CL 128/LIM/1, ya se nos habían dado algunos alcances sobre este documento. Este tema es para información; sin embargo, de este documento se desprende una serie de hechos. Lo primero que debemos señalar es que existe una cantidad significativa de cuotas pendientes de pagos a la Organización por parte de los Estados Miembros. ¿De qué manera esto afecta a la Organización? La Organización se verá obligada a recurrir a préstamos externos por un valor de hasta 40 millones de dólares EE.UU. durante el período comprendido entre agosto y octubre de 2005 para sufragar los gastos corrientes mensuales de la Organización. El costo total estimado de los intereses de estos préstamos ascendería a aproximadamente 150 mil dólares EE.UU. que se cargarían a los ingresos de inversiones en el componente de ingresos varios del Programa Ordinario. Teniendo en cuenta lo señalado, el Comité instó una vez más a todos los Estados Miembros a pagar puntualmente sus cuotas a fin de asegurar que la FAO pudiera hacer frente a las necesidades de efectivo para sufragar las actividades de su programa de labores.

En cuanto al punto 13.2 Ejecución del presupuesto en el 2004, el Comité de Finanzas examinó el informe anual sobre la ejecución del presupuesto y las transferencias en el programa y el presupuesto basado en las cuotas no comprobadas de 2004. El Comité observó que el gasto neto en el 2004 con cargo al Programa Ordinario ascendía a 360 millones de dólares EE.UU., vale decir, que dichas cifras representa el 48,1 por ciento de la consignación bienal de 749 millones de dólares EE.UU. y se preveía para este año que la consignación se utilizaría en su totalidad durante el bienio. El Comité observó también que la ejecución financiera del Programa Ordinario se veía afectado por una variación desfavorable con respecto a los gastos de personal de 16 millones de dólares EE.UU. debido a incrementos en el pasivo y el seguro médico y el fortalecimiento de las monedas locales respecto al dólar.

Otro de los puntos que el Comité de Finanzas analizó es sobre las transferencias entre capítulos presupuestarios que se presentan y se van a presentar al Comité de Finanzas en septiembre de 2005. Se nos informó sobre la base actual que se harían transferencias a los Capítulos 3 y 6, y que esta transferencia ascendería a la suma de 5,5 millones de dólares EE.UU., la mayor parte provendrían de fondos del Capítulo 2. La magnitud de estas transferencias estaba en consonancia con bienios anteriores.

En lo que se refiere a la escala de cuotas para el 2006-2007, existe un proyecto de resolución. El Comité de Finanzas abordó el tema de la escala de cuotas propuestas para el bienio 2006-2007; como conoce el Consejo, la escala propuesta se basa directamente en la escala de cuotas de las Naciones Unidas aprobadas para el año 2004-2006 con arreglo a lo establecido por la Asamblea General en su resolución 58/1 del 23 de diciembre de 2003. Las tasas de las cuotas de los Estados Miembros en la escala de las Naciones Unidas son inferiores a las que figuran en la escala de la FAO, puesto que al tener una composición diferente es necesario aumentar de forma prorrateada las tasas de asignación de cuotas de las Naciones Unidas a fin de llegar a la escala de la FAO. El Comité de Finanzas examinó y aceptó la escala de cuotas propuestas para el bienio 2006-2007.

En lo que se refiere al punto 13.3 Otras cuestiones planteadas en el informe, abordamos varios temas. El primero de ellos se refiere al plan de incentivos para estimular el pago puntual de las cuotas. Se efectuó un análisis de las repercusiones del tipo de descuento cero. Para poder analizar sobre un largo período de tiempo el efecto del tipo de descuento cero en el calendario de pago de los Miembros, el Comité recomendó que el tipo de descuento aplicable a las cuotas del 2006 en dólares EE.UU. y en euros se mantuviera en cero. Asimismo, el Comité pidió que la Secretaría ampliara el análisis de la cuestión de modo que incluyera una encuesta a los Estados Miembros sobre los distintos aspectos que influyen en el calendario de pagos de cada Miembro. El Comité decidió examinar este análisis en su período de sesiones de mayo de 2006 con vistas a formular una recomendación general en el período de sesiones del Consejo de noviembre de 2006. En cuanto a la prórroga del nombramiento del Auditor Externo, el Comité observó que en mayo de 2004 había confirmado que era adecuada la duración de cuatro años del mandato del Auditor Externo y su posible prórroga por otro período de dos años al término del cual el contrato de auditoría externa debería ser objeto de una nueva licitación. El Comité consideró la opción de prorrogar el mandato del Interventor y Auditor General de la India como Auditor Externo de la Organización por otros dos años e hizo suyo el proyecto de resolución que figura en el Documento CL 128/3.

En cuanto a la financiación del pasivo del seguro médico después del cese del servicio, el Comité de Finanzas tomó nota de la recomendación de la Secretaría de mantener el actual método aprobado de financiación basado en una financiación periódica de la amortización del seguro médico después del cese en el servicio cuyo valor se establece cada bienio con arreglo a la última valoración actuarial realizada. El Comité convino, que continuar con este nivel de financiación bienal era el sistema más adecuado y prudente para la Organización así como el único método de garantizar que el déficit del fondo general no siguiera aumentado debido al seguro médico después del cese en el servicio. Sin embargo, el Comité expresó preocupación porque la cantidad de 30 millones de dólares EE.UU. indicados para el 2006-2007 se había obtenido a partir de los datos correspondientes al 2003 mientras que las necesidades de financiación podrían ser mayores actualmente de lo que se había calculado previamente debido a la apreciación del Euro. Tras

señalar la importancia de formular recomendaciones basadas en los resultados de una valoración actuarial al día en función de las hipótesis demográficas y los tipos de cambios más recientes, el Comité pidió que la Organización encargara a sus actuarios que realizaran otra valoración de forma que sus resultados y la cuantía de financiación bienal recomendada para el 2006-2007 pudiera comunicarse al Comité de Finanzas en su período de sesiones de septiembre de 2005.

Otro tema abordado en el Comité de Finanzas es con respecto al seguimiento de la evaluación independiente de la descentralización de la FAO. El Comité de Finanzas expresó su decepción por el informe, ya que había esperado que en él se presentara de manera más clara la visión estratégica subyacente, mayores progresos en la aplicación y un plan de aplicación con plazos y costos precisos. El Comité reconoció que el progreso en la aplicación se veía limitado por la necesidad de determinar con exactitud, en primer lugar, las demandas en el plano de los países en relación a los tipos de servicios, a saber, relativos a las políticas, técnicos y operacionales, por disciplina a fin de poder preparar nuevos modelos de plantilla descentralizada y compararlos con las combinaciones de competencias existentes en las oficinas descentralizadas. El Comité valoró positivamente la presentación informativa de los directores del equipo de evaluación independiente y tomó nota de las aclaraciones proporcionadas por la Secretaría en la esperanza de que en su siguiente período de sesiones se realizara una presentación y un debate más detallado. El Comité destacó varias esferas fundamentales en relación con las cuales la FAO debería adoptar medidas.

En conclusión el Comité manifestó su interés en recibir un informe de seguimiento más detallado en su siguiente período de sesiones.

En general el 109^o período de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas resultó muy productivo y, en particular, creo que se logró abordar una serie de cuestiones financieras y presupuestarias de importancia a las que se enfrenta la Organización. En nombre de los Miembros del Comité quisiera manifestar nuestro agradecimiento a la Secretaría por la asistencia prestada en nuestras deliberaciones así como nuestra gratitud a los Estados Miembros de la FAO por esta oportunidad que nos brindan de promover la importante labor de la Organización. Tendré sumo gusto en facilitarles cualquier aclaración adicional que deseen con respecto al informe.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Nous sommes arrivés au terme de notre session de ce matin. Nous reprendrons nos travaux à 14 h 30 et on reprendra les débats sur le Rapport du Comité financier.

On vous rappelle qu'une présentation sera faite par Monsieur Eric Bost, Sous Secrétaire du Département de l'agriculture des Etats-Unis d'Amérique sur les directives nutritionnelles dans la salle d'Iran, au rez de chaussée du bâtiment B à 13 h 00.

On se retrouvera donc à 14 h 30 précises pour poursuivre nos travaux.

The meeting rose at 12.40 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 40

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.40 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Twenty-eighth Session Cent vingt-huitième session 128º período de sesiones
Rome, 20-24 June 2005 Rome, 20-24 juin 2005 Roma, 20-24 de junio de 2005
FOURTH PLENARY SESSION QUATRIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE CUARTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
21 June 2005

The Fourth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14:50 hours
Mr Aziz Mekouar,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding

La quatrième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 50
sous la présidence de M. Aziz Mekouar,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la cuarta sesión plenaria a las 14.50 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Aziz Mekouar,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je déclare ouverte la quatrième séance de la 128^{ème} session du Conseil.

Nous reprenons donc sur le point 13 et je donne la parole aux délégations inscrites sur la liste. Personne n'est inscrit sur la liste, donc tous ceux qui veulent prendre la parole, la Chine. Oui, Chine.

III. PROGRAMME, BUDGETARY, FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (continued)

III. QUESTIONS RELATIVES AU PROGRAMME, AU BUDGET, AUX FINANCES ET À L'ADMINISTRATION (suite)

III. ASUNTOS DEL PROGRAMA Y ASUNTOS PRESUPUESTARIOS, FINANCIEROS Y ADMINISTRATIVOS (continuación)

13. Report of the 109th Session of the Finance Committee (Rome, 9-13 May 2005) (CL 128/13) (continued)

13. Rapport de la cent neuvième session du Comité financier (Rome, 9-13 mai 2005) (CL 128/13) (suite)

13. Informe del 109º período de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas (Roma, 9-13 de mayo de 2005) (CL 128/13) (continuación)

13.1 Status of Contributions and Arrears (CL 128/LIM/1) (continued)

13.1 État des contributions et des arriérés (CL 128/LIM/1) (suite)

13.1 Estado de las cuotas y de los atrasos (CL 128/LIM/1) (continuación)

13.2 Budgetary Performance 2004 (continued)

13.2 Exécution du budget 2004 (suite)

13.2 Ejecución del presupuesto en 2004 (continuación)

13.3 Scale of Contributions 2006-2007 (continued)

13.3 Barème des contributions 2006-2007 (suite)

13.3 Escala de cuotas para 2006-2007 (continuación)

13.4 Other Matters Arising out of the Report (continued)

13.4 Autres questions découlant du rapport (suite)

13.4 Otras cuestiones planteadas en el informe (continuación)

Guo HANDI (China) (Original language Chinese)

On this item I would like to touch upon two issues: after service-medical costs and FAO's language policy.

The Chinese delegation noted that the Report of One hundred and ninth Session of Finance Committee has mentioned many times about after-service medical costs (documents 17, 25, 26 and from paragraph 45-49). To this end the Conference decided in 2003 to adopt the method of amortization, namely each financial year will amortize about US \$14.1 million and use twelve financial years to fulfil.

Now we acknowledge that the amount of amortization is far from enough and it should be increased many times with the original amount increasing from US \$14.1 million to US \$30 million.

Our member countries have come across similar problems in relation to after-service medical costs due to the increase of medical costs and the number of retired people the rise of medical costs is inevitable. To this end, the majority of Member governments have formulated the relevant methods to address this issue as we all know that after-service medical costs of the Organization will eventually come from the assessed contributions of Member Countries, but until now we have not received any convincing explanation about the rise of medical costs which has put us in an embarrassed position. It is difficult for us to convince the relevant authorities at home – parliament and even taxpayers – about the increase of the budget.

There is a great leader in China saying "we are not afraid of taking matters seriously and earnestly". We hope that the Secretariat will help us to convince the relevant parties in a serious manner, so as to find a good solution to this issue left over many years.

We also noted that paragraph 72 of the Report mentioned FAO's Language Policy. If referring to policy, then policy should go through certain procedures to be formulated. It is our hope that we could have access to know about this policy-making procedure and legal basis for implementing this language policy as well as its difference with other organizations, for example the language policy of WFP.

We are of the view that this language policy is not fair to some Members and objectively becomes a technical barrier in recruiting new personnel. We hope that this phenomenon could be rectified in order to realize the expectation by the Conference Resolution 15/2003, namely, the Organization will to a possible extent represent all cultures and diversified characteristics of all Member Countries.

Hans HOOGEVEEN (Netherlands)

I am speaking on behalf of the European community and its 25 Member States. The acceding countries Bulgaria, Romania and turkey align themselves with this statement.

The European Community is grateful to the Finance Committee for their comprehensive and lucid report.

We will deal with the Summary Programme of Work and Budget in a separate statement on that item of the Council's agenda.

We note with concern the further deterioration in FAO's financial position. The General Fund deficit was US \$90 million at the end of 2004 and is projected to increase to US \$114 million at the end of 2005. The main factors in this are the growing burden of unfunded After Service Medical Costs and the increase in arrears owed by Members States. The liquidity position is also getting worse, with the assessed contributions due from the two largest contributors not reaching FAO until the last quarter of the year. Thus it was necessary to borrow US \$14 million in 2004; and the Secretariat expects to have to borrow around US \$40 million in the period between August to September 2005.

This is a difficult issue. Yet, we have no choice but to deal with it. It is in our view imperative that the next Council should receive clear advice from the Finance Committee on the options available to it to improve the timely receipt of assessed contributions and that the Council should agree on a set of measures to address this issue. Failure to deal with this in 2005 will only make the problem harder to solve.

The second important factor in the deterioration of the financial position is the treatment of After Service Medical Costs. the progressive funding of the liability agreed by the last Conference – under which US \$14 million would be set aside in this and the next 11 biennia – was subsequently shown by a new actuarial valuation to be a serious underestimate. We now learn from the report of the Finance Committee that the latest figure – US \$30 million – may itself be too low. We therefore concur with the committee that a further valuation needs to be done as a matter of urgency so that the Council and the Conference can take a properly informed view as to the best way to handle funding of the liability.

The European Community shares the disappointment of the Committee that the Secretariat has yet to produce a management response to the Report on the Independent Evaluation of Decentralization in the form of a costed, timetabled action plan, as was requested in September 2004. We look forward to the presentation of such a plan to the Finance and Programme Committees in September and to have a full discussion at the next session of Council.

We support the recommendation of the finance Committee that the External Auditor should be re-appointed for a further term of two years.

Paul MURPHY (Canada)

Canada continues to be concerned regarding the financial situation facing FAO as raised in the Report of the One hundred and ninth Session of the Finance Committee.

The Committee identified delay in receipt of contributions and the persistently high level of arrears as the most significant factors undermining the financial health of the Organization.

We note that according to FC 109/4, there was a net increase of US \$9 million of unpaid contributions from Members in 2004, with only 89% of 2004 assessments paid before year end. These unpaid contributions to the Organization are having serious implications for cashflow. We note with concern that the Secretariat has indicated that it will, once again, need to resort to external borrowing of up to US \$40 million for the period of August to October 2005. This will only exacerbate the difficult financial situation of the Organization as it will create additional interest costs for FAO due to interest charges.

We again urge all Member States to pay their annual assessed contributions on time, in full and without conditions. Timely payment of assessed contributions is critical for the Organization to implement its Programme of Work. We cannot expect FAO to do without providing the agreed level of resources.

In addition, the level of arrears continues to increase, having risen from US \$58 million at the end of 2004 to US \$83 million plus Euro 12 million as of 6 May 2005. In fact, at that time 51 countries were in arrears as of 31 December, with 27 of them having made no payment at all against outstanding arrears in 2004. A total of 33 countries were facing a potential loss of their voting rights due to their level of arrears.

Clearly FAO is facing a difficult situation which requires consideration of new ways to address this problem.

We welcome the request by the Finance Committee that the Secretariat survey Members on issues that influence the timing of payments with a view to addressing this problem.

Canada would also suggest that a study be conducted on the penalty and incentive schemes in other intergovernmental organizations in order to propose new measures to address this critical issue. For example, in addition to removing voting rights the Organization could consider removing the right of Members with significant arrears to host FAO meetings or conference.

Nonetheless, and whilst we understand that the current cashflow situation is extremely serious, Canada cannot support the proposal to have Members pay their assessed contributions without first deducting forecast miscellaneous income. Throughout the UN system appropriations are determined on the basis of net income after deducting forecast miscellaneous income as an accepted accounting practice. Such a change, whilst certainly improving the cashflow situation of the Organization, would ignore the fact that the major factor contributing to cashflow difficulties is late or lack of payment of assessed contributions by a significant number of Members. By increasing the appropriation level in this way Members who pay their assessments on time would be carrying a larger percentage of the financial burden; in effect subsidizing the late payments by others. Such a change at FAO could set an unwarranted precedent within the UN system as a whole.

Finally, Canada also continues to be concerned with the After Service Medical Cost liability and await an updated actuarial evaluation of this liability as we consider how to address this problem

in the coming months. It would make sense to us for this issue to be studied across the UN system with a view to developing a common approach.

Kenichi BESSHO (Japan)

Japan would like to comment on the issue of outstanding contributions and After Service Medical Care.

Firstly, with regard to unpaid contributions Japan would like to highlight the fact that the General Fund deficit at 31 December 2004 had remained at the same balance as at the end of 2003 at US \$90 million, and there was a net increase of US \$9 million of outstanding contribution in 2004 according to the Report submitted by the Finance Committee.

In this regard we are concerned that many Member Countries are faced with difficulties in meeting financial obligations, and therefore Japan questions whether a further increase in budget level is sustainable from the viewpoint of the sound budgetary management of FAO.

Secondly, with regard to the After Service Medical Costs liabilities, according to paragraph 47 of CL 128/13 "the amount of US \$30 million indicated for 2006-2007 funding was derived from 2003 data while funding requirements could now be higher than previously estimated due to the strengthened Euro.

Japan would like to request the Secretariat to explain adequately how the amount has been calculated and would like to ask to make clear the details of calculations, as well as relations with relevant discussions concerning other UN agencies.

Japan is unwilling to accept the amount of US \$30 million for 2006-2007 as long as the above mentioned questions are not cleared up.

Ms Radha SINGH (India)

We commend the finance Committee for having disposed of a very heavy agenda in a very efficient manner. We are happy that the entire appropriate of US \$749.1million for the current biennium will be fully utilized. Nevertheless, it is a matter of considerable concern that these so called unbudgeted costs, on account of items such as staff cost variance etc. amounting to about US \$16 million, will erode the programme budget. It would be helpful if the Secretariat could throw some light on ways to deal with this problem in the future.

It is also worrying to note the growing deficit in the General Fund which is expected to reach US \$114 million by the end of the year. To us it appears to be largely due to unpaid contributions and the amortization charge for After Service Medical Care. I need not emphasize the adverse implication of this development on the programme budget. We do hope that the Secretariat and the Finance Committee will propose innovative ways to attend to these major stumbling blocks.

We note with satisfaction that the Finance Committee has thought it proper to recommend the extension of the appointment of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India as the External Auditor of FAO for a further two year period. We are rather surprised, however, that some Members wish to involve private sector firms in external audits through invitations of bids. The Auditor General of India is, to my knowledge, the first constitutional authority from a developing country to undertake FAO's external audit. We urge the Finance Committee to carefully examine the pros and cons of the issue, keeping in view the interests of developing countries.

With regard to matters of personnel policy we are happy to note that the Secretariat is considering establishment of a mechanism to increase the participation of candidates from developing countries in the APO Scheme. It is necessary, both from the standpoint of equity as also to facilitate drawal of talent from varied cultural milieus. Recruitment under the scheme must not be confined to those who manage to obtain sponsorship. The use of regular programme resources to fund APOs from developing countries will, in our opinion, be an important initiative in providing a level playing field for recruitment of young people from across the globe.

As the Chinese delegate stated in his intervention the language policy of the Organization (referred to in paragraph 72 of the Committee's Report) adversely affects, in particular, candidates from the Asian region. In this region, it takes a lot for a potential candidate to develop proficiency in one of the three working languages of the Organization. To expect proficiency in more than one of the languages is, indeed, exacting. In effect it amounts to denial of equal opportunity in the matter of recruitment. As the Asian region is comparatively under-represented in FAO – which is surprising considering the huge pool of talent in the region – we urge that the language policy be reviewed so as to ensure that it is not a hindrance in recruiting competent personnel. It goes without saying that much more needs to be done to step up recruitments from under-represented countries.

Finally, with regard to the administrative information system we agree with paragraph 92 that the project costs can be reduced significantly through off-shoring, outsourcing and shifting staff to lower cost locations. These are options that need to be looked at seriously.

Saulo ARANTES CEOLIN (Brazil)

The Brazilian delegation would like to thank the Finance Committee and the Secretariat for the preparation and presentation of document CL 128/13.

We would like to dwell on the problem of extra-budgetary funding. From Brazil's point of view, it is not acceptable that the level of resources outside the regular budget of the Organization is as high as the regular budget itself. We must recall that this is a multilateral organization, and that multilateralism should continue to be its basis and guiding principle.

Therefore, Brazil would propose that the Secretariat prepare, for consideration by the Council, a study comparing levels of extra-budgetary activity throughout the United Nations system.

Secondly, we believe that the Finance Committee should perhaps start to examine and report on expenditures incurred under extra-budgetary funds.

Finally, I would like to reiterate that the guidance to the development of programmes and studies by FAO must come as much as possible from Members collectively. Decisions at FAO should be taken by all Member Nations in accordance with the Organization's multilateral nature.

Vladimir HERNÁNDEZ LARA (México)

Mi intervención se refiere a algunos comentarios que ya escuché aquí en el Consejo y me quería referir particularmente a la cuestión de las opciones que se manejan en el presupuesto. Para mi delegación resulta una cuestión útil ya que en su momento nos permitirá elegir el mejor nivel de presupuesto adecuado para las labores que debe desarrollar esta organización.

Sobre las declaraciones que acaba de hacer la delegación de Brasil, considero que se deberían tomar en consideración por parte del Comité de Finanzas, y también desearía hacer una pregunta en relación al Anexo 2 del documento que estamos estudiando porque, si entendí bien, la presentación del Presidente del Comité mencionaba que la escala de cuotas no viene transportada directamente a la FAO y hay un procedimiento adicional. Quisiera que me aclarara un poco, porque cuando veo la escala propuesta para mi país no deja de sorprender el cambio que se aplicará. Creo que es claro que mi país siempre ha tenido un firme compromiso con la Organización y esto tendría una repercusión muy importante.

Quisiera sustentar mi cuestión en relación a las hipótesis de presupuesto en función del grave estado que se nos ha expuesto en el informe sobre la situación de cuotas y atrasos que creo que es uno de los aspectos más graves que condicionan mucho el buen desempeño de labores de la organización, por lo que considero que las acciones que pueda emprender el Comité para exhortar a los países al cumplimiento del pago de sus cuotas será muy importante.

José A. QUINTERO (Cuba)

Solamente para apoyar la declaración que hacía anteriormente la distinguida Representación de Brasil en el sentido de su preocupación por el alto nivel que tienen en los recursos

extrapresupuestarios dentro del presupuesto total de la organización, fundamentalmente para financiar programas que son importantes para la FAO y para los miembros de la FAO y que nuestra delegación considera que deben ser financiados en su mayor parte por los recursos del programa ordinario.

Oswaldo DEL AGUILA RAMÍREZ (Perú)

La delegación del Perú en esta oportunidad también desea apoyar la propuesta presentada por Brasil referida al estudio sobre usos presupuestales por parecernos muy oportuna.

J. Michael CLEVERLEY (United States of America)

There are a number of issues that came up in the Finance Committee which were important to us as an Organization. One of which was security, there was a security briefing in the Finance Committee and there was reference to the discussion on security in the Finance Committee report. We would like to draw attention to the need to continue to address the issues of security. I suspect there is nothing that we would like less as Member States than to see a tragedy at either FAO headquarters or at field offices which we could have prevented had we addressed the issue adequately on time, and we certainly read every day instances where these types of events happen; they are not academic - they are real.

We would like to take this opportunity, therefore, to reiterate our concerns about the need for visible and effective security upgrades here at FAO. We understand the complexity of the task, particularly as it pertains to the many field offices. Nevertheless, FAO's greatest asset is its staff. We urge FAO to brief Member Nations more fully and more frequently on measures it has taken and plans to take to ensure that FAO headquarters and field offices are safe.

We note the UN headquarters, the World Food Programme and other UN Organizations have undertaken security renovations and keep their Member States informed of their plans.

Another issue of importance to us which came up in the Finance Committee which we think must be protected under any scenario which is chosen for the budget information systems. These systems enhance the productivity of the Organization, and if we cut expenses to information systems development, it is going to hurt the Organization's ability to achieve greater efficiencies in the future.

Oversight of the financial mechanisms and the financial oversight process itself, is another area as well as human resources where the Organization must make sure that sufficient resources are available.

Moving to after service medical cost, the United States recognizes the important liabilities that must be addressed eventually. Nevertheless, there are two issues which we think are very important, one of which is the availability of a current actuarial statement. Unfortunately, in the last Conference, there was an actuarial statement made available shortly after the Conference. Therefore, many Member States, including ourselves, thought we had dealt adequately with the problem at the 2003 Conference, only to find a few weeks later that the actuarial estimates were not accurate and the whole issue had to be readdressed. More important than this, however, we believe that the liability as stated by the Secretariat is a widespread liability which is being experienced throughout the entire UN system, and it makes it very difficult for Member States to go back to their legislatures asking for funds to cover a liability in FAO, for example, and then to have to return a few weeks later or a few months later to ask again for funds to cover problems in New York. The issue should be addressed as a global problem. We understand that the Secretariat in New York is drafting a report which should be available to Member States soon. We therefore do not believe that we should make any decision on after service medical costs until we have available the report from New York in order to address this issue as a global problem as it certainly is.

Finally, we would like to congratulate the Secretariat's efforts for seeking to work with the Host country Government to develop a Memorandum of Understanding which would ensure employment opportunities for spouses of FAO staff. This is a major step forward and a major

issue as a human resources issue which affects in the instances of American citizens, certainly, retention and recruitment. We do appreciate this effort and look forward to seeing a final resolution of the problem which has plagued the ability to recruit and retain important staff and good staff over the past.

Khalid MEHBOOB (Assistant Director-General, Finance Department)

I will take a few questions myself, and then on the after-service medical coverage with your permission I will hand over to the Director of Finance, and he can explain to Members of the whole intricacies of that topic.

I should, first of all like to thank Members for their valuable comments. We have taken note of all the comments you have made. On some of the issues, we have to go back to the Finance Committee with new documentation, and we shall take your comments into account in preparing those documents. We could not agree more with the concerns expressed by Members on the delayed payment of contributions or the non-payment of contributions. In fact, the paper we distributed today, document CL/128 LIM/1, page 3, provides very illuminating information on why we have a deficit and why we have the arrears which we have. If you see from the table there in paragraph 5, almost a 100 plus Members have not paid anything since 2001. That is an issue which the Finance Committee has been grappling with in most their sessions, and I think they have asked us to prepare further information which we will, and we will taking your comments into account. Then the Finance Committee will make its recommendations to you following the September session.

On the question of language policy, the comments in the Finance Committee's report relate mostly to the headquarters positions. First of all, the languages governed by the post which is being advertised, but for headquarter positions, we do give waivers to good candidates if they are from under-represented or non-represented countries, so there is flexibility in the application of the language policy at headquarters. In the Near East region, for example, the requirement is for Arabic and in Asia for positions in Asian FAO offices, we do include Chinese, as well. This is the Organization's policy for the various languages, and I understand it is more flexible than the policy of the UN at New York.

There was a question on the scale of contributions, I can only repeat what the Finance Committee has said: that the scale is worked by a Committee at the UN in New York, it is the Contributions Committee. We take that scale and amend it for our Membership because the Membership of the UN and FAO are different. That is why there are slight differences in the scale which is applied by the UN and the one applied by FAO.

On the question of security, the distinguished representative of the USA spoke about security. We did brief the Finance Committee as he reported. We have upgraded our security at headquarter but that is not the end. We are in the process of adding further. For the field, we follow the proposals made by the Department of Safety and Security at the UN which then are discussed by all the UN Organizations in an Inter-agency network. We cost share the security costs in the field, so FAO, along with other organizations, is giving a lot of importance to security. When you have your budget debate, I am sure my colleagues would explain further the question of security and its budget implications.

These were some specific questions which I could take. Now, I will give the floor to Mr Nelson who can take the after-service medical coverage.

Nicholas NELSON (Director, Finance Division)

Let me address comments as they came in chronological order. I will start with the comments from the distinguished representative from China, who was seeking a convincing reason for the increase in after-service medical care liability. I can only refer, in the first instance, to the Report of the Council's meeting of last November. CL 127/REP. In paragraphs 85 to 87, the Council attempted to give a full explanation of the reasons behind the change. The change to some degree derived from a one time change in methodology between the criteria used in 2001 and criteria

used in 2003. Even more exhaustively, is in the September 2004 Report of the Finance Committee itself and that is in CL 127/15 and the paragraphs are 54 to 61. Rather exhaustive explanations are provided there as to the reasons. In both instances, it is made quite clear and reiterated that from now, one should see only normal demographic changes between one valuation and the next valuation, so that point has been made.

I wish to say simply that the Conference did take a courageous and strategic decision in November 2003, to begin this additional partial funding towards this liability. The external advice that we have had and the discussions with our sister UN agencies all point in one direction, and that is the need to take forward and continue with addressing this liability rather than any retreat from addressing it head on. I will come back to after service later; there are other questions posed by other delegates.

Turning now to the comment posed by the distinguished representative of Canada joined by several others about the possibility of external borrowing, more than one has referred to this amount mentioned in the Finance Committee report of up to US\$40 million requirement from August to October. I would simply like to stress that the basis for that is in the absence of any major or important payments because the payments have been due since January, and that is our predicament is to wait for these large payments which come very late in the year.

The distinguished representative of Japan turned back to after-service medical care and wished to understand the calculations for the basis for these valuations. I do refer again to the Council report and to the Finance Committee report which I mentioned earlier. Actually, the Finance Committee has been looking at these issues for more than three years, practically at every session. The issue itself has been in front of the Governing Bodies since 1996/97, so it has been a strenuous and determined approach by the Organization to deal with this problem. That is the goal: to address this matter over the very long term. The reason being that the valuations are needed on a two-year basis to update demographic changes which have occurred in the population of participants in the plan and to update all trends and assumptions that are used (economic trends, economic factors, medical inflation). These matters have to be updated on a two-year basis, and changes do occur and the valuation is used as a reference point.

I believe the distinguished representative of Japan also asked about other UN agencies and how they are treating this matter. As you note in the Finance Committee's report before you, in paragraph 46, FAO is addressing this matter. It is in the forefront of those who are successfully addressing the matter by obtaining recognition in the accounts of the liability itself and finding a way to fund this liability which develops and which is needed over time. The World Health Organization, it is probably fair to consider them, along with the World Food Programme are among those who are the best placed. In other words they have abundant funding and they have been able to recognize the liability in their accounts almost entirely. Many other UN organizations, agencies and so on have not made progress, including a few very large ones, as we reported to the Finance Committee and the document itself includes the ILO, UNESCO and the UN itself which has tremendous liabilities not yet addressed.

Turning to the comments by the distinguished representative of Mexico on the scale of contributions, you questioned the increase from barely 1 percent to 1.9 percent for Mexico. It is very similar to the change experienced at the UN - which is our reference point - which moved from 1.08 to 1.88. As mention by Mr Mehboob, our source for the scale of contributions is, of course, the UN scale.

Regarding the comments from the distinguished representative of the USA, we return to the after-service medical care which is recognized that it needs to be addressed, eventually; I hope that means gradually over time. There is a perception that the actuarial valuation changed in a short time. One must recall the purpose of the actuarial valuation, and that is to provide a sound basis for a very large liability to be recorded and to be audited and to be part of our audited biennial accounts. That is the reason that the actuarial valuation is performed in the first place. Therefore, the 2001 valuation was performed in early 2002 in order to support the biennial accounts at the end of 2001. That was the basis for debates during that biennium (2002/03) and

culminated in the Conference's decision in November 2003; granted that is a long time after the biennial accounts of 2001. So it is not as though the figures change within a matter of weeks; they change on the basis of the purpose of the valuation which was to support the new biennial accounts at the end of 2003. The point, in any case, is very well taken. We have been looking at ways to have more up to date information and we will be introducing, at additional costs, of course, an interim valuation on the part of our actuaries who are external experts, which must be contracted. We will be doing a valuation and a so called interim valuation at the end of the mid-term of each biennium in order to have most up to date information and to share that with the Finance Committee.

The distinguished representative of USA also spoke about this issue affecting the entire UN system and that it should be addressed globally. It is a compelling argument, of course, but one must recognize that the varied treatment of this liability within the UN system itself. As we shared with the Finance Committee, many organizations have not even begun recording the liability; others are well advanced; some have no funds whatsoever; others are fully funded. So there is quite a difference in treatment. Yes, there is a General Assembly paper which has been promised for the last two years. I am not sure when it will be actually issued. However, turning back to FAO's liability, it is a liability which is real, calculated and updated at each actuarial valuation. That liability will not change on the basis of the UN's report. The UN will not be able to provide funding to this Organization or to anybody else to provide the necessary funding to deal with that liability. Only the FAO Membership can do that. In any case, we do know that the paper being developed for the General Assembly, among other options, does seek funding from the UN Membership to address the liability.

Manoj JUNEJA (Director, Programme, Budget and Evaluation)

The distinguished representative from India observed the substantial staff costs variance of US\$16 million unfavourable as reported in the annual report on budgetary performance. As reported in the Annual Report on Budgetary Performance for 2004/2005 and asked how such a situation could be avoided in the future.

In fact this really is quite a challenge and even in the past biennia there have been variances between the costs, which are full costs which are for budgeting purposes and those that actually transpire during the implementation cycle. In the previous biennium, in 2002/2003 for example there was a favourable staff cost variance of US\$5.4 million and in the biennium before that in fact the favourable variance was in excess of US\$21 million so this is certainly a challenge.

FAO's methodology for establishing standard rates, these are the rates that are used for budgetary purposes, is actually quite sophisticated. We use a database that analyses in excess of 400 000 records and this database, with the projections, results in budget rates for each grade level and location. However, the problem is, that even with the refined projection methodologies we have, it is very difficult to predict the future with absolute accuracy.

To give you an idea of the scale of the challenge, if we have a one percent variance between the standard costs that are established up to two and a half years before the completion of the implementation cycle and the actual costs, that in itself results in a US\$6 million variance.

So when actual costs do end up being higher than the standard as is the case in the Annual Report on Budgetary Performance before you, the problem we face is that the Organization is required to reduce its programmes in order to remain within the appropriation that is approved by Conference. So a forecasting error in our staff costs really has quite significant programmatic implications.

The problem is that these forecasts are subject to factors outside FAO's control. For example, we have the situation as is the case 2004/2005 of a weakening dollar against the local currencies in which FAO operates, these are currencies in the regional offices, subregional offices, and the FAO country offices. It is very difficult to predict that. Although some predictions are made based on projections made by banks, those projections themselves are not entirely accurate.

We are also subject to decisions of the International Civil Service Commission, that determines the conditions for all UN staff. There again we cannot predict with absolute accuracy the decisions that they might take during the implementation cycle.

Having said that, there are some ways in which we can immediately reduce risks and one is to change the timing of the actuarial evaluations. The after service liabilities, the end of service benefits are based on actuarial evaluations for standard costing purposes. If we were to change the timing of those actuarial evaluations we would end up in a situation where we would be able to forecast the implementation costs much better.

We are already in discussion with the Finance Division in that regard and plan to implement a revised timing for the programme of work and budget 2006/2007.

A proposal that is, however, outside our immediate control but perhaps given that I have been given this opportunity to speak on this topic could be put to you, is to establish a reserve account to act as a buffer for certain identified variances between standard costs and actual costs. In other words, if the Membership itself were to recognize that this is a problem and that such shocks can be problematical for programme delivery during the implementation cycle, a reserve could be established where surpluses and deficits are charged at the end of the biennium and carried over to the following biennium.

Now such a situation does actually exist, for example, with respect to differences in exchange rates between the US dollar and the Euro, they exist in the special reserve account. One possibility would be to actually extend this modality to other currencies such as those of our regional, subregional and FAO country offices. Of course, a proposal has not been made yet, but the Secretariat will make some proposal in this regard because we do recognize that this is a significant issue.

Perhaps, I could also underline a couple of comments that Mr Nelson had made with regard to the after service Medical Care. This is an issue that was identified by FAO very early on, back in 1997. The Secretariat is very grateful for the open governance process that has lead to some very positive progress and very positive decisions with regard to the after service medical liability.

Mr Nelson referred to other organizations that have not made as much progress as we have. Just to give some idea of the scale of the challenge in some other UN agencies, the United Nations itself, has an unfunded liability in excess of US\$1.8 billion, the ILO, again this is comparative information *vis-à-vis* the 2003 information that has been already presented to you, has an unfunded liability of US\$437 million and UNESCO US\$323 million.

If we were to wait, for a UN wide decision as suggested by the representative from the United States, I am concerned that this might be a backward step for the Organization. We would effectively end up waiting for the lowest common denominator so to speak and in fact we would have to undo some very positive steps that we have already taken.

For example, FAO currently covers the current service cost for after service medical, in other words, the current accrual for the future liability of current staff who are working for the Organization and who will eventually benefit from after service medical care. That current accrual is already charged to the biennial budget of FAO and has been since 1998. Now effectively if we were to look for a UN wide solution one would almost have to undo these kinds of positive steps that we have already taken.

Finally the representative from Canada made a comment about miscellaneous income and with your permission I would propose to revert to that item under the SPWB.

Roberto SEMINARIO PORTOCARRERO (Presidente del Comité de Finanzas)

Quisiera hacer algunos comentarios adicionales a lo ya manifestado por la Secretaría.

Hemos escuchado con mucho cuidado los comentarios vertidos y, sin duda, nos darán luces para nuestro trabajo en el Comité de Finanzas. Vemos y tomamos nota de la preocupación que existe con respecto al deterioro de la situación financiera y el déficit del fondo general, son temas que

dentro del Comité vemos con mucho detenimiento. El tema de las cuotas y el pago de ellas por parte de los Países Miembros, las opciones o los incentivos, sin duda, será otro tema que seguiremos evaluando dentro del Comité de Finanzas. El tema de los costos del servicio médico después del cese en el servicio ha concitado mucha atención; como bien se ha mencionado es un tema que nosotros estamos dando un seguimiento muy adecuado tratándolo en cada una de nuestras reuniones. Vemos también que la Organización ha hecho progresos interesantes tanto para contabilizar como para financiar dicho pasivo. Sin duda la valoración actuarial en función de las hipótesis demográficas y los tipos de cambio más recientes que hemos solicitado y que se nos presentará en septiembre de 2005 nos darán muchas luces sobre este tema, hecho que informaremos oportunamente al Consejo.

El tema de la descentralización ha sido también un tema que hemos visto con detenimiento; hemos especialmente solicitado un calendario y el presupuesto para este tema.

Con respecto a la financiación extrapresupuestal y el estudio que solicita Brasil y estudios sobre los gastos extrapresupuestales, tomamos nota de lo solicitado.

LE PRÉSIDENT

En adoptant le rapport, le Conseil a adopté la Résolution relative à la prolongation du mandat du contrôleur et vérificateur général des comptes de l'Inde. Je propose le Commissaire aux comptes de l'Organisation pour une nouvelle période de deux ans à compter de 2006. En outre, il renvoie à la Conférence le projet de Résolution sur le barème des contributions 2006-2007.

Je passe la présidence à Monsieur le Représentant du Canada.

James Melanson, Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada to FAO, took the Chair

James Melanson, Représentant permanent adjoint du Canada auprès de la FAO, assume la présidence

Ocupa la presidencia James Melanson, Representante Permanente Adjunto de Canada ante la FAO

CHAIRMAN

Turn now to item 10 of the agenda, the Summary Programme of Work and Budget 2006/2007. Document CL128/3 is the reference document.

I would draw the attention of Council Members to the efforts made by the Secretariat to reduce the length of the Summary Programme of Work and Budget 2006/2007. These efforts were favourably received by the Programme and Finance committees and I think the hope was expressed that a similar effort would be made with regard to the full Programme of Work and Budget.

In opening this item I will ask Mr Manoj Juneja, Director of the Division of PBE, to speak first followed by Mr Seminario, Chairman of the Finance Committee, then Mr Wermuth, Chairman of the Programme Committee, then again Mr Seminario as Chairman of the Joint Committee, so that they may be able to present the conclusions of their respective committees.

10. Summary Programme of Work and Budget 2006-2007 (CL 128/3)

10. Sommaire du Programme de travail et budget 2006-2007 (CL 128/3)

10. Resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto para 2006-2007 (CL 128/3)

Manoj JUNEJA (Director, Programme, Budget and Evaluation)

I should like to highlight some features of the Summary Programme of Work and Budget and the Director-General's main proposals which were reviewed by the Programme and Finance Committees last month.

Allow me first, to recall that the Council considered the Medium-Term Plan 2006-11 last November. The Council, I quote, "gave its general endorsement of the substantive content of the MTP as a basis for the preparation of the PWB proposals", end quote. Accordingly, the

programme proposals in the SPWB are consistent with the MTP. This SPWB builds a link between the six-year MTP already endorsed by Council and the full PWB to be considered by the Conference in November 2005. Your comments on the policy issues and resource scenarios in the SPWB will guide the Director-General in preparing the full PWB.

After your guidance this week, the SPWB will become redundant. Within a few weeks, it will be superseded by the full PWB. This limited life-span of the SPWB is one reason to have a substantially shorter document than in the past. But, more importantly, we hope that the emphasis of the SPWB 2006-07 on risk assessment and its policy orientation makes it a better discussion document for the Council. The Director-General has invited your feedback on the length and content of the Summary and full PWB and hopes that the Council will give unambiguous signal to condense these documents in future.

The last session of the Council recognized that three scenarios would be necessary to enlighten the Membership about the possible impact of alternative resource allocations. Accordingly, RG, NRG and ZNG scenarios are presented in the SPWB. All resource scenarios have been preceded by efforts to identify, quantify and realize efficiency savings. Of course, such targets should be demanding. After years of proven progress, they must also be realistic.

The Director-General's Real Growth scenario amounts to a US\$ 31 million real increase corresponding to the overall OECD growth rate for 2006-07. He acknowledges that this is a prudent proposal when compared with the expressed demands on the Organization. His proposal seeks to balance these demands with Member's capacity to pay assessed contributions.

ZRG maintains purchasing power, and provides for cost increases estimated at US\$46 million. This figure may seem high but in reality, the inflationary events which have caused the majority of these price adjustments have already occurred in the past year. The resulting financial impact on cost increase is a matter of arithmetic, not judgemental long-range assumptions.

The ZNG scenario is defined as the programme of work that leads to the same nominal level of the budget as the current figure of US\$749.1 million. It implies a real reduction in resources estimated at US\$43 million (5.7%).

The budget level of 2006-07 will be for Members to decide, and the current implementation cycle should have some bearing on your discussion leading to the budget resolution in November. I should, therefore, recall that the current, 2004/05 budget saw a US\$51 million real reduction in regular programme resources. Simultaneously, some necessary costs of doing business, such as security expenditure, have been forced upon the Organization and continue to escalate. These circumstances have entailed the abolition of 232 posts during the past year and have clearly weakened the capacity of the Organization to fulfil its mandate.

In fact, the budget outcome for 2004/05 entailed a more significant reduction than what some other UN organization would define as ZNG. It was a harder blow than what some of our sister agencies would define as ZNG outcome.

Irrespective of the budget level for 2006/07, the Director-General is seeking Council's guidance on two strategies to improve financial management and cash flow:

The first, is a proposal for a multi-biennium security expenditure facility under a new chapter of the budget. Up until the PWB 2002/03, which was prepared before September 11, 2001, security was neither a significant management concern nor a major financial burden. The situation is different now, with non-staff Regular Programme security expenditure having increased more than fivefold during the period. The proposals for a security expenditure facility, to also include the cost of security staff at headquarters, will strengthen financial planning, monitoring and accountability for security and safety of staff and assets at headquarters and in the field.

The second proposal seeks to revise the treatment of Miscellaneous Income to fully fund the budgetary appropriation. Given the financial situation of FAO, there is an inherent problem if, after going through a long process of negotiation to approve a budget level, the budget itself is not fully funded from assessments. Since the 1990s, FAO has faced a cash flow crisis. In fact, a few

months ago, as the Chairman of the Finance Committee reported, FAO borrowed US\$15 million from the bank to execute the programmes that were already approved by you. The reason for the Director-General's proposal is this: If the approved budget is \$100 and we clearly don't have spare money in the bank, why are Member's assessments \$99? If the budget is \$100, assessments should also be \$100. The solution to this problem is in the hands of its Members.

Before finalizing the full PWB, the Secretariat looks forward to your guidance on the resource scenarios and the policy issues in the SPWB.

Roberto SEMINARIO PORTOCARRERO (Presidente del Comité de Finanzas)

Pasaré a recapitular lo sucedido en el Comité de Finanzas con respecto al tema del resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuestos para el 2006-2007. Sin duda, esto concitó la consideración de todos los Miembros del Comité de Finanzas centrando su atención y su examen en líneas generales del presupuesto, el marco financiero, las propuestas relativas a los Capítulos 5 Servicios de apoyo, y Capítulo 6 Servicios comunes, que son los capítulos sobre los cuales centramos nuestra atención como Comité de Finanzas.

El Comité subrayó la importancia de garantizar la salubridad y seguridad del entorno del trabajo del personal de la FAO así como la necesidad de reforzar el marco de gestión financiera de este ámbito de gastos cada vez más complejo e importante. Reconoció la necesidad de una cobertura amplia y reforzada de los gastos de seguridad en un único crédito presupuestario así como de flexibilidad financiera mediante un mecanismo de financiación que abarcara varios bienios y se pudiera complementar con contribuciones voluntarias. Por consiguiente, el Comité de Finanzas apoyó la propuesta del Director General de establecer un mecanismo para los gastos de seguridad como medio para agrupar todos los gastos de personal y de otros tipos directamente relacionados con la seguridad en la Sede y sobre el terreno en el Capítulo 9 del PLP.

El Comité reconoció la difícil situación que atravesaba el flujo de caja de la Organización y reconoció que el déficit acumulado en el fondo general se había agravado; numerosos Miembros manifestaron su apoyo a la propuesta del Director General de pedir a los Estados Miembros que paguen sus cuotas sin deducir los ingresos varios previstos como modo de contribuir a vencer estas dificultades. El Comité indicó que en el resumen del PLP se presentaban tres hipótesis; el crecimiento real, el crecimiento real cero y el crecimiento nominal cero y valoró positivamente la información comparativa proporcionada. Numerosos Miembros pidieron que se presentara una hipótesis de crecimiento real superior en el PLP completo. Los incrementos de gastos para el 2006-2007 se estimaron provisionalmente en un 3,6 por ciento al año, vale decir, 45,7 millones de dólares EE.UU. con un crecimiento real cero. El Comité examinó el método adoptado por la Secretaría para calcular los incrementos de gastos y consideró que los cálculos se ajustaban al método acordado, y manifestó su preocupación por el incremento considerable del gasto de la Organización para sufragar su cuota correspondiente a la prima del seguro médico e instó a la Secretaría a esforzarse por contenerlo.

De otro lado el Comité de Finanzas manifestó su satisfacción general con el programa y los créditos del presupuesto para los Capítulos 5 y 6, pero hizo hincapié en que no se redujeran los controles financieros internos a ningún nivel presupuestario. El Comité tomó nota de la planificación de gastos de capital y entradas de recursos en el servicio de gastos de capital. Sobre este tema las deliberaciones del Comité figuran en mayor detalle en el Documento CL 128/13 párrafos del 56 al 68.

Ewald WERMUTH (Chairman of the Programme Committee)

Distinguished colleagues, I am pleased to report on the elaborations of the last meeting of the Programme Committee on the Summary of Programme of Work and Budget.

I would like to approach 3 issues. First of all, the scope of discussions we had in Programme Committee on the SPWB; reactions to the contents of the Summary Programme of Work and Budget and finally, addressing some challenges and improvements in the programming and planning budget process.

It was a very challenging meeting and there was a lot of innovative thinking in the Programme Committee and I would like to synthesize that in my oral report to you. The discussion of the Summary Programme of Work and Budget in the Programme Committee departed somewhat from established practice. We deferred our programme by programme review of proposals to our September session. As Mr Juneja pointed out, in September 2005, the proposals will be updated in the full Programme of Work and Budget to take account of the recent discussions of Technical Committees, like COEC, COFI and COFO. We will then be in a better position to provide guidance to Council on the content of the proposals.

Distinguished colleagues, we mostly engaged in a more systemic discussion on the Programme and Budget process. We initiated a process of reflection on some fundamental aspects of the Programme and Budget planning process. Let me first focus on the Committee's reactions to the contents of the Summary Programme of Work and Budget as presented in the sections on the SPWB within the Enhanced Planning Process and Budgetary Framework.

The Committee recognized that the document contained three scenarios: Real Growth, Zero Real Growth and Zero Normal Growth, as requested by Council at its last session. We acknowledge that NRG scenarios were closely based on the proposals in the MTP 2006-2011, the substance of which had been endorsed by the last Council. Several Members felt that the Real Growth rate of growth was not commensurate with the requirements of the membership, particularly to implement the MDGs, the Millennium Development Goals. They questioned the rather limited growth rate proposed in the Summary Programme of Work and Budget. We noted that under the Zero Nominal Growth some areas, such as the Technical Cooperation Programme and FAO Liaison Offices had been exempted from reductions. Among the technical major programmes, Fisheries and Forestry had received slightly less cuts than others.

I would now like to turn to the Committee's observations on the format of the Summary Programme of Work and Budget and Programme of Work and Budget documents. First, I would like to emphasize the Committee's appreciation for the brevity and clarity of the Summary Programme of Work and Budget. We stress the complimentary roles of the MTP and PWB under the results-based approach applied in FAO, and the principle of keeping the size of these documents to manageable proportions. The MTP should be strengthened for programme formulation and prioritization, whereas the Summary Programme of Work and Budget and the full Programme of Work and Budget should provide the business plan for the first two years for the Medium Term Plan.

As the Secretariat is to embark soon on preparations for the full Programme of Work and Budget, the Committee agreed on a number of desirable features. These included five main suggestions. First of all, analyze proposals according to the mentions of major interest to the membership, specifically regional perspectives and distribution of resources by strategic objectives. Explain how recommendations of Regional Conference and other Committees of the Council have been taken into account in a transparent manner. More clearly associate the expressed priorities of members within the Biennial Resource Allocations. Confine programme budget proposals to the main thrust for the biennium which proposed to resource allocations indicated down to the programme entity level. And to provide the outputs to be achieved in the biennium as part of complete information on programme entity formulation on the FAO web site in all languages. The Committee has also encouraged the Secretariat to continue, in the next Summary Programme of Work and Budget, to focus on identifying key financial budgetary and operational opportunities and constraints for the biennium. The Committee stressed that the Summary Programme of Work and Budget should contain adequate summarized information to explain and justify proposed resource allocations.

I would now like to turn to the Programme Committee's extensive discussion on challenges and improvements on the programme and budget planning process, which we brought to attention of the Joint Meeting. We were guided by the fact that FAO is unique in having a complete suite of planning documents. A major challenge is the late timing of the decision on the budget level by Conference. This actually leads to the formulation of multiple budgetary scenarios throughout the

planning process. And this process diverts staff time away from technical tasks. The Committee noted with concern that the final position on the budget level at Conference is primarily the result of last minute negotiations without necessarily having a relation to the proceeding, planning and scenario setting process. Therefore, the Committee concluded that the membership should start to discuss possible ideas about how to improve the programme and budget process of FAO. The process should build on its existing strength while addressing perceived weaknesses and problems.

The Committee put four key challenges to the Joint Meeting for consideration and as I observed from many interventions this morning, they are generally endorsed by the delegations who took the floor, so far, on this issue. And these four key challenges are, in our view: how can we better articulate the various planning documents and possibly streamlining of the overall programme and planning and budgeting process; how to enhance and modify the format of individual documents to meet more closely their intended purpose within the strategic framework; what are the pros and cons and how could we reduce the burden, stemming from the current practice of preparations of scenarios; and how could we align more closely programme planning efforts and decision-making on the budget level.

The Programme Committee decided to put these four key challenges for consideration to the joint meeting, and I defer to my dear colleague, Mr Seminario who chaired that meeting, to report on our conclusions of our joint deliberations.

Roberto SEMINARIO PORTOCARRERO (Presidente del Comité de Finanzas)

La Reunión Conjunta del Comité del Programa en su 93º período de sesiones y el Comité de Finanzas en su 109º período de sesiones procedió a examinar de manera conjunta el Resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto. A este respecto, los Presidentes de los Comités, el Embajador Wermuth y el suscrito, informamos sobre los debates que se suscitaron en nuestros respectivos Comités. Los Comités abordaron las mejoras en el proceso del programa y del presupuesto, así como en la documentación, con el fin de resolver los problemas y frustraciones señalados que padecen tanto los Miembros como la Secretaría. A este respecto, los Comités consideraron bastante oportuna la sugerencia formulada por el Comité del Programa, en el sentido de iniciar un diálogo al respecto entre los Miembros. Los Comités recordaron que la FAO era bastante peculiar en el Sistema de las Naciones Unidas por el hecho de presentar más de una hipótesis presupuestaria y de poseer un amplio conjunto de documentos de planificación a lo largo de diferentes horizontes temporales. No obstante, persistía una percepción general de que las disposiciones actuales comportaban bastante duplicación y suponía una carga innecesaria para los Estados Miembros y para la Secretaría. Con respecto al dilema relativo a la racionalización y a la forma de presentación de los documentos de planificación, los Comités recomendaron la preparación de un Programa de Labores y Presupuesto completo más breve y analítico para el 2006-2007. Los Comités convinieron en que debía evitarse la repetición de los detalles programáticos por entidades y en que los productos bienales formarían parte de la información completa sobre la formulación de la entidad programática publicada en sitio Web de la FAO. Los dos dilemas relativos a las hipótesis y a la alineación de la planificación y la provisión de recursos son bastante difíciles de resolver. Estos dilemas entrañan evidentemente enormes desafíos, incluso de carácter legal e institucional que será preciso abordar de manera adecuada. Los Comités acordaron continuar el debate de las cuestiones más amplias relacionadas con la racionalización del proceso general del programa y del presupuesto y con la búsqueda de mejores métodos para alinear los procesos de planificación de la Organización con las decisiones presupuestarias; entre otras, se explorarían las posibilidades de, primero, racionalizar en mayor medida el número y el alcance y la extensión de los documentos de la planificación, y segundo, vincular más estrechamente el calendario y el nivel de las decisiones presupuestarias con la formulación del correspondiente Programa de Labores. Asimismo, tratamos la sustancia del Resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto, la Reunión Conjunta tomó nota del refrendo por parte del Comité de Finanzas de la propuesta al Consejo y a la Conferencia de crear un Servicio de Gastos de Seguridad. El Comité de Finanzas convino asimismo en transmitir al Consejo la propuesta del Director General de exigir a los Estados Miembros el pago de sus cuotas

fijadas sin deducir los ingresos varios. Los Comités acogieron favorablemente el resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto para el 2006-2007 mucho más breve y centrado, en particular, las sesiones de líneas generales y marco financiero, incluida la evaluación del riesgo que proporcionaban una base sólida para la preparación del Programa de Labores. Los Comités reconocieron que el Resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto presentaba la propuesta del Director General de un crecimiento real, acompañada por la hipótesis de crecimiento real cero y crecimiento nominal cero en respuesta a la petición del Consejo en su último período de sesiones. Sin embargo, muchos Miembros estimaron que la tasa de crecimiento propuesta en el marco del crecimiento real, no guardaba relación con las necesidades urgentes de los Estados Miembros; los Comités solicitaron que en el Programa de Labores y Presupuesto completo se incluyera una hipótesis de crecimiento real más elevado del 9,25 por ciento.

Ante las diferentes opiniones manifestadas, los Comités no intentaron llegar a una recomendación de consensos sobre el nivel del presupuesto en esta coyuntura.

CHAIRMAN

With that rather complete introduction to this agenda item, the floor is now open the Members of Council.

Naved MASOOD (India)

I would like to comment on the new format of the SPWB document, particularly at its brevity and focus. However, we have some fundamental concerns with regard to the planning and budgeting process. The basis of planning in FAO is the strategic framework which is a 15 year policy document. The Medium Term Plan derived from this strategic framework, lays out the programming priorities and budget requirements over a six year period. The third link in the hierarchy of planning instruments is the Biennial Programme of Work and Budget.

Logically, we should expect a clearly defined thread running through the three policy instruments. It is rather disappointing, however, that the link between the SPWB, the Medium Term Plan and the Strategic Framework seems rather tenuous. This disconnect is probably due to the demand of the membership that the Management prepare alternative budget scenarios.

We gather that FAO is possibly the only institution in the UN system that is required to present more than one resource scenario. Ideally, the Director-General should prepare a Programme of Work and Budget, indicating the resource requirements for meeting the objectives of the MTP and the Strategic Framework, delineating areas of focus of the Organization.

The membership would, thereafter, undertake an informed discussion on the respective priorities before arriving at a decision on the budgetary level. The reality in FAO, however, is that despite alternative resource scenarios being presented, the eventual decision on the level of the budget is based on reasons far removed from actual institutional needs or members' programmatic priorities. The SPWB 2006-2007 presents a Real Growth Scenario of 2.5 percent for an increase of about US\$31 million. We regard this as being excessively modest and cautious. We believe that a much more robust scenario is required to meet a strategic objectives of the Organization. In view of the vast distance to be covered to meet the Millennium Development Goals and the crucial importance of agriculture and rural development in eradicating hunger and poverty, FAO needs to considerably strengthen its own profile and activities.

It should be noted that the current Biennium has brought a reduction of 6.4 percent in FAO's budget and that even the Real Growth scenario presented in the SPWB will leave the Regular Programme 16 percent below the 1994 levels in real terms. Therefore, we strongly support Real Growth that would effectively enable the Organization to fulfill its mandate and we look forward to seeing an optimistic Real Growth Plus scenario being presented by the Director-General in the full PWB.

Now, on the programme side, our major concern relates largely to the Technical Cooperation Programme and the Special Programme for Food Security. We find that under the Technical Cooperation Programme against the provision of US\$98,64 million, an outlay of 102,64 million is

envisaged. Considering the overall constraints of resources, this level of resource commitment is to be landed. Over the years FAO's TCPs have become virtually designed along the Organization. It is in the fitness of things that this particular arm of the Organization be islandized as much as possible from financial vicissitudes. Having said this, we note with concern this proportionately low share of Asia Pacific region in the distribution of TCP allocations. From about 24 percent in 1994-1995, there was a decline to 21 percent in 1996-1997.

This further fell to 19 percent during 1998-1999. For the last whole biennium for which figures are available the share of this region was 22 percent. While we note that it is proposed by the Secretariat to bring forward substantial changes in the TCP criteria for the Hundred Twenty-ninth Session of the Council in November in 2005, we would like to point out that if the *tempo* of the growth of agriculture is to be maintained in the Asia and Pacific region, much greater deployment of TCP resources needs to be made to this region. As the problems in this part of the world require cutting-edge, scientific and technical inputs which are most amenable to the TCP route.

We would also request the Secretariat to clearly spell out whether the Organizational priority continues for the Special Programme for Food Security, particularly for the South-South Cooperation arrangements. We have felt some difficulty in understanding the allocation under the grouping Food Production in support of Food Security in LIFDCs. It is not very clear as to what proportion of the budget is meant to cover FAO's commitment in the South-South Cooperation arrangements. As the programme also focuses on household level food security concerns, it is all the more necessary to ascertain the commitment for national food security. It would be highly desirable to specifically indicate FAO's contributions to tripartite national arrangements.

It would also be advisable for the Secretariat to bring out the experience of implementation of these trilateral arrangements in the last few years. Whether this particular intervention has lived up to its promise needs to be clearly spelled out. While this is not an apt occasion to put forward the various improvements which in our opinion are needed to improve the delivery system under this initiative, we would like to definitely suggest that the existing arrangements for drawing up projects for trilateral cooperation be revisited. Much greater preparatory work involving all the role players is necessary before formalizing further arrangements.

We are also aware of the serious limitations put on optimal utilization of the existing arrangements within FAO for reasons of resource constraints. Within these constraints, we urge a degree of involvement to look at the issues impinging on relative stabilization of productivity in this Asian region. We would, in particular, expect guidance and recommendations for research in hybrids of rice and wheat with still greater drought and flood resistance and with greater adaptability to our agro-climatic zones. India, while supporting the broader approach adopted for implementation of the programme, would therefore urge identification of more innovative delivery systems to help Member States to achieve further growth.

Hans HOOGEVEEN (Netherlands)

I am speaking on behalf of the European Community and its 25 Member States. The acceding and candidate countries Bulgaria, Romania as well as the candidate countries Croatia and Turkey associate themselves with this statement.

We welcome the abbreviated form of the document; the presentation of three budget scenarios; and the new format, notably the analysis of key issues in the sections entitled Budgetary Framework and Financial Framework. In the full Programme of Work and Budget, the European Union would appreciate it if a Zero Nominal Growth scenario were also presented on programme level.

That said, we join others in asking what purpose the document serves at this stage of the planning and budgeting cycle - acting as it does as a bridge between the Medium Term Plan, which we considered last year and the full Programme of Work and Budget, which will come before the Programme and Finance Committees in September and the Council and Conference later in the year. As we have made clear in our separate statement on the report of the Programme

Committee, we believe that the time has come to review the state of planning and budgeting documents that come to the governing bodies with a view to streamlining and simplification.

Against this background the European Community does not propose to comment in detail on the substance of the Summary Programme of Work and Budget for 2006-2007. We had expected, however, to see further prioritization under the three budget scenarios. In particular, we noticed that some of the working areas that we identified as high priority areas at the Committee meetings, for example, Codex Alimentarius, IPPC, work on Plant and Animal Genetic Resources, the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Adequate Food and FIVIMS, would receive additional support only under a Real Growth scenario and would be weakened under a Zero Nominal Growth scenario. We, therefore, reiterate that high priority working areas are to be sufficiently funded even under a Zero Nominal Growth scenario.

Furthermore, we would like to make a few other points. We endorse the view of the Finance Committee that internal financial controls and administrative information systems must be properly resourced under any budget scenario, including a Zero Nominal Growth scenario.

We agree that it makes sense both managerially and presentationally to consolidate expenditure on security in a new chapter of the budget.

The European Union had hoped to see planned efficiency gains larger than US\$2.4 million on the base figure of US\$749 million. We note that further work is in hand on this and we look forward to a more ambitious target in the full Programme of Work and Budget.

Finally, the European Union would have appreciated information about the planned activities, during the budget period 2006-2007, in relation to possible extra-budgetary means scenarios.

Kasem PRASUTSANGCHAN (Thailand)

First of all, my delegation commends the Secretariat in providing the budget under three scenarios (Zero Nominal Growth, Zero Real Growth, and Real Growth) for the first item, including a proposal on the capital expenditure facility and the security expenditure facility.

There are few points I would like to make to the Council for consideration.

Firstly, about the programme of work: Thailand wishes to stress two areas of concern; control of avian influenza and regional application of the early warning system in agriculture as top priorities in FAO's programme of work. Although avian influenza is included in paragraph 185 under programme 2.1.3, it was reported that the danger of the disease is still present and real in several countries, despite the concerted efforts from international organizations such as FAO, OIE and WHO in conjunction with Member Countries. There is fear that the disease could transmit from human to human. Therefore, research and measure to prevent and to eradicate it are urgently needed and for this, Thailand is ready to share her experience and build a regional network for disease control.

As equally important to the avian influenza, an early warning system in agriculture needs to be instituted on a regional basis. The system should cover natural disasters and calamities like droughts, floods, typhoons, etc. in the disaster-prone regions, with the regional offices serving as a linkage to build a network among countries within the regions.

Secondly, as financial resources are limited, Thailand suggests that the Secretariat review the proposed work programme and either prioritize or streamline certain activities by considering their benefit, cost, and risk. Duplication of work must be avoided, both inter-agency and intra-agency. In addition, we must keep in mind the mandate of FAO given by Member Countries.

Lastly, in demonstrating the negative impact of the Zero Nominal Growth scenario, it was suggested that several outcomes could take place, such as scaling down of FIVIMS objectives, elimination of new entities proposed in the Medium Term Plan, reduction of work on food composition and publications, cancellation of work on environmental statistics, and so on. I believe that the list many not be exhaustive and can be referred to as being exemplary only. If in

fact the ZNG is adopted, I urge FAO to revise, in detail, the corresponding programme of work, taking into account the priorities and needs in the developing world, within the FAO framework.

Guo HANDI (China) (Original language Chinese)

The Chinese delegation would like to first thank the Secretariat for its carefully prepared document entitled Summary Programme of Work and Budget 2006-2007.

We note the three budget scenarios laid out in the report: Zero Real Growth, Real Growth and Zero Nominal Growth.

However, we are perplexed by the inconsistent computing methods used and the different presentations for different scenarios and approach difficult to fathom. For instance, in paragraph 74 of the Real Growth Scenarios "the real growth of US\$30.9 million before cost increases, equivalent to an increase of 2.4 percent in 2006 and 2.5 percent in 2007, etc." Whereas in paragraph 127 on Zero Real Growth it is stated: "This section provides an overview of the cost increases needed to maintain purchasing power, which are estimated at US\$45.7 million for the 2006-2007 biennium at Zero Real Growth. This corresponds to a biennial cost increase rate of 5.4 percent of the Programme of Work (equivalent to a 3.6 percent annual increase), or 6.1 percent of the total net budget (equivalent to 4 percent per year)."

Now, what is perplexing to us is that according to the above two paragraphs it would seem that the growth rates of the Zero Real Growth are higher than those of the Real Growth Scenario.

We therefore think that the Secretariat should adopt throughout the document a unified and consistent approach and should provide Member States with specific impacts on the real assessed contributions for the three scenarios, respectively. That is to say, specific sets of figures for assessed contributions for the three different scenarios for consideration of the Member States.

The vast number of developing countries hope to see increased resources for FAO, so as to provide better services to Member States and have the commitments to the MDG rapidly for field. Such hope is understandable.

However, we note at the same time that according to the scale of assessment proposed for the 2006-2007 at this session of the Council, there would be great increases in the scale of assessment of some countries.

That is to say, even if the absolute value of the envelope of assessed contributions remains unchanged, yet, some countries would nonetheless, see increases of 36 up to 76 percent in their assessed contributions. This would indeed bring an increase in the financial burden of these countries.

We, therefore, hope to see enhanced understanding and communication by all participants on the Work of Programme and Budget of FAO and the resolution reached through consultations.

Nasreddine RIMOUCHE (Algérie)

La question des objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement constitue, aujourd'hui, le sujet par excellence des débats à l'échelle internationale. A notre avis, les politiques qui sont menées pour atteindre ces objectifs doivent être synonymes de solidarité pour lutter contre les inégalités de tout ordre. Si nous voulons, nous pouvons suivre les engagements du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation et atteindre les objectifs du Millénaire considérant que le moment est venu de redoubler d'efforts. J'ai écouté hier avec attention la déclaration de la Finlande au nom des pays nordiques à l'occasion de l'examen du Rapport du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire. J'adhère pleinement à sa proposition visant à intégrer les objectifs "Millénaires pour le développement" dans le cadre du Programme de travail et budget mais la question qui surgit est la suivante: avec lequel des trois scénarios envisagés dans le Sommaire du Programme de travail et budget, peuvent être réalisés, ne serait-ce qu'une partie de ces objectifs? Serions-nous en mesure avec les trois scénarios de pouvoir nous rapprocher de ces objectifs? A mon avis, je n'en suis pas sûr, bien au contraire, on va continuer de s'éloigner de ces objectifs car les données, affirment Collen, que l'on est encore loin des huit objectifs du Millénaire, dans l'éradication de la pauvreté d'ici 2015. Certes,

des efforts ont été engagés mais pas suffisamment pour freiner la détérioration des conditions de vie des populations. S'agissant de la FAO, et puisqu'on est en train de discuter du Sommaire du Programme de travail et budget, un budget à croissance réelle plus positive est plus qu'indispensable, au regard des défis et des ressources limitées et en décroissance depuis plus d'une dizaine d'années. Un autre niveau budgétaire inférieur à celui-ci risque de mettre ces objectifs hors de portée de la FAO.

A notre avis, l'atteinte des engagements du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation et des objectifs du Millénaire nécessite certes une volonté mais aussi de l'action. Le Sommaire du Programme de travail et budget nous donne un aperçu général sur les projections de l'Organisation pour le prochain biennium. Le scénario à croissance nominale zéro fait ressortir clairement la nécessité de réduire, voire de supprimer, dans certains cas, des programmes, ceux qui se répercutent sur le personnel de l'Organisation d'où la suppression d'au moins 190 postes tel que mentionné dans les paragraphes 85 à 94, cela provoquera une situation déplorable et contraindra le Directeur général à procéder à des réajustements importants pour essayer de limiter leurs effets néfastes.

S'agissant du budget à croissance réelle, les prévisions pour le prochain exercice prévoient à peine une augmentation de huit millions de dollars par rapport au PMT, c'est-à-dire une augmentation insignifiante pour ne pas dire nulle en termes réels. Nous avons relevé avec satisfaction les efforts du Directeur général en vue de faire des économies en matière d'efficacité et d'ajustement, ainsi qu'un souci, de prendre en compte, les exigences des pays en vue de privilégier les programmes économiques et techniques.

En second lieu, et au sujet des questions qui nous sont soumises pour allouer des ressources au système de sécurité dans le cadre du budget, cette proposition ne soulève pas de commentaires de notre part, puisqu'il est question d'une pratique suivie par le système des Nations Unies. De notre côté, nous appuyons la proposition visant à prévoir un chapitre distinct pour le mécanisme de sécurité, qui sera financé par le budget consacré, non pas par le budget consacré aux activités économiques et techniques, mais à travers un financement séparé.

Dans la perspective de l'élaboration du Programme de travail et budget, nous voulons mettre l'accent sur certaines activités tel que le Programme de coopération technique et nous estimons que des ressources adéquates doivent être consacrées à ce Programme.

Nous voulons aussi souligner l'importance de la pêche traditionnelle, secteur qui joue un rôle important dans le cadre du renforcement de la sécurité alimentaire des petites communautés de pêcheurs ainsi que pour les pays dont la capacité de pêche est limitée ou ceux ne disposant pas d'une industrie de pêche importante.

Nous soulignons également l'importance de la question de la gestion des ressources hydriques dans l'agriculture et l'utilisation des eaux usées traitées dans ce contexte. Nous estimons qu'elle est incontournable dans plusieurs pays qui connaissent les problèmes du déficit des eaux, de pluviométrie et de sécheresse. Dans ce cas de figure, le travail doit être orienté aussi vers une assistance aux pays demandeurs pour renforcer leur capacité pour mieux maîtriser cette technique et éviter tout risque de contamination.

Enfin, un accent doit être mis sur les questions de changements climatiques et des ravageurs notamment dans son volet acridien. D'ailleurs, un événement spécial a été organisé en marge de la dernière session du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire à laquelle notre Président de la République a pris part, ce qui reflète l'importance qu'accorde mon pays à ces questions.

Enfin, nous remercions le Secrétariat pour la nouvelle présentation du Sommaire du Programme de travail et budget.

Modibo Mahamane TOURÉ (Mali)

Intervenant pour la première fois, malgré l'heure tardive, je voudrais adresser mes félicitations à vous-même et à l'ensemble des Membres élus pour diriger nos débats au cours de cette présente session.

Je voudrais féliciter la direction de la FAO pour sa capacité à relever les défis que nous ne cessons de lui lancer en termes d'allocations de ressources et ce, depuis plus d'une dizaine d'années. Défis qui auraient mis à genoux plus d'une autre organisation qu'elle. En matière de planification et programmation, également, la FAO mérite notre admiration. Tout le monde s'accordant à reconnaître que l'exemple de la FAO est unique en son genre en la matière.

La FAO a connu en 2004-2005 une réduction réelle de 51 millions de dollars au titre du Programme ordinaire, plus importante que ce que d'autres organisations auraient qualifié au titre de la croissance réelle zéro. Elle est la seule à subir trois scénarios budgétaires. Depuis 1990, la FAO est confrontée à des tensions de trésorerie dramatiques. Cette situation, qui a des répercussions négatives sur la capacité d'intervention de l'Organisation au bénéfice des Membres provoque, certainement aussi, des drames silencieux en son sein, vécus avec dignité par l'ensemble du personnel de l'Organisation qui a toute notre sympathie.

Jusqu'où et jusqu'à quand irons-nous dans l'administration de remèdes amers que nous imposons à l'Organisation? Quand arrêterons-nous de vouloir une chose et son contraire, demander toujours plus à l'Organisation et lui donner toujours moins.

Je m'adresse à tous les Membres aussi bien des pays développés qu'en développement. Les uns pour leur réticence à donner à l'Organisation dans la mesure de leurs possibilités réelles, les seconds parce que n'exprimant pas, comme il se doit, leur attachement à leur Organisation, ce qui ne fait aucun doute. En ne s'inquiétant pas, comme cela se doit, des modestes contributions qui leur sont demandées.

Pour toutes ces raisons, et fort de ce que mon prédécesseur, l'honorable représentant de l'Algérie a eu à dire, ma délégation souhaite souscrire aux propositions du Directeur général, sur tous les plans, à encourager les Membres à soutenir le scénario de croissance réelle proposé.

Il est grand temps que nos demandes, voire nos exigences, à l'endroit de l'Organisation, soit en conformité avec ce que nous sommes prêts à lui accorder. Nous savons bien que ce ne sont pas les ressources qui manquent. Il est important d'y veiller pour ne pas éterniser la bataille de tranchées concernant la fixation des priorités et surtout d'éviter d'imposer des priorités aux autres en considérant comme négligeables celles de certains Membres parceque moins nantis. Je suis certain que les Membres sauront se transcender cette fois sur la question. Je voudrais, en terminant, Monsieur le Président, adresser mes félicitations aux Présidents du Comité financier, du Comité du Programme et de leurs Membres pour tout le travail remarquable qu'ils accomplissent.

Noel D. DE LUNA (Philippines)

The Philippines would like to join other member countries in congratulating the Secretariat for preparing a much more concise document, which focuses on the main issues and resource implications.

We are comfortable with the length of the document and we feel confident that the full-blown Programme of Work and Budget can likewise be made more concise and clearer than the PWB 2004/05. Although this had been addressed in the previous agenda items, we simply would like to go on record to express our concern over increasing obligations of FAO, especially for the after-service medical coverage (ASMC) liability and the security expenditure facility. Our concern here stems from the fact that the budget allocations for these two expenditures might effectively reduce the size of the pie which can be used to fund development projects under whatever budget scenario.

We note that the ASMC expenses keep on ballooning every biennia and that FAO liabilities are likewise constantly growing, as cited in paragraph 149.

We have heard the explanation of the Secretariat earlier on this and so there is no need to reply to this point.

On another point, we note that one of the impacts of the ZNG scenario, as cited in paragraph 169, is the cut on support for the meetings of the Group of 77. We find it disturbing that the G77 has been singled out since, based on experience, the G77 has been very supportive of the Secretariat's work and has been providing a constructive avenue for resolving critical issues. In other words, funds spent on G77 meetings are fund well spent and should not be cut.

Going back to the scenarios, we see that the impacts under the Real Growth and the Zero Real Growth are generally positive, and we therefore support them, especially that of the Real Growth scenario. However, under the Zero Nominal Growth, all programme activities, except for the Technical Cooperation Programme, are under threat of budget cuts. We think we should revisit these directions as they impact negatively on the process of achieving the targets set by the Millennium Development Goals and the World Food Summit.

We are pleased to note that the TCP is a protected programme and, therefore, seems to be immune from budget cuts. We also note, however, that Management seems to have imposed a number of internal conditions that cause delays in the fund releases for TCP projects. We hope that the Secretariat can reform these internal conditions so that the TCP can be made truly relevant in making bigger impacts.

Finally, we associate ourselves with the statement of India on the share of Asia in the TCP.

CHAIRMAN

I am just going to give people and overview of the speaker's list as it stands. We have the following order, the Republic of Korea, Japan, Canada, Cuba, Pakistan, Australia, Nigeria, Angola, Finland, Mexico and among Observers Afghanistan. So the next speaker is the Republic of Korea.

Young-gu LEE (Republic of Korea)

To begin with I would like to welcome the Secretariat's efforts in making the concise report. The Korean delegation is also satisfied with the general contents of this Report.

Regarding the budget for 2006/2007 the Republic of Korea faces very tight budgetary constraints, for international organizations, driving from the recent fast-growing needs in various new areas, and we believe that this is the case in many countries. Under this situation it is hard for us to accept a budget increase for 2006/2007.

Much praise should be given to the Secretariat for their achievement in efficiency saving during the past decade. However, there is much room, and we would like to ask the Secretariat for continuous efforts and we expect more concrete and accurate information in the coming full PWB document regarding efficiency savings.

Priority setting is also very important work in this regard. FAO should focus on its core competency and priority settings should target to achieve Members' needs in the most efficient way.

We support the CODEX, IPPC and PGR-related works, and as the distinguished delegate from Thailand already expressed, we also support avian influenza-related work, which has severely damaged the rural economy in Asia. More research should be put in these areas.

Kenichi BESSHO (Japan)

First of all, Japan would like to thank the Secretariat for submitting the Summary Programme of Work and Budget.

Japan recognizes the role of FAO in the global effort to address food security issues, especially in achieving the objectives, including those set out at the World Food Summit.

Japan also places importance on FAO's normative work which contributes to increased food security and safety.

As to the proposed budget for the next biennium, Japan's position is that FAO should keep sustainable levels without further increase, bearing in mind Members' capacity to pay. Japan believes that FAO should seek to address the needs expressed in the international community by maintaining the level of financial resources below Zero Nominal Growth by improving its efficiency and by streamlining its workload based on clearer prioritization. Japan thinks that the scenario is not unrealistic and in this respect would like to request the Secretariat to seriously consider the following points: namely, the level of the regular budget over the next five years and improving transparency of FAO's activities and budget content; review of timeframe of each programme; and finally reduction of fixed expenditure.

Firstly, about the level of the regular budget over the next five years: FAO's regular budget has been increased sharply and it amounts to US\$749 million for the biennium 2004/2005. Japan thinks that FAO should reverse budget increasing trend and Japan would like to propose that the level of the regular budget be fixed at the current regular budget over the next five years, beginning 2006.

Secondly, regarding improving the transparency of FAO's activity and budget content: the Summary Programme of Work and Budget 2006/2007 shows three scenarios and outlines of substantive thrust; summary of the proposals and summary of the impacts. However, the details of activities and expenditure of each programme and how proposed figures are calculated, as well as the breakdown of the figures, are not clear in the SPWB. Although the Secretariat explained in paragraph 22 of the SPWB that FAO has prepared three additional scenarios for the 2006/2007 budget with less focus being placed on budgetary detail, we think in order to ensure transparency that more concrete data and a clearer picture should be provided during the course of the discussion on the full Programme of Work and Budget.

Thirdly, regarding the review of timeframe of each programme: according to the Medium Term Plan 2006-2011 the aggregate number of programme entities classified in the timeframe category as continuing is 162 for PWB 2004/2005 and 187 for PWB 2006-2011. That is to say, those active periods are assumed to be continuing account for about 70 percent of the entire number of programme entities. As most of these activities are assumed to be continuing, the timeframe is not set in fact.

For the purpose of prioritization, financial resources should be allocated to truly important activities. Therefore, Japan would like to request a review of the timeframe and the necessity of every single programme entity. The appropriateness of starting new activities in the next biennium should be considered only on condition that existing activities considered to be less significant are ended.

Finally, regarding reduction of fixed expenditure: Japan would like to point out that the ratio of fixed expenditure suggests costs for personnel services out of the total amount of the regular budget, which are extremely high. According to Table 3 in the SPWB the cost for personnel services reaches about 76 percent of the total regular budget and the trend towards further increase is continuing. We think the allocation of the budget can be revised so that limited resources are used in a more effective manner to achieve the objective of FAO, such as poverty reduction in developing countries.

With regard to miscellaneous income, Japan would also like to emphasize that the estimated miscellaneous income shall be deducted from total appropriation in accordance with paragraph (a) of Article 5(ii) of the Financial Regulations.

Arrear assessed contributions of Member Nations are calculated and Japan would also like to emphasize that such a budgetary principle should be applied rigidly. For the above mentioned reason, Japan does not support the proposal made by the Secretariat that miscellaneous income will not be deducted from total appropriation.

Paul MURPHY (Canada)

Canada strongly supports the work of FAO and recognizes that a solid Programme of Work is important to both developed and developing countries. At the same time, we must ensure the efficient and effective use of resources provided to FAO through strict budgetary discipline and cost-effective use of resources, as well as transparency and accountability in spending.

We thank the Secretariat for including a Zero Nominal Growth scenario in the Summary Programme of Work and Budget as directed by the Council last fall. This will aid our Government in assessing issues concerning the appropriate budget level and the allocation of the budget among different programme areas. At the same time, we understand the burden on the Secretariat of preparing a series of extensive planning documents and we are open to considering proposals to review the planning process with a view to reducing the burden of these exercises.

While we recognize that FAO has faced some difficult choices in recent years as budget levels have not increased as much as has been proposed by some, we would note that several measures have been agreed to by the Membership to address this.

First, in order to limit the negative effects of currency fluctuations Member States agreed at the last Conference to have assessed contributions split into two currencies: a change that led to an increase in FAO's budget in US dollar terms.

To address the declining purchasing power of FAO contributions, the nominal budget for the current biennium was increased significantly by just under US\$100 million.

Further, we would draw to the Council's attention the fact that the revised scale of assessments, which has been recommended by the Finance Committee, implies a significant increase in the assessed contributions of many Members. While we have no objection to the revised scale, we would note that the implications of the revised scale for Canada are significant. Even under a Zero Nominal Growth scenario with the budget level for the next biennium remaining at its current level, Canada's assessed contribution to the Organization will increase by 11.7 percent.

We would also note that many countries are already having trouble meeting their financial commitments to FAO as evidenced by the persistently high level of arrears. In our view, it is not appropriate to consider increasing the budget when so many Member Countries are not paying their assessed contributions. For these reasons, we would, once again, encourage the Organization to continue efforts to manage its budget responsibly and maintain budget discipline. Canada is willing to participate constructively in further discussions to reach agreement on a realistic budget level.

My delegation would like to urge the Secretariat in its efforts to better set priorities within FAO's activities. For example, the implementation of the recommendations of the Decentralization Evaluation and the reform of the TCP should take clear account of the emerging consensus around the MDGs paper and, in particular, its targeting recommendations. We note with satisfaction that this process has already begun.

In addition, as the full Programme of Work and Budget is prepared, Canada would like to encourage the Secretariat to revisit the budget scenarios. In particular, to incorporate a risk analysis which describes how the priority activities are identified and conversely, how lower priority items are identified for funding cuts.

I take this opportunity to reiterate that Canada values the work of FAO. We have begun a process of interdepartmental consultations with a view to responding in detail to the recently distributed questionnaire to Members. We look forward to further details on how the results of this exercise will further assist the Organization in setting priorities and ensuring that programming reflects these priorities.

Canadian priorities for FAO programming include: realization of the mandates of the standard-setting bodies, in particular, the International Plant Protection Convention, CODEX Alimentarius

and its expert scientific committees; FAO engagement in the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and similar global public goods institutions; food and agriculture policy and policy development, notably FAO's contribution to monitoring of the MDGs and the Food Insecurity Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems and related capacity building; collaboration with the United Nations Development Group in the UN family of institutions; collection, analysis, interpretation and dissemination of information on the status and trends of the world's forests; work on developing a comprehensive strategy to address the problem of wildland fire, with members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests; and the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction; Global Woodland Fire Network and fisheries.

José A. QUINTERO (Cuba)

La delegación cubana reconoce el esfuerzo desarrollado por la Secretaría para la presentación de este documento al Consejo. Sobre el mismo tenemos los siguientes comentarios: agradecemos la elaboración de un resumen de PLP más pequeño que en años anteriores. Este documento trata de los temas fundamentales del presupuesto para el próximo bienio. Sin embargo, recomendamos a la Secretaría que continúe esforzándose para lograr un documento de resumen de PLP y del propio PLP más reducido aún, acorde con las tendencias existentes en otras agencias de Naciones Unidas que nos permitan una mejor comprensión del presupuesto de la organización. Reconocemos el trabajo desarrollado por la Secretaría para la presentación de tres hipótesis de recursos para el presupuesto 2006-2007 en consonancia con los reclamos de este Consejo en períodos de sesiones anteriores, así como la menor atención prestada a los detalles presupuestarios en favor de una mayor atención a los resultados programáticos en un intento de vincular los niveles de recurso a las prioridades de la FAO. Sin embargo, concordamos con la idea presentada por el Director General en la inauguración de este período de sesiones, acerca de que es conveniente que la FAO disponga de una sola propuesta de presupuesto al igual que el resto de los organismos del sistema. Llamamos la atención acerca de que una decisión de aplicar una hipótesis de crecimiento nominal cero para el presupuesto del próximo bienio, tal y como se aplicó en el actual bienio, traerá consecuencias significativas para la inmensa mayoría de las actividades que realiza la FAO y la imposibilitará de cumplir con su mandato eficazmente.

Apoyamos la aprobación durante la próxima Conferencia de una hipótesis de crecimiento real que permita concederle a todos los programas de la FAO una financiación acorde a los objetivos planteados por los organismos rectores y las direcciones estratégicas. Acogemos la idea planteada en el párrafo 26 acerca de presentar a finales del 2005 un informe que contenga un análisis del funcionamiento del sistema de asignación de cuotas en dos monedas y cómo la FAO enfrenta los riesgos de fluctuaciones de los tipos de cambio del Euro con respecto a otras monedas diferentes del Dólar EE.UU. en las cuales realiza alrededor de un veinte por ciento de sus gastos.

Por último reconocemos a la Secretaría el esfuerzo realizado para proteger el nivel presupuestario del Programa de Cooperación Técnica en las hipótesis presupuestarias presentadas.

Muhammad Ismail QURESHI (Pakistan)

Pakistan finds the Summary Programme of Work and Budget 2006/07, a well prepared document. We welcome the reduced size of the SPWB and endorse the suggestion of the Finance Programme Committee for an even shorter SPWB presentation for the future biennia. Likewise, we endorse the recommendation of these two Committees regarding reduced size and more analytical document for the full PWB to be presented at the next Council session. This will make it more readable as well as save costs on this publication.

Pakistan, as a Member of the Finance Committee, has had the opportunity to comment on the SPWB in the Finance Committee as well as the Joint Session of the Financial and Programme Committees. We reiterate the view we expressed at these sessions along with many other Members of the rate of work proposed even under the Real Growth scenario was not commensurate with the pressing requirements of the Membership, particularly in view of the commitments to implement the MDGs.

We note that under the Real Growth scenario that the Director-General has proposed an increase of 3.8 percent for the 2006/07 biennium as compared with the approved PWB for 2004/05. This translates into an overall Real Growth US\$30.9 million, raising the budget level for next biennium to US\$872.2 million. After taking expected income into account the level of appropriation is estimated at US\$780 million, an increase of 4.1 percent over the appropriation for the 2004/05 biennium. Under the Zero Real Growth scenario the increase is minimal and under the Zero Nominal Growth scenario there will be a reduction of 5.5 percent of the budget or US\$43 million in real terms. Hard numbers may be reconfirmed as a manner to ensure its accuracy and the removal of discrepancies, if any.

There are 21 major programme SPWB comprising 63 programmes. We know that only 28 of these programmes benefit from Real Growth while the rest of the 35 programmes remain static, 22 of the 28 programmes benefiting from the Real Growth are in chapter 2, Technical and Economic Programmes comprising of 5 major programmes. Almost half of the incremental budget goes to these 5 major programmes. Pakistan, however, feels that there is scope for further adjustment of the budgetary increase. In this context we find that more resources need to go into TCP Chapter 2, and policy assistance Chapter 3, and the proposed increase of US\$4.1 million, and US\$1.5 million respectively, is insufficient in view of the needs of the Member Nations.

Pakistan had also raised this point during the meeting of the Conference on Agriculture earlier this year. We hope that the full PWB would take this into account.

We consider the Real Growth scenario as a preferred option for the next biennium in view of the successive cuts in the budget since 2004. We note that despite this moderate Real Growth the Regular Programme would still be 16 percent below the inflation adjusted level of resources in 1994.

The Finance and Programme Committees in the Joint Meetings have rightly called for inclusion of a higher Real Growth scenario of 9.2 percent in the full PWB. We endorse and request and would await the response of the Secretariat in putting together the work plan addressing the needs of the Member Nations and the overall context of MBGs.

We welcome the introduction of risk assessment as a step in the right direction and hope that this can be further strengthened in the future.

Due to many and diverse demands of the Memberships, years of Nominal Growth projects and increased costs delivery services, the FAO programmes and activities have been expanded with thin spread of resources. There has also been a cost in terms of retention of high quality staff. While the salary component as against non-salary component is higher, it is important to know that quality and rich skill makes of human resources does not come cheap. We must ensure that FAO's quality of human resources - being its forte - is enhanced and enabled and not allowed to be compromised.

Several programmes and elements sub-programmes are left with only notional funding and mostly without the right type of expertise to backstop them. The financial capacity of the Membership to substantially enhance the contributions to the Organization's budgetary resources is faced with its own limitations.

The initiation of an Independent External Evaluation is an apt move and we look forward to its considered and meaningful recommendations. However, at this juncture it is important that a prioritization between activities must be done to retain focus of what is most crucial and what can be done most effectively.

FAO over the years has carved a special position for itself among the international agencies. It is important for the image and the worth of the Organization and the interest of the Membership that this leaves the status of FAO in the field of agriculture maintained and strengthened.

There are new challenges emerging from the International Trade Organization and negotiations within the WTO raising an ever greater demand from the developing countries for FAO's support in order to build up the internal capacity for the negotiation rounds and also to undertake

measures for capacity building for compliance with WTO requirements and especially of SPS measures. FAO needs to play a bridge role in the emerging situation to assist developing countries in developing local entrepreneurship in agri-business and to assist them in finding partners holding internationally recognized branches and invest in joint ventures in those countries.

The area of capacity building for trade negotiations and WTO compliance along with agri-business require a higher priority in allocations.

In the situation our delegation would suggest that the FAO Secretariat, between now and the fall session of the Finance and Programme Committees, work with a selected group of Members from the different regions to prioritize budget areas and ensure adequate resources for this.

David INGHAM (Australia)

Australia notes that Members explicitly requested three different funding assumptions: Real Growth, Zero Real Growth and Zero Nominal Growth in Council in November 2004, recognizing that alternate scenarios for the next MTP and PWB would be necessary to enlighten the Membership at the possible impact for alternative budget allocations.

Australia supports the explicit consideration of the three funding scenarios. Furthermore, the three scenarios should be presented equally down to the programme entity level, with each included in the full Programme of Work and Budget 2006/07. This is reflected in the recommendations of the Joint Meeting for the Programme and Budget Committees in paragraph 13. This will make it clear as to the effect of the choice of each option on the level of funding for individual programmes. We believe we need to ensure that the full range of options is canvassed in the documentation so that Members can make decisions with a thorough understanding of their implications.

In addition to the comments on the planning process in budgetary scenarios, Australia would appreciate the Secretariat's guidance on the rationale behind only one major programme, the Technical Cooperation Programme being left unchanged under the ZNG scenario. We have checked back through the papers in Programme Committee discussions on priority setting over the past few years and have not been able to find the answer to this question. Table 3, from the priority setting paper considered by the Programme Committee in May 2004, PC 91.7, provides an indication of Members' expressed preferences in which the TCP is included in highest priority category. However, along with many other programmes, including the IPPC and phytosanitary standards, Codex and Codex related work on food safety, genetic resources, fishery and forestry programmes.

The September 2004 PC meeting also considered priority setting, but was focused on the three criteria relevant to this Strategic Framework, focus on Members' express priorities and FAO's comparative advantage which are currently being used in priority setting. The report of the November 2004 Council meeting included a paragraph outlining Members' views on high priority programmes, which included the TCP. However, 16 other areas of FAO activity were also included. The answer to the question why is the TCP alone unaffected by the ZNG scenario is therefore, clearly not the priority setting methodology being adopted by the Secretariat at the moment. Can the Council please have an explanation as to the rationale behind the decision?

Australia believes that with the increasing importance of trade to developing countries, including the growth of South-South trade, a crucial role for the FAO is to assist global harmonization of plant quarantine and food standards that support international trade rules. Adequately resourcing the international standard work of IPPC and Codex is an essential part of helping developing countries to expand their trade and improve their food security. This has been recognized in each of the Governing Body meetings over the past two or three years where the prioritization of FAO's programmes has been discussed with widespread support from a broad range of countries.

Similarly, the support for developing countries to assist them to participate in trade negotiations is considered by Australia and a number of other countries as being a high priority.

Australia also places considerable importance on a number of other FAO programmes which is a key to achieving FAO goals of assisting Member Nations achieve food security. The FAO's

fisheries and forestry programmes, especially the important Fisheries work on Illegal Unreported un-regulated Fishing, regional fisheries management organizations, Monitoring Control and Surveillance schemes for fisheries and the FAO forestry programmes designed to promote sustainable and responsible forest management are especially important in this regard.

Finally, Australia is very supportive for the high priority FAO work on the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the Joint FAO/WHO meeting on Pesticide Residues and the important FAOSTAT work and seeks funding which recognizes this priority.

Gabriel LOMBIN (Nigeria)

Having listened so attentively to the interventions so far, one is tempted to think that anything from here on is likely to be a repetition. I am not saying, however, that I am finding an apology for that - only for purposes of emphasis and to place it on record.

The document that appears to have been applauded by everybody here is the Summary Programme of Work and Budget. We made sufficient inputs at the level of the Committees and I think it is superfluous to repeat them. Suffice to say, that one notes with satisfaction the fact that the overall impression I have got is that the call for even greater brevity of the document.

My delegation hopes that this increasing brevity will eventually lead to a total elimination of these documents in our documentation and budget processing process. I am not sure that these documents honestly have added anything - at least to Nigeria's knowledge of the system.

As the Secretariat mentioned this morning, the document after this meeting is now going to the shelf and the shelf life is over. I wish that the Programme of Work and Budget that we are now considering were a draft. Then we would expect a final document in November, in line with what India suggested this morning, instead of having an interim document that does not tell us anything; it only says we should wait.

However, the Council appears prepared to go with it, but I would like to put on record that the Nigerian delegation is of view that the time is coming when these documents should be considered as whether in fact they have any serious value added.

Having said that and coming specifically to the major items that were covered in the documents. I think there are too many intelligent people here for me to answer some of them, so please permit me to make one or two comments.

First, on this budget scenario. Having listened carefully to the intelligent discourse that has been going on here, I have not caught precisely where the link is between the scenarios and the figures that are now being pedalled around. I mean that people are now talking about 749 against this 31 against - nobody has told me the relationship between the scenarios themselves and the budget level that is being discussed.

Our country was one of those countries that did not support the idea of three scenarios during the last Council. I can speak with some measure of confidence that a wide margin of the African delegates did not support it, but the Council took the decision and we went ahead with it. Now that it has been given I have heard with some concern the request that it should even go further than what it is now, even to kind of influence the levels of contribution be proposed.

Let me pose the question on behalf of my country and on behalf of my Africa region. who formed the whole principle of these scenarios, particularly the last one, the Zero Nominal Growth? I am not challenging those who proposed it initially; and there must have been some wisdom in so doing. Has the time not come for us to revisit whether in fact it should continue? It is beginning to look as though this Council will want to make it a permanent feature of the budgeting process of this Organization.

I am not a Member of the Secretariat, but I do not think the mere burden on the Secretariat is the only concentration that should be used to consider whether the time has come for us now to say maybe we should do away with this scheme. Like India said this morning, the duty of a chief executive of any organization - maybe the UN ones are different, but I have yet to be convinced

that they are any different - the duty of a chief executive is to prepare the budget in line with priority set by the Governing Bodies. The Governing Bodies decide to cut or to add. We have got the Strategic Plan; we have got the Medium-term Plan; we are going to get the Programme of Work and Budget. These are the documents I suggest are sufficiently important for us to take decisions. The Chief Executive has indicated what he would want so as to be able to execute the programme that we have placed before him.

I have taken very due note of the observation made by Japan that we should fix the figures now and let them remain like that for five years. Nigeria wants it to go on record, speaking on behalf of my country, that I am not sure where we want to go with that. If we are going to fix the figures now and let it go, then we may as well forget about discussing the programme for the next five years because the programmes are already here. So I would like to plead with the more endowed countries of this planet, that we have talked enough, and I have spent so much time trying to understand the scenarios - of course I have the mechanical understanding of the Zero, the Real Growth scenarios - but I have not been convinced yet as to the background motives pushing them. If the intention, as I seemed to have gleaned from the few comments that I have gathered, was to squeeze out any inefficiency in FAO, we are reaching the point of squeezing the life out of FAO instead of squeezing out inefficiency. One would therefore want to plead that from 1994 to date, we are still talking about asking FAO to contract. We are beginning to get a little embarrassed as to how far we will go with this. I appreciate the difficulties, particularly of the major contributors. I mean, one is not unrealistic to appreciate the weight and burden being placed on them. But in the same context is the same poverty that the developing countries are facing that is making them unable to contribute. To now turn around and say that one is not contributing much, let us reduce I think is just simply saying that the problems we are facing in the developing world are not real. Again, I would like to re-echo what my Permanent Secretary said yesterday in thanking the G8 Members for cancelling the debts of about 14 African countries: we are most delighted for that. I am sure that we would like the trend as it goes along. I just want to leave a plea on behalf of my country and that of the other African countries, particularly the ones south of the Sahara, that I think we are getting a little bit frightened as to what is the motive behind this push about the Zero Nominal Growth when all the facts on the ground appeared to be the contrary.

Finally, I would like to now specifically mention the areas in which I think most of the African countries and indeed the developing world would be interested. I agree entirely that there must be some priority setting in any system. Resources are not limitless. Even if we give them one billion dollars today, they will come back with bigger programmes, anyway. There must be a standard way of setting our priorities to enable us to move forward. I think my Australian colleague has listed quite a number and we are in total support.

Regarding the TCP, I would like to say that we should not forget that is the only major entry strategy for FAO in the developing world. The question of linking it with the normative work is as critical. How do we test all the money that goes into TCP work? A lot of it goes, in fact, for capacity building and policy development towards the normative work. They are so interlinked and any attempt to say this is for normative work, this is for TCPs, the TCPs have many dimensions and therefore what you may consider as normative work is in fact being covered also by the TCPs. So I can see sentiment be raised as to why the TCP is so protected. A very, very big percentage of the Membership of FAO benefits from TCP. A very large proportion of the Membership benefits from TCP - that is another justification. Besides the fact that in any case the TCP are also used to augment our capacity to handle normative work of FAO. If this is an attempt to answer my Australian colleague, I have no apology. I hope it will help.

I took note of the area that were listed and apart from the Codex, the fisheries, the ICPC, I also note that under programme 2, the emphasis placed on regional priorities appreciates the capacity building and the effort to use the TCP through normative and field activities to support the formulation and implementation of projects in the context of NEPAD. All the factors, the normative work, the TCPs are all linked up. There is therefore no need to attempt to separate them.

Kiala Kia MATEVA (Angola)

Monsieur le Président, au cours de sa réunion du 13 juin, la semaine dernière, le Groupe africain s'est réuni pour examiner plusieurs points inscrits à l'ordre du jour. Un point concernait la préparation de la cent vingt-huitième session du Conseil et le Programme de travail et budget pour 2006-2007 a retenu notre attention.

À cette occasion, le Groupe africain a entendu nos représentants au sein du Comité du Programme et financier. Le PTB, comme vous le savez, est un sujet qui tient à cœur aux pays africains. L'Algérie, à ma gauche, le Mali et le Nigéria ont présenté des préoccupations pertinentes parce que nous sommes parmi les bénéficiaires des services de la FAO.

Monsieur le Président, avant de faire ma déclaration, je voudrais vous demander votre indulgence pour donner la parole à notre Représentant au sein du Comité financier, la délégation du Zimbabwe, pour présenter les commentaires du Groupe africain et après je pourrai reprendre la parole. Merci.

Ms Mary Margaret MUCHADA (Observer for Zimbabwe)

I wish to thank the Secretariat for the report and presentations by the Chairman of the Programme Committee and Finance Committee as a preview to this discussion.

We have participated in the initial consultations of the budget in the various committees and have made our comments known to our colleagues. We welcome the shortened PWB document that was tabled by the Secretariat. It makes it easier for us all to follow through the various programmes as we discuss them during this session.

We have looked at the three budget scenarios. Our view is that we cannot continue to reduce even when we see that the demands that we are making on the Organization are continuing to increase. The last ten years have seen the figures remaining static and as a result the timetable for the achievement of the MGD's is behind schedule. We have reviewed the situation in the house as a group and we realize that for us to achieve the halving of the hungry people in the world by 2015 we cannot continue at this same pace. If we continue at this same pace, it means that we are looking at 2050 to achieve this same result, hence, I think we have got to consider redoubling our efforts.

At what percentage is what I think we are discussing in this room. We welcome the views that others from our region of Africa have made, and indeed the views that others from the G77 have put forward.

Most of them have spoken so eloquently, that I feel that our job has really been done for us, for they have demonstrated the need to marry our programmes with resources. We have heard other delegates from other regions also coming on board with this view and even articulating some of the areas where we should particularly pay attention in addressing the situation.

This is a very critical issue. What we envisage in Africa is a jump start so it is imperative that FAO be able to respond to the needs of the developing countries. For example, in Africa, heads of State last year agreed to the Maputo Declaration where they committed the minimum of 10 percent of the national budget to agriculture.

This would naturally create the need for many normative and technical programmes to be affected. FAO is the training and information Organization and should be able to respond accordingly to the country initiatives. We also feel that having too many extra budgetary costs such as Security and after service medical coverage included in the Regular Programme would crowd out the many Regular Programme action items that we have been discussing this afternoon.

Whatever scenario we end up with, we think that the Regular Programme would be compromised.

We support the role of FAO as a knowledge Organization and in the same vein, we support the complementarity of the normative and technical programmes. We, therefore, wish to see this clearly articulated in a Real Growth scenario that will ensure that what we learn from a normative

sense we are able to implement in the field. There is no point in learning these techniques if we can not implement them.

I wish to underscore the need for that complementarity as we go along.

For us here to sit and argue for a ZNG budget scenario when the whole world is clamouring for us to double our efforts, in order for us to improve the situation in the developing world it would appear that we are taking a different a turn that is against what our own leaders are saying in other scenarios in other fora. I would like to cite the recent meetings that were held by some of the G8, some of the EU leaders and even the G77 leaders. So let us be in tune with our leadership that way even the programmes that we seek to implement will be in tune.

Table 8 on page 32 of this PWB document gives a snap shot of what a ZNG scenario would be and every programme in the ZNG scenario is in the negative. Is this what we are advocating for FAO, that no programme is going to grow?

I thought what we are advocating is to see an improved programme delivery through FAO, however if we go according to what is on table 8, FAO is not expected to grow in a ZNG scenario. My delegation feels that the ZNG scenario cannot and does not address this situation.

I wish to reserve the other comments for when we get to responsive areas of the debate.

Kiala Kia MATEVA (Angola)

Monsieur le Président, notre déclaration vient compléter celle faite ce matin par notre délégation, lorsque le Conseil a examiné le point CL 128/4. C'est avec beaucoup d'attention que nous avons analysé le document CL 128/3 concernant le Sommaire du Programme de travail et budget 2006-2007. Nous nous félicitons de sa clarté et de sa concision. C'est pourquoi ma délégation félicite le Directeur général de la FAO et l'Organisation.

Monsieur le Président, il est indispensable que les conclusions finales auxquelles sont parvenus les Comités techniques au cours de leurs sessions, dans la version intégrale du PTB 2006-2007, y soient incluses. S'agissant du processus de la planification améliorée, nous faisons nôtres les principes généraux qui consistent à éviter la répétition des informations présentées dans les différents documents et limiter sa longueur.

Pour l'établissement de la version intégrale du PTB, il est nécessaire d'approfondir les orientations qui figurent dans le SPTB et les propositions doivent être analysées en fonction d'éléments qui présentent un intérêt pour les Membres, en particulier, les aspects régionaux et la répartition des ressources par objectifs stratégiques. Nous sommes de l'avis que, dans le prochain Sommaire, les descriptions figurant à la section budget/programme peuvent être supprimées.

Monsieur le Président, en ce qui concerne le cadre budgétaire, la FAO a présenté trois scénarios. Comme nous l'avions déclaré, lors de l'examen du Rapport conjoint des Comités du Programme et financier ce matin, nous soutenons la proposition d'un PTB de croissance réelle car la FAO se trouve devant un grand défi: celui d'aider les pays en développement pour résoudre les problèmes de la faim et de la pauvreté sans oublier son engagement de réaliser les objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement. Mais il faut se rappeler que les difficultés qu'affronte l'Organisation dans l'exécution de ses Programmes, à part l'insuffisance budgétaire, sont dues au non-paiement des contributions des pays membres.

A cet égard, je vais terminer. Les pays, qui se trouvent dans cette situation, doivent faire un effort afin d'honorer leurs engagements vis-à-vis de l'Organisation.

CHAIRMAN

Just before giving the floor to Finland. I am going to give a little forecast of the rest of our late afternoon, early evening. We do have arrangements and in fact we have a new translation team with us, judging by the length of the speakers' list and allowing for some response from the panel, I think we will be sitting at least until seven o'clock more or less. Just so that you are aware.

Veli-Pekka TALVELA (Finland)

Finland is speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Finland. We also want to give our support to the statement concerning the Summary Programme of Work and Budget made by the European Union as well as those you gave on Finance Committee and Programme Committee given by the European Community earlier on.

To begin, I would like to commend the Secretariat for having improved the clarity and readability of the document. The inclusion of alternative budgetary scenarios is important so that Members can see their consequences both on financial and programme levels. Without going into too much detail, we would like to comment on some of the general aspects that we think are vital with regard to the Work Programme and Budget of FAO.

The basic approach of the Nordic countries in dealing with the SPWB for this Organization is to, within reasonable limits, seek a match of resources and requirements. We feel that the document at hand illustrates the need for a clearer priority setting within the Organization. The different budget scenarios presented in the document illustrate implicit prioritization. Yet, an explicit substantial discussion on prioritization is still to come.

We are, however, glad to note that FAO has taken an initiative to discuss its priorities in relation to the Millennium Development Goals and look forward to this discussion to be reflected in the final Programme of Work and Budget later this year.

In our option the Secretariat has a leading role in initiating the discussion in the Governing bodies on the priorities of FAO. This discussion should evolve into a dynamic dialogue between the Secretariat and the Membership.

The MDG debate, as well as the Independent External Evaluation will provide inputs for this process. To improve its work, the Organization must – as was already stated in Stockholm when our Ministers met with the Director-General– take bold steps even if they may initially be criticized.

The Nordic countries think that a comparison between the budgetary procedures of the UN agencies might help FAO to streamline and improve its own procedures. The comparison should also include how different organizations deal with regular budget and extra-budgetary resources in their annual or biannual budgets. As half of FAO's resources today originate from extra-budgetary sources, we would like them to be reflected also in the Summary Programme of Work and Budget. From a strategic point of view, both the regular and extra-budgetary resources should be governed by the same rules and the same strategic choices. Both financing modalities have also a direct link to the use of the personnel resources and hence to the capabilities of FAO.

With changes in the operational environment of FAO and in light of the necessary efficiency savings, we would like FAO to take a closer look at various alternatives. Some more drastic decisions must be taken already at this stage to protect the relevance and the efficiency of the Organization. Therefore, we see a need to assess the adequacy of FAO internal structures and governance, including the current committee structure. There should also be a clear policy on how to balance the appropriate personnel resources and the key operations of the Organization.

The Nordic countries consider forestry, fisheries, gender issues, genetic resources, Codex Alimentarius and International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) among high priority areas in FAO's work. We call for their sufficient funding regardless of the future level of FAO's budget.

Vladimir HERNÁNDEZ LARA (México)

Mi delegación agradece la preparación del resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto 2006-2007 que nos presenta las tres hipótesis de crecimiento que fueron señaladas a la atención del Consejo. Consideramos que de esta manera tenemos información pertinente sobre los distintos escenarios posibles que nos permitirán determinar el nivel más adecuado de presupuesto para la Organización. Pero deseo señalar que al momento de determinar el nivel de presupuesto debemos

tener en consideración que también debe haber una correspondencia con la capacidad económica de los países para cumplir sus compromisos con la Organización, especialmente a la luz de la información presentada en el informe sobre la situación de cuotas y atrasos que ya examinamos. Resulta claro que un amplio número de países tiene problemas para cumplir con el pago de sus contribuciones.

Por otra parte e independientemente del nivel de presupuesto que se adopte, mi delegación desea dejar constancia de las actividades prioritarias para mi país en el ámbito de competencias de la FAO. Estas son: inocuidad alimentaria, sanidad vegetal, salud animal, manejo poscosecha, biotecnología aplicada a la agricultura, recursos fitogenéticos, bioseguridad y uso y conservación de los suelos y desarrollo rural. Estas prioridades son importantes para promover el desarrollo agrícola de mi país. Por ello, consideramos que el fortalecimiento de los programas de la FAO en estas áreas será importante para ayudarnos a cumplir los objetivos de garantizar la producción y disponibilidad de alimentos de calidad sanos e inocuos y el desarrollo rural.

Trevor MURRAY (Trinidad and Tobago)

Trinidad & Tobago, as a member of the Caribbean Subregion and the Caribbean Community, formerly known as CARICOM, wishes to commend the Secretariat for the documentation presented to us for this meeting. We would also wish to thank the Chairmen and members of both the Programme and Finance Committees for the work they have undertaken on our behalf and would wish to encourage them to continue this good work.

Trinidad & Tobago wishes to express its support to the Secretariat for the brevity and the compactness of the Summary Programme of Work and Budget document and would want to encourage that work continues in the simplification of these documents for the future. The complexity of the overall budgetary process which requires a suite of budget documents and the three scenarios presented are of great concern for us. There is a critical need to continue the efforts at simplifying this process. Having said that my delegation wishes to concur with the sentiments expressed by the Delegation of Nigeria in respect of the usefulness of the many documents that we are presented at this time, when again we will have to examine these proposals at the next meeting of the Council. We also wish to support the position expressed again by Nigeria with regard to the importance of the TCP to developing countries. We must endeavour to enhance and safeguard this programme that is provided to developing countries by FAO. Trinidad & Tobago is of this view and we support the comments of other members who expressed that the budget should reflect a Real Growth scenario. And this is so if the Organization is to deliver on its mandate. This mandate, as we note, is ever increasing while the budget continues to decrease. At this juncture, we would wish to encourage those members in arrears to make every effort to pay up the outstanding arrears. As a small island developing state, the programmes and technical assistance provided by this Organization to our countries are critical in support of our continued development, and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. We recognize that this work is in progress and look forward to the continued work in this area.

Finally, we wish, once again, to thank the Secretariat and the Committees for the work they have undertaken in the preparation of the SPWB.

Saud AL BADDAL (Oman) (Original language Arabic)

I wanted, on behalf of my country, to thank the Secretariat on the content of the Summary Programme of Work and Budget. My delegation would also like to make a few comments, at this stage, on the question of contributions and on the Finance Committee regarding the content and information in the document. The Finance Committee document on contributions and arrears shows the figure at US\$ 78 million on the 31 December, and the question is whether the Organization should undertake certain measures to ensure that countries pay their arrears because this has a significant impact on the Programme of Work and Budget.

As far as the Technical Cooperation Programme is concerned, this is a programme that has to be implemented in countries which have to be helped according to their needs. This is an essential programme for developing countries to ensure that they can develop their agricultural systems and

there has to be a development of plant genetic resources, given their impact on food security. My country believes that we have to have a rational use of available resources, particularly when it is a question of implementing programmes for the benefit of countries. A good husbandry of resources, particularly water and land, are extremely important too, and we have to help developing countries to manage their fisheries resources. There has to be an implementation of programmes allowing for improvement in all of these areas. My country believes there ought to be a greater emphasis for the early warning system to avoid natural catastrophes and to avoid livestock diseases, plant diseases and pests. I think that we need proper support for research to make sure that we are better able to master innovations in technology and that we can make the most of technology both in the plant and animal sector.

Oman supports Real Growth scenario because of the real impact it has on the implementation of the projects which are currently being envisaged.

Jorge Luis ALEMÁN ALFARO (Panamá)

Quiero felicitarle por su elección al igual que los otros miembros de la mesa. También queremos extender nuestro agradecimiento a la Secretaría por los documentos que nos presenta, lo mismo que a los presidentes de los Comités de Finanzas y del Programa. Su presentación ha sido muy clara y muy apreciada. Vemos con agrado y felicitamos a la Secretaría por el nuevo formato del resumen del presupuesto.

Frecuentemente todos hablamos de los objetivos del Milenio y, aparentemente estamos identificados con estos criterios y objetivos, pero tengo una duda ¿en realidad estamos comprometidos con ellos? No comprendemos cómo se puede estar comprometido cuando tenemos un PLP cada día mas bajo. Es una cuestión que viene desde hace mucho tiempo, coincidimos con nuestro colega de Argelia en lo que dijo en este sentido y que no vale ahora la pena repetirlo.

Estamos de acuerdo con la incorporación en el PLP de los objetivos del Milenio, pero siempre ligado a lo que dije anteriormente. Si realmente deseamos reducir el hambre a la mitad antes de 2015 hay que incrementar el presupuesto. Reconocemos y vemos con agrado todos los esfuerzos realizados por el Director General para lograr economía. Estos esfuerzos se verían reducidos por no decir anulados si no se asignan los recursos económicos adecuados a la Organización. Por lo tanto, al igual que Argelia, Malí, Angola, Zimbabwe, Cuba, Trinidad y Tobago, Omán y muchos otros apoyamos un presupuesto de crecimiento real. Al igual que Nigeria llamamos poderosamente la atención y subrayamos la tendencia de querer perpetuar el concepto de crecimiento nominal cero. Para la Delegación de Panamá es una práctica sumamente peligrosa que va contra la misma Organización, se pone en peligro la existencia misma de la Organización, es una cuestión que hay tratar con mucho cuidado. Al igual que el Representante de Nigeria quiero identificarme con sus palabras en relación con el PCT y lo apoyamos.

Por último, me sorprende que se quiera eliminar el apoyo que la Secretaría brinda a los G77, una de las fuerzas que mayormente lucha por esta Organización y no podemos dejarla sin recursos

J. Michael CLEVERLY (United States of America)

The United States would like to join itself, with so many of our colleagues, in congratulating Mr Juneja and his staff for the hard work, as well as creativity which they put and are putting into this process of discussing the budget and the process on how we will move ahead in the future and streamlining a process which is always very cumbersome and painful for all of us. We recognize the tremendous amount of work that goes into preparing and reviewing the Programme of Work and Budget, the Medium Term Plan and the Strategic Framework. We support the Joint Committee's suggestion to streamline the process including the preparation of a shorter and more analytical full PWB for 2006/07. We welcome further discussion on this issue and look forward to the paper the Secretariat will prepare for the September meetings of the Programme and Finance Committees and eventual discussion in the next Council.

We appreciate the attempts in the Programme and Finance Committees to develop a more effective budget and planning process. Any proposal to streamline the budget presentation, however, should make the process of achieving an acceptable PWB easier, more effective and less expensive, rather than more so.

Mr Chairman, the United States remains a strong supporter of the Food and Agriculture Organization and its vital mission to address global hunger and sustainable development. We recognize the first-rate staff and the important contributions this staff makes towards these types of issues. And that brings us to the point when we have to deal with the budget, which we find a difficult and complex process. FAO, after all, is the largest independent agency in the UN System, and developing a budget for FAO is not as simple as it is for other smaller organizations in the UN System. Indeed FAO is an actor, an entity in the public sector. Just as in our own capitals, the budget process for funding ministries or departments is contingent not only on projected needs, they are also contingent on many other factors, not the least of which is the legislature's ability to appropriate money or resources to the Organization. Ultimately, all of us who are employed by ministries or departments must conform with the decisions of our legislatures and often that requires difficult decisions. The United States continues to advocate budget discipline, accountability, efficiency and prioritization in the financial resources of international organizations.

The US\$ 100 million nominal increase adopted for the 2004/05 biennial budget has taken a major toll for our government. Due to shortfalls of over US\$ 100 million in the congressional appropriation that pays United State's assessments to international organizations, in general, we are entering our second year of being unable to pay our full assessments to international organizations in a timely manner. In keeping with the United States policy of budget discipline and reinforced by shortfalls in the appropriation that funds international organizations, the United States' position on the FAO budget remains consistent and has not changed from the past. We continue to support the Zero Nominal Growth budget.

On after-service medical costs, pending completion of the UN study we cannot support additional assessments to fund ASTIC liabilities. To clarify my earlier statement on this, let me mention that this does not assume that the UN would pay these costs. Quite on the contrary, we recognize and applaud the Secretariat's initiative in identifying the liabilities and making attempts to deal with them expeditiously. Nor does it presume that our decisions will be made differently if we made the decision at the moment. The important thing, however, is to look at the matter as a global matter, and it would be important for us to see what the UN System itself is saying about the liabilities before we make our decisions within the Food and Agriculture Organization.

We support the establishment of a dedicated chapter of the PWB to group all costs that are related to Headquarters and Field security at FAO. However, based on the limited information made available related to the fluctuations in FAO's share of the costs of the UN Department of Safety and Security, and other recurring security costs, we cannot support a multi-biennia funding mechanism.

The United States does not support the Secretariat's request to assess Member States based on a budget level that excludes projected miscellaneous income. FAO should continue to budget for income from all sources. The United States supports the UN practice, which is the same practice in New York, of deducting miscellaneous income from various income producing activities, that include, for example, publication sales, from total expenditures.

We appreciate the Secretariat's commitments in identifying potential inter-organizational efficiencies; the effects of biennialization and the foreign exchange exposure of FAO in operations in its regional offices have proved to be a financial challenge. We believe this calls for an urgent and continued re-evaluation of the operation of these offices with a focus of identifying efficiencies to offset the exposure to exchange rate fluctuations. We note, however, the recent strengthening of the dollar and expect that if this improvement continues, projected cost increases may be less than so far elaborated. We wish to underline how important we consider protecting

expenditures related to sound financial and human resource practices, the effective physical security, as well as those such as information systems that promote greater productivity.

The United States looks forward to the results of FAO's Independent External Evaluation so that we can more easily get into the programme types of issues, which underline the difficulties and challenges we face. We hope the IEE will allow Member States to reach a milestone consensus on priorities. For only when we reach priorities, as many of my colleagues have mentioned, will we be able to deal more effectively with the budget challenges we face today. We want all funding to be focused on high priority programmes so that we can get the greatest impact and the most impact in the field, within the headquarters and within our full range of operations and the mission of the Organization.

Memed GUNAWAN (Indonesia)

Indonesia would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing a more concise SPWB document. We take note of the budgetary difficulty that FAO is now facing.

On one hand we are expecting FAO to double its efforts in meeting MDGs particularly in developing countries which implied the need to adopt the Real Growth scenario.

On the other hand as other delegations have already noted it is very difficult to expect budgetary increases while some countries are now having difficulty in complying to their commitments. It is clear that FAO should continue its efforts in the exercise of priority settings and efficiency savings in programme implementations.

Saulo ARANTES CEOLIN (Brazil)

I will be brief considering the time and all that we have heard already today here. Brazil would like to join other delegations in thanking the Secretariat for this preparation of this concise and informative Summary Programme of Work and Budget.

We have expressed during the discussion of previous items that we place great importance on the Technical Corporation Programme and we are content that the TCP will be exempted from cuts under all scenarios, which should be continued to be so.

Brazil also aligns itself with the preoccupations raised by India regarding the Special Programme on Food Security. As well as the concern expressed by Cuba among others, on the budget with the results expected.

As major distinguished delegates have been noted already, it does not seem likely that the tasks already assigned to FAO by the membership, specially regarding supported implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, be successfully performed on the Zero Nominal Growth or Real Growth scenarios.

FAO has already made considerable efforts towards budget containment and greater efficiency, as we all know. It is simply not realistic to expect that all priority working areas will be sufficiently funded with at least some way of budget growth.

Ricardo SANTA CRUZ RUBÍ (Guatemala)

El informe que nos han presentado es bastante claro para facilitarnos la comprensión de la situación financiera de FAO, pero al mismo tiempo pone en evidencia los esfuerzos hechos en la búsqueda de mayor eficiencia en el uso de los recursos que todavía no son suficientes. Sin embargo, vale la pena felicitar a la FAO porque se observa un esfuerzo por mejorar los niveles de eficiencia y estoy seguro que las crisis financieras conducen a esto. Pero se observa una incongruencia entre los objetivos del Milenio y la disponibilidad de los recursos, dado que un crecimiento nominal cero en términos reales equivale a un decrecimiento y resulta, entonces, contradictorio con esos objetivos, por lo tanto, sólo quedan dos caminos, asumimos la responsabilidad de financiar un presupuesto mayor en términos reales o renunciamos a los objetivos del Milenio. Sin embargo, estos objetivos son una necesidad insoslayable y ni siquiera podemos considerarlos demasiados ambiciosos. Por otro lado, al escuchar otro delegado, me doy

cuenta que compartimos las mismas preocupaciones en tema de inocuidad de alimentos, fitozoosanidad, desarrollo rural, etc. y que el apoyo debería ser más sustantivo mediante los denominados PCTs. Entendemos la preocupación por incrementar la carga presupuestaria de los Países Miembros pero la situación de pobreza en el mundo así lo demanda.

Felicitemos a FAO por sus esfuerzos en mejorar el buen uso de sus recursos y estoy seguro que si continúa en ese camino todavía van a elevar ese nivel de eficiencia.

Aboubakar BAKAYOKO (Côte d'Ivoire)

En ma qualité de Membre du Comité financier, je ne devrais pas prendre la parole en ce jour, mais je le fais tout simplement pour appuyer la déclaration de son Excellence Madame l'Ambassadeur du Zimbabwe au nom du Groupe africain. Donc, en tout état de cause, il serait paradoxal de chercher à éradiquer la faim, réaliser les objectifs de développement du Millénaire et réduire les moyens d'action de la FAO. N'oublions pas les engagements pris par nos Chefs d'Etats et de gouvernements depuis le Sommet mondial de l'alimentation de 1996 et du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation: cinq ans après en 2002 ainsi que par le Sommet du Millénaire. La FAO ne doit pas être la seule Organisation à supporter les réductions budgétaires drastiques qui risquent de compromettre la poursuite de son mandat. C'est pour cela que je dirais, tout simplement, que ma Délégation soutient les Pays qui ont proposé que notre organisation commune ait les moyens d'action pour éradiquer la faim. Je vous remercie.

Abdul Razak AYAZI (Observer for Afghanistan)

My first issue, is the Streamlining of the Medium-Term Plan, the Summary Programme of Work and Budget and the full Programme of Work and Budget. The Medium Term Plan takes its inspiration from the Strategic Framework and is the principle document for Priority Setting what indicative resource allocation for the three biennia; it embraces all the Programme entities and it explains each Programme entity in detail so, therefore, there is no need to repeat the MTP narrative part in the Summary Programme or the full Programme of Budget and Work.

The second issue is that I find it difficult that the Summary Programme of Work should be used as a mechanism for testing the level of indicative resources, instead, it should be a short document, justifying the rationale for a given resource allocation.

The question is to debate by a rich process, does membership come to a decision on the level of resources, so that the Director-General can confidently proceed with the preparation of the Summary Programme of Work and Budget.

In this connection I share Nigeria's wish that a time will come when we can eliminate the Summary Programme of Work and Budget.

The third issue, is that the three resource scenarios ZRG, ZNG, RG have some kind of implicit or explicit justification for priority setting in the Summary Programme Work or the Full Programme Work is really a painful process for the Secretariat and the value added to the Governing Body is questionable.

In our opinion, the elaboration of the three scenarios do not really throw much light on priority settings and India has clearly pointed out the very important issue of the link between the Strategic framework, the Medium-Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget. These three scenarios really enhance the gap between these three major documents.

For transparency, good governance, efficient programme and result oriented management, priority setting is a must. No-one can deny that, however its usefulness becomes visible in the context of Medium-Term Planning. This is because the nature of priority settings is making strategic choices. Strategic choices can be made only within the context of an environment that is protected as much as possible from the vagaries of the short term exogenous factors such as, arbitrary scenarios on budget levels, fluctuation of exchange rates, in other words stable assumptions are the pre-conditions for priority setting. Otherwise one is ruled by the winds of change. Therefore,

in our opinion the application of the three resource scenarios as a mean of priority setting for the Summary Programme and the full Programme are not helpful.

In this connection, I would like to point the honourable delegate from the Netherlands speaking on behalf of the EU, mentioned that the Director-General should also produce in the full Programme Work and Budget the ZNG scenario. He also added that there are certain programmes untouchable as far as the EU is concerned. Some untouchable programmes were also mentioned by the distinguished delegate of Finland speaking on behalf of the Northern Countries, developing countries also have some untouchable programmes such as the TCP and the SPFS. Consequently, we cannot have a ZNG with all these untouchables untouched. It is a very complex issue and we have to come to grips with it.

I hope the independent evaluation of FAO will throw some light on this because it is very important to solve this problem.

The fourth issue, which has been mentioned by several members of the Developing Countries is that we are somewhat unhappy about the 2.5 percent increase in the Programme and Work Budget and RGS. I need not to mention that the severe budget cuts of the last decade has really brought such pressure on the Organization that it can no longer respond adequately and promptly to some critical needs of the Developing Countries particularly in those countries that are caught in the process of poverty traps, indebtedness and aid dependence. We know the majority of those countries are located in sub-Saharan, Africa.

We wish to refer particularly to higher allocations for resources for those programme entities that have a strong and direct impact on improving the livelihood of the poor.

In the Medium-Term Plan 2006-11, there are in my opinion at least 12 programme entities particularly concerned with poverty eradication. I think the Secretariat are aware of them and I do not have to repeat them. The allocation for these 12 programme entities, in the Medium-Term Plan for 2006-07 amount to \$24 million, the Secretariat could easily have come with some rational for increasing these 12 programme entities of 50 percent. I doubt if only member countries would question that, as all these programme entities are dealing with corporate strategy A which is in turn closely related to Millennium Development Goal One which is the common goal of all Nations.

The Road Ahead as presented by Ms Killingsworth on the first day of the Council pointed out to many challenges associated with the Millennium Development Goals. We know that achieving the Millennium Development Goals is basically a nationally responsibility but other stakeholders have a critical role to play, in the Road Ahead particularly in section four which deals with Strategic Support to Country Level Corporation, a number of vital trusts are identified for which country knowledge is a pre-requisite. Here FAO needs to excel itself by putting more resources at the country level and this can be done only where Real Growth Rate is higher than 2.5 percent.

Ahmed Ali EL HASSAN BASHIR (Observer for Sudan)

Sudan would like to welcome the increasingly important role being played by this Organization. It is outstanding in nearly all of our countries. Moreover, I would like to complement the Programme and the Finance Committees. We do need a real growth budget and we support much of what has been said by colleagues that have spoken to that effect. We believe that we are facing a number of challenges and requirements at a time when this Organization is short on resources. We think that FAO should be able to receive all the arrears owed it by Member Countries. We are very much in favour of increasing assess contributions if need be. This Organization ought to attract more extra budgetary resources, too.

What my colleagues have said concerning Agriculture growth, etc. everything we can agree with, however, in Africa, climatic changes are now becoming a major cause of concern and the main cause for poverty in our region. We need to discuss this matter of droughts, very seriously. We must look to adequate technologies in order to improve the situation, we need to improve the weather forecasting in our countries too because if we can foresee what is going to happen, I am

sure, it would help the food security situation. Droughts and climate changes on our continent are of extreme importance and should be part of the priorities of this Organization.

Mme Barbara EKWALL (Observer for Switzerland)

Switzerland thanks the Secretariat for the Summary Programme of Work and Budget 2006/07. We appreciate the concise presentation of the key issues for the upcoming biennium as well as the fact that, three different level scenarios are presented. The document is a useful base for discussion in view of the preparation of the full Programme of Work and Budget to be considered by the upcoming FAO Conference.

We welcome the Secretariat's proposal to curtail the length of these documents.

As was stated on several occasions during this Council meeting, to match the demands and requirements with scarce resources, remains a major challenge. This challenge requires focusing FAO's activities in areas where it has a comparative advantage and where it obtains the greatest impacts in achieving the goals of the World Food Summit Plan of Action and the Millennium Development Goals.

Switzerland is of the opinion that FAO should have at its disposal sufficient and adequate financial support for carrying out its important mandate.

Among the priority activities, which have a crucial impact in reducing extreme poverty and hunger and where the Organization has a leading role to play, the following should be integrated and adequately funded in all three scenarios.

Firstly, the follow-up actions on the Volunteer Guidelines Right to Food; second, activities related to water for food and agriculture in the programme 2.1.1; third, major programme 2.5 contributions to sustainable development and special programme trusts in particular agenda issues; fourth, support to the implementation of the international treaty on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and finally fifth, EMPRESS.

Switzerland took note that TCP is protected in all three budget scenarios. We are convinced that important synergies exist between the normative and operational activities. Field operations on the one hand translate the results of normative work into concrete action and on the other hand enrich the normative work through feedback from field experience.

Switzerland supports an adequate balance between normative and operational activities of FAO. Although, we realize it is not always possible to have a clear cut distinction and indeed a question if such a distinction makes sense.

A comprehensive review of the TCP has been initiated, which might lead to changes in the criteria, overall scope of the programme and implementation procedures. We will examine with great attention the results of this review and the final management proposals expected by November this year.

We welcome the document FAO and the challenge of the Millennium Development Goals, The Road Ahead and appreciate that FAO is increasingly oriented its work on the MDGs and looking for a better integration into the UN system into the UN family. We appreciate this and we encourage FAO to strengthen the UN families' contribution towards reaching these goals.

We are looking forward to FAO involvement in ECOSOC's operational activities segment this July and encourage it to actively engage in the process leading up in the UN Summit in September this year.

Manoj JUNEJA (Director, Programme, Budget and Evaluation)

Thank you for all your contributions. Let me first of all say that we are very grateful for the positive comments that have been made on the format and the content of the SPWB and indeed for supporting a more concise SPWB document in future.

We are also grateful for the unanimous support that the Council has given for a more condensed content and format of the full PWB 2006-07 which the Secretariat is now preparing.

As regards the manner in which we would achieve a more condensed document the Chairman of the Programme Committee and the Chairman of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees already provided some clear indications.

One aspect I would mention concerns the presentation of the scenarios in the full PWB. Based on the discussions that took place in the Joint meeting and indeed the discussions that took place this morning and this afternoon, it seems to me that there will indeed be a fourth option in the full PWB 2006-07. An option that has been referred to as Real Growth Plus, by several members, one which proposes a 9.2.5 percent Growth rate. We must therefore, bear in mind that the PWB 2006-07 would have to include a fourth scenario, based on the guidance that has been provided.

I noted that one member, the distinguished Representative from Australia, supported explicit and equal consideration of all scenarios that was mentioned then as three scenarios but then in fact there was this fourth scenario as well, and that the Representative of the Netherlands speaking on behalf of the EU, mentioned that the Zero Nominal Growth scenario should be presented at the programme level.

Turning to another area where there seems to be almost unanimous consensus is the Director-General's proposal for a security expenditure facility.

On behalf of the Secretariat I should like to thank members for the support for establishing chapter 9 of the Budget.

I note that the Representative of the United States does not support a multi-biennium funding mechanism. I would suggest that the reason for a multi-biennium funding is not simply the uncertainty of the charges that come from the UN Department of Safety and Security - the UNDSS - but are also driven by the fact that all security expenditure is unpredictable and therefore should not be subject to the constraint of the entire amount being spent within the biennium. In other words there is a need for a buffer, regardless of the uncertainty of the UNDSS share that the Organization has to bear every biennium. Indeed you may wish to be aware that the UNDSS itself wishes to propose to the General Assembly, UN central funding for their security expenditures and that continues to be an ongoing debate.

Several members, including the Representative of Zimbabwe, speaking this morning, as well as Algeria and the Philippines have referred to the effect that rising security expenditure has had on the Programmes of the Organization. In fact the Representative of the Philippines referred to this as cutting the size of the Pie.

It is indeed correct to say that the budgetary increases and actual increases in security to date have come from programme cuts. This is of course very apparent from the fact that we have had a substantial real decline in the budget into 2004-05 which could not possibly have been met from efficiency savings, as a result of which the increased security expenditures have been compensated by programme cuts.

The Representative of the United States, indicated the difficult position with regard to possible increase in the budget. I should mention that if there is a question of parity here, if there is a question of equity here, that we could sometimes also take a look at the practices of other organizations that have a different method for funding security.

If we take the UN for example the UN actually has add-ons to its budgets for security expenditure so indeed if security expenditure rises during the implementation cycle, there is a budgetary add-on, in order to cover those costs. The IAEA has had specific increases in its budget for security expenditure in 2004-05 and in its 2006-07 proposals. The ILO has recently introduced extraordinary items in the budget that was adopted by the International Labour Conference which includes additional funding for security.

The point I am trying to make here is that there is a question of equity, there is a question of parity of treatment, and it seems to me that FAO is lagging somewhat, with security expenditure having to be absorbed from programme cuts. It is not unusual for security to be funded separately from

the substantive programmes even when it is funded from Members assessments and from extra-budgetary resources.

I should like to turn now to comments that were made with regard to the proposal on Miscellaneous Income, the proposal not to deduct estimated miscellaneous income in arriving at assessments. I should emphasise that what FAO is now trying to do is to follow a best practice enterprise risk management approach in developing its business plans. It looks, therefore, at financial risks and in looking at these financial risks we look at the equity accounts of the Organization and also the cash flow situation to propose ways to address risks. This is an approach that has been unanimously welcomed by the Committees. We have a problem in FAO that has been referred to by the Chairman of the Finance Committee and by many interventions at Council today. Our cash flow position is extremely weak. The problem is systemic and long-standing. Equally long-standing is the practice that quite frankly contributes to these cash flow difficulties. In the old days, when FAO enjoyed surpluses the practice that FAO has in deducting Miscellaneous Income in arriving at Member Nations' assessments made sense. Financial Regulation 5.2 which was referred to by the Representative of Japan made perfect sense in the context of surpluses because that deduction simply anticipated something which the Organization would have had to do in any case, at the end of the biennial implementation cycle, to return surpluses to member states. Those days have long gone. From the mid-eighties FAO has lived with a deficit. We are in your hands. Good financial management of your Organization depends on you, the membership; the Secretariat can pose the problem. If the problems requires a derogation of the Financial Regulations this is the governance process, the Council and the Conference.

The Secretariat asks you to derogate financial regulations 5.2 until such time as we are in a position where surpluses need to be returned to Members. In the Secretariat's view this makes perfect sense. In the Secretariat's view this is a response to our enterprise risk management.

The representative of Canada noted that Canada does not wish to set a precedent in the UN system. In fact we are not asking the FAO Council or Conference to do something that is unique to the UN system. The practice, the revised practice that the Secretariat is proposing is one that already exists in ILO and UNESCO. In the case of ILO and UNESCO, Member Nations fully fund the budget. If the budget is \$100 at the ILO and UNESCO, assessments are \$100. Now of course, circumstances vary between Organizations and I am not suggesting that we continue to follow the UN practice as was suggested by the representative of the United States or that we have to be bound by the practices of the ILO or UNESCO. FAO faces cash flow difficulties and this seems to be a very logical way to address those difficulties without setting a precedent within the UN system. The Finance Committee agreed to transmit this proposal to Council. We have heard three speakers, the distinguished Representatives of Canada, Japan and the United States express reservations with regard to this proposal.

It is not clear to me whether other members have simply not spoken because there was the agreement to transmit this proposal to Council. That seems to be my understanding. I wish to be guided by Council in this regard. The Secretariat's proposal would be, if my understanding is correct, then to make more specific proposals in the full programme of Work and Budget, including a draft Conference resolution which could be considered by the Finance Committee and then eventually by the Conference in November.

I should like to turn now to some comments that were made with regard to efficiency savings. The Representative of the Netherlands speaking on behalf of the EU noted that the 2.4 million dollars that had been projected was a rather small amount. Indeed the Secretariat will make further proposals in the full Programme in Work and Budget.

Efficiency Savings are defined in paragraph 37 in the Summary Programme of Work and Budget as "reduction of the costs of inputs without material negative impact on outputs".

Now following this definition, as the Director-General said in his introduction on Monday, FAO has achieved 120 million dollars of savings per biennium, compared with 1994. A best practice

definition of efficiency in fact goes further than this Council definition. If we were to follow best practice definitions, FAO would also pursue and perhaps quantify efficiencies that were achieved through enhanced quality and quantity of outputs for the same level of inputs.

Now the Secretariat cannot give you additional figures for efficiency savings if this best practice approach were followed but I can certainly say that efficiency savings would have been even larger if that definition had been followed by FAO and if such monitoring was done by FAO.

The Representative of Mali said that with the kinds of budget cuts that FAO has faced, other Organizations may be flatfooted. In fact efficiency savings have contributed very greatly to the Organization's capacity to manage budget reductions.

I am not aware of any other UN Organization that has made the kind of progress that FAO has made in achieving efficiency savings. I would like to invite the Council to liaise with the Secretariat so we can be pointed in the right direction, somewhere in the UN system where more significant efficiency savings have been made, so that we can see where other organizations may have done better than us.

The Representative of Korea mentioned that further efficiency savings require continues effort. Indeed that is the case in FAO. The Director-General mentioned this as a management process and in fact the search for efficiency savings, I would say, is embedded in the fabric of the Organization.

The Representative of Nigeria asked whether perhaps budget cuts were a way of squeezing out efficiency savings from FAO. I would suggest that is certainly no longer the case and in fact the situation is getting somewhat unproductive from the point of view of the Secretariat partly because of the fatigue that this process is creating. The Programme Committee has itself mentioned, as has the Representative of Pakistan as well, the need to be realistic in the assessment of efficiency savings and that is indeed the approach that the Secretariat proposes to follow for 2006-07.

It would perhaps be better to view further budget cuts or any budgetary increase that does not compensate the Organization for legitimate cost increases as Programme reductions. That then takes me to the issue of priority setting.

There have been a number of interventions on priorities. To underline my point I should actually like to list some: the Technical Corporation Programme, which was mentioned by Guatemala, India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Trinidad and Tobago; Codex, IPPC, Animal Genetic Resources, The Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food, FIVIMS mentioned by the Netherlands on behalf of the EU, as well as internal financial controls. Thailand mentioned avian flu with Korea, and early warning system; Algeria mentioned fisheries, water management; Australia mentioned the importance of quarantine and food standards, support to trade, fisheries, forestry and the international treaty on plant genetic resources. The Nordic countries added gender issues; Canada also mentioned several areas, including FAO work on monitoring on MDGs, the status and trends in world forests and the plant genetic resources for food and agriculture; Mexico mentioned food safety, biosecurity, land conservation. If I were to add to that the statements on COFI, COFO, COAG and the statements that were made in connection with the discussion on the MDGs, the list would get longer.

There were two general statements on high priorities as well. Thailand mentioned that ZNG reductions should be revised to take into account the needs of developing countries; the Representative of the United States mentioned generally support for high priority activities. I did not hear a single speaker mention specific areas of lower priority for the Organization. Herein lies the problem of the Secretariat. With regard to priority setting, I agree with the comment made by the Representative of Afghanistan that that is something that needs to be considered in connection with the Medium-Term Plan. But if we were to follow best practice approach on priority setting and resource setting, it is said that member states "should focus on providing resources commensurate on the approved programmes and/or giving clear guidance on programme and resource allocation priorities".

This was a quote of the Joint Inspection Unit: What are then the respective responsibilities of the Secretariat and Member Nations to establish priorities? I hope that the discussion that the Programme Committee, Finance Committee and Joint Meeting will embark on from September will begin to answer that question.

I do hope, however, that the Council can trust the Secretariat when the Secretariat says that we will do everything to support you, the governing body, in arriving at any area of decision-making of the governing bodies.

I should like to turn now to some specific comments that were made by the representative of Japan. The representative of Japan and Canada commented that the budget increased sharply to US\$749 million. Let me remind the Council that FAO had less than a Zero Nominal Growth budget in 2004/2005. Indeed, assessments rose sharply for some member states: the United States being one example, but in fact, assessments in 2004/2005 in local currency also reduced for some major contributors to FAO. Now part of the reason for that is exchange rates, of course, but part of the reason is also that FAO had a less than Zero Nominal Growth budget in 2004/2005 and the assessment levels were less than what they should have even been in a Zero Nominal Growth scenario.

The representative of Japan mentioned the large proportion of continuing activities in FAO – 70 percent. In fact, the figure is 40 percent if we were to take technical programmes and to exclude the service entities in the technical and economic areas and the non-technical departments. Nevertheless, it is extremely important to have timeframes on FAO's activities. This is entirely consistent with results-based management and I can assure the representative of Japan that the Secretariat gives very careful attention, and will continue to give very careful attention, to this aspect. Programme formulation is done in the Medium Term Plan and in the Medium Term Plan, in fact, there were 33 programme entities that were eliminated.

The representative of Japan also noted the high level of fixed expenditure in FAO. Personnel services were quoted at 76 percent. Here again I would offer to correct the figure to 67 percent because the proportion of personnel services should be taken against the programme of work and not the net budget. Against the programme of work, the percentage is 67 percent. Is that too high, or too low? FAO is a technical assistance agency – a centre of excellence that provides advice, advice that is based on human resources. In fact the representative of the United States actually mentioned that staff constitute the most valuable asset of the Organization. The figure of 67 percent is actually quite consistent with the other UN technical assistance agencies. FAO is certainly not off the mark in that regard. It would actually also be entirely consistent with a consulting firm in the private sector. Although the Organization will continue to look at more flexible ways of implementing its priority programmes, it is important to note that 67 percent may not be that far off the mark.

The representative of Japan also noted the need for transparency and suggested in that regard that the Organization should provide details of activities and how the budgetary figures for programmes are calculated. May I respectfully suggest that this would go against current trends in results-based management. In fact, the Council has a JIU report – the reference of that report is CL 128/INF/10 – which recommends that all UN organizations should go against that trend and instead focus on the use of resources – the outputs, the outcomes and expected achievements. This is the direction that FAO would propose to go in its Medium Term Plan and its Programme of Work and Budget.

The representative of Canada and Mexico mentioned that Member Nations already have trouble meeting assessments and that it is therefore not appropriate to increase assessments in the context of 2006/2007. I ask the Council, is FAO's situation of arrears worse than other UN technical assistance agencies? The answer I have is 'no'. Has this then been a reason for other organizations to not implement a Zero Real Growth budget, or indeed even a Real Growth budget? Apparently not. In fact, the ILO Conference only last week approved a Real Growth budget. A Real Growth budget that adjusts for inflation, that provides additional funds for security and additional funds for infrastructure needs. Of course, the Organization needs to find a balance, a balance between

the demands that are placed on the Organization, the demands that you have expressed in your discussions today and yesterday, and the capacity, on the other hand, of Members to pay.

Finally, there were some other matters, questions that were raised by distinguished representatives. The representative of Australia asked why protection was accorded to the Technical Cooperation Programme. That protection comes from Conference Resolution 9/89, which invited the Director-General to make every effort in order to restore the resources available to the TCP to the former level of 14 percent. This is the Resolution that the Director-General is guided by in making the top-down resource allocations on the budget.

The representative of China also asked for clarification on the Real Growth rate in paragraph 74 and the cost increases in paragraph 127. The Real Growth rate is real growth in resources. On top of the Real Growth increase that is mentioned at 2.4 percent and 2.5 percent for 2006/2007 would be the cost increases under Real Growth, which would amount to approximately 5.4 percent of the programme of work. In other words, under Real Growth the two percentages would be additive.

The representative of India made several comments with regard to the SPFS and South South Cooperation, on which we will provide more information in the full Programme of Work and Budget and also noted the need to revisit arrangements for trilateral projects. We have taken note of that the many other comments that have been made by Members.

The representative of Finland, on behalf of the Nordic countries, commented on the need for extrabudgetary resource forecasting, together with regular programme budgets. I would like to confirm that the Secretariat will provide additional information on extrabudgetary resource levels for 2006/2007 in the full Programme of Work and Budget despite the fact that, I might add, these projections are really very difficult to make because of the lead time that is needed for implementing extrabudgetary projects.

I apologize for having taken so much of your time at Council, but I did feel that the debate was very rich and deserved a comprehensive response from the Secretariat.

Ewald WERMUTH (Chairman of the Programme Committee)

At this late hour, some very brief and concise comments. Thank you for all your inputs to our discussion which we will have on the full Programme of Work and Budget in September, and in my capacity as Chairman of the Programme Committee I have listened very carefully to the views expressed by Members on the appropriate budget level. I noted that there are some Members who actually claimed that the ZNG level would be the appropriate level, others advocated the Real Growth scenario, whereas some Member Countries have not expressed at this stage of the planning process any view on the required level to respond to Membership needs.

Secondly, I have listened as well, very intensely, to the priorities expressed by the Membership of this Council. We will take those on board in our discussion on the substance on the full Programme of Work and Budget in our meeting in September.

The third observation I would like to make is that I feel there is widespread support of Council Members for the initiative to explore actually how to streamline FAO's programme and budget process, and secondly, how we can better align the Organization's planning exercises and budget decisions. We will take into account the many interesting ideas expressed in this debate.

Particularly, I have noted the importance attached by Members to maintaining and enhancing the programmatic link running from the Strategic Framework through the MTP and PWB; ensuring transparency and accountability in the planning documents; and learning from experiences of other UN agencies.

On the latter issue, the Secretariat promised to deliver a paper for consideration in our September meeting, and at this Chair I actually want to conclude my observations by promising this Council that we will give you proper advice, as Members of the Programme Committee, on the full Programme of Work and Budget for your consideration in November.

Roberto SEMINARIO PORTOCARRERO (Presidente del Comité de Finanzas)

Simplemente para agradecer a los distinguidos delegados por las ideas expuestas, sin duda nos servirán como un derrotero en los trabajos que realizamos en el Comité de Finanzas. Hemos tomado nota sobre el sentir de los señores delegados con respecto a las tres hipótesis. Sin duda el tema de ahorro por eficiencia sigue siendo un tema prioritario para los señores delegados, cosa que tomamos nota y lo llevamos también al Comité de Finanzas. El tema de Los Gastos por Seguridad, sin duda es otro tema que seguiremos muy de cerca en el Comité de Finanzas. Agradecemos a los señores delegados por todo lo expuesto.

Kenichi BESSHO (Japan)

I would like to ask the Secretariat to explain our questions regarding some figures and I would like to respond on each individual point, but it is rather late and I am not going to do that, but I would like the Secretariat to provide background information which can be the basis for your explanation concerning the figures.

CHAIRMAN

I believe that is noted. Any other calls for the floor then? Okay, thank you very much; we have concluded Agenda Item 12. We will recommence tomorrow morning at 9.30am.

The meeting rose at 19.15 hours

La séance est levée à 19 h 15

Se levanta la sesión a las 19.15 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Twenty-eighth Session Cent vingt-huitième session 128º período de sesiones
Rome, 20-24 June 2005 Rome, 20-24 juin 2005 Roma, 20-24 de junio de 2005
FIFTH PLENARY SESSION CINQUIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE QUINTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
22 June 2005

The Fifth Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.55 hours
Mr Aziz Mekouar,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding

La cinquième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 55
sous la présidence de M. Aziz Mekouar,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la quinta sesión plenaria a las 9.55 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Aziz Mekouar,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

III. PROGRAMME, BUDGETARY, FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (continued)

III. QUESTIONS RELATIVES AU PROGRAMME, AU BUDGET, AUX FINANCES ET À L'ADMINISTRATION (suite)

III. ASUNTOS DEL PROGRAMA Y ASUNTOS PRESUPUESTARIOS, FINANCIEROS Y ADMINISTRATIVOS (continuación)

14. Independent External Evaluation of FAO (CL 128/15)

14. Évaluation externe indépendante de la FAO (CL 128/15)

14. Evaluación Externa Independiente de la FAO (CL 128/15)

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je déclare donc ouverte la cinquième séance de la 128^{ème} session du Conseil.

Mesdames et Messieurs, nous allons examiner le point 14 de l'ordre du jour sur l'évaluation externe indépendante de la FAO. Le document pertinent porte la référence CL 128/15.

Durant la 127^{ème} session du Conseil, nous nous étions accordés sur la mise en œuvre d'une évaluation externe indépendante de la FAO et avons établi un Groupe de travail intersessions à cet effet, dont j'ai eu le plaisir de présider la première session en janvier dernier. Les Membres du Groupe de travail m'ont informés des progrès qui ont été faits depuis cette première réunion, en particulier, l'objectif commun d'un aboutissement constructif de l'évaluation externe.

J'ai également apprécié la réponse donnée à ma lettre de requête aux Membres de l'Organisation visant à encourager les contributions financières aux travaux du Groupe de travail intersessions. Néanmoins, les ressources ont été difficiles à réunir et une telle situation serait néfaste si elle se répétait pour l'évaluation même. Je laisse maintenant la parole à Son Excellence, Monsieur Flavio Maragaia Perri, Président du Groupe de travail, qui va nous informer sur les derniers progrès des travaux et nous présenter le rapport préliminaire du Groupe.

Flávio MIRAGAIA PERRI (Chairman, Inter-Sessional Working Group)

I thank you for your work with us and initiating the work of the Inter-Sessional Working Group (ISWG), and for convening our first session and giving it a very constructive start.

The ISWG process has been very thorough and inclusive. We have all had a process of learning and growing together for this very important and complex exercise on which we have embarked, an Independent External Evaluation for FAO. I think we have also learned much about what this Evaluation can achieve for the Organization and what it cannot. Therefore, our expectations for a very positive contribution to the Organization's future direction and our realism have grown. The ISWG Seminar we held was a particular positive process in drawing widely on members' views and informing ourselves.

The ISWG has now appointed two consultants with considerable evaluation experience to assist: Mr Horst Breier from Germany and Dunstan Spencer from Sierra Leone. As you can see from the Report, we intend, with their help, to complete our proposals for the Council on the terms of reference for the evaluators in September, followed shortly thereafter by the recommendations on the other two items of the ISWG mandate: the terms of reference for the Council Committee to oversee the evaluation process; and the proposals for the definition of an appropriate supporting role for the Secretariat. We do not consider that we can either thoroughly consider or entirely finalize our proposal in these last two areas until we have a precise view on the job to be done by the evaluation process and its modalities - that is to say, the terms of reference. As we have gone on with working with the ISWG, it has become clear that if the final evaluation report is to be ready for Conference in November 2007, the Council will need a comprehensive basis on which

to make final decisions in November of this year. The Evaluation itself will then need to begin to work in January 2006. The ISWG is concerned to provide the necessary level of precision to the Council on all of the items in its mandate, and is requesting the support of this Council to make initial arrangements, in order to facilitate the rapid and careful selection of evaluation modes and evaluators, once the Council decisions have been taken in November.

I now turn to a key area for conduct of evaluation and that is the availability of the resources to implement it. As decided by last November's Council, the Evaluation is to be funded entirely by extra-budgetary funds. Those funds need to be available, or at least, very firmly guaranteed at the start of the Evaluation. As all of you know, from your involvement in the work of the ISWG, following the appeal of the Chairman of the Council to Members to contribute financially to the work of the ISWG, Members have contributed generously, but resources have come in gradually and in an unpredictable way. In line with the task assigned to us by the Council, the ISWG will prepare a budget for the Evaluation after having finalized the three main tasks attributed to it. We may draw up a couple of alternatives based on the eventual funding level. However, I appeal to Members now to begin mobilizing funds.

In our report we have also asked the Director-General to open a multilateral Trust Fund so that funds can start to be received to conduct the Evaluation itself. Information on the availability of such funds would be of major assistance to the Council in determining the way ahead in November. In presenting this report, I would like to make a special reference to the support given by FAO's Secretariat, in particular the dedication and the intelligence of John Markie's work. I have the honoured duty to acknowledge the interest of the Director-General in our work. Last, but not least, I thank my fellow members in the ISWG for the work and the effort they have put in and the friendly, collegial atmosphere in which they have conducted our business. It has been a privilege to chair the ISWG on behalf of this Council.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je souhaiterais maintenant donner la parole au Président des Groupes régionaux, s'il souhaite prendre la parole.

Noel D. DE LUNA (Philippines)

On behalf of the Asia Region, we would like to take the occasion to congratulate Ambassador Perri for his tireless efforts in making the Working Group work hard in order to meet deadlines. We would also like to commend the Working Group and the Secretariat for working hard against all odds. We believe that, as a whole, the evaluation process has been member-driven and very transparent and we hope that it will continue that way. As a whole, also, we support the progress report in document CL 128/15 and approve paragraphs 13-16 as a way forward.

Ms Judy BARFIELD (Australia)

On behalf of the South West Pacific Group, Australia would like to make some brief comments on the Evaluation, from the perspective of being one of the two South West Regional Representatives on the Inter-Sessional Working Group, and the sole South West Representative on the Bureau.

I refer, in particular, to paragraph 7 of the Progress Report and wish to express that Australia fully supports the sentiments in this paragraph, that the task, the preparation of the IEE have been carried out in a positive and collaborative spirit. The strong sense of ownership of the process has been established among the members with the determination to work in an open and transparent manner. The ISWG is convinced that the attention being given to ensuring the Evaluation is designed in line with current best practice and its wide stakeholder support will be instrumental in ensuring that it makes a major contribution to ensuring the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of FAO's future service to Member Countries.

Australia would like to endorse the general approach flagged in the section of the paper entitled *Follow-up*, relating to the need to take up further preparatory work in order for early agreement for

the Terms of Reference, so the Evaluation can be initiated within a relatively short period after the Hundred and Twenty-ninth Session of the Council in November.

We look forward to continued collaborative working relations with the ISWG to enable the IEE to carry out its mandate. To demonstrate the commitment of the South West Pacific Group to the IEE, New Zealand provided US\$20 000 to the ISWG and Australia has now provided US\$50 000.

Helmy BEDEIR (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the Africa Group, I should like to express my appreciation and thanks to His Excellency, Ambassador Perri for his sound leadership of the Inter-Sessional Working Group. Despite all the hardships we have encountered and despite the fact that some of the members of the Working Group did lack some experience and expertise in the field, our work was comprehensive and deep.

I should like to pay tribute to the Secretariat of FAO for the role it played. The Evaluation Division, John Markie, did indeed contribute in a very valuable way. As for the Progress Report, document CL 128/15, I should like to refer to paragraph 15 in particular. I believe that this is a good document despite the short timeframe and the difficulties we have encountered. The most important aspect of this work is the positive spirit that prevailed. With regard to the Hundred and Twenty-seventh Council Session, we have a sense of ownership for this process. We have also witnessed this transparent way of work and this is valuable indeed. I have said this is work-in-progress. Hopefully, this ISWG will continue in its endeavours and hopefully it will reach an agreement concerning the Terms of Reference concerning the Committee to be entrusted with the task of supervising the Evaluation as well as the role of the Secretariat as a support role for this Secretariat. For the point raised by Mr Perri, namely the importance of mobilizing the necessary financial resources in order to achieve this work in the service of this Organization, hopefully this will be secured.

Tony P. HALL (United States of America)

We certainly want to join other delegations and welcome this most important report.

We wish to highlight the positive, collaborative spirit in which the ISWG has been carrying out its task under the great leadership of Ambassador Perri, we want to especially thank him and the hard work of his delegation.

The sense of partnership among Member Governments, the FAO Secretariat and other stakeholders has laid a good foundation for rapid progress in the months ahead. We need to ensure that the momentum of this process is maintained. The ISWG should work delightfully and purposely complete its mandate to produce draft Terms of Reference and proposals for oversight, and management of the evaluation, so that we can move forward rapidly with the IEE after the Council gives its final approval in November 2005.

We fully support the recommendations for action by this Council contained in this report before us today.

In the world of today's United Nations, reform is a process to which we are seeking to improve the manner these Organizations meet their mandates. The IEE is a fundamentally important reform effort. The fact that we as Member States have opened the discussion and are now expending great effort, to achieve the evaluation is evidence of the progressive attitude towards reform that we are taking within FAO.

This Organization is a good one, but we all know it can be better and it is our responsibility as Members to make it better. Most would agree that the status quo is unacceptable. To move forward we need to make far-reaching decisions that target the Organization's effective and viable programmes, while they identify those that are not. There is little sense in continuing to fund from the Organization's meagre resources every possible alternative, if that comes at the expense of programmes. We all want to succeed. The IEE, if we do it properly, will give us an objective and

independent set of findings that will assist us and the Governing Bodies to accept these types of challenges.

Adequate funding for the IEE will be essential in order to begin the IEE promptly. The sums required are relatively modest; we see this as an investment in the future of FAO. We recognize that some Government face tighter budgetary constraints than others, but also urge that all FAO Members consider making a pledge, no matter what the size, as an expression of solidarity with a commitment to this important endeavour. United States: we stand ready to play this part; we have already identified US\$250 thousand in the current fiscal year to support the work of the ISWG and the IEE. It is important for all members to begin planning now so that the necessary funds are available in January 2006.

In conclusion, we share the conviction expressed in the ISGW report that the attention that has been given to ensuring that the evaluation is designed in line with the current best practices and its wide stakeholders, support will be instrumental in assuring that the IEE will make a major contribution to enhance in the relevant efficiency and effectiveness of FAO.

Ms Lamy AL SAQQAF (Observer for Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

The Near East Group would like to thank Ambassador Perri for his work as Chairman of the ISWG. Our region believes that FAO is unique in its mandate and role. We believe that FAO is well placed to face the problems of globalization order to help developing countries. We believe that the Organization deserves our support and we have great faith in the Strategic Framework.

The Near East Group is a beneficiary of this Organization in relative terms and therefore, we believe that TCP impact and influence in development is one of the most important elements of our agenda. Thus, we believe that this Organization should be strengthened. We believe that every effort should be made in order to boost the budget of the IEE and full contribution should be made by all Member States.

Roberto SEMINARIO PORTOCARRERO (Perú)

Le pediría que diera la palabra a Costa Rica quien va a hablar sobre este tema en nombre del GRULAC.

Sra. Victoria GUARDIA DE HERNÁNDEZ (Observador de Costa Rica)

El GRULAC reitera su apoyo al proceso de evaluación externa independiente de la FAO, comprendiendo que esta Organización, como toda obra humana, es perfectible, es decir, que la forma como lleva su mandato a la realidad concreta es susceptible de continua optimización. Es propicia la ocasión para elogiar la tarea desplegada por el Grupo de Trabajo entre Períodos de Sesiones, los cuales han contado con la activa participación de los Estados Miembros bajo la hábil presidencia del Embajador Flávio Perri, Representante Permanente de Brasil.

Los objetivos de la FAO, resumidos en el preámbulo de la Constitución, continúan siendo válidos. Las razones que nos motivaron adoptarlos hace 60 años, y a ratificarlos una y otra vez en cónclaves del más alto nivel, siguen teniendo entera vigencia. Esto es así porque continuamos viviendo en un mundo donde no ha sido posible erradicar la pobreza, el hambre y la malnutrición, a pesar de los avances tecnológicos y la implementación exitosa de políticas nacionales orientadas a su eliminación.

En este contexto la FAO aportó una masa crítica de conocimiento y experiencia que dan dirección y sostenibilidad a los esfuerzos de cada país, en particular los menos desarrollados, en la consecución de sus metas de desarrollo económico y social. Como entidad multidisciplinaria, líder en su campo de acción, la FAO multiplica su capacidad de respuesta a las necesidades de todos los Estados Miembros, a través de actividades operativas y normativas.

El GRULAC entiende que la FAO es, y ha de seguir siendo, propiedad colectiva de sus Estados Miembros, abierta a todos, al servicio de todos, a las órdenes de todos, con todos y para el bien de todos, sin exclusiones ni privilegios. El GRULAC aspira que la FAO pueda evolucionar hacia una estructura simplificada y descentralizada, más eficiente y eficaz, estimulando la transparencia.

Esto incluye un mayor conocimiento por parte de los Estados Miembros del proceso de toma de decisiones al interno del Secretariado y una mejor comprensión de la evolución de las ideas hasta ser transformadas en políticas y acciones concretas.

Partiendo de estos principios, el GRULAC desea que el proceso de evaluación externa estudie como la FAO puede cumplir su mandato con mayor eficacia y con superior eficiencia. El proceso deberá encontrar las deficiencias, los obstáculos y las limitaciones que en el pasado han frenado, y hoy entorpecen, a la FAO, en el cumplimiento de las obligaciones que nosotros, sus Estados Miembros, le hemos encargado de ejecutar.

En otras palabras, el GRULAC ve este ejercicio evaluador en términos de balances y equilibrios que conduzcan a la armonía en todas las áreas de la FAO, incluyendo las relaciones de los Estados Miembros entre ellos y con el Secretariado. Para ello, es preciso encontrar proporciones adecuadas en cuanto a la conformación de los órganos rectores, con el objeto de hacerlos regionalmente más representativos y definir con mayor claridad sus funciones a la luz de su respectiva experiencia y de los cambios operados en la escena internacional durante estas seis décadas.

Es oportuno participar al Consejo que el GRULAC espera que la evaluación externa aborde cuatro áreas esenciales, realizando análisis en profundidad de primero, los programas incluyendo un equilibrio razonable entre actividades normativas y operacionales; segundo, las políticas, incluyendo la mejor forma de alcanzar sus objetivos; tercero, la estructura organizacional, incluyendo aspectos administrativos y de recursos humanos, y cuarto, un diagnóstico de sus finanzas, incluyendo el análisis de si el nivel presupuestario se corresponde con las exigencias que los Estados Miembros hemos colocado sobre la Organización. Este examen no deberá incluir sugerencias de recortes a programas o el establecimiento de comparaciones entre programas y recursos, labores que son tarea de los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas.

Antes de terminar, expresamos nuestra preocupación por la lentitud con que han fluido los recursos extrapresupuestarios, situación que nos hace temer por el proceso cuya integridad exige que las sumas necesarias para llevar a cabo la evaluación externa deberán estar disponibles en su totalidad antes de que sea concluida la redacción de los términos de referencia, esto es antes de que los mismos sean sometidos a la aprobación del 129º período de sesiones del Consejo.

Para concluir, el GRULAC reitera que trabaja en este proceso con seriedad y determinación y que continuará haciéndolo para que este ejercicio avance con pasos firmes en un espíritu de sana colaboración y concluye con una FAO más fuerte, más eficaz, más eficiente y mejor posicionada para continuar liderando la lucha contra el hambre y la pobreza en todo el planeta.

Ewald WERMUTH (Netherlands)

The Netherlands is speaking on behalf of the European Community and its 25 Member States. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, as well as the candidate countries Croatia and Turkey align themselves to this statement, as well as, Switzerland who associates itself with this statement.

We join others in complimenting Ambassador Perri and the Secretariat for the efforts they have put in the process. The EU welcomes the Progress Report of the Inter-Sessional Working Group (ISWG) for the Independent External Evaluation of the FAO.

It expresses its support to the proposals made in the report, including the preparation of an approach paper and the drafting of the Terms of Reference by the two appointed independent experts.

It expresses also its support to the parallel process of preparing two working papers by the Working Group on the Terms of Reference for the Committee to oversee the evaluation process, as well as the definition of the Secretariat's role, the timetable for the preparation, and the conduct of the Evaluation and the possible follow-up decisions by the Council.

To speed up the work of the ISWG, the EU would like to suggest to the Bureau to establish two Working Groups, one for the Terms of Reference for the Evaluation Committee and the other for the elaboration on the role of the Secretariat. These groups will work parallel to the experts preparing the approach paper and drafting the Terms of Reference for the evaluation.

The EU appreciates the positive collaborative atmosphere in which the Working Group has carried out the tasks for the preparation of the Independent External Evaluation. The prerequisite for the confidence and good spirit is the open way the work has been conducted in the ISWG and we think future work must build on this confidence and guarantee the transparency of the process in order to achieve the outcome of the evaluation, which will be approved by all Member States. Although the basis has been laid for a comprehensive analytical and evidence-based evaluation, the European Union regrets that the final proposals of the Inter-Sessional Working Group could not be ready for the June Council. The ISWG should finalize its work and the final report should be forwarded to the Hundred and Twenty-ninth Council in November.

To make full use of experiences, the European Union will make available to the Evaluation Committee relevant evaluations and assessments of FAO policies and programmes undertaken by the European Union Member States and the European Commission.

The EU has expressed its support in earlier stages and will contribute actively to the Independent External Evaluation process, as agreed upon by the Hundred and Twenty-Seventh Council. The EU stands ready to engage in an open discussion with other regions and with the Secretariat during the next steps of the evaluation process. In order to keep up progress, we would like to see the proposals for the Terms of Reference for a Committee to oversee the evaluation process and for the Independent Evaluation of the FAO itself and the definition of the role of the Secretariat ready for approval by the Council in November. All the main tasks of the ISWG should then be reported at the same time, in order to allow the proposals to be considered and discussed in relation to each other, as a whole.

Flávio MIRAGAIA PERRI (Chairman, Inter-Sessional Working Group)

First of all, I would like to thank the entire membership who participated in the Inter-sessional Working Group and I would like, in particular, to thank representatives from Regional Groups for their kind words. I must say that we are now going on with the process in the same spirit as we started it. The point is that understanding and transparency are very important aspects of our work and that is the way I understand that we should continue to do it.

As for the continuation of our work, I would say that we will strive to have all the papers and all the documents ready for September. At the end of September we should consider every paper and every aspect of our mandate in their entirety and allow for this comparison and for this work of detailing the whole as a coherent process.

As for the timetable of our work, we are going to have a period of consultations between the two experts and the Membership. We will have it by 30 June and we hope that after five or six days' of work they will be ready to present a first and very preliminary draft of the approach paper. After having done that it is quite possible that we could have a first English version of the paper ready for consideration informally by our Membership. I do feel that we have to start reading, understanding and criticizing the paper, the first preliminary paper, on the draft approach as soon as possible. Therefore, on 8 July I hope we will have the Membership ready to consider freely the first draft - the first preliminary draft, but we will not have time to have it in all languages and that is something we have to understand, but it is not a formal session we are envisaging. We are envisaging only an informal occasion to exchange views with the experts, would allow them to finish with this draft approach paper by 20-25 July. When everything will be translated, the papers will be distributed. In August delegations will have the opportunity to consult with their governments and then in early September we will start the decision-making final process of this Inter-sessional Working Group.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Il me semble maintenant que nous avons conclu nos travaux sur le point 14. Je vous remercie Monsieur l'Ambassadeur Perri pour tout le travail que vous avez effectué ainsi que les membres du Groupe et je pense que les travaux de ce Groupe sont en train d'évoluer comme nous le souhaitions et qu'au mois de novembre nous pourrions adopter les Résolutions de ce Groupe.

Je vais passer la présidence à Monsieur le Représentant du Guatemala pour continuer nos travaux.

Ricardo Santa Cruz Rubi, Representative of Guatemala, took the Chair

Ricardo Santa Cruz Rubi, Représentant de Guatemala, assume la présidence

Ocupa la presidencia Ricardo Santa Cruz Rubí, Representante de Guatemala

EL PRESIDENTE

Vamos a proceder con el Tema 5 de nuestra agenda que corresponde al Informe del 65^o período de sesiones del Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos que se ha llevado a cabo en Roma del 11 al 13 de abril 2005 y el documento de referencia 128/6 es el que corresponde a este tema. Concedo la palabra al Presidente del Comité, Sr. Heiner Thofern, quien presentará el informe. Posteriormente el Sr. de Haen, Subdirector General del Departamento de Política Económica y Social, hablará sobre el tema.

II. ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP (continued)

II. ACTIVITÉS DE LA FAO ET DU PAM (suite)

II. ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y EL PMA continuación)

5. Report of the 65th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems (Rome, 11-13 April 2005) (CL 128/6)

5. Rapport de la soixante-cinquième session du Comité des produits (Rome, 11-13 avril 2005) (CL 128/6)

5. Informe del 65^o período de sesiones del Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos (Roma, 11-13 de abril de 2005) (CL 128/6)

Heiner THOFEN (Chairman, Committee on Commodity Problems)

The main focus of the Sixty-fifth Session of the CCP held in April 2004 was on core issues of the Committee's mandate. That is to say, agricultural committee market developments and related policy issues.

While I do not intend to go into the details of the Committee's deliberations and details of the Report, I will confine my report to highlighting those methods that, according to the Committee's views, require the attention of the Council.

To begin with, I would like to draw your attention to the Committee's review of the state of world agriculture commodity markets and the fact that it welcomed the new flagship publication entitled *The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets*. In this context the Committee supported the Secretariat's work on monitoring commodity market developments, including market structure issues.

The Committee further considered the new analytical approaches and methodologies being developed by the Secretariat for the analysis of the impacts of agricultural policy reform.

Here the Committee supported further development of the Commodity Simulation Model (COSIMO) modelling framework and the Agricultural Policy Indicators (API). More specifically, the Committee in this regard encouraged further inter-agency collaboration on the part of the Secretariat in relation to the development of these new analytical tools.

On agricultural trade reform the Committee called for further developing country case study-based research on agricultural trade policy reform and food security, including *inter alia*

consideration of trade and competition issues; institutional aspects and the role of the private sector.

On commodity risk management the Committee supported the respective work of the Secretariat in collaboration with the World Bank's International Task Force on this subject.

Further, the Committee discussed international food aid and the role of the Consultative Sub-committee on Surplus Disposal (CSSD) in the context of ongoing international negotiations. The Committee supported the continuation of the Secretariat's analytical work on food aid and in this context the Committee requested the Secretariat to signal the current role of the CSSD to the World Trade Organization (WTO) members and its preparedness to be at the service of the WTO, if so required in the future.

The Committee endorsed the reports of the Intergovernmental Groups for the various commodities and approved the proposal for an International Year of Natural Fibres.

Moreover, the Committee recommended that concerned international agencies should cooperate in analyzing the efficiency and effectiveness of international commodity institutions. In this regard the Committee recognized the resource constraints faced by the Secretariat in supporting formulation and supervision of commodity development projects funded by the Common Fund of Commodities and acknowledged the need for adequate compensation for these activities.

Hartwig de HAEN (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Department)

There is really not much that I need to say. There is only one point regarding the signal that was mentioned by Mr Thoern to be sent by the Secretariat, that is, by FAO, to WTO regarding the work of the Sub-committee on Surplus Disposal. This signal has been sent and the WTO has reacted that they have noted the Committee's availability, as was indicated in that so-called signal.

Saud AL BADDAI (Oman) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the Near East Group I would like to say how much we appreciate the efforts that have been made to produce this document on the Committee on Commodity Problems. We do have some comments on it.

First of all, our Group very much welcomes the efforts that have been made to study the changes in the market and the possibilities of developing and extending our cooperation with a number of international organizations with a view to having more exchange of information on commodities. We also think that the Organization's efforts are to be commended, particularly as regards the production of this document and the situation of markets and commodities in the world.

There is the question of customs tariffs and the way that they impact developing countries which we think is particularly key. Our Group believes that agricultural development is extremely important for people who live on the land and what was adopted in Doha has a great bearing on developing countries. I think there is a need to have a global analysis of all problems connected to commodities so that we can consider how best to lower prices for these products.

Our Group supports the results adopted by the Group. Particularly if we think about infrastructure and the institutions that the agricultural sector has to work with. We have to consider the stability of agricultural prices because this has a real bearing on production. We have to develop some rural and agricultural development strategies which are market-based, bearing firmly in mind the needs of developing countries all the while. We have particularly to think about local financing options and simplification of regulations, the improvement of infrastructure and everything which can improve agricultural production in rural areas. There has to be continuous cooperation between FAO and the World Bank and institutions that deal with risk and commodities.

Our Group emphasizes the role that food aid plays because this is essential in the case of natural catastrophies and emergencies. The role of FAO is extremely important and it will be important in implementing the Marrakech Resolution adopted by the World Trade Organization – all of this in a bid to improve the quantity and quality of food aid.

We have to emphasize the importance of all activities carried out in the health sector and the sanitary and phytosanitary sector, particularly considering everything that has been done about pesticides and other connected measures.

Richard J. HUGHES (United States of America)

The Committee on Commodity Problems is charged with reviewing and reporting on the world commodity situation and submitting suggestions to this Council on policy issues arising out of its deliberations.

In fulfilling its review and reporting functions the Committee confirms that the long term decline in real agricultural commodity prices continues. Considering the very real dislocation and hardships resulting from this trend, the Committee's mandate to improve suggestions on policy issues needs to be taken seriously and the Council should respond appropriately.

The structural changes affecting agricultural commodity markets virtually assures that the commodity price level observed 40 years ago will not return on a sustainable basis. However, FAO's new publication, *The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets*, demonstrates that the factors driving these structural changes are also creating new opportunities for agricultural sectors in developing countries. Agricultural productivity has increased, markets for value-added products are growing and rising incomes in developing countries are fuelling demand.

The challenge for FAO, and for this Council, is to determine how to most effectively deploy FAO's resources and expertise to help Members realise the benefits from these opportunities. We note with satisfaction that both reports, the Committee on Commodity Problems and *The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets* encourage the elimination of trade-distorting barriers and subsidies as a priority in responding to the difficult circumstances facing commodity-dependent economies.

To facilitate the process of global agricultural trade policy reform, FAO should continue to provide independent policy analysis and advice, particularly on issues central to the negotiation and implementation of the Doha Development Agenda in the WTO.

The Report of the Committee provides a concise list of matters requiring the attention of Council. Priority attention should be given to those matters and activities that support agricultural trade policy reforms. The new publication, *The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets*, is a valuable tool for communicating with Members and other interested parties on trends, analysis and policy issues related to commodity market development.

The development of the Commodity Simulation Model (COSIMO) and the Agricultural Policy Indicators (API), in conjunction with the case studies on trade policy reform, are useful contributions to the global effort to improve food security through agricultural trade liberalization. FAO should continue to play a leading role in providing analysis on food aid issues.

FAO's analytical expertise and independence are unmatched in any other multi-lateral forum. In addition, reforms should be considered for the Consultative Sub-committee on Surplus Disposal in order to approve its operational effectiveness and ensure that it is fully capable of fulfilling the oversight role which is properly within the mandate given to it by this Organization.

Finally, I would like to address briefly several procedural issues for the Committee on Commodity Problems.

The first of these is the meeting format. The new shorter format back-to-back with the Committee on Agriculture worked very well. We would favour this new format over a return to the previous one.

The second procedural issue concerns intersessional activities. The regular meetings of the Committee, no matter how well organized and executed, cannot sustain the rate of progress needed on the serious issues before it without substantial work being undertaken in other formats. We encourage Richard J. HUGHES (USA) FAO to maintain an ongoing dialogue with Members on the issues raised at the 65th Session, particularly the issue of Trade Policy Reform and Food

Security, and not wait for the next session to continue this discussion. We encourage the Secretariat to add these issues to the agendas of FAO Regional Conferences in 2006. In addition, we would also welcome efforts to develop a more focused dialogue between FAO and Members on these issues, particularly in the form of seminars, side events and other low-cost meeting formats.

The third procedural issue concerns the relationship between the Committee on Commodity Problems and the Committee on Agriculture. We note the substantial overlap between the issues being considered by both Committees. This overlap is consistent with the new challenges facing agriculture in the 21st century.

Many of the same factors affecting commodity markets, integration of markets, trade distorting agricultural policies, environmental resource constraints also affect the agriculture sector more generally. Many of the policy responses are also the same, whether we are considering commodity markets or broader agricultural sectors. Therefore, we think there is merit in more closely integrating and perhaps combining the two Committees.

We look forward to the Secretariat's report on this question to the Joint Programme and Finance Committees in September.

Ms Radha SINGH (India)

We commend the Committee on its in-depth deliberations and the Secretariat for the comprehensive background documentation. The format of the meeting varied from the past in focusing squarely on the core issues of agricultural commodity market developments and related policies.

It is a matter of concern for all of us that agricultural commodity prices have, in general, continued their long-term downward trend, coupled with price variability in recent years. The implications for developing countries have been indeed very serious, both for those relying on commodity exports and those who depend on food imports.

Ensuring food security of populations across the world and attaining the Millennium Development Goals are priorities for all of us in this gathering. As the large majority of food insecure people depend on agriculture for their livelihood, their evolution of agricultural trade and commodity markets is indeed a critical issue. While food security of citizens is primarily the responsibility of national governments, we must endeavour to ensure that policies that distort trade in markets, especially those that have a negative impact on the poor, such as domestic support for production and export subsidy by the richer countries, are levelled. Besides, there are non-tariff trade barriers which developing countries are finding difficult to overcome, with goal posts being shifted every now and then hurting again the poorer countries.

FAO has played a useful role in monitoring, analysing and disseminating information on the global agricultural market. The commodity simulation model developed with the collaboration of OECD is a very useful instrument. Wide ranging consultations with developing countries must, however, be ensured in collection, monitoring and analysis of data. Validation workshops and dissemination at the country level should also be ensured.

On the issue of trade policy reform and food security, it is evident that they tend to increase productivity and must be accompanied by expansion of rural non-farm employment. The major obstacle of weak, rural and agricultural infrastructure must also be overcome.

We in India have undertaken a major effort to encourage capital formation in agriculture and build coherent linkages all along the supply chain. We have also launched radical market reforms to dismantle barriers and facilitate trade. These are beginning to show results already. The impact of food aid on the international market is a complicated issue. We feel that this must be dealt with by the WTO, and FAO may provide inputs, if required.

In general, we believe that food aid should be demand, rather than supply driven, responding to the needs of recipients, rather than to the availability of surpluses of donor countries. We also

believe that it has been amply demonstrated that food aid cannot substitute for long-term sustainable development.

Once again, I commend the work of the Committee on Commodity Problems. We feel that these important aspects of FAO's work need to be strengthened, if necessary through enhanced budget support and other extensional support.

Young-gu LEE (Republic of Korea)

I would like to begin with expressing my sincere appreciation to the Secretariat for providing this excellent report. Before endorsing the report which accurately reflects the results of the meeting, I would just like to emphasize two points.

First, we welcome the two new work programmes, the Commodity Simulations Model (COSIMO) modelling framework and Agricultural Policy Indicators (API). However, there is concern about duplication of the work of other organizations. In this context, we call on the Secretariat to extend its collaboration with other international agencies, such as OECD and the World Bank, and also with developing countries' institutions, to minimize duplication and to use collective expertise.

Finally, regarding the back-to-back meeting arrangements for the Committee on Commodity Problems and the Committee on Agriculture in the last session. We believe it was very positive and fruitful, considering the efficiency savings achieved, both for the Secretariats and the Member Countries. We hope this kind of work will be continued in FAO.

Noel D. DE LUNA (Philippines)

The Philippines would like to express its endorsement of the Report of the 65th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems. We would also like to highlight that we are likewise endorsing the proposal contained in paragraph 36 of the Report of the Intergovernmental Groups on Hard Fibres and on Jute, Kenaf and Allied Fibres to Organize an International Year of Natural Fibres. We hope that an appropriate resolution can be drafted for the 33rd FAO Conference. We agree with the report's conclusion that it would raise the profile of all natural fibres and their positive contribution in terms of environmental benefits and, through income generation, improved food security in developing countries.

We would also like to take this occasion to compliment once again the Secretariat for its new publication, the *State of Agricultural Commodity Markets*. We find this publication very useful for our policy analysis. Hopefully, in the future when the Secretariat would have refined its two new work programmes, the Commodities Simulation Model (COSIMO) modelling framework and Agricultural Policy Indicators (API), we would have a better understanding of the impact of trade distortions on both net-food exporters and net-food importers as well as analysing the impact of trade liberalization within a WTO rules-based framework.

As a developing country, we look forward to FAO's analysis of agricultural trade as an aid in our negotiations in other international fora, especially in the ongoing WTO negotiations.

Ms Judy BARFIELD (Australia)

Australia appreciates and supports the information-gathering and analytical work of the Secretariat in the area of examining commodity trade issues affecting developing countries presented at the 65th Session of the CCP.

The flagship publications *State of Agricultural Commodity Markets* emphasized the long-term downward trend in real prices and a high level of price variability to which protective policies have contributed. The link was made to aggravation of poverty. Market based responses are the only appropriate responses and the Doha Development Agenda will play a significant role in addressing the problem.

Australia also supports the collaborative work with OECD on the new COSIMO model which will improve FAO's capacity to assess existing and proposed policies for developing countries.

The Agricultural Policy Indicators' work with OECD, the World Bank and IFPRI should help to understand better how agricultural and related economy-wide policies are affecting food security, poverty reduction, agricultural growth and rural development in developing countries. Capacity building is critical to the relevance of all agricultural trade related work of FAO.

In relation to the document *Food Security in the Context of Economic and Trade Policy Reforms*, we support the Committee's recommendations for further developing country case studies on agricultural trade policy reform and food security. The paper includes a good, although brief, review of many of the economic and trade policy issues associated with the decoupling of domestic support programmes.

We would agree that the jury is still out on the extent of actual decoupling or delinking of support from production that has occurred in some of the domestic support programmes provided by the larger developed countries. Nevertheless, we would fully support the sentiment expressed in the paper, and we should in the first instance be sceptical of the decoupling effects of policies that involve very large and ongoing transfers of support to producers.

With regard to proposals for a working group to consider the future nature and roles of the Consultative Subcommittee on Surplus Disposal, (CSSD), Australia's view is that any proposed changes to the CSSD cannot at this time be addressed in isolation, nor the outcomes of the WTO negotiations be pre-empted or predicted. It would be prudent to wait for the new disciplines of the WTO to be determined before making any changes to the role, functions and responsibility of the CSSD as these may only have to be reworked at the conclusion of the WTO round.

Australia wants to maximize the provision of effective food aid to genuinely needy recipients, whilst also maximising the opportunities for development for recipient countries and avoiding trade distortion or commercial displacement.

Australia provides food aid in fully grant form as either an in-kind donation of Australian grain where this is cost effective, or cash for local purchase to operations conducted by the World Food Programme.

At the same time, Australia is very supportive of efforts to improve WTO disciplines on the misuse of food aid. For the first time the Doha Round provides an opportunity to eliminate production and trade distortion forms of support provided to farmers in major developed countries, namely, export subsidies. As part of the WTO July Framework Agreement, Members have agreed to eliminate all forms of subsidy in parallel, including export subsidies, subsidised export credits, subsidies provided to or by state trading enterprises and food aid that is commercially motivated and trade distorting. These are all interlinked and the disciplines need to be developed in a coherent way in order to be effective.

Suthiporn CHIRAPANDA (Thailand)

Thailand endorses the Report of the 65th Session of the CCP and would like to share with the Members of the Council some of our experiences dealing with commodity problems.

In recent years, there were a number of important developments in Thailand: the upsurge in oil prices, the failure of multilateral trade negotiations and the imbalances between demand for and supply of several agricultural commodities. This has led us to adopt a number of strategies to deal with the situation.

We have embarked on a programme to increase the production of certain agricultural commodities to replace part of fossil fuels and diesel imported into the country. Oil import now accounts for 10 percent of the total import bill and in the past few months, the overall trade balance is in deficit, something which has not occurred in recent years. Cassava is now used in producing ethanol, and oil palm will replace old, less productive rubber trees and will be planted in potential new areas in the northeastern part of the country.

Thailand has entered a free-trade arrangement with a number of countries and groups of countries,; we have also undertaken a number of agriculture restructuring measures which help

cushion the effects of increased agricultural imports from the trading partners. As a consequence, some farmers will have to change their production plan and to produce other crops which offer better potential. Others will have to improve and strengthen their productive efficiency in order to be on par with their counterpart overseas.

In fruit production, Thailand has witnessed an expansion in the supply of certain commodities, such as longans and rambutans. Instead of reducing production by controlling land planted, efforts have been put to increase consumer demand both in the country and in the export market. Processed fruit and fruit products can add value to the growers and processors in the supply chain.

In 2002, the Government introduced a major bureaucratic reform to the country. For the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, a new agency called the Office of Agricultural Commodity and Food Standards was set up. The reform at the moment is continuing, and the major thrust is the focus on the people on the receiving end. In recognition of the need for supply chain management and food safety among the final consumers, the Ministry will pay greater attention to food and, as a result, the name will be changed to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food later this year.

Ms Ruth OKWELE (Uganda)

Uganda also expresses appreciation to the Secretariat for a report well articulated.

Agriculture commodity markets' failure still poses a big challenge especially for developing countries. These failures in turn continue to cripple any efforts towards sustainable, social and economic development. Major impediments include stringent restrictions to market access which has been commented upon by the delegate from the United States, dumping of subsidized food on the world market. In endorsing the proposals raised by the Committee on Commodity problems in CL 128/6, Uganda recommends that special attention be paid to the following concerns.

Firstly, the state of world agricultural commodity markets. It will be impossible to overcome the challenges of commodity problems if developed countries do not undertake initiatives that minimize the impact of commodity price availability. A compulsory mechanism should be considered for developing countries that suffer serious losses of export revenue due to price variability.

We also join India in stating that tariff escalation and other barriers on processed products from developing countries are a serious impediment that requires to be seriously addressed.

Secondly, to national and international commodity market risk management, all forms of capacity building should be enhanced for developing countries to adequately address commodity risks.

Thirdly, international negotiations concerning food aid. We support India that food aid should be demand driven. All forms of food aid should take into consideration social, economic and cultural values of recipient countries and communities. It should not distort local markets of food commodities in the recipient countries and food aid should have a strong element of building capacity of the recipient countries to handle future emergencies as one of the strategies.

Fourth, scarcity of funds for the Common Fund for Commodities. The activities of CFC are critical for poor countries and therefore should be allocated some minimal budget to operate efficiently.

Finally, Uganda supports the integrating of the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Commodity Problems.

Ms Maryse COUTSOURADIS (European Community)

I welcome this opportunity to speak on behalf of the European Community and its 25 Member States. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania as well as the candidate countries Croatia and Turkey align themselves to this statement.

Referring to document 128/6, the European Community and its Member States can endorse the report from the Sixty-fifth Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems. Therefore, we can refrain from repeating our all comments made at the said Committee which are still valid.

However, I would like to refer to the views expressed by some delegations concerning the Consultative Subcommittee on Surplus Disposal. On this matter, I would like to recall that the report of the CCP had expressed a balanced view on these matters and we would like the Council to make this balanced approach in endorsing the report of the CCP.

Indeed and as already stated by Australia, as far as the role of the CSSD is concerned I would like to recall that it was agreed by the majority of members at the CCP that the future nature and role of the CSSD could not be determined in advance of the outcome of current negotiations in the WTO and that any discussion on reform of the CSSD was premature.

Finally, the EU supports the efforts made regarding the organization of the Sixty-fifth Session including its back-to-back arrangement with the Committee on Agriculture (COAG). The EU considers that there may be some scope for integrating the work of the CCP and COAG.

José A. QUINTERO (Cuba)

Nuestra delegación agradece a la Secretaría por el documento que nos presenta y, en general, apoya las recomendaciones presentadas en el mismo.

Sobre el documento tenemos los siguientes comentarios: aceptamos la nueva forma de presentación del informe, el estado de los mercados de productos básicos agrícolas; destacamos que el estudio del mercado de productos básicos es un aspecto de gran importancia que debe continuar teniendo la mayor atención de la FAO, si se tiene en cuenta que más de 50 países en desarrollo perciben entre el 20 y el 90 por ciento de sus ingresos en divisas de la exportación de tres o menos productos básicos agrícolas. Apoyamos que la Secretaría continúe dándole un seguimiento y evaluación continua a estos mercados, y dada la importancia del tema recomendamos que la FAO tenga una participación más significativa en las negociaciones internacionales comerciales. Mostramos nuestra preocupación por la evolución que mantienen los precios de los productos básicos agrícolas, los cuales a largo plazo muestran una tendencia decreciente produciendo una influencia adversa en la economía de los países en desarrollo que son exportadores de estos productos. El comercio internacional es una de las vías para acceder al desarrollo; sin embargo, mientras existan estas tendencias en los precios de estos productos no podrá garantizarse que los países en desarrollo obtengan los recursos financieros necesarios para un crecimiento y desarrollo económico sostenido. Consideramos necesario que las negociaciones comerciales internacionales aborden con voluntad política los temas referidos a los obstáculos presentes en el comercio internacional, fundamentalmente los vinculados al alto nivel de protección agrícola, las crecientes ayudas internas y la progresividad arancelaria, las medidas proteccionistas arancelarias y no arancelarias de los países desarrollados, y las políticas que provocan la acumulación de excedentes distorsionan los mercados internacionales agravando aún más los problemas de inserción internacional de los países en desarrollo. Ratificamos que la ayuda alimentaria debe suministrarse en forma de donaciones y no debe utilizarse como instrumento de promoción en el mercado para desplazar las operaciones comerciales y la producción local. Del mismo modo, consideramos que deben priorizarse las adquisiciones en los mercados locales, lo que permite que la ayuda alimentaria cumpla un doble objetivo: enfrentar la crisis alimentaria y contribuir al desarrollo de actividades de producción de alimento en los países que la reciben.

Mohammed Ismail QURESHI (Pakistan)

Pakistan appreciates the value and the timeliness of the report of the Committee on Commodity Problems.

The price of agriculture commodities have gone down, which entails a decrease in the income of farmers, however, hunger and poverty persists. The solution lies in the removal of distortions in agriculture policy and liberalization of trade. Studies of development policies in developed countries OECD and the modelling for the developed paying countries should be made thorough and analytical. Findings and conclusions should be clear, items 17-20 of the Sixty-fifth Session of the Committee of Commodities do not seem very conclusive.

Cash assistance instead of food aid is less distortionary. This fact may be highlighted in the report. Less developed countries, the infrastructure for movement and storage of food, issues of sanitary and phytosanitary, regulations and pesticide residues are more important for such countries instead of some minor issues discussed in the Committee report.

The Committee had noted that the long-term decline in real commodity prices which would be altered only by market-based changes in the balance between supply and demand. This argument we find partial as there are other factors affecting price variability.

The COSIMO model is important and its results should be known as Pakistan is included as a model. A detailed report of this model is requested.

Pakistan does not support suggestions that developing countries are not working for elimination of export subsidies phasing out domestic support reduction in tariffs by the developed countries. However, Pakistan suggests that the following may be considered for implementation: greater attention to tariff escalation and non-tariff values as well as other barriers to market entry which may enable trade expansion and development, particularly for developing countries; linking trade policy and investments more closely and identifying revenue laws and financing needs for different trade policy approaches to rural development.

Pakistan suggests that concerted efforts are required towards aiding farmers, farmers' associations, boosting productivity and meeting international standards. This is a way of increasing accessibility to international markets and managing risk. The Committee had asked the Secretariat to send a signal to WTO members with respect to the role of the Consultative Subcommittee on Surplus Disposal (CSSD) in monitoring international food aid flows, an indication, that it could be a service of WTO. Pakistan supports this proposal.

Pakistan, also proposed that there is a need for periodic updating of the commodities strategies to provide guidance for international action.

Pakistan fully supports the proposal of holding International Year of Natural Fibres for the Council. It may however be unsound that cotton is included in the list of natural fibres.

We are of the view that the Commodity Problems can not be seen in isolation. There is a need to link commodities to the entire value chain as there are serious impediments both in terms of tariff escalation and non tariff areas.

It is also desirable to examine the role and impact of the processors and the marketers on the price level of the commodities. As the role of the public sector state trading enterprises is under discussion in the current negotiation on agriculture, Pakistan suggests that the Committee may also look at the role of the private multinationals and help build disciplines and criteria in conjunction with WTO so that the due benefit to the farmers is insured and distortions removed.

Manabu YASUHARA (Japan)

We are pleased to express that we would like to support the report of the Sixty-fifth Session of the Committee on Commodity Programmes which reflects and summarizes the results of discussions of the Committee.

We would not like to open the discussion again here but we would like to mention some issues.

Firstly, Japan has been advocating the importance of coexistence of various types of agriculture, since various types of agriculture exist on the globe. From this point of view, we believe that the impact of the international agriculture trade policy toward reform is not identical to each country.

Secondly, reading the new publication, "The State of Commodity Market", we would like the Secretariat to take into account the impact. and the importance of the communication before publishing such an important publication.

Finally, let me touch upon the proposal made by the European Union regarding alternative arrangements for the Committee on Commodity Programmes and the Committee on Agriculture. I

recognize that the proposal was made in a timely fashion in conjunction with the discussion regarding prioritization and streamlining of the Organizations tasks.

In terms of efficient and effective administration of the fora inside the Organization, my delegation is pleased to endorse this proposal, on the condition that some of the functions of the fora will be accommodated by those of the latter if necessary.

I also add that this arrangement does not have to wait for necessary official amendment of relevant rules of the Organization but should be immediately initiated as a matter of practice.

Ms Amal PEPPLE (Nigeria)

My delegation commended the efforts of the Committee for its in-depth work on world commodity agricultural problems. On the long-term decline in real commodity prices, the Committee observed that this would be altered only by market-based changes in the balance between supply and demand. That is, provided there is a level playing field, provided the doctrine of market liberalization is allowed to work, and the problem of trade and market distorted policies, as mentioned in paragraph 8 of the Report, are addressed.

On policy of development affecting agricultural commodity markets and trade, my delegation is disappointed that there appears to be nothing in paragraphs 11-16 that really addresses the impact of OECD agricultural trade policies in developing countries, which is the main part of section 3A. My delegation lends its strong support to the substance of paragraphs 17-23, on trade policy reform and food security, especially paragraphs 19-22. My delegation also welcomes the section on national and international commodity market risk management, but would want to subscribe more specifically to the view that concerted efforts be directed towards aiding farmers' associations in boosting productivity and meeting international standards as a way of increasing accessibility to international markets and managing risks.

On international negotiations concerning food aid, my delegation associates itself with the concern expressed by some of the Committee Members on the likelihood of some unintended effects of food aid, such as the perpetuation of dependency on external assistance, that such aid could encourage. It is clear that food aid can only be temporary relief, aside from its negative effects on local markets and domestic producers. The sustainable solution would be the extended development assistance which goes beyond immediate emergency relief.

In conclusion and in line with the Committee's suggestion on inter-agency collaboration, my delegation agrees that there is some room for integrating the work of the CCP with that of COAG as already suggested by previous speakers and would want the prospect explored formally by the Programme and Finance Committees.

Sudayranto TAHLIM (Indonesia)

Our delegation also has two things to report on the state of the world of agricultural commodity market, including the allowance of the new publication. We encourage FAO to continue its report on analysing market developments and to make all documents available to all Member Countries.

With regard to commodity market modellings we note the importance to link with other organizations, such as the World Bank and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), which conducts much work in the same area.

Considering the existence of trade-distorting policies on some commodities, we encourage FAO to continue its work on the impact of such policies and make necessary recommendations to take care of the problems. In this regard, we request that developing countries are given flexibility in formulating their own policies best suited to their own coalitions.

Lastly, Indonesia supports the proposal for an International Year of Natural Fibres.

Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

During the last session of the Committee on Commodity Problems, State Members had the opportunity to evaluate the state of world agricultural commodity markets. It was noted that

international real prices of the agricultural commodities have remained at historical low levels and that in the longer term, this trend continues. The tendency posed continuous problems for developing countries whose economies depend in various degrees on agriculture. The situation is still worse for those reliant upon few agricultural commodities for a significant share of their exports.

Brazil agrees that the economical impacts on developing countries are considerable, deserving a precise, impartial analysis. According to its constitution, FAO has a specific mandate to conduct studies on this process. The reasons that explain that downward trend may depend on different elements. As affirmed in FAO's *State of Agricultural Commodity Markets 2004*, technological progress, for instance, is one aspect. While new technologies increase activity in the rural world, the provision of agricultural goods tends to grow in volume and quality. It is a positive trend, however, to be followed with the greatest care for its effects on the market.

A strategic and fundamental aspect of commodity's price levels regards trade conditions. Unfair agricultural policies still cause trade distortions making access to global markets more difficult, decreasing international prices and obstructing social-economic progress. In the context of the Doha Round, agriculture is recognized as vital for all developing countries and central to the Doha Development Agenda. A fair and market oriented agricultural trade is an essential instrument to allow for the levelling of the playing field, and can be seen as an effective instrument for developing countries on the grounds of their comparative advantage to overcome poverty.

At the CCP Session my delegation also expressed its view on the important role played by FAO's communication policy. The Brazilian delegation acknowledged FAO's efforts to produce studies on agriculture and trade issues, based on common guidance defined by the Organization's Governing Bodies. Its highly specialized staff produced projects, analysis and information, destined to help all Member Nations to implement national policies and advance international actions, to promote food security and overcome poverty and hunger.

The Secretariat has recently launched a new document: *FAO and the Challenge of the Millennium Development Goal: The Road Ahead*. The document highlights FAO activities and its contribution to the achievements of the MDGs. Special reference is made in the document to FAO's role as a knowledge organization. Brazil duly acknowledges and supports the technical authority of the Organization. FAO's studies may constitute a great technical asset, altogether their political thrust however, pertain to State Members. The subject of the MDGs is too important to be left to a debate lasting a few minutes. Brazil has provided to the Director-General an initial reaction to the Report *FAO and the Challenge of the Millennium Development Goal- The Road Ahead*. In our written comments we remark on the necessary relation between multilateralism and the concept of FAO as a knowledge-based organization, which is only useful if its results are applied equally to all Member States in every nation. This idea of the knowledge-based organization needs further development so that the Secretariat's initial effort may be placed on the proper context of FAO's fora where all Members have a say. The issue needs to be further examined as a matter of general interest of all Member Countries on equal footing. Any project of research involving production of knowledge should never be limited to the inputs of a particular group of countries, including donor countries.

Md. ABDUL MALEK (Bangladesh)

I will be very brief. The Bangladesh delegation wishes to thank FAO's Secretariat and the Committee on Commodity Problems for this important and brief report on the existing problems of agricultural commodities.

We welcome and endorse the recommendation of the Committee's Report with special attention to the following. Firstly, Bangladesh supports that food aid should be demand-driven rather than supply-driven. Secondly, we endorse the organization of the International Year of Natural Fibres and requests the Secretariat to present a more concrete proposal in this regard.

Finally, Bangladesh supports the proposal of integrating the work of the CCP and COAG, considering financial constraints of this institute.

Paul MURPHY (Canada)

My delegation also endorses the Report of the Committee on Commodity Problems. We note, in particular, that part of paragraph 31 which was sided by the delegate of the European Community and we also add our support to the remarks to the delegate of Australia on the issue of food aid.

Yohannes TENSUE (Eritrea)

I also endorse the Report of the 65th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems. The proposal of amalgamating COAG and the Committee on Commodity Problems was a surprise at that time.

I made some interventions, also, at that the time. I raised some of the problems that we may face. When the Conference decided for the establishment of the Committee on Commodity of Problems and COAG, they gave it two distinct functions and they remained, still, far apart. The Committee of Commodity Problems, personally, my country has been benefiting from its support - not only material, but on information to the Ministry of Trade and Industry. At this time, the international community which is heavily engaged in debates on international trade, FAO has been encouraging the participation of developing countries in the negotiations with the World Trade Organization. But this time it is to delude or to undermine its role, the Committee of Commodity of Problems which gathers the information. If you go to the Department of Statistics which provides and produces the balance sheet of information of different commodities, it reflects the roles that the Committee of Commodity of Problems is gathering very important information. The Ministry of Agriculture refers to the COAG Department, whether it is livestock or different crops for that matter, but the Ministry of Trade is involved with that Department which deals the with Committee of Commodity Problems, gathering the statistics on market fluctuations, different policies and what policies to adapt. So, my problem with which I need some clarification from the Secretariat, is have we envisaged any problems that you may face, whether for cost saving matters, if it is intended to reduce the staff involved in some of the Departments, if we have to amalgamate or join the two Departments, have you anticipated any problem? We would like to ask the Secretariat to give us information, the problems you anticipate if you have to amalgamate them and how many years it will take. It is not simply just that the next Conference says that they should be amalgamated, but the formality they should follow. Abolishing one Committee and giving it a new name requires different resolutions and legal aspects. The Committee of Agriculture Engineering was abolished and it never came back. Most of the problems developing countries face are engineering problems. The engineering problems have never been addressed because there is not a Committee which addresses that problem. And the same thing if we abolish the Committee on Commodity Problems – who is going to address the problems or the participation in the international debates on trade? The Committee on Agriculture? It will be deleted. So, what is the intent of amalgamating them at this time when the international community is heavily engaged in different negotiations? So, these are my observations and I seek information from the Secretariat.

Anton KHOLER (Observer for Switzerland)

I have a short request only, a very interesting high level round table on Trade and Food Security took place between the CCP and the COAG meeting.

Can the Secretariat please inform us whether there is any access to a report on the inputs and conclusions on the high level round table?

Neil FRASER (Observer for New Zealand)

I attended the CCP meeting in April and enjoyed that experience. I was very happy with the meeting and I wanted to make some comments on the basis of some things that I heard here this morning.

Firstly, I heard the plea for coexistence of agriculture. The delegate said that they did not want to enter into discussion or open up the topic but did want to make a point. I am a bit concerned that they may want to include something into the report, of the Council meeting, which we would not be very happy with.

Coexistence is fine but not if it means that highly supported agriculture coexists along-side non supported agriculture. Coexistence, to us, does not mean agriculture that debases the natural resources and damages the environment existing along-side benign and sustainable agriculture systems. Nor does it mean agriculture protected from the world markets along-side competitive market led agriculture that can supply global consumers with quality products at competitive prices, so we have certain reservation about the use of the word coexistence.

Secondly, concerning the proposal that the CCP and the COAG work more closely, possibly even that they be merged. I think there was a suggestion that – let's go ahead and not be too concerned of the rules of the Organization – if I heard it correctly, well we certainly would not support going around the rules of the Organization.

Working more closely, we have no problems with that, but we would want to ensure that the process is careful to retain the key elements of the CCP work which we think is very valuable for the membership. Particularly we were very impressed with the new flagship publication. We think the COSIMO and agriculture policy indicators work is very valuable, yet to reveal its full value and its richness this is collaborative work that we support, I think Korea should not be too concerned about duplication there, it is a truly collaborative process as, with different organizations, bringing their strength to it. Also the CCP work on trade analysis and the impact of trade liberalization is very valuable and we would like to see it extended.

Finally, concerning the CSSD and the comments of paragraphs 31 and 32 of the Report, with the message to WTO and the reply from the WTO. We would be interested to see these communications so I will be interested to hear were we can sight those.

Ahmed Ali ELHASSAN BASMIR (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

My delegation would like to thank the CCP for the efforts made and the excellent report it has submitted. We would like to state our concern because Commodity prices are going down for different reasons, amongst which, as you know, the decline of these prices have a negative impact on farmers and production and will contribute further to the spread of poverty. As you know there are other factors, like the package of policies imposed on some countries, the use of new technologies which may not be adaptable to local conditions for some people, subsidies which are paid by developed countries of course to distort trade. Consequently developing countries cannot compete with developed countries for example in the field of cotton. FAO should give a great importance on this matter in the ongoing trade negotiations with the WTO. There is also the problem of organic agriculture, we are trying in our country to make some progress in this and trying our best to benefit from what could be given by FAO as technical assistance by which we would be able to enter this new field.

We also agree that the CCP and COAG should be merged as the work can be done by one Committee.

Heiner THOFERN (Chairman, Committee on Commodity Problems)

Let me summarize this morning's discussions in four points: two substantial ones and two procedural ones.

Firstly, the substantial point, was that I noted a general endorsement by Council for the report of the CCP meeting;

Secondly, I noted large support and encouragement for the continuation of the Committees' work, with a special emphasis on commodity market developments and special trade policies reforms.

The further two procedural points are regarding, firstly, there was general satisfaction expressed concerning the new format of the CCP even though some delegates suggested the merging of the

CCP and COAG. I understand that a detailed evaluation of a new format is being undertaken by the Secretariat and a report on that will be submitted to meeting of the Finance and Programme Committee during the next Session in September.

Lastly, concerning the International Year of Natural Fibres, I noticed general support to organize such an international year but I would like to revert with this specific issue to the Secretariat, as well as the other two specific requests made from the floor concerning the high level round table and the availability of the exchange of letters with the WTO Secretariat concerning the CSSD.

Hartwig de HAEN (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Department)

Thank you for a rich discussion and many suggestions. We have taken due note of them and do our best to implement them and follow up on them, and in particular on calls for priority areas to be strengthened, including the continuation of studies on the impact of trade policies and trade reform on food security.

I would like to reply to some specific questions, we noted the United States' encouragement for continuation of dialogue between sessions of CCP. We have noted the three examples you gave, raising the commodity related issues in regional conferences, seminars, expert consultations, side events and so on. Of course also trying to improve the coordination between CCP and COAG,

Regarding the various suggestions made on closer collaboration with partner agencies such as OECD, World Bank and so on and in particular on the modelling effort and on the agriculture policy indicators work. I just wish to confirm that this collaboration is already rather close especially with OECD, the World Bank and also with IFPRI. You may wish to note that the outcome of commonly using the COSIMO model by OECD and FAO for mid-term projections has been subject to a joint press conference yesterday in Geneva. You will hopefully find this in the media today, we have presented our projections until 2014, using the COSIMO model jointly. Pakistan asked for more details on this model, this is certainly noted and in our plans anyway.

Regarding the interventions on the possible initiative for an International Year on Natural Fibres and here, we refer to, Philippines, Indonesia, Bangladesh.

I believe a few others. The question was, what are we doing or what we should do. I believe I have to inform you that we are in your hands, the Members, the initiative lies upon you, to take such an initiative if you do wish to do so. International Years are declared by the General Assembly of the United Nations. In the event that Council were to endorse the proposals made, a resolution would have to be presented by Member Countries and not by the Secretariat, which would then request the Conference to request the Director-General to write to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, if this was your wish. There is certainly a waiting list for conclamation of international years so you are talking about something that may happen only in later years. We also noted that it requires a strong resolution and support by many, not just a few countries. I believe the ownership is now with you members and if you wish that to happen there is not much time between now and the Conference in November. Such an international year, if it is proclaimed, is costly and you may wish to consider also where the funding for such a year can be mobilized.

Regarding the issue of merging the two committees, as the Chairman of the CCP has already informed you, it is under evaluation and will be submitted to Programme and Finance Committees. The distinguished delegate of Eritrea asked for the views of the Secretariat, I think I should postpone the detailed statement for the session of Programme and Finance Committees, but I want to clarify that it is not the Secretariat that proposes such a merger. We have already gone far in streamlining and reducing costs, by shortening meetings of COAG and CCP by holding them back-to-back whether or not there can be further cost savings from a full merger, I personally do not see where these cost savings could come from but I would ask you to wait, with that further evaluation until you have a more complete report.

Switzerland asked how they can have access to the report on the high-level round table on Agriculture Trade Reform and Food Security that was held on 13 April 2005. That report is

available on the trade web-site of the Organization for quite some time so may I refer you to that. If you do not find it please contact us, I hope it is easily accessible there.

New Zealand asked about the communications between the Secretariat and the WTO about the sub-Committee on Surplus Disposal is available. It is not public, it is not publicly available but there is no secret in it, if you wish to have a copy we can certainly make it available to you if you request us to do so.

I would like to reply to those questions where the Organization communications on relevant trade and WTO issues can be found. We have published a number of trade policies technical notes on issues that are apparently under discussion in the WTO, they all on our web-site. They are all a result of a very thorough expert consultation where we tried to bring together the best experts on the respective topics. They are not meant to take sides in any form on the ongoing negotiations but only to provide a sound science base comparison of various modelling or analytical exercises. These topics deal with cotton, bananas, sugar tema formulas, export competition, special safeguard measures, food aid, preferences, special and differential treatment. These technical notes are all available on the web and I hope you will find them useful. Finally, since many of you spoke about the new flagship publication: *The state of commodity markets and agriculture*, we intend to publish this publication every second year when we hold a meeting on Committee and Commodity Problems.

**6. Report of the 19th Session of the Committee on Agriculture
(Rome, 13-16 April 2005) (CL 128/9)**

**6. Rapport de la dix-neuvième session du Comité de l'agriculture
(Rome, 13-16 avril 2005) (CL 128/9)**

**6. Informe del 19^o período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura
(Roma, 13-16 de abril de 2005) (CL 128/9)**

EL PRESIDENTE

Concluimos el Tema 5 de la Orden del Día y vamos a pasar al siguiente Tema que es el relacionado con el período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura.

Mientras invito al señor Pavel Sköda a incorporarse a esta mesa, quiero hacer un par de anuncios. Por un lado, se convoca una reunión del grupo de países que integran el GRULAC y quienes, al terminar la sesión de esta mañana, se estarán reuniendo en el Salón G77. Adicionalmente, se invita a los miembros de Comité de Redacción para sostener una breve reunión que tendrá lugar en el Salón Nórdico entre la Sala Roja y la Sala Verde en este mismo nivel.

Vamos a dar inicio al Tema 6 contenido en la Orden del Día que se refiere la informe del 19^o período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura que se llevó a cabo en Roma del 13 al 16 de abril de presente año. El documento está contenido en el 128/9 el cual contiene una lista de tópicos que llaman la atención de los delegados en el principio del documento.

Voy entonces a invitar al señor Pavel Sköda, Presidente del Comité de Agricultura para que proceda a presentar el informe.

Pavel SKODA (Chairman, Committee on Agriculture)

It is my honour to present a very brief introduction on the outcomes of our session; that is the Nineteenth Session on the Committee on Agriculture.

I may just remind that we have a discussion on five substantive agenda items; that is the Review of FAO's Programme of Work in the Food and Agricultural Sector; then the Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development and Good Agricultural Practices; and FAO's Strategy for a Safe and Nutritious Food Supply. The last two items being the Globalizing Livestock, Impact of Changing Markets and finally, Bioenergy. Especially the last ones, with a lively discussion, have shown a dynamic development in these sectors.

We also had five side events on which brief oral reports were made in the Plenary.

For the main outcomes and recommendations I would like to refer to the document - on pages 1-4 - all the matters requiring the attention of the Council are with bullet points.

For the first time, the sessions of both the Committee on Commodity Problems and the Committee on Agriculture were held back-to-back during one week, and there were already discussions during the previous item on any possible future options of the arrangements.

I would like to remind you of what our Committee has stated on that issue, and that is that the Committee looks forward to the assessment of alternative arrangements for the CCP and COAG, as already agreed upon, and that our Committee requested the Secretariat to consider merging the CCP and COAG into one committee as an option in its assessment for consideration by the Joint Programme and Finance Committee session in September 2005 and the subsequent Council in November this year.

With your permission, I would also like to draw the attention of the sub-item 6(i), highlight it as one of the outcomes of our discussions, as our Committee welcomed and endorsed the proposal for FAO to convene an International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in 2006. We also welcomed and endorsed the offer by the Government of Brazil to host the Conference.

The Secretariat was also requested to elaborate, in consultation with Brazil, detailed financial and administrative implications, and I understand that a concept note was prepared and also a PowerPoint presentation by the Secretariat will be done.

Ms Radha SINGH (India)

At the very outset, let me place on record India's appreciation of the comprehensive coverage accorded to all the relevant issues concerning agriculture by what is arguably the flagship Committee of FAO.

The range of topics considered and the material furnished to that Committee to facilitate such considerations attests to the diligence of the Secretariat, which indeed deserves to be complimented.

The subject of sustainable agriculture and rural development goes to the very core of maintaining the tempo of development initiatives in much of the developing world. As we move forward towards the Millennium Development Goals target, there is an imperative need to focus even more closely on SARD. The achievements of MDGs will be nullified and there could be a regression to extreme poverty unless the national and sub-national institution mechanisms and methodologies are continuously updated. The measures assumed under SARD and GAP initiatives fill this critical need.

India firmly believes that SARD and GAP, being the very basis of the FAO mandate, should find pride of place in its agenda and constraints of resources should not be allowed to dilute the relevant initiatives.

We also note, with satisfaction, the endorsement of the Committee for seeking assistance and support for developing countries and countries in transition to develop capacities and institutional mechanisms for safe and nutritious food supply, food safety concerns and the food chain approach. We do wish to reiterate here our reservation about the expected nutritive value of food and the still nebulous concept of nutritious food. We had shared these reservations in the Committee and would urge that the Secretariat works in close coordination with the relevant international expert organizations to obtain greater clarity on the subject. We are, however, inclined to be of the view that an across the board application of these concepts would not be in the best interests of the targeted communities and will give rise to significant confusion in the public policy domain.

We welcome the endorsement for a focus on bioenergy, a subject that, as India has been consistently maintaining, should have received the attention of FAO much earlier. We note, however, that the subject could be dealt with adequately only if meaningful linkages are forged

with the CGIAR system to see whether this critical gap in the rural development processes over much of the developing world is fully dealt with.

This also brings me to an aspect which necessarily follows from the deliberations of the Committee, though it may not have been expressly discussed in that forum. I refer to the long felt need of a regular interface between FAO and CGIAR, particularly its Science Council, that the mere presence of CGIAR representatives in FAO meetings and vice versa has not served the purpose is self evident. India strongly feels that FAO with its mandate to raise the levels of nutrition, improve agricultural productivity and to better the lives of the rural people, has a legitimate and, if I may say so, obligatory claim to have a say in the shaping of the research priorities of CGIAR.

India would urge that the Organization start a dialogue with the CGIAR to see how the two Organizations could work still more meaningfully for the larger interests of the world. I am sure that this august forum will agree that feedback on the progress made in this regard could be shared at the Conference.

We have noted with satisfaction the endorsement of the Committee to the holding of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform. I understand that perhaps this subject too is to be dealt with alongside, so we would like to give our reactions on this, too.

On behalf of the Government of India, I convey sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Brazil for having taken up the initiative for organizing the World Conference on Agrarian Reform under the auspices of FAO. We do feel that there is a definite need for such a gathering and that this will help bring the subject of agrarian reforms, which in the recent past has been somewhat relegated to the background in the development discourse, back to centre stage. Having said this we must take serious cognisance of the few reservations that were expressed when the proposal had come up for discussion in the Committee on Agriculture.

The reservations related to a degree of scepticism that has become to be attached of late to global conferences. India firmly believes that these doubts can be set at rest if the event is organized with adequate substantive preparations and a meaningful agenda.

I am sure that under the guidance of the Council, it should be possible to identify the agenda and to involve appropriate institutions and experts to set in motion a process of appropriate documentation and background material which are likely to generate discussions on lines most likely to lead to identification of factors impeding agrarian reforms.

An important milestone to be crossed in the move towards meaningful discussion and definitive conclusions would be to arrive at a consensus towards a holistic treatment of agrarian reforms. Often in the past agrarian reforms have been considered co-extensive with land reforms and its aspects of equity and efficiency, such as adoption of land ceilings, avoidance of fragmentation and consolidation of land holdings.

Crucially important as these aspects are, many more issues, such as access to irrigation, water rights, wellbeing of smallholders and setting up permanent safety nets for this group, along with many other measures for reformed land and improving the quality of the life of the tiller of the land needs to be considered. Once the contours of agrarian reforms are clearly demarcated it would be necessary to compile the state of the art as it pertains in different parts of the world with regard to the identification of the elements of the programme. Given the wide variety of expertise available in FAO and the knowledge which the Organization has on the expertise available elsewhere in the academia and the partitioning world this should not be difficult. While every effort should be made to use the event within 2006, the year of hosting the event may remain flexible in the interests of adequate substantive preparations.

With these suggestions we once again endorse the proposal for hosting this global conference.

EL PRESIDENTE

Dado que nos hemos propuesto concluir la reunión alrededor de las 12.30, me parece que vamos a tener que suspender probablemente después de las intervenciones de todos los delegados y dejar para la tarde las respuestas o las reacciones de las personas que nos acompañan en esta mesa. Tenemos la lista de turnos de quienes han solicitado la palabra, aparece Emiratos Árabes, México, Australia, USA, Comunidad Europea, Cuba, Tailandia, Egipto y Japón. Esperamos que podamos cumplir con esta meta antes de concluir la mañana.

Mohammed Hassan AL SHAMSI (United Arab Emirates) (Original language Arabic)

I have the honour on behalf of the Near East Group to express my thanks to the Secretariat for the efforts made in producing this important document. On this occasion I would also like to stress the importance of agricultural development and sustainable agriculture in our region. Sustainable agriculture and development have been placed on the Agenda of COAG in recent years. Agricultural development and sustainable agriculture have also been stressed at the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992. Chapter 14 includes a Global Plan of Action for the 21st Century.

At the Summit in Johannesburg in 2002, chapter 14 was considered as an adequate framework for the implementation of agricultural development and sustainable agriculture. Despite the efforts made by our region in this area, poverty continues to exist in areas where food security is no longer ensured, and as a result, many people living in rural areas suffer from poverty.

Food safety is also very important for our Group, and we need the technical support of the Organization, particularly with regard to pesticides, chemical products and substances for biological control in order to protect consumers. We also request the aid of the Organization in strengthening quarantine and animal and plant health measures by adopting the required standards in this area.

Thirdly, we would like to ask the Organization to assist the countries of the region which have this need to improve their early warning systems for agriculture and nutrition.

In conclusion, considering that agricultural development and sustainable agriculture require drinking water and irrigation water which our region is short of, we require support in this area, too, from the Organization, particularly in order to develop new desalinization methods and other ways to respond to the need of water in the region. Also considerable experience has been put together in our region on this issue.

Vladimir HERNÁNDEZ LARA (México)

Mi delegación agradece el informe del 19º período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura, así como la presentación que acaba de hacer el Presidente de dicho Comité, señor Pavel Skôda, distinguido Representante de la República Checa.

Mi delegación desea señalar la importancia de utilizar de forma sostenible los recursos naturales para contribuir a reducir el número de personas hambrientas. Con respecto a los grandes desafíos como catástrofes naturales, plagas y enfermedades, el impacto de la liberalización del comercio internacional en materia agrícola y la utilización de tecnologías modernas, si bien se reconoce que son los gobiernos nacionales quienes deben responder a dichos desafíos, también es fundamental la colaboración internacional y la asociación con otros organismos, instituciones, ONGs y el sector privado en esta esfera. Mi delegación reitera que es necesario ampliar las áreas de programas originales vinculadas con la Agricultura y el Desarrollo Rural Sostenible (ADRS), recordando que deben ser voluntarios y no deben crear obstáculos al comercio, buscando que se promueva el uso voluntario de las prácticas agrícolas apropiadas para las necesidades y capacidades locales de los agricultores, lo que permitirá contribuir al logro de los objetivos del Milenio. Asimismo, convendría que los tres enfoques programáticos asociados con estos objetivos estratégicos queden incorporados debidamente, tal y como fueron aprobados en la sesión del Comité de Agricultura en abril pasado.

Mi delegación exhorta a que el enfoque de las Buenas Prácticas Agrícolas (BPA) se centre en la promoción del uso voluntario de ese esquema y, dado que muchos países carecen de los recursos económicos, técnicos y humanos para poner en práctica las mismas, se puede exhortar a la FAO que proporcione asistencia técnica, en especial, en términos de creación de la capacidad de los Estados Miembros que así lo requieran. Mi delegación apoya el enfoque estratégico basado en la cadena alimentaria propuesto por la FAO y considera que para su correcta aplicación es necesario que se asignen los recursos necesarios con cargo al presupuesto ordinario. También convendría obtener recursos extrapresupuestarios para ese fin. Mi delegación también desea señalar que es necesaria la creación de una capacidad técnica mínima entre los países miembros, que permita a los países en desarrollo y a los países en transición incorporarse paulatinamente a las cadenas alimenticias, lo que sería necesario antes de dar inicio a los trabajos en torno a la evaluación de riesgos en la inocuidad alimentaria.

En cuanto a la propuesta de creación de un Grupo de Trabajo Intergubernamental sobre Bioenergía que se encargará de promover una nueva esfera para la acción interdisciplinaria en la materia, desearía saber por parte de la Secretaría, cómo se piensa financiar las actividades para la creación de este grupo y su labor de intensificar la cooperación con otros organismos y otras organizaciones nacionales, regionales e internacionales.

Por lo que se refiere a la propuesta presentada por la Unión Europea para la eventual fusión del Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos y el Comité de Agricultura, mi delegación considera que es necesario que se nos proporcione toda la información sobre los aspectos positivos y negativos para dicha propuesta, por lo que estaremos atentos a la información que nos han ofrecido para septiembre próximo, y al respecto consideramos que tampoco sería conveniente tomar una decisión sin conocer previamente los resultados de la evaluación externa independiente de la FAO.

Ms Judy BARFIELD (Australia)

In relation to the Medium-term Plan 2006-11 and preliminary Programme of Work proposals for 2006/07, Australia believes that with the increasing importance of trade to developing countries, including the growth of South-South trade, the crucial role for the FAO is to assist global harmonization of plant quarantine and food standards that support international trade rules. Adequately resourcing the international standards work of IPPC and Codex is an essential part of helping developing countries to expand their trade and improve their food security. This has been recognized in each of the Governing Body meetings over the past two or three years where the prioritization of the FAO's programmes has been discussed with widespread support from a broad range of countries.

Similarly, capacity building for WTO agricultural negotiations is considered by Australia and number of other countries as being a high priority.

The report emphasized the importance of the work of the IPPC and of Codex related work on food safety expressing concern that the preliminary budget proposals would be insufficient to support the business plan of the Bureau of the IPPC and urged that this priority area receives more Regular Programme funding regardless of the overall budget level for 2006/07.

Australia, would like to strongly endorse these comments and point out the importance of adequate resourcing the international standards work of IPPC and Codex has been recognized in each of the Governing Body meetings.

In regard to sustainable agricultural rural development and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Australia has raised concerns that GAP should not create barriers to trade, should not be prescriptive and should be voluntary. Paragraph 22 of the Committee's report states that Members requested further clarification on concepts and principles of FAO's GAP approach, and also, the Committee endorsed the FAO approach to GAP as set out in paragraph 27 of the document that it should be non prescriptive, voluntary and not create barriers to trade but be consistent with existing regulatory instruments, such as Codex, IPPC and OIE.

Australia points out that until further clarification on concepts and principles of FAO's GAP approach has been provided and articulated to Members, it will not be possible to advance with clarity further development of the GAP approach.

Australia requests the Secretariat to provide clarification on the GAP principles for Members at an early stage to assist Members to be satisfied that the approach will not create barriers to trade, will not be prescriptive and will be voluntary.

In relation to FAO's strategy for a safe and nutritious food supply, Australia would like to support the COAG conclusions in relation to this matter, and in particular support the further development and implementation of the strategy, support enhanced cooperation with other international agencies working in the same or related fields in terms of technical assistance, capacity building and provision of policy advice and support the main objectives of the strategy including the continued strengthening of the international regulatory framework for food safety and nutrition, especially Codex, as well as other international standards and guidelines developed by FAO that have a strong and positive impact on the food chain approach.

EL PRESIDENTE

Dado que estamos en las 12.30 y tenemos todavía una lista relativamente larga de delegaciones que han pedido la palabra, vamos a suspender la reunión en este momento y la reuniremos a las 14.30 en este mismo salón.

The meeting rose at 12.35 hours

La séance est levée à 12h35

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.35 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Twenty-eighth Session Cent vingt-huitième session 128º período de sesiones
Rome, 20-24 June 2005 Rome, 20-24 juin 2005 Roma, 20-24 de junio de 2005
SIXTH PLENARY SESSION SIXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEXTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
22 June 2005

The Sixth Plenary Meeting was opened at 15:00 hours
Mr Ricardo Santa Cruz Rubí,
Vice-Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La sixième séance plénière est ouverte à 15 h
sous la présidence de M. Ricardo Santa Cruz Rubí,
Vice-président du Conseil

Se abre la sexta sesión plenaria a las 15:00 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Ricardo Santa Cruz Rubí,
Vicepresidente del Consejo

II. ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP (continued)
II. ACTIVITÉS DE LA FAO ET DU PAM (suite)
II. ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y EL PMA continuación)

**6. Report of the 19th Session of the Committee on Agriculture
 (Rome, 13-16 April 2005) (CL 128/9) (continued)**
**6. Rapport de la dix-neuvième session du Comité de l'agriculture
 (Rome, 13-16 avril 2005) (CL 128/9) (suite)**
**6. Informe del 19º período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura
 (Roma, 13-16 de abril de 2005) (CL 128/9) (continuación)**

6.1 Proposal for a World Conference on Agrarian Reform
*6.1 Proposition relative à l'organisation d'une Conférence mondiale
 sur la réforme agraire*
6.1 Propuesta de una Conferencia Mundial sobre Reforma Agraria

EL PRESIDENTE

Vamos a iniciar la sexta sesión de esta Asamblea. Tenemos pendiente concluir el Tema 6 que interrumpimos al mediodía. Antes de continuar con la Agenda quisiera recordar a los Delegados que aún no se han inscrito formalmente que pasen al Centro de inscripciones de Turquía, ubicado en la entrada principal del edificio A. Esto es importante para que sus nombres queden debidamente registrados en la memoria de esta reunión.

Para reanudar la sesión de esta tarde, voy a invitar al señor Koohafkan, Director de la División de la Secretaría para la Diversidad de Animales Domésticos, para hacer una videopresentación sobre los preparativos para la Conferencia Mundial sobre Reforma Agraria.

Parviz KOOHAFKAN (Director, Rural Development Division)

I am going to do a short presentation on the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development with the subtitle, New Challenges and Opportunities for Revitalizing Rural Communities.

Why an International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development? In April 2005, the Committee on Agriculture approved the proposal that FAO convene an international conference on Agrarian reform and Rural Development in 2006 to be hosted by the government of Brazil.

The Committee noted that the conference would fulfil critical elements in FAO's commitments undertaken at World Food Summit, World Food Summit: *five years later*, World Summit on Sustainable Development, ECOSOC and for the implementation of Millennium Development Goals.

The Committee requested the Secretariat that the proposal for organizing the Conference be submitted to Council in June 2005.

The objectives of the Conference would be first to promote understanding, learning and constructive dialogue on agrarian reform and sustainable rural development through the creation of a lasting platform for monitoring and evaluation of best policies and practices and rural development progress.

The second objective would be to share experiences and foster recognition, improve willingness and concrete actions through international, cooperation and partnerships on agrarian reform and sustainable rural development.

There would be at least two major outputs of this Conference. The first one would be a lasting platform of dialogue and experience sharing on agrarian reform and sustainable rural development, supported by an international observatory panel. And the second would be

enhanced international cooperation and partnership building on a range of best policies, practices and lessons learned on agrarian reform on sustainable rural development.

The organization of the Conference would be as follows: a Steering Committee composed of regional groups and Member States; FAO Secretariat led by the Sustainable Development Department supported by FAO technical divisions and a small number of high level consultants. We would also hold parallel discussions with UN agencies, scientific communities, NGOs, civil society organizations and the private sector.

The FAO Secretariat would be headed by an Executive Secretary who would be in interaction with the Brazilian National Secretariat responsible for the preparation and logistics of the Conference leading to conclusions and recommendation and follow-up actions.

The theme of Conference - the final theme would obviously be identified through an open consultative process facilitated by FAO through Internet, E-mail exchange, and discussion forums. However, some indicated themes have already been identified as follows: best policies and practices for improving and securing rights and access to land and water; capacity building for improving access to land, water, agricultural inputs and agrarian services; new opportunities to revitalize rural communities; and rural development progress indicators.

The preparation schedule would be starting from the Council. We will initiate consultations with regional groups and member governments; do a preliminary identification of topics and invitation for papers; interact with all the stakeholders nationals, internationals, scientific communities and NGOs, CSOs.

We will prepare a reporting format and guidance for national reports and in November we will start the preparation of national reports and issue papers. Then, during FAO's Conference we will benefit from special events, side events, and the whole conference in interacting with Member Governments and other stakeholders. We will continue our consultation, prepare papers and do a stock taking of progress on agrarian reform and rural development at least from the perspective of what has happened after the Agrarian Reform Conference organized by FAO some thirty years ago. We have found that there are increasing conflicts and problems related to agrarian reforms which we would like to take in stock and report to you.

We will finalize national reports and issue papers during the month of January; collate these reports and stock-taking exercise, finalize national reports and issue papers in February; and present them to the International Conference in March 2006.

The venue of the conference as has been suggested by the government of Brazil would be Porto Alegre, Brazil. The conference costs, excluding FAO's and Brazil's in-kind contribution, would be approximately US\$830 000 and the Conference date, for the moment has been set-up for 27 – 30 March 2006.

We will have some follow-up processes. The results of the Conference would be reported to the Commission of Sustainable Development year 2008/2009 Session, which it has its focus on Agriculture, Rural Development, Land, Drought, Desertification in Africa.

We would also report to COAG on Conference follow-up under the 4 yearly standing item on SARD.

We would obviously promote partnership on Agrarian Reform and Sustainable Rural Development and its specific concrete projects as we will follow the recommendations of the Conference.

We would like to request FAO's Council to give us a feedback on this proposal and support the International Conference and Agrarian Reform and Sustainable Rural Development.

EL PRESIDENTE

Luego de esta presentación reanudamos el orden de la palabra de acuerdo al listado que tenemos construido desde esta mañana. Corresponde entonces el uso de la palabra al Delegado de Brasil.

Flávio MIRAGAIA PERRI (Brasil)

Escuché con mucha atención la presentación hecha por el Secretariado y me parece que ha presentado sus ideas con claridad después que el Comité de Agricultura consideró la propuesta original del documento COAG 2005/4 sobre la realización de la Conferencia Internacional sobre Reforma Agraria y Desarrollo Rural. Sobre este tema el Informe Final de COAG subrayó que tal Conferencia ayudaría a movilizar el apoyo mundial con miras a incrementar el acceso de los pobres a la tierra y los servicios de apoyo para el desarrollo rural sostenible y la reducción de la pobreza en el contexto general de desarrollo. La Conferencia brindará un foro para el debate y el intercambio de información sobre las políticas nacionales de la cooperación internacional. He citado el propio párrafo del informe de COAG.

Brasil ha sido uno de los países que ha impulsado la realización de un evento internacional para tratar de la mejora del acceso a la tierra y a los servicios necesarios para un desarrollo rural sostenible. Con otros países en desarrollo, importantes en nuestra relación bilateral y significativos en el campo internacional, hemos tratado de entender esta idea de la Conferencia Internacional para el Desarrollo Rural y la Reforma Agraria como un componente fundamental del concepto más amplio de desarrollo. Es por esto que las políticas de reforma agraria y de apoyo a la agricultura familiar se encuentran al centro de la estrategia de desarrollo de mi país.

Como ha declarado el Ministro Brasileño responsable del desarrollo agrario en ocasión de la última sesión del COAG, tales políticas "son los elementos centrales de un proyecto nacional soberano que busca un nuevo patrón de desarrollo para el medio rural asentado en la reforma agraria y el fortalecimiento de la agricultura campesina. En este contexto la acción compartida del Estado y de la sociedad civil es capaz de desconcentrar la propiedad de la tierra y cambiar la estructura agraria creando las condiciones para las políticas de fomento a la producción y garantizar la sustentación ambiental y la universalización del acceso a derechos". Estamos seguros que el tema tiene particular importancia no sólo para Brasil sino también para los países en desarrollo. Los debates durante el COAG y los contactos que venimos manteniendo demostraron el gran interés por el diálogo y por el fortalecimiento del intercambio de experiencias con vistas a la superación del desafío común al subdesarrollo y a un refuerzo de la cooperación internacional para más eficacia de las acciones nacionales de lucha contra la pobreza rural y el hambre, en el contexto más amplio e integrado de desarrollo.

La Conferencia Internacional que pretendemos realizar en Brasil con el apoyo de toda esta comunidad internacional aquí reunida, ofrecerá una oportunidad y un foro para el debate y el intercambio sobre las políticas nacionales y la cooperación internacional.

Estamos reconocidos por los esfuerzos hechos por el Secretariado en tan poco tiempo desde la clausura de la sesión del COAG. La concisa y muy objetiva presentación a los Miembros del Consejo por el señor Parviz Koochafkan trae sugerencias preliminares, pero muy completas, sobre la buena preparación y organización de la Conferencia Internacional. A este respecto, Brasil apoya la sugerencia de creación en esta sesión del Consejo de un Comité Conductor, un Steering Committee en inglés, para dirigir el proceso preparatorio que defina por consenso los temas para discusión y los resultados deseados por la Conferencia. Para caracterizar el interés político de todos los Estados Miembros en la materia y construir el sentido de pertenencia y propiedad, será correcto que cada grupo regional designe inmediatamente a uno de sus miembros para representarlo con entera legitimidad en los trabajos. Suponemos que los grupos regionales inicien simultánea y coordinadamente sus discusiones internas para traer sus sugerencias de propuestas al Comité Conductor.

Estamos convencidos que el éxito de la Conferencia depende de su correcta preparación substantiva. Debemos trabajar inmediatamente con los grupos regionales, adecuadamente representados, para que con el necesario apoyo del Secretariado producir la agenda de trabajo e iniciar la elaboración de documentos. Estoy seguro de que, bajo el apoyo determinado de este Consejo, el Comité Conductor podrá identificar los puntos centrales de la agenda. A partir del alto conocimiento del Secretariado de la FAO sobre la materia, el proceso preparatorio podrá igualmente movilizar instituciones e individuos capaces de contribuir a la labor.

El Comité Conductor, así lo entendemos, podrá funcionar a semejanza de las mesas de los órganos rectores de la FAO, con la responsabilidad de promover consultas con sus respectivos miembros en cada uno de los grupos regionales, sobre todas las materias de interés para la Conferencia misma y durante el período preparatorio. La designación por el Director General de la FAO de un Secretario Ejecutivo, como propone el Secretariado, es positiva para asesorar técnica y administrativamente el Comité Conductor. Esto es necesario y esencial para garantizar el sentido de adecuación de los trabajos del Secretariado a las posiciones de los Estados Miembros.

Por este intermedio esperamos que se establezca la deseable sinergia entre los miembros, los grupos regionales y el Secretariado. Subrayamos aquí la importancia de la participación de la sociedad civil. A este respecto el Comité Conductor debería definir: uno, la creación de un canal eficaz de comunicación con la sociedad civil con vistas a los preparativos de la Conferencia; y dos, las formas de participación y consulta de representantes de la sociedad civil y ONGs en los trabajos preparatorios en la Conferencia misma.

Será importante que este trabajo sustantivo pueda llegar a un rápido consenso para el tratamiento olístico de la cuestión del desarrollo rural que involucra mucho más que la idea simple del pasado que centraba la cuestión agraria en el problema de la distribución de tierras. Debemos allí tratar la cuestión de la tenencia y propiedad legítima de la tierra, como también el adecuado acceso a medios de financiación, a conocimientos técnicos y tecnológicos, a asistencia educacional y de salud, a estructuras de almacenamiento y transporte, sin olvidar el correcto acceso a los mercados.

En este contexto, no se pueden olvidar las necesidades especiales del pequeño agricultor. Estamos de acuerdo con la propuesta del Secretariado y con el calendario propuesto. Debemos aprovechar el momento creado y pasar directamente a la acción. Brasil está preparado a trabajar con todos los interesados, y no sólo preparar la recepción de todos ustedes en Brasil el año próximo, pero también para trabajar substantivamente con cada uno de los interesados directos.

Finalmente, en su presentación el Secretariado nos informa sobre las necesidades financieras para la organización de la Conferencia. Además de los recursos que Brasil naturalmente debería aportar como país sede, son necesarios 830 mil dólares EE.UU. extrapresupuestarios. Como dijo durante la última del COAG el Ministro del Desarrollo Rural, es intención de mi Gobierno hacer enteramente viable la realización de la Conferencia. Por esto estamos dispuestos a considerar de manera afirmativa variantes en todas las formas de financiación, pero siempre esperamos que otros países vengan a contribuir para reducir esta carga financiera. Contamos con los esfuerzos del Secretariado y llamamos a todas las partes interesadas, en el sentido que vengan a apoyar, incluso en este sentido, el éxito de la Conferencia Internacional sobre Reforma Agraria y Desarrollo Rural.

Richard J. HUGHES (United States of America)

The United States endorses the COAG Report and we have a few, brief comments on some of the issues raised in that Report. Given that producers and consumers world-wide rely on the work of FAO, for normative standards for agricultural production and trade, we continue to stress that IPPC and Codex activities should be fully funded.

Regarding Good Agricultural Practices, we would welcome further clarification from the Secretariat regarding its understanding of GAP concepts and principles. We believe it is important that GAP measures do not become barriers to trade.

As we heard from this presentation, just as we came back from lunch, we appreciate Brazil's offer to host an International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in March 2006. Land reform and land tenure issues are very important issues for developing countries.

A safe and nutritious food supply is important to all FAO Members. With regard to using a food-chain approach to accomplish this task, we recognize that in addition to funding from the Regular Budget, extra-budgetary funds will be required to realize this FAO strategic priority.

FAO's Priority Areas for Interdisciplinary Action (PAIAs) have proven to be a successful tool for interdisciplinary involvement and cooperation. A PAIA on bio-energy will facilitate work in this field.

Finally, ideas for a closer association between the Committee on Commodity Problems and COAG will require closer examination by the Programme and Finance Committees in September, to make sure that any structural changes are in the interest of Members and the Organization.

Flávio MIRAGAIA PERRI (Brazil)

It is only a comment I would make about the translation. It seems that the translation to English on the very important point I made about financing of the Conference missed an important point. And that is to say, that besides the resources that Brazil naturally will provide as the country hosting the Conference, there will be a need of US\$830 000 extra-budgetary funds. My point was that Brazil is available for considering every different aspect in a positive way of financing the Conference. We are prepared to make it viable and to make it entirely viable, but we count upon the collaboration of other countries, other stakeholders, other interested countries, in helping us to alleviate this burden. That is the point that I would like to make to make it clear.

Ms Maryse COUTSOURADIS (European Community)

I welcome this opportunity to speak on behalf of the European Community and its 25 Member States. The exceeding countries, Bulgaria and Romania, as well as the candidate countries, Croatia and Turkey, align themselves to this statement.

The report from the Nineteenth Session of the Committee on Agriculture held in Rome this April and reproduced in document CL 128/9 can be endorsed by the EC and its Member States. Under this perspective one must highlight the concept developed in the subject *FAO's Strategy for a Safe and Nutritious Food Supply* which acknowledges the importance of addressing food safety issues along the food-chain and acknowledges and recognized the importance of ensuring access to safe and nutritious food. The proposed principles are consistent with those underlying in the EC Food Legislation. In particular, the role of science and the use of a risk-based approach.

With regard to the point referring to sustainable agriculture and rural development and Good Agricultural Practices, it is important to stress the references made to the Good Agricultural Practices approach as one of the means to help countries respond to rapid development in the agri-food sector, promote sustainable agricultural systems and supply chains. Our cross compliance concept introduced with the Common Agricultural Policy Reform of 2003, in the first pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy, will play an important role as base-line in the future rural development policy.

The EU supports the efforts made regarding the organization of the Nineteenth Session including its back-to-back arrangement with the Committee on Commodity Problems. The EU considers that there may be some scope for integrating the work of the CCP and COAG.

To conclude, we support the idea of a World Conference on Agrarian Reform in 2006, which will focus on access by the poor to land, sustainable rural development and poverty reduction and which was endorsed by COAG.

José A. QUINTERO (Cuba)

Agradecemos a la Secretaría por el documento que nos ha presentado y apoyamos en forma general las recomendaciones contenidas en él. De forma específica queremos apoyar la importancia que le concede este Comité al reforzamiento de la capacidad en relación con las negociaciones comerciales agrícolas en el marco de la OMC y la necesidad de que se destinen más recursos a apoyar estas actividades, las cuales deben estar encaminadas a permitir que estos países aumenten su capacidad para participar más activamente en las negociaciones. Resaltamos la ventaja comparativa que presenta la FAO respecto a la labor que realiza en el ámbito de las estadísticas alimentarias y agrícolas y la necesidad de que se conceda mayor prioridad al refuerzo de la capacidad en materia de sistemas de estadísticas agrícolas nacionales.

Expresamos nuestro agradecimiento a la FAO por el trabajo coordinado que desde hace varios años se viene realizando entre la División de Estadísticas y la Oficina Nacional de Estadísticas de Cuba, con el objetivo de que lo que publica FAO sobre Cuba exprese la realidad de nuestro país.

La Delegación de Cuba recomienda a la FAO que estos tipos de contactos más estrechos deben ser establecidos también con todos aquellos países en desarrollo que lo necesiten.

Consideramos que en los próximos períodos de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura se debe prestar mayor atención al Programa de Seguridad Alimentaria. Apoyamos la relevancia que le otorga el Comité a los aspectos referidos a la Agricultura y el Desarrollo Rural Sostenible. Este aspecto debe continuar siendo prioritario dentro de esta Organización y su tratamiento debe ser abordado de forma transversal en todos los programas y áreas de trabajo de la FAO. La capacidad que tenga la FAO de promover en los países en desarrollo una agricultura sostenible y un desarrollo rural debe constituir una de sus ventajas comparativas. En ese sentido recomendamos al Comité que en los próximos períodos de sesiones dedique mayor importancia a la agricultura orgánica y cómo la FAO puede continuar aumentando su apoyo a la promoción de este tipo de agricultura. Nuestro país se encuentra disponible a trabajar junto con la FAO y otras organizaciones interesadas en este aspecto para transmitir sus experiencias en este sentido a otros países en desarrollo.

Apoyamos la iniciativa de celebrar en Brasil una Conferencia Mundial sobre Reforma Agraria y destacamos que un acceso seguro y estable de los campesinos a la propiedad de la tierra o al derecho a trabajarla y beneficiarse de ello es indispensable para garantizar que los pobres puedan salir de la pobreza. La tierra es el principal activo de las personas que viven en el medio rural y poderla trabajar les garantiza empleo seguro y los ingresos necesarios para su subsistencia. De igual forma queremos apoyar la propuesta realizada recientemente por el distinguido Representante de Brasil en el sentido de crear un comité preparatorio para ir trabajando en los temas referidos a esta conferencia.

Pornprom CHAIRIDCHAI (Thailand)

My delegation would like to express our appreciation of the work of the Committee on Agriculture and welcome the outcomes of the Nineteenth Session of the Committee.

We would like to highlight the importance of the activities in the area of sustainable agriculture and rural development and Good Agricultural Practices. The activities in this area contribute directly to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. To this end, we support the strategic objectives A1, C2 and D1. We support the GAP approach of FAO and we agreed that it should be non prescriptive, voluntary and not create barriers to trade, but be consistent with existing regulatory instalments, such, as Codex, IPPC and OIE, as already indicated in paragraph 27 of the COAG document.

We welcome the GAP workshop, the collaboration between FAO and Thailand, due to take place later this year in Bangkok. With the strategy for safe and nutritious food supply, we support this strategy and we would like to emphasize the capacity building and technical assistance for developing countries.

My delegates note the concept of expected nutrition value of food. We think FAO should elaborate further on this concept by way of discussing it with WHO and other relevant organizations, so that a clear understanding can be provided to Member Countries.

On the issue of livestock, we agree that the livestock sector has an important role to play in economic development and food security. With the recognition of its importance, the Government of Thailand has launched a nation-wide five year project whose objectives it is to promote cattle raising at the rate of five per farm household, so as to increase the income of small-scale farmers. Thailand is committed to the control of transboundary animal diseases in compliance with the OIE and the SPS measures which will ensure domestic animal health and, certainly, enforce food safety.

We appreciate the work of FAO in capacity building activities in dealing with the SPS regulations in livestock sector and we support FAO in the continuation of the work in this area.

Regarding bioenergy, Thailand is well aware of the increasing gasoline demand and has undertaken a number of studies on potential bioenergy production, market potential and future demand. We have identified three crops which are oil palm, cassava and sugarcane, that can offer excellent alternatives as a source of energy in substituting fossil oil. The production of methanol oil is expected to substitute MTBE, the substance contained in benzene at 4 million litres per day by 2011 and by oil diesel which will replace diesel at 3 100 millilitres per year by 2012.

Bioenergy will maintain a clean environment, as well as increase the income of Thai farmers. We are interested in the progress made in many countries in this area. Presently, Thailand is establishing a joint research and development of biomass energy with China, using surplus agricultural products and derived products.

We agree with the forecast of FAO work on wood energy and agro energy.

Finally, Thailand appreciates the presentation by the Secretariat and we support the convening of the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in 2006 in Brazil.

Manubu YASUHARA (Japan)

First of all my delegation is pleased to support the report of the Nineteenth Session of the Committee on Agriculture regarding SARD, GAP, Food Safety, Globalizing Livestock, Bioenergy, IPPC and Integrated Resource Management, in particular, water and land.

With reference to the proposal of the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, Japan welcomes the initiative in principle and agrees that there is a need to consider further elements, such as degraded resource management for rural livelihood.

However, we would like to point out that the Secretariat could take into account the availability of additional contributions for a successful Conference.

As was suggested by the distinguished Ambassador of Brazil extrabudgetary resources need to be solved for this purpose, otherwise FAO has to give up their activities in the Department concerned.

Aamir ASHRAF KHAWAJA (Pakistan)

Pakistan welcomes the report of the Committee on Agriculture and notes that the report has separate sections on FAO's Work Programme SARD and GAP. These are interrelated subjects and would be useful to consolidate. The essence of SARD and GAP initiatives should be reflected in the work programme.

Pakistan further notes that the whole report is descriptive rather than being analytical.

Pakistan suggests further work is needed to bring out the key milestones of progress, highlight the lessons learnt and suggests desirable directions for the future.

There is also a need for setting priorities in the work programme and workloads in the relevant agencies, such as IFPRI, in order to avoid duplication.

Pedro Agostinho KANGA (Angola)

Ma délégation félicite le Comité de l'agriculture ainsi que le Secrétariat pour la présentation de ce rapport. Lors de la tenue de la session du Comité de l'agriculture, ma délégation s'était prononcée dans différents points du document de ce rapport que nous réitérons. Ainsi, mon intervention se concentrera particulièrement sur la proposition relative à l'organisation de la Conférence internationale sur la réforme agraire et le développement rural.

Il y a 27 ans, la première Conférence internationale sur la réforme agraire et le développement rural a eu lieu à Rome du 12 au 20 juillet 1979. La réalisation d'une deuxième Conférence internationale sur la réforme agraire et le développement rural en 2006 permet à ma délégation de

la qualifier d'initiative louable et est une opportunité pour faire le bilan positif ou négatif sur ce qui a été adopté en 1979.

Pour beaucoup de pays en développement, la réforme agraire et le développement rural constituent un instrument social légitime particulier pour l'accès à la terre, l'augmentation de la production, la gestion d'emplois et l'amélioration des conditions de vie de l'homme dans le milieu rural.

Lors de la dernière Conférence, il avait été suggéré et approuvé des politiques spécifiques dans différents domaines tels que: l'accès à la terre et à l'eau ainsi que d'autres politiques internationales et de développement rural; la participation de la population au développement, l'interaction de la femme au développement rural; la coopération technique entre les pays en développement aujourd'hui appelée "Coopération Sud-Sud"; l'accès aux facteurs de production, les marchés et services; les activités rurales non-agricoles; les investissements privés d'origine étrangère; le rôle du système des Nations Unies et d'autres organismes intéressés; l'éducation, la formation et la vulgarisation.

Malgré l'adoption à l'unanimité de la déclaration de principe, à la fin de cette Conférence, nous devons reconnaître que celle-ci n'a pas connu un progrès significatif et dans beaucoup de pays en développement ce thème est encore d'actualité et dans d'autres, il se pose encore avec autant acuité qu'en 1969.

Pour cette raison, ce thème a été retenu dans le Plan d'action du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation en 1996 et dans la déclaration du Millénaire pour le développement.

A cet égard, mon pays, l'Angola, appuie l'initiative d'organiser la deuxième Conférence internationale sur la réforme agraire et le développement rural, délégation au Brésil.

La réalisation des consultations aux niveaux régional et sous-régional s'avère indispensable pour présenter au niveau de la Conférence des propositions claires et cohérentes.

Etant donné que la Conférence régionale de la FAO pour l'Afrique aura lieu au cours du premier trimestre 2006 pour mieux préparer la dite Conférence au niveau régional, nous proposons que ce point soit inclus à l'ordre du jour.

Noel D. DE LUNA (Philippines)

We simply would like to endorse the report of the Nineteenth Session of the Committee on Agriculture with particular attention to paragraphs 24 and 25 of the said report. The issue of asset reform is very important for my country and we are looking forward to the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in 2006 with great interest.

The timeline suggested by the Secretariat earlier, looks reasonable and doable and we can agree on it.

As far as the proposed Steering Committee is concerned, we associate ourselves with the statements made by Brazil on this matter. We look forward to participating in this exercise. We do appreciate the initiative taken by Brazil in hosting this event.

We would also like to call on sympathetic Member Countries to make extrabudgetary contributions so that this very relevant Conference can become successful. For our part, we are prepared to do our share.

Trevor MURRAY (Trinidad and Tobago)

The delegation of Trinidad and Tobago wishes to thank the Secretariat, the Chairman and Members of the Committee on Agriculture for the comprehensive report tabled for the consideration of this Council. We also wish to record our endorsement of the recommendations in this report.

We welcome the endorsement of the Committee for the greater integration and cohesion to the MTP and the Programme of Work and Budget of this Organization. We have especially endorsed the appeal made by the Committee to increase resources in support of the identified activities to

enable developing countries, especially Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to participate more effectively in the formulation of rules based on food and agricultural trading systems.

We endorse with satisfaction the importance the Committee has placed on water management issues and the need for greater land and water quality improvements, especially if they are effective. We are especially pleased at the efforts to broaden the SARD programme areas and GAP. Notwithstanding, we hasten to add that GAP should not be seen or used as an opportunity for technical variance to trade.

We welcome the proposed International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development scheduled to be held Brazil in 2006. We would wish to thank the Government and people of Brazil for this offer to host this all important Conference.

We also welcome the call for strategies for technical assistance and capacity building in food safety for developing countries especially SIDS in implementing the food chain approach risk assessment. We especially support the call for the allocation of funds from the regular budget, as well as extrabudgetary funds for the implementation of this strategic food chain approach.

We endorse the efforts to transform the work of the CCP and COAG into one body and look forward to the results of the Secretariats' work, as well as the deliberations of the Joint Committee on Programme and Finance in this regard.

Finally, we wish to record our endorsement of the report and thank the contributors.

Farid HASAN BAKTIR (Indonesia)

We generally endorse the Nineteenth Session of the COAG Report. We thank for the continuous work of FAO on SARD, GAP and FAO's strategy for safe and Nutritious Food Supply. Support is needed for developing countries on capacity building to be able to implement those initiatives. The Indonesian delegation fully supports the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in 2006. Indonesia noted the cruciality of the Conference on Agrarian Reform because of our experience in small land ownership, where around 56.5 percent of Indonesian farmers are categorized poor farmers with an average of land ownership of 0.2 ha.

On the other hand, there are about 9.7 million ha. of potential land considered as "sleeping land" that could be used for agriculture and further redistributed for ownership. With the Conference, we will be able to communicate and share my country's experience on land reform. Our country may later come as the best solution to promote land reform in developing countries and better access for poor farmers to land and support services for sustainable rural development and poverty reduction. This is why the Conference on Agrarian Reform is becoming important and crucial for us and most developing countries.

Mooneeshwar RAMTOHUL (Mauritius)

My delegation would like to endorse the Report of the Nineteenth Session of the Committee on Agriculture. I would just like to add a few comments on this Report.

We recognize the importance of the work of the IPPC and Codex Alimentarius Commission in setting standards, providing guidelines and capacity building for enabling Member Countries with SPS requirements in trade of agricultural produce.

We, therefore recommend that proper support in terms of both financial and human resources be made available to both IPPC and Codex for their 2006/2007 budget.

Water management and land improvement constitutes one of the pillars of NEPAD CADP for increasing agricultural production in Africa.

We rely on FAO to provide technical assistance in the implementation of irrigation schemes, in the formation of water users' associations, in land preparation and mechanization of field operations.

The delegation recognizes the importance of food safety issues in line with the ever increasing demands of both consumers and agro industries.

We support FAO's Strategy for ensuring Safe and Nutritious Food and this implies capacity and technical assistance in food safety to developing countries.

The livestock sector also plays a very important role in the national economy of many of the developing countries. It offers potential for employment creation in the rural areas and makes available food at affordable prices.

The present constraints in the trade of livestock and livestock products need to be addressed. With the collaboration of OIE and other international organizations, we would urge FAO to undertake proper disease control and vaccination programmes for control of major livestock diseases.

Bioenergy development provides new opportunities to developing countries in terms of employment creation, use of marginal lands for crop production and rural development and ensuring food security at household level. Taking cognisance of the long term investment in the bioenergy sector, we would like FAO to gather information from various countries where this programme is ongoing so that the proper recommendations could be made.

We also recommend that FAO set up an interdepartmental working group on bioenergy to better assist Members Nations in right decisions for implementing bioenergy projects. This is a new priority field that requires our attention in view of the ever-increasing price of fossil fuels.

Regarding Good Agricultural Practices, we support the recommendation that it should be on a voluntary basis. Right now Mauritius is implementing EU-funded projects for Good Agricultural Practices. Nonetheless, we would like to obtain additional information from the Secretariat regarding FAO's GAP approach.

Yohannes TENSUE (Eritrea)

I will concentrate my comments mainly on the International Conference on Agrarian Reform. However, before I do that I would like to give my endorsement of the Report of COAG.

Also a short statement regarding the comments given by Mr de Haen regarding my query this morning as to the merging of COAG and the Committee on Commodity Problems he said that the Independent Evaluation will evaluate and come with their report, but we do not know the boundary of evaluation - whether that issue will be evaluated or not. This answer should have been provided by the Secretariat - not at this time, but if it is given a sort of report, then how will it be rather than the Independent Evaluator? Whether it will be in his mandate or not, we don't know. So if a separate paper is prepared for the next session of the Council, it would be much appreciated.

Coming to the most important point, the International Conference on Agrarian Reform. If you want to win the heart of the people; if any government wants to win an election for support, if it comes with that subject, it will get overwhelming support from the people – but that is cheating.

We have gone through all those cycles of agrarian reform before the Cold War and after the Cold War. All of them have failed. There was an agrarian reform in Europe after the Second World War. The combatants, when the war was finished, were given huge slices of land. I will give you an example of a few countries: in the United Kingdom there are 238 000 farmers only; in France the farmers are 680 000, and the two of them can feed the whole of Europe. I don't know the exact numbers of farmers in the United States of America who are feeding the whole world, but we never talk about their reform and we never thought of adapting the type of land reform they have adapted, but even just now we heard the United States saying that agrarian reform for Africa or developing countries is very important, but it will fail.

FAO had been contacted soon after our independence – about fourteen years' ago – when the land was confiscated and redistributed to the tillers. It was the cause of degradation and most of the people lived at subsistence level with a typical size that Indonesia has indicated in their statement about two hectares and less. So that leaves people at subsistence level. They cannot compete in the market, even if they the market is open for export. At that level you just live on subsistence. So at the International Conference, the expectation of the developing world would be very high,

and I am sure they will not come with a solution. They do not know what size of land is appropriate for those farmers because they cannot formulate it as it depends on the population size of the country. The shifting of ownership of the land is not a safe solution, please at least expose why the Europeans have been successful. Why not look at other income-generating activities apart from giving access to land and production facilities. Promising land to people is not a solution in itself. Even if you reform, you will create more damage and FAO should choose very successful countries including, as I mentioned, those in Europe, and devise a way to apply that reform to different developing countries if ownership, for example, of land to women was emphasized in Eritrea. Land was given to women also, but still we face many problems. There was no good system of reform.

Land reform was emphasized during communism and now, after the Cold War, when communism has disappeared, the problem has still not been resolved. FAO, being the centre for reference or a knowledge Organization, has not been able to develop the right formula.

So these are the things that should be prepared and good advice and reference for the Brazil Conference should be given. I am not against the Conference. Indeed, it is very important but good concrete advice to countries should be provided.

Jorge Maria CUSTÓDIO SANTOS (Cape Verde)

I will be brief. Let me first at the outset congratulate the Secretariat for the presentation of this document that we endorse fully.

My comment will be on the convenience of the International Conference of Agrarian Reform. Let me first congratulate my dear colleague and friend from Brazil who since the beginning knows that the delegation of Cape Verde supports the idea. We support it because we believe that we are dealing with an expert endeavour towards achieving food security in many developing countries. Not only this, we are only addressing one aspect of fighting poverty, one of the main Millennium Development Goals.

Also, we will be, perhaps, beginning to pave the way to the settlement offer of the guideline rate on assessed resources and voluntary guideline number 8? that speaks of extra resources and assets for people's livelihoods.

So, generally speaking we support, and we would support as well, the proposal from Brazil on creating a Preparatory Committee for the Conference and we hope that the international community, mainly the donors, will support to cover its cost.

Yasser Abdel Rahman SOROUR (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

I shall be very brief in my statement because I do not wish to reiterate comments made by other delegations.

At the outset we wish to thank the Secretariat for preparing the Report of the Nineteenth Session of COAG. We would like to stress the importance of the agriculture sector for a continent such as Africa. In this regard, we believe that it is useful to stress the decision of the latest Summit of the African Union to have African countries delegate 10 percent of their overall GDP to the agricultural sector. This underscores the importance that heads of states and governments in Africa attach to this vital sector.

In this regard, I would like to mention the cooperation which we would like to develop between FAO and the Standing Committee of NEPAD that has stressed a number of programmes and projects which are necessary to develop agriculture in Africa.

I would like to express the support of the African Group to the conclusions contained in this Report and the support of our Group, which was expressed during the last meeting of COAG, to hold an International Conference on Agrarian Reform in Brazil. We hope that the preparations will be judicious so as to deal with the matter, also with extrabudgetary resources, to resolve the problems of agrarian reform and obtain the Millennium Development Goals.

We thank the Government of Brazil for their generosity with their proposal to host this Conference.

The holding in parallel of the Committee on Commodity Problems and COAG, we await the Report of the Independent Evaluation and we do not want anything to be detrimental to the two Commissions.

Sergio INSUNZA BECKER (Chile)

Seré muy breve. La delegación endosa el informe del Comité de Agricultura y, en particular, quisiera subrayar algunos aspectos como el que se refiere a la necesidad de que las prioridades sean definidas cada vez más con mayor coherencia con los objetivos de desarrollo del Milenio y también un aspecto que nos parece muy importante es la asistencia que la FAO debe continuar prestando a los temas del comercio agrícola, ya que un justo comercio agrícola es cuestión fundamental para los países más atrasados.

Al mismo tiempo la Delegación de Chile desea expresar nuevamente su apoyo a la realización de la Conferencia Internacional sobre Reforma Agraria y Desarrollo Rural, y suscribe las proposiciones que se han hecho tanto por parte de la Secretaría como por parte de la Delegación de Brasil. Chile espera en esa ocasión poder intercambiar experiencias con otros países en este tema tan fundamental como es el acceso a la tierra y el desarrollo rural.

También queremos expresar nuestro agradecimiento al Gobierno de Brasil por haber ofrecido hospedar esta importante reunión.

Luis Alemán ALFARO (Panamá)

Agradecemos y reconocemos la labor del Comité de Agricultura por su trabajo en la elaboración de este informe, el cual adoptamos; especialmente, en el tema de los alimentos inocuos y nutritivos pues la seguridad alimentaria cobra mucha importancia visto que los mercados internacionales serán más exigentes y, en este sentido, la trazabilidad en la cadena alimentaria será vital para la actividad.

De manera especial acogemos con beneplácito la celebración de la Conferencia Internacional sobre Reforma Agraria en nuestra hermana República de Brasil y desde ya le auguramos el mayor de los éxitos.

Ms Ruth OKWELE (Uganda)

The Uganda delegation recognizes the importance of sustainable agriculture and rural development and Good Agricultural Practices having a safer nutritious food supply and the impact of changing markets on globalization of the livestock sector.

The delegation, therefore, endorses the proposals made by the Committee on Agriculture. The delegation commends the FAO Secretariat for their proposal establishing the framework for balancing the impact of globalization on livestock markets. Livestock is indeed one of the key priority enterprises in Uganda for improving national and household food security and alleviating poverty. However, despite the enormous potential for production, the country has not yet benefited from the globalized markets, mainly due to unmet sanitary conditions and other barriers.

Emphasis by FAO for livestock improvement should be on capacity building in the following areas: formulation and implementation of appropriate policies and institutional frameworks, regulatory services and attendant livestock development strategies and programmes, developing standards and quality assurance mechanisms, value addition and processing, undertaking studies and data collection.

The delegation also appreciates the new initiatives FAO is proposing to undertake in the Programme of Work proposals covering bio-energy, the strategy for a safe and nutritious food supply and other demonstrative initiatives. However, the delegation is recommending for an increase in FAO budget in order to implement all these planned activities.

The delegation also supports the proposal for a World Conference on Agrarian Reform in Brazil and prays that it will receive adequate financial support to hold the Conference and also support to the least developed countries to attend it.

Mohamed Said Mohamed Ali HARBI (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

I would like to refer to paragraph 32 of the document. The Secretariat apparently wishes to present a joint FAO/WHO study and a study including other agencies on concept of nutritious food. The Secretariat is now apparently intending to open a new front on a point that we had already reached an agreement on. Apparently in the report, the matter of chronic disease and food is raised again. Now we do not want this matter to be opened again for the simple reason: the report was rejected by COAG and also by Council therefore, we feel that FAO placed itself once again in an embarrassing situation, especially in the delicate financial position it is in because this is a very marginal issue of no interest to developing countries.

I would like to reiterate an important comment made by my colleague from Eritrea; we have some reservation about the fact that COAG and the CCP be merged. We want our countries, or rather our colleagues from major countries, to work with us so that both Committees remain as they are because they are of great interest to developing countries. We could have a joint forum for the Committees but that is all. We need to stress the importance of dedicating two days to each Committee and have a parallel meeting, but merging these two Committees into one is something that we reject in principle.

We thank Brazil for organizing a conference on Agrarian Reform, we support their proposal and we hope that the Organization and donor countries may come to the assistance of Brazil to make this conference a success because the theme on agrarian reform is very important. Sudan has participated with a high level delegation at the Latin American and Arab Summit held in Brazil, so we support the proposal of Brazil.

Mohamad Ridha SULEIMAN (Oman) (Original language Arabic)

Our delegation wishes to thank the Secretariat for this excellent document submitted to the Council. We have the following comments to make.

Firstly, more research should be undertaken on organic agriculture technical assistance to developing countries should be provided regarding this area.

Secondly, to increase support for agrarian extension and to strengthen an exchange of information between developed and developing countries and capacity building.

Thirdly, to concentrate on countries that are affected by drought and that need support in the practices of irrigation for their agrarian reform.

Fourth, to revise the proposal of merging the two Committees (the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Commodity Problems). We believe that this could have a negative impact. Furthermore, we support the convening of a Conference on Agrarian Reform.

Modibo Mahamane TOURÉ (Mali)

Notre délégation souhaite marquer son approbation sur le Rapport de la dix-neuvième session du COAG ainsi que sur la plupart des recommandations qui ont été mentionnées.

Nous voulons saluer l'attention apportée à l'élevage et à l'importance du rôle de la FAO dans la lutte contre le criquet pèlerin ainsi que la mise à disposition des ressources suffisantes pour contribuer efficacement à maîtriser les invasions de criquets dans les pays touchés.

Nous souhaitons, à ce niveau, rappeler toute l'intensité du drame que des régions entières du monde ont eu à connaître du fait de l'invasion acridienne capable de mettre à néant les efforts du développement engagé, tant par la communauté internationale que par les pays. Nous voulons que les efforts qui ont été consentis par les uns et les autres, pour juguler l'invasion et la crise qui s'annonçaient dramatiques dans leur ampleur et dans leur portée, ne soient pas oubliés ou

considérés à un niveau moindre, parce qu'aujourd'hui la situation s'est calmée. Et c'est ça le malheur avec ce genre de fléau. Dès que la crise passe, on pense qu'on en a terminé.

Mais l'invasion acridienne nous a prouvé que l'on ne doit jamais baisser la garde avec une telle menace. Et il ne m'appartient pas de rappeler quelle était la situation tant au niveau de la FAO que des pays: les comités de crise mis en place - nous étions sur le pied de guerre pour mobiliser les donateurs. Nous pensons qu'il ne suffit pas d'écouter dans les rapports qu'il fait demander à la FAO de faire attention et d'assister les pays si on ne lui donne pas les ressources suffisantes pour le faire, et si on assiste pas les pays à prévenir de telles crises à l'avenir.

Nous accueillons également favorablement l'organisation d'une Conférence internationale sur la réforme agraire et le développement rural en 2006 au Brésil. Nous estimons que l'ADRD mérite encore plus d'attention qu'elle n'en a bénéficiée dans un passé récent. L'eau, à usage agricole, et nous insistons là-dessus. Quand nous parlons de l'eau, nous devons relever qu'il s'agit bien de l'eau à usage agricole, parce que nous avons tendance, souvent, à parler de la maîtrise de la gestion de l'eau en oubliant que d'autres domaines prennent le pas sur ce secteur qui nous concerne.

Et pour nous, l'eau à usage agricole doit constituer pour nos pays, un domaine prioritaire d'action et d'investissement, et ne devrait pas être reléguée au second plan par rapport à l'eau destinée à d'autres usages.

Sans eau, il n'y a pas de production, et sans production il n'y a pas de sécurité alimentaire, et la FAO doit continuer à jouer son rôle de sensibilisation et de mobilisation autour de la question de l'eau à usage agricole.

Monsieur le Président, je voudrais terminer en posant une question qui me paraît essentielle au Secrétariat.

En lisant le document, nous avons relevé à plusieurs endroits, lorsqu'il n'est pas dit qu'il faut accorder des ressources suffisantes à certaines activités, quelque soit le niveau du budget, il est dit que pour d'autres, il faut accorder des ressources suffisantes, des ressources supplémentaires, des ressources additionnelles, des ressources encore plus croissantes.

Je voudrais savoir, par rapport aux scénarios, puisque le Comité n'a pas eu l'opportunité de discuter sur cette question, car il a été dit que les trois scénarios seront proposés mais que la discussion des niveaux et des volumes se ferait ailleurs et à d'autres niveaux -. Nous disposons de ce rapport, nous avons vu le sommaire, nous connaissons les scénarios qui nous ont été proposés. Quel serait le scénario qui, pour le Secrétariat du Comité serait à même de lui permettre d'exécuter, ou de faire face aux besoins qui ont été présentés dans ce document, pour lequel nous avons demandé, et recommandé qu'il y ait des ressources supplémentaires, suffisantes.

Ms Madina SEPHOU (Observateur du Bénin)

Merci Monsieur le Président pour avoir accordé la parole à la délégation de mon pays, le Bénin.

Comme c'est la première fois que je prends la parole au cours de cette session, permettez-moi de féliciter Monsieur le Président du Conseil de la FAO et son Secrétariat pour le tact avec lequel le Rapport a été élaboré et la qualité de ce document qui, à notre humble avis, est tout à fait satisfaisante.

Qu'il me soit également permis de féliciter la FAO et son Directeur général pour les efforts, combien louables, qu'ils ne cessent de déployer pour accompagner mon pays dans la lutte pour la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle durable et la réduction de la pauvreté.

Le Bénin a toujours été cité parmi les pays ouest africains qui sont à l'abri de l'invasion des criquets pèlerins ou alors, il est cité parmi les pays où les risques d'une telle invasion ne sont pas significatifs.

Dans l'une des déclarations du Ministre béninois en charge de l'Agriculture, au cours de la dernière session du Comité de l'agriculture, qui a eu lieu cette année dans cette même salle, il a eu

l'occasion d'affirmer que le Bénin ne doit plus être considéré comme un espace géographique à l'abri de ce fléau qui, comme vous le savez si bien, ne laisse survivre aucune culture sur son passage.

Force est aujourd'hui de constater, qu'après les frayeurs et les inquiétudes occasionnées par l'invasion des criquets pèlerins dans les pays voisins, notamment le Niger, mon pays a été envahi par un grand essaim de criquets pèlerins dans sa partie septentrionale, précisément dans les communes frontalières au Burkina Faso, au Niger et au Nigeria.

Dans une synergie d'action avec les services techniques de la Protection des végétaux du Niger, cet essaim qui couvrait un espace de plus de 50 km², a traversé la forêt du Parc W et a atteint le sud de la République du Niger. Cet essaim qui a eu comme itinéraire la Guinée, le Burkina Faso, le Bénin et le Niger, est retourné au mois de mai dernier au Bénin en se scindant en deux colonies: l'une positionnée dans le Parc W, à cheval sur le Burkina Faso, et l'autre installée du côté de l'île de l'Été.

Des cadavres de femelles retrouvés au Bénin en l'absence de traitement au Burkina Faso et au Niger, indiquent très probablement que leur mort serait survenue peu après. A l'heure où je m'adresse à vous, certainement que des oothèques sont sur le sol du Bénin et poursuivent naturellement leur processus d'évolution qui les conduira à l'éclosion d'une nouvelle génération de criquets pèlerins à partir du territoire béninois comme base d'invasion non seulement du Bénin mais aussi des autres pays.

Pour un pays comme le Bénin, qui ne dispose pas de moyens adéquats à la hauteur de l'enjeu que constitue la lutte contre ce redoutable fléau, les risques encourus, si rien n'est fait, sont énormes et multiples.

En effet, la partie septentrionale de mon pays produit plus de 90 pour cent de la production de coton graine, la quasi-totalité des tubercules et racines notamment l'igname, la pomme de terre, etc., la grande partie des céréales comme le sorgho, le mil, le maïs, le riz, etc., une grande quantité de cultures maraîchères, principalement l'oignon, le piment, les légumes feuilles, les pastèques, les courges, etc.

Le Bénin qui sert actuellement de grenier de réserves de produits vivriers pour soutenir le Niger qui subit présentement les affres de l'invasion de ce fléau, doit faire face à une catastrophe alimentaire sans précédent lorsque l'on sait que la zone nord de mon pays est en pleine installation des cultures qui doivent donner des récoltes à la fin de la campagne agricole en cours.

La disette va inévitablement sévir au Bénin et aggraver l'insécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle, ce qui va compromettre le droit à l'alimentation de la plupart des béninois.

Par ailleurs, le coton étant la principale culture d'exportation du Bénin (80 pour cent des recettes commerciales formelles), l'économie subira un choc quasi fatal et sa croissance sera inversée. Les risques potentiels sont donc aussi bien au niveau individuel (je veux dire les productrices et les producteurs ruraux notamment) qu'au niveau national avec toutes les dérives économiques et sociales qui s'en suivront et dont personne ne saurait imaginer ni l'étendue ni l'intensité.

Mon pays a adressé à la FAO une requête pour son appui technique, matériel et financier pour accompagner le Bénin dans ses efforts pour faire face à cette situation préoccupante.

Mon pays voudrait compter sur la FAO pour revoir sa position vis-à-vis de lui en ce qui concerne ce fléau et nous donner l'appui nécessaire pour juguler ce mal avec les pays voisins.

Enfin, le Bénin soutient le chronogramme qui est proposé, pour l'organisation au Brésil de la Conférence internationale sur la réforme agraire et le développement rural.

Anton KOHLER (Observateur de la Suisse)

Monsieur le Président, mon pays remercie le Secrétariat pour le document CL 128/9 que nous approuvons.

J'aimerais rappeler ici, que mon pays estime important que la FAO accorde à l'agriculture et au développement rural durable, une priorité élevée et des ressources suffisantes dans le cadre de son Programme de travail, en mettant l'accent sur une coordination efficace.

Nous sommes également favorables au développement d'une approche basée sur les bonnes pratiques agricoles.

Mon pays estime, par ailleurs, opportun et utile, d'envisager une meilleure intégration des travaux du Comité des produits et de ceux du Comité de l'agriculture, ceci notamment, afin d'améliorer la participation des pays membres.

En ce qui concerne la proposition relative à l'organisation, au Brésil, d'une Conférence internationale sur la réforme agraire et le développement rural, j'aimerais relever que mon pays est, en principe, favorable à la réalisation d'une telle Conférence.

Nous ne sommes, toutefois, pas en mesure, à l'heure actuelle, de nous exprimer sur la question d'une éventuelle participation financière.

Nils FARNERT (Observer for the International Federation of Agricultural Producers)

IFAP is the International Federation of Agricultural Producers all over the world. We have in membership 500 million farm families and the fact is that amongst those, about 850 million people in the world who suffer from hunger, 50 percent are farmers and an additional 25 percent farm labourers who are very close to our Members.

Surely, the next year's Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural development will be of the greatest importance for our farmers, not only the poor ones, but for farmers all over the world.

We are very grateful for Brazil for having taken the initiative of organizing next year's conference and we are grateful to the Secretariat for giving it such a strong support and of course, for the strong support given by so many of the delegates in this room.

EL PRESIDENTE

Para concluir con esta sesión vamos a dar la palabra al Presidente del Comité de Agricultura y a la Subdirectora General del departamento quienes van a responder a preguntas y hacer los comentarios finales.

Pavel SKODA (Chairman, Committee on Agriculture)

Let me just, in my capacity, welcome the confirmation of the widest support to the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and let me join the numerous thanks to Brazil as the host country.

Ms Louise FRESCO (Assistant Director-General, Agriculture Department)

There was one question earlier this morning from India about a collaboration in the area of livestock with the CGIAR. I would like to confirm to India that, in fact, the livestock area is the area we probably have the strongest collaboration with the CGIAR and several institutions and it is a model of co-funding of activities, particularly our livestock and poverty programme. So I think you can rest assure that is in good hands.

Continues in French

Je vais changer au français pour répondre au Bénin.

Madame, vous avez posé une grande série de questions sur les criquets pèlerins. Nous partageons, bien sûr, vos soucis. Je vais demander à un de mes collègues de descendre pour vous faire part des détails des activités au Bénin.

Je crois qu'il vaut mieux faire cela en bilatéral plutôt qu'en Session plénière.

Continues in English

I will go back to English to reply to a very large series of questions that have been asked for clarification on the issue of Good Agriculture Practices and I welcome the opportunity to give you some elements there because I think this is an important subject and I was not able to do so during the COAG session itself.

For a start, I would like to refer to paragraph 27 of the Report of COAG itself, which I think spells out quite clearly some of the concerns that have been raised again and the approach that FAO should take.

Let me say to you very clearly that the work that FAO will undertake in this area will focus on information and technical assistance, as well as capacity building. We feel this is important because there is a proliferation of sets of Good Agriculture Practices that are already being developed in many quarters by the industry, by some governments and by other federations. The field has been actually quite confusing in such a way that we feel we should assist as a neutral platform the developing countries, in particular, in their decision-making on how they want to confront this series of good agriculture practices and the requirements that some producer organizations or consumer organizations would like to impose. So our role, as usual as it has been also in the area of, for example, biotechnology, is as a neutral provider of information as a basis for decision-making.

I think that the question that is also in your mind is on the relationship between Good Agriculture Practices and SARD - Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development. Let me confirm to you that SARD is a much wider concept, which deals not just with production but with a whole series of rural issues, having to do also with education, with institutions, with general issues of rural development.

Of course, Good Agriculture Practices and SARD are related but GAP - Good Agriculture Practices - is a more limited activity where basically it deals with technical practices in agriculture production at the farm level and the institutions and policies that are required to provide that.

The principles, however, both of SARD and of GAP are quite similar. They deal with economic viability, with environmental sustainability and with social acceptance. In that sense, I believe there is nothing new. This refers very much to Agenda 21 and Chapter 14 in particular, that both the Council and COAG have had many occasions to review.

The new aspect, perhaps that GAP adds to this is an increased emphasis on food quality and food safety. This is logical because those are really new subjects that have come up in the last two years and were not as prominent in the early 1990s when the agenda for Rio was being developed. So let me be very precise on this. It is not the intention of the Secretariat for FAO to play a new role in developing its own standards or certification or even taking a position on whatever good agriculture practices are being proposed elsewhere. It is really a role of brokerage, a role of information, of assisting countries to develop their strategies of capacity building, and I am very glad to see that several of the countries with whom we have worked have taken this up in their statements.

I think this gives you an answer to the questions. We are not talking about a prescriptive approach. We are not talking about a normative approach. We are really talking about information, technical assistance and capacity building.

So, I hope that with this I have laid a rest to your fears that we are talking about something that would increase barriers to trade. If there are any concerns, it is especially because there are so many systems of information available in this area of good agriculture practices and we feel we should clarify what is there and make it available to our Member Countries.

Hartwig de HAEN (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Department)

Just two very brief replies.

One regarding Thailand's observation on paragraph 32, which refers to the concept of expected nutritional value. As is already said in that paragraph, the Secretariat is developing this concept further working with WHO. Just to make sure that where such terms are used, they are commonly defined and there is no confusion created. We will keep Members informed through the appropriate channels.

Another remark regarding Eritrea. I just want to clarify that when I mentioned the proposed merger and the other form of streamlining and coordinating the work between COAG and the CCP, I refer to the analysis being presented, being prepared for presentation to the Programme and Finance Committees. I did not make any reference to the Independent Evaluation of FAO and I did not wish to do so.

Hosny EL-LAKANY (Officer in Charge, Sustainable Development Department)

Just to confirm what the Secretary of COAG mentioned, that the Secretariat welcomes the Council's endorsement of the COAG proposal for the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development to be held in Brazil in 2006.

We also appreciate the generous offer of Brazil to host the Conference and the need to quickly identify the membership of the steering committee and identify extra- budgetary resources to hold the Conference.

We look forward to working together with the Member Countries and the civil society in implementing this proposal.

Aziz Mekouar, Independent Chairman of the FAO Council, took the Chair

Aziz Mekouar, Président Indépendant du Conseil de la FAO, assume la présidence

Ocupa la presidencia Aziz Mekouar, Presidente Independiente del Consejo de la FAO

9. Preparations for the 33rd Session of the FAO Conference**9. Préparatifs relatifs à la Trente-troisième Session de la Conférence de la FAO****9. Preparativos para el 33^o período de sesiones de la Conferencia de la FAO**

9.1 Arrangements for the Session and Provisional Timetable (CL 128/12)

9.1 Organisation de la session et Calendrier provisoire (CL 128/12)

9.1 Preparativos para el período de sesiones y calendario provisional (CL 128/12)

9.2 Deadline for Nominations for the Post of Independent Chairperson of the Council (CL 128/12)

9.2 Date limite de dépôt des candidatures au poste de président indépendant du conseil (CL 128/12)

9.2 Plazo para la presentacion de candidaturas al cargo de Presidente Independiente del Consejo (CL 128/12)

9.3 Nomination of the Chairperson of the Conference, and the Chairpersons of Commission I and Commission II (CL 128/12)

9.3 Désignation du président de la conférence et des présidents de la commission I et de la commission II (CL 128/12)

9.3 Presentación de candidaturas para los cargos de Presidente de la Conferencia y Presidentes de las Comisiones I y II (CL 128/12)

9.4 Nomination of Nine Members of the Credentials Committee (Countries) (CL 128/12)

9.4 Désignation de neuf membres de la commission de vérification des pouvoirs (PAYS) (CL 128/12)

9.4 Presentación de candidaturas para nueve miembros del Comité de Credenciales (Países) (CL 128/12)

LE PRÉSIDENT

Nous allons poursuivre avec le point 9 de l'ordre du jour: "Préparation de la trente-troisième session de la Conférence de la FAO". Nous allons examiner, l'un après l'autre, les sous-points 9.1, 9.2, 9.3 et 9.4.

Je vous propose de passer immédiatement au sous-point 9.1 de l'ordre du jour sur l'organisation et le calendrier provisoire de la session de la Conférence, que vous pouvez trouver dans le document CL 128/12.

Monsieur Rouighi, Secrétaire général adjoint de la Conférence et du Conseil va introduire ce sous-point.

SECRÉTAIRE GÉNÉRAL ADJOINT

Le document CL 128/12 contient les propositions concernant la conduite de la trente-troisième session de la Conférence, ainsi qu'un ordre du jour et un calendrier provisoire de la session. La Conférence votera sur les points suivants:

- l'admission des états candidats à la qualité de membre; à ce jour: le Bélarus;
- la nomination du Président indépendant du Conseil;
- la nomination du Directeur général; l'élection des Membres du Conseil et le montant du budget pour le prochain exercice biennal.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Puis-je considérer que le Conseil adopte le calendrier provisoire de la Conférence tel qu'il est présenté à l'Annexe B du document CL 128/12? Oui? Très bien. Il en est ainsi décidé.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

LE PRÉSIDENT

Nous allons passer maintenant au sous-point 9.2 de l'ordre du jour intitulé: "Date limite pour la présentation des candidatures à la fonction de Président indépendant du Conseil". Le document pertinent porte la référence CL 128/12. Il est proposé dans le paragraphe 13, du document CL 128/12, que la date limite pour la soumission des candidatures à la fonction de Président indépendant du Conseil soit fixée au vendredi 9 septembre 2005 à 12 heures et que les Membres du Conseil soient informés des candidatures le vendredi 16 septembre 2005. Y a-t-il des objections aux dates proposées? Non? Très bien. Je vous remercie. Il en est ainsi décidé.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

LE PRÉSIDENT

Continuons maintenant avec le sous-point 9.3 de l'ordre du jour sur la nomination du Président de la Conférence et du Président des Commissions I et II. Le document CL 128/12 se réfère à cette question. Après consultation entre les Groupes régionaux, il est proposé qu'un Représentant du Vietnam soit tenu à la fonction de Président de la Conférence. Y a-t-il des objections? Non? Très bien. Je vous remercie. Donc, le Président de la Conférence viendra du Vietnam.

Comme cela se fait habituellement, le Directeur général prendra contact avec le Gouvernement du Vietnam, et communiquera le nom de son Représentant à la prochaine session du Conseil en novembre 2005. Le Conseil confirmera à cette occasion la proposition de candidature en vue de la soumettre à la Conférence. En ce qui concerne la fonction de Président de la Commission I de la Conférence, il est proposé qu'un pays de la région Amérique latine et Caraïbes, le Costa Rica, occupe cette fonction. Enfin, j'ai été informé que l'Arménie a été désignée pour la fonction de Président de la Commission II. Y a-t-il des remarques à ce sujet? Non? Très bien. Il en est ainsi décidé.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

LE PRÉSIDENT

Nous passons maintenant au sous-point 9.4 de l'ordre du jour, soit à la désignation des neuf Membres de la Commission de vérification des pouvoirs. Le document pertinent est encore le document CL 128/12. Les Membres de la Commission de vérification des pouvoirs désignés par les Groupes régionaux sont les suivants: Bulgarie, Croatie, El Salvador, Etats-Unis, Indonésie, Maroc, Saint Marin, Tanzanie et Yémen. Les Membres de la Commission pourront ainsi commencer leurs travaux dans les délais; c'est-à-dire quinze jours avant l'ouverture de la session de la Conférence. Y a-t-il des remarques à ce sujet? Non? Très bien. Je vous remercie.

Nous passons au sous-point 18.1 qui a trait à l'attribution de la médaille Margarita Lizárraga, le document pertinent porte la référence CL 128/INF/9. Comme vous vous le rappellerez, la Conférence de la FAO a institué à sa vingt-neuvième session en novembre 1997, la médaille Margarita Lizárraga, décernée tous les deux ans par la Conférence aux propositions du Conseil, à un individu ou à une organisation s'étant distingué dans l'application du code de conduite pour une pêche responsable. Cette médaille rend hommage à Madame Margarita Sosedo Lizárraga, fonctionnaire principal de liaison au Département des pêches, qui a joué un rôle décisif dans la promotion du code de conduite pour une pêche responsable, et qui, pendant près de 40 ans a été active dans le domaine des pêches, faisant preuve d'un grand dévouement à l'égard de la FAO et d'une volonté résolue de favoriser la promotion du secteur des pêches, notamment, dans les pays en développement. J'aimerais donner la parole à Monsieur Nomura, Sous-directeur général, chargé du Département des pêches, sur ce point.

Monsieur Nomura. Je crois qu'on a été trop vite. Bon, en attendant que Monsieur Nomura revienne et si vous êtes d'accord, nous passerons au point 17 de l'ordre du jour.

V. OTHER MATTERS

V. QUESTIONS DIVERSES

V. OTROS ASUNTOS

17. Revised Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and Other Main Sessions 2005-2006 (CL 128/INF/4)

17. Calendrier révisé 2005-2006 des sessions des organes directeurs et des autres réunions principales de la FAO (CL 128/INF/4)

17. Calendario revisado para 2005-2006 de los períodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores y de otras reuniones importantes de la FAO (CL 128/INF/4)

Examinons donc le point 17 de l'ordre du jour intitulé: "Calendrier révisé des sessions des organes directeurs et des principales réunions de la FAO pour 2005-2006". Le calendrier qui se trouve au document CL 128/INF/4 indique les sessions déjà tenues pendant cet exercice biennal, ainsi que les sessions prévues pour le restant du biennium. Les changements par rapport à l'Annexe F du Rapport de la cent vingt-septième session du Conseil sont indiqués par un astérisque. Y a-t-il des commentaires sur ce point de l'ordre du jour? Non?

Mooneeshwar RAMTOHUL (Mauritius)

The clarification from the Secretariat recalled that early this year the Director-General of FAO announced the holding of a Special Ministerial Meeting on event of SIDS on agriculture.

Just before the Conference meeting to evaluate the First Ministerial Meeting of SIDS in agriculture organized by FAO in 1999 and a Mauritius Programme of Action adopted by SIDS in January 2005. Since this event has not been included, I would just like clarification from the Secretariat.

SECRÉTAIRE GÉNÉRAL ADJOINT

Cet événement est prévu en marge de la Conférence. Il aura lieu le 22 novembre 2005, en marge de la prochaine Conférence.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Très bien. Ayant examiné le calendrier contenu dans le document CL 128/1/4, le Conseil a noté que sa prochaine session se tiendra du 16 au 18 novembre 2005. Immédiatement avant la trente troisième session de la Conférence. Y a-t-il des commentaires? Non? Il en est ainsi décidé.

Je reviens au sous point 18.1. Je passerai la parole à Monsieur Nomura.

18. Any Other Matters

18. Autres questions

18. Otros asuntos

18.1 Margarita Lizárraga Medal (CL 128/INF/9)

18.1 Médaille Margarita Lizárraga (CL 128/INF/9)

18.1 Medalla Margarita Lizárraga (CL 128/INF/9)

Ichiro NOMURA (Assistant Director-General, Fisheries Department)

The FAO Conference at its Twenty-ninth Session in November 1997, by Resolution 18/97, instituted that the Margarita Lizárraga Medal to be awarded biennially by the Conference upon the proposal of the Council to a person or organization that has served with distinction in the application of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

For the 2004/2005 Award, the Selection Committee received seven nominations.

The Committee unanimously agreed that the Award be given to the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Programme (AIDCP).

The AIDCP is an international agreement whose objective is to progressively reduce dolphin mortality in the tuna purse-seine fisheries in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO), and to ensure the sustainability of tuna stocks and associated species in the EPO pelagic ecosystem.

The Parties to the Agreement are Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, the European Community, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, the United States, Vanuatu and Venezuela.

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) provides the Secretariat and other services for the Agreement. The AIDCP has diligently applied the relevant principles set forth in the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, in particular those aspects relating to the precautionary approach and to the utilization of fishing gear and techniques which minimize the catch of non-target species. It achieved an enormous reduction in dolphin mortality.

You may wish to invite the Council to endorse the nomination of the Agreement on International Dolphin Conservation Programme and recommend that the Medal be presented to its representative by the Director-General, as part of the proceedings of the next session of the Conference.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Le Conseil est donc invité à approuver la sélection du "Collectif international d'appui à la pêche artisanale" et à recommander que la médaille Margarita Lizárraga soit décernée à son représentant par le Directeur général à l'occasion de la trente-troisième session de la Conférence.

Le Conseil approuve-t-il la nomination du "Collectif international d'appui à la pêche artisanale"?

Vladimir HERNÁNDEZ LARA (México)

Para la delegación de México, intervenir en este tema es un motivo de doble honor. Reiteramos nuestro agradecimiento a la FAO por haber instituido desde 1997 la entrega de la medalla Margarita Lizárraga a una persona u organización que impulse la aplicación del código de conducta para la pesca responsable. Se trata de un galardón en honor de la difunta Doctora Margarita Lizárraga, mexicana ejemplar y funcionario de esta Organización que con su gran capacidad, vocación y talento impulsó la adopción del código al que he hecho referencia, que es un instrumento de referencia internacional en el sector pesquero.

La segunda parte que motiva mi intervención es la gran satisfacción que en esta ocasión la medalla Margarita Lizárraga se otorgue al acuerdo relativo al Programa Internacional para la Conservación de los Delfines, administrado por la CIAT, la Comisión Interamericana para el Atún Tropical, que es un instrumento sumamente valioso para mi país como parte del acuerdo, así como para un importante número de países latinoamericanos, ya que nos permite impulsar el desarrollo de una pesca sustentable en nuestra región en beneficio de nuestras sociedades y, particularmente, las vinculadas al sector pesquero. El APIC es un acuerdo que ha dado resultados tangibles y cuantificables en años recientes y apoyo plenamente el otorgamiento de la medalla.

Willem BRAKEL (United States of America)

United States would like to add its voice to those speaking in support of the IDCP and, particularly, to express our strong support for the recognition of the programme through the Lizarraga medal. I should just note that the IDCP agreement stands as a strong example of what can be achieved when governments working in close cooperation with their fishing industries and other concerned interest groups, make a commitment to work together towards a common objective.

The result, in this case, is an agreement that is among the most effective, most transparent and best monitored agreements for the conservation of living marine resources in the world today.

We are very pleased to see that the IDCP agreement is being signalled out for this high level of recognition.

Sra. María Eulalia JIMENEZ DE MOCHI (El Salvador)

Unas pocas palabras para unir mi voz a lo que acaban de expresar los representantes de México y de los Estados Unidos y a expresar la satisfacción de El Salvador, miembro del APIC, en que haya sido concedida esta medalla a este importante acuerdo sobre el cual ya expresaron tanto el Delegado de México como el Delegado de los Estados Unidos, las inmensas bondades que tiene.

IV. CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS (continued)
IV. QUESTIONS CONSTITUTIONNELLES ET JURIDIQUES (suite)
IV. ASUNTOS CONSTITUCIONALES Y JURÍDICOS (continued)

15. Report of the 78th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (Rome, 5-6 April 2005) (CL 128/5)

15. Rapport de la soixante-dix-huitième session du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques (Rome, 5-6 avril 2005) (CL 128/5)

15. Informe del 78º período de sesiones del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos (Roma, 5-6 de abril de 2005) (CL 128/5)

LE PRÉSIDENT

Merci. Très bien, le Conseil approuve-t-il la nomination du "Collectif international d'appui à la pêche artisanale"?

Il me semble que oui. Il en est ainsi décidé. Je vous remercie.

It was so decided

Il en est ainsi décidé

Así se acuerda

LE PRÉSIDENT

Nous passons maintenant au point 15 de notre ordre du jour intitulé "Rapport de la soixante-dix-huitième session du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques". Le document relatif à ce point porte la référence CL 128/5.

Je passe maintenant la parole à Monsieur Maiga, Président du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques qui vous présentera le thème traité dans le Rapport de la soixante-dix-huitième session du CQCJ relatif à la Commission du criquet pèlerin pour la région centrale.

En ce qui concerne les deux autres thèmes abordés par le CQCJ, après consultation avec les groupes régionaux, il est proposé que le CQCJ les examine à nouveau au cours de sa prochaine session en octobre.

Adam Maiga ZAKARIAOU (Président du Comité des Questions constitutionnelles et juridiques)

Etant donné que la présentation du Rapport de la soixante-dix-huitième session du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques se limite à un seul point, il s'agit de l'amendement à l'accord portant création de la Commission de lutte contre le criquet pèlerin dans la région centrale.

A ce sujet, le Comité a rappelé que cet accord avait été approuvé par le Conseil à sa quarante-quatrième session en juillet 1965 et l'accord est entré en vigueur le 21 février 1967.

Le Comité a également noté que le dit accord avait été amendé par deux fois en 1977 et en 1995. Successivement à sa vingt-quatrième session tenue en avril 2004, la Commission avait proposé que l'Article IX soit amendé de façon à ce que le nombre des Membres du Comité exécutif de la Commission soit porté de 5 à 7.

La Commission a estimé que, compte tenu de l'augmentation du nombre de ses membres, cet amendement lui permettrait de remplir ses fonctions avec une plus grande efficacité et efficience. Après examen de l'amendement proposé le Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques est arrivé à la conclusion que cet amendement, était acceptable d'un point de vue juridique et a recommandé de présenter le texte figurant au paragraphe 14 du document CL 128/5 au Conseil pour approbation.

L'amendement figure donc au paragraphe 14 du document portant "Rapport de la soixante dix-huitième session du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques".

LE PRÉSIDENT

Y a t-il des commentaires. Non? Donc, nous pouvons considérer que cette partie du Rapport est adoptée.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

Nous avons terminé avec le point 15 de notre ordre du jour et la séance sera levée dans deux minutes lorsque je dirai que le Comité de rédaction aura sa première réunion dans la Salle du Mexique à 18 heures.

Par ailleurs, les Délégués sont priés de prendre leur invitation chez le Représentant permanent des Pays-Bas pour une réception qui aura lieu à la Salle Aventino à 17h30 demain après-midi. Les invitations se trouvent au "Document Desk".

Voilà, je vous remercie, la séance est levée et bon travail pour le Comité de rédaction.

The meeting rose at 17.15 hours

La séance est levée à 17h15

Se levanta la sesión a las 17.15 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Twenty-eighth Session Cent vingt-huitième session 128º período de sesiones
Rome, 20-24 June 2005 Rome, 20-24 juin 2005 Roma, 20-24 de junio de 2005
SEVENTH PLENARY SESSION SEPTIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SÉPTIMA SESIÓN PLENARIA
23 June 2005

The Seventh Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.55 hours
Mr James Melanson,
Vice-Chairman of the Council, presiding

La septième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 55
sous la présidence de M. James Melanson,
Vice-président du Conseil

Se abre la séptima sesión plenaria a las 9.55 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. James Melanson,
Vicepresidente del Consejo

II. ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP (continued)
II. ACTIVITÉS DE LA FAO ET DU PAM (suite)
II. ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y EL PMA continuación)

8. World Food Programme
8. Programme alimentaire mondial
8. Programa Mundial de alimentos

8.1 Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board on its Activities in 2004 (CL 128/2)

8.1 Rapport annuel du Conseil d'administration du PAM relatif aux activités entreprises par le Programme en 2004 (CL 128/2)

8.1 Informe anual de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA sobre las actividades del PMA en 2004 (CL 128/2)

CHAIRMAN

Having made good progress in the previous three days of our meeting, we have before us this morning one agenda item remaining, that is, agenda item number 8 World Food Programme.

Sub-item 8.1 Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board on its Activities in 2004.

The document before is CL128/2.

We are fortunate to have with us Ms Sheila Sisulu, Deputy Executive Director of the WFP, and I would like to invite her now to introduce the report.

Ms Sheila SISULU (Deputy Executive Director, World Food Programme)

I am pleased to be here representing the Executive Director of WFP who regrets not being able to be here this morning, as he is in New York, preparing for ECOSOC.

To paraphrase the words of James Morris, the Executive Director of WFP "Nothing is more important or will have a greater payoff than strong relationships with partners."

Our partnerships are key to the success of our operations, and those who truly benefit from our partnerships are the needy people we are assisting together.

In 2004, WFP collaborated with UN partners, other international organizations and the World Bank in 75 countries. WFP's main partners included UNICEF, with 116 projects in 61 countries; FAO our second most important partner with 75 projects in 43 countries. For example, in Sierra Leone, FAO and WFP worked together in the development of the first food security strategy for development the Government.

In 22 countries WFP participated in the Consolidated Appeals Process and in 8, it contributed to flash appeals to mitigate consequences of natural disasters. Donors pledged and contributed about 85 percent of the total CAP requirement of the Programme.

Two WFP staff, both women, were deployed as Residence Coordinators in Lebanon and Kazakhstan, while three more were included in the pool of Resident Coordinator candidates.

In 2004 WFP started administering chartered air services on behalf of all UN agencies for humanitarian and other requirement, except peacekeeping. WFP's Aviation Unit provided short-term air services at the request of UN agencies in Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, Chad, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan and West Africa and also collaborated with UNHCR to agree on arrangements for long-term air services.

For WFP operations, 2004 was another year of need for hundreds of millions around the world. They ranged from 140 million people struck by natural disasters such as the earthquake in Baam, Iran and the Tsunami in the Indian Ocean, to the many more suffering every day from chronic hunger. In total, WFP planned to deliver food aid to 81 million people in 2004. By the end of the

year the Programme met the emergency needs and supported the economic and social development of nearly 113 million people in 80 countries delivering 5.1 million tonnes of food. In Iraq, we fed 26 million people through one of the largest bilateral operations in WFP's history. WFP purchased 3.6 million metric tons of food, valued at over US\$1 billion, 25 percent more than in 2003, close to 50 percent of total food aid in 2004. These accomplishments reflect the continuing support of our donors, the contributions of our UN families and partners and, most significantly, the genuine commitment of our staff for those in need.

WFP distributed emergency food aid and protracted relief and recovery assistance to 63 million people in 69 countries in 2004. More than half of these were in Africa. The situation in southern Africa remained particularly difficult throughout 2004 due to the "triple" threat of HIV/AIDS food insecurity and weakened capacity for governance.

WFP food assistance to the HIV/AIDS infected ensured increased effect of the anti-retroviral treatments and helped impoverished families affected by HIV/AIDS to cope and carry on. A number of interventions were designed to assist orphans and vulnerable children. One example is the Junior Farmer's Field and Life school Project in Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia. This joint FAO/WFP scheme provided agriculture and entrepreneurship training for orphans and vulnerable children, and increased the capacity of local institutions to respond to these children's special needs.

WFP supported HIV/AIDS programming in 41 countries in Africa, Asia and Central America in 2004, reaching 21 of the 25 most HIV infected countries of the world.

In Darfur WFP was feeding 1.7 million people per month by the end of the year, delivering over 26 000 metric tons of food commodities. Over 140 000 tons of food was delivered in Darfur between the start of the emergency operation in April and the end of 2004. This was achieved against all odds in the face of widespread insecurity towards the end of 2004.

Within hours of the Indian Ocean tsunami, which hit on 26 December, 2004 WFP set in motion an emergency operation which dominated the first quarter of 2005 in complexity and magnitude. WFP provided food assistance over six months for 2 million people in affected countries in the region: Indonesia, the Maldives and Sri Lanka. The combined value of WFP's appeal was US\$256 million in addition to working with emergencies, WFP also kept its dual function, looking at improving longer-term food security in development prospects for 24 million people in 52 countries. We expanded our school feeding initiatives in West Africa and co-hosted a Global Ministerial Consultation school feeding, mother-and-child nutrition of projects, and HIV/AIDS initiatives helped mitigate the impact of hunger and malnutrition for millions of the most vulnerable pregnant and lactating mothers and the young children. Tackling child hunger means helping nations out to reach out for a richer and healthier future, as child hunger in particular, cripples human potential by causing death, retarding physical and mental development, slowing the progress of nations. By the end of the Maternal and Child Health with the Government of India, WFP in 2004 included 16.6 million children in its school feeding programme throughout the world to assist them with nutritious food to continue their schooling successfully. In Afghanistan, WFP food assistance was used to support the world's largest ever de-worming campaign, treating 4.5 million children in 8 000 schools, in partnership with UNICEF, WHO and the national governments.

More details on our partnerships and coordination with UN and other partners are available on our WFP Annual Report presented at the January 2005 session of the Executive Board, where as you can consult the WFP Annual Performance report, presented at the same annual Board where the Session in June, for more 2004 operational highlights.

Let me conclude by paraphrasing the words of President Obasanjo of Nigeria, who recently spoke at WFP's Executive Board session: Hungry people become angry people. There is a clear link between household food security, global food security and global peace. He said by reducing hunger we are making a better and more peaceful world for all of us and by taking hunger out of

poverty you have poverty. So finally to reach this common objective we count on the continued help and support of your countries

CHAIRMAN

Thank you very much, Ms Sisulu, for that introduction. I should say that I was remiss in my introductions by not also acknowledging the Secretary of the Board of WFP, Ms Claudia Van Roll, who I assume can give us some guidance later on when we are responding to delegates' questions.

Ewald WERMUTH (Netherlands)

I am speaking on behalf of the European community and its 25 Members States. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania as well as the candidature countries Croatia and Turkey align themselves to this statement.

The Annual Report has already been extensively discussed in the Annual Meeting of the WFP Board in February 2005. Actually, there are no issues that need to be specifically discussed by this FAO Council. We therefore propose that the Council takes note of the report.

Kiala Kia MATEVA (Angola)

Monsieur le Président, l'Angola est Membre du Conseil d'administration du PAM et a participé à la session du Conseil du PAM qui avait approuvé le projet de décision contenu à la page 4 du rapport. Elle représente les pays africains Membres du Conseil d'administration du PAM au sein du Bureau. C'est à ce titre, que notre délégation prend la parole au nom de la région Afrique.

Monsieur le Président, avant tout, notre délégation voudrait souligner que les commentaires de notre groupe ont été présentés en son temps lors de l'examen de ce document et continue à être des leurs. C'est pourquoi nous allons limiter notre intervention à quelques points que nous considérons importants.

Je voudrais, avant tout remercier le Directeur exécutif du PAM pour ce rapport et Madame Sisulu, sa représentante, qui nous l'a présenté, et pour le dynamisme qu'il a injecté dans les activités du PAM. C'est un document complet qui présente les résultats obtenus par l'Organisation en 2004. Notre délégation note, avec satisfaction, la part active prise par le PAM à toutes les activités du groupe des Nations Unies pour le développement. Madame Sisulu nous a dit, dans sa présentation, que la FAO était le deuxième partenaire après l'UNICEF dans les projets ou opérations conjointes. C'est pourquoi, nous nous félicitons de cette coopération et nous encourageons le PAM à poursuivre ce partenariat et à le renforcer de plus en plus.

Les tableaux insérés nous montrent les différentes mesures prises par le PAM pour la mise en œuvre des résolutions de l'Assemblée générale et sur les points forts soulevés par la trente-deuxième session de la Conférence de la FAO. C'est pourquoi, notre délégation et notre groupe régional salue et félicite une fois de plus le PAM, son Directeur exécutif et son personnel.

Parmi les grandes préoccupations à signaler, nous voulons citer le manque de ressources pour la mise en œuvre de certains programmes importants. Cette situation limite l'action du PAM à les poursuivre: la réduction ou la diminution de ces ressources multilatérales annuellement. Ces grandes préoccupations sont également celles de nombreuses délégations du monde du Conseil d'administration et d'autres régions. C'est une occasion pour nous, de féliciter tous les donateurs habituels potentiels pour continuer à soutenir les actions du PAM, de féliciter également les nouveaux donateurs et encourager d'autres à suivre leur exemple.

Nous insistons sur le lien qui doit exister entre les urgences et le développement; en d'autres termes, la transition des secours au développement. Une part importante de l'aide alimentaire doit aller vers les projets de développement. Le Directeur exécutif continue à informer le Conseil sur l'évolution de cette question. Ce qui permet au Conseil de donner régulièrement des orientations et décider de la marche à suivre.

Dans le cas spécifique de l'Afrique, nous félicitons le PAM pour la coopération entreprise avec le NEPAD sur les actions prioritaires identifiées, notamment, le programme des cantines scolaires en Afrique et d'autres. C'est l'occasion pour nous, de féliciter le Directeur exécutif qui ne cesse d'informer le Conseil sur le suivi de cette coopération et sans oublier, surtout, son rôle d'envoyé spécial du Secrétaire général des Nations Unies pour l'Afrique costale qui, comme vous le savez, Monsieur le Président et chers Membres du Conseil, l'Afrique costale souffre de la sécheresse et de la pandémie du VIH/SIDA, tout ce qui provoque l'insécurité alimentaire.

Nous voulons également souligner l'apport du PAM au PDI du Soudan. Vous connaissez la situation du Soudan. Le PAM a fait et continue à apporter l'aide alimentaire aux pays du Sahel surtout à ceux qui souffrent annuellement de l'invasion acridienne.

Monsieur le Président, notre délégation et la Région Afrique approuve le document, félicite le PAM, appuie et soutient son Directeur exécutif, Monsieur James Morris et son personnel qui ne ménage aucun effort au risque de leur vie pour apporter l'aide alimentaire aux populations nécessiteuses pour sa participation active à toutes les activités communes avec d'autres agences des Nations Unies.

Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

I would like to thank Ms Sisulu for her useful introduction on the Annual Report of WFP. I am especially deeply impressed by the saying "let us say, hungry people become angry people".

My intervention will be very brief since a fruitful and in-depth discussion was already made at the Annual Session of the WFP Executive Board. From this point of view the Japanese delegation fully endorses the statement made by the distinguished delegation from Netherlands on behalf of the European Community. Let me conclude my intervention just by expressing Japan's commitment to continue supporting WFP, in particular, regarding empowerment related activities, such as food for work, food for training and food for education.

Hanadi KABOUR (Syrian Arab Republic) (Original language Arabic)

I should like to speak on behalf of the Group of Near East Regions.

Our Group would like to thank WFP for the achievements carried out so far in the field of emergencies and protracted relief and rehabilitation operations. However, challenges are still tremendous in the face of WFP in the field of development assistance which lack the necessary funding. Actually, funding has decreased recently; that is why we should like to urge WFP and donor countries in particular to attach the necessary importance to development projects, particularly as the first and foremost objective of WFP is to promote development in the field of economic and social sphere.

We should like to stress here that the five strategic objectives of WFP have equal importance and we should like to recall those objects: to save lives in the face of crises; promoting livelihoods and help people to become resilient to shocks; promote the health of infants, children, pregnant women and lactating women; to promote school attendance; and gender equality in the field of education and acquisition of skills, in addition to the assistance given to countries in order to put an end to the poverty and hunger scourge.

Our Near East Group should like to stress the importance of the sovereign right of countries and, therefore, WFP should coordinate and cooperate with these governments. We should like to welcome the new donor countries for the assistance given, particularly in the field of empowering and capacity building.

We should like to thank WFP for giving priority to capacity building in an independent way and the assistance given to that effect. We do sincerely hope that WFP will maintain a proper balance between human and financial resources as far as the strategic and priority areas but, in particular, the five strategic objectives, and the other activities of WFP.

Vladimir HERNÁNDEZ LARA (México)

La Delegación de México agradece y apoya el Informe de la Sesión Anual de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA y reitera que en la medida de que vaya adquiriendo mayor fuerza la adopción de medidas respecto a la gestión para la consecución de resultados en el Programa, el Informe Anual se convertirá en un instrumento de gestión basado en datos concretos, cada vez más importante, que orientará de mejor manera los planes, prioridades y políticas destinados a prestar asistencia a las personas más vulnerables y aquejadas por el hambre en el mundo.

Asimismo la Delegación de México exhorta al PMA a seguir buscando mecanismos que le permitan dar solución a los factores que aún afectan la distribución puntual de los alimentos a los beneficiarios, que es uno de los problemas que enfrenta el Organismo.

Por último, la Delegación de México desea hacer referencia a las acciones de colaboración que durante el 2004 llevó a cabo nuestro país para apoyar las actividades que, en la lucha contra el hambre, el PMA desarrolla en la región de América Latina, en particular en Centroamérica, a través de la participación de funcionarios mexicanos como ponentes en los foros que el Programa organizó sobre programas alimentarios en esos países.

Alexander G. TITARENKO (Observer for Russian Federation)

The Russian Federation is a Member of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme and has a good level of cooperation with this great humanitarian organization for many years.

In 2003, the Russian Federation made its first voluntary contribution to the WFP fund and, starting this year, my country has become a permanent donor of WFP. Our contribution for 2005 is US\$11 million.

We very much appreciate what WFP is doing, especially: its school feeding programme, its assistance and aid to vulnerable groups of populations in emergency situations, its developments projects, its businesslike approach to problems arising here or there in the world; the transparency of all its activities; its non-bureaucratic Secretariat and high professionalism of its employees here in its headquarters, as well as all those who are working in the field.

We consider that close cooperation between FAO and WFP, along with other UN system humanitarian agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector is very important. Only with joint efforts it is possible to make progress and to do the best in fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals. Cooperation has to avoid duplication, minimize costs, help more needy people, and give them more aid and assistance.

As most of us here are also Members or Observers of FAO and WFP, at the same time this delegation would like to confirm the decision taken at the Annual Session of WFP and take it as it is.

William BRAKEL (United States of America)

The United States of America appreciates the progress made by the World Food Programme in the contribution to the UN's operational activities.

We welcome the enhanced cooperation between FAO and WFP, both at headquarters and in the field. We look forward to their continuing collaboration on the twin track approach to food security, on needs assessments, on emergency responses and the provision of agricultural inputs and on nutrition.

We also commend WFP for expanding its donor base by attracting new donors for ongoing improvements in its business process review and for its commitment to continuing process improvement.

Madina SEPHIOU (Observateur du Bénin)

Merci, Monsieur le Président pour avoir accordé la parole à la délégation de mon pays, le Bénin.

Je félicite la Représentante du Directeur exécutif pour sa brillante présentation.

Notre délégation remercie vivement le Directeur exécutif du PAM pour les efforts multiples et multiformes qui sont accomplis dans nos différents programmes.

Mon pays salue les progrès accomplis avec efficacité.

Je voudrais tout simplement savoir dans quelle mesure le PAM contribue à la gestion des effets et impacts liés aux invasions des criquets pèlerins dans les différents pays qui sont concernés.

Ms Sheila SISULU (Deputy Executive Director, World Food Programme)

Thank you very much to all the delegates who made interventions, for your kind words, your commendations, your appreciation that you expressed. As I said in the introduction to the Report, we are only able to do what we do because of the support of all of our donors – the ones that have been with us for a long time and the new ones that we welcome and appreciate, like the Russian Federation.

I would just like, in that regard, to say that we do, however, share the sentiment raised by the delegate from Angola, speaking on behalf of the African Region, that the availability of resources is uneven at best for some of our key strategic objects. However, we continue to strive and look forward to all our Member States being donors and all our Members States participating with us in the programmes that we are engaged in.

There was, I believe, only one specific question related to the locusts and my brief response to it was that we are, in this particular instance, following the lead of FAO because they are the Organization that has to take the lead in this matter. However, I shall read a paragraph that gives more detail to this sentiment.

"WFP supported the response to the desert locust crisis in the Sahel countries by making available, at FAO's request and with Italian Government funding, an aircraft based at their UNGMC at Brindisi, Italy, to airlift 160 metric tonnes of pesticides to Mauritania, Senegal and Chad. In collaboration with FAO, CILSS and the Famine Early Warning System, WFP lead missions to 4 of the most potentially affected countries – Mauritania, Mali, Niger and Senegal to evaluate the impact on food security and coping mechanisms dialogued to face the crisis."

So that is the detail of the answers we gave and, yes, we respond in collaboration, first with FAO and with others.

Aziz Mekouar, Independent Chairman of the Council, took the Chair

Aziz Mekouar, Président indépendant du Conseil, assume la présidence

Ocupa la presidencia Aziz Mekouar, Presidente Independiente del Consejo

CHAIRMAN

I would like to thank our colleague from Canada for his wonderful Chairmanship.

I would like to remind the Members of the Drafting Committee that its second meeting will be convened at 15.00 today in the Mexico Room and not at 16.00 as printed in the Order of the Day.

I wish you well with your drafting.

Continues in French

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je voudrais vous dire que nos travaux ont avancé avec beaucoup d'efficacité et de rapidité. Nous avons donc conclu nos travaux. Je pense qu'il n'y aura pas beaucoup de difficultés au Comité de rédaction, vu le bon esprit qui a régné pendant cette réunion du Conseil. Nous espérons donc et

j'espère que nous allons clore cette session du Conseil demain à 19 heures par l'adoption du Rapport. Cela permettra à tout le monde d'avoir un bon week-end tranquille.

Je crois qu'il y aura un événement special, je vais le dire en anglais: "*The implementation of the International Treaty and Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*", "will be held from 11.00 to 12.30 hours tomorrow in the Green Room".

The meeting rose at 10.35 hours

La séance est levée à 10 h 35

Se levanta la sesión a las 10.35 horas

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Twenty-eighth Session Cent vingt-huitième session 128º período de sesiones
Rome, 20-24 June 2005 Rome, 20-24 juin 2005 Roma, 20-24 de junio de 2005
EIGHTH PLENARY SESSION HUITIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE OCTAVA SESIÓN PLENARIA
24 June 2005

The Eighth Plenary Meeting was opened at 19.20 hours
Mr Aziz Mekouar,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding

La huitième séance plénière est ouverte à 19 h 20
sous la présidence de M. Aziz Mekouar,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la octava sesión plenaria a las 19.20 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Aziz Mekouar,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

**ADOPTION OF REPORT
ADOPTION DU RAPPORT
APROBACIÓN DEL INFORME**

DRAFT REPORT - PARTS 1 – 12 (CL 128/REP/1, CL 128/REP/2, CL 128/REP/3, CL 128/REP/4, CL 128/REP/5, CL 128/REP/6, CL 128/REP/7, CL 128/REP/8, CL 128/REP/9, CL 128/REP/10, CL 128/REP/11, CL 128/REP/12)

LES PROJETS DE RAPPORT – PARTIES 1 – 12 (CL 128/REP/1, CL 128/REP/2, CL 128/REP/3, CL 128/REP/4, CL 128/REP/5, CL 128/REP/6, CL 128/REP/7, CL 128/REP/8, CL 128/REP/9, CL 128/REP/10, CL 128/REP/11, CL 128/REP/12)

LOS PROYECTOS DE INFORME, PARTES 1-12 12 (CL 128/REP/1, CL 128/REP/2, CL 128/REP/3, CL 128/REP/4, CL 128/REP/5, CL 128/REP/6, CL 128/REP/7, CL 128/REP/8, CL 128/REP/9, CL 128/REP/10, CL 128/REP/11, CL 128/REP/12)

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je déclare ouverte la huitième séance de la cent vingt-huitième Session du Conseil.

Nous allons à l'adoption du Rapport de la session. J'invite les Membres du Conseil à s'assurer qu'ils ont bien avec eux les différentes parties du Rapport. Ces parties sont au nombre de douze et portent les références CL 128/REP/1, CL 128/REP/2 jusqu'à CL 128/REP/12.

Je voudrais demander à Monsieur Willem Brakel des Etats-Unis d'Amérique, qui a présidé le Comité de rédaction, de présenter le Rapport.

Willem BRAKEL (Chairman, Drafting Committee)

I am pleased to inform you that the Drafting Committee was able to complete the task of preparing the Draft Report that you now have before you efficiently, harmoniously and on time. We finished our work in just two sittings: three hours on Wednesday evening and about eight hours on Thursday afternoon and evening. We were able to progress as we did for several reasons:

First, the members of the Committee approached their task with a seriousness of purpose and in a true spirit of cooperation. Although we were summarizing Council discussions on some potentially contentious issues, we in the Committee worked together in a positive manner to try to capture in a fair and balanced way the sentiments and positions expressed in Plenary.

Second, the Secretariat provided outstanding support on substantive and policy questions, thereby greatly facilitating our work. The Secretariat's preliminary drafts provided an excellent starting point for our deliberations. As usual, officers from the the various FAO departments were on hand to provide helpful information and advice as we shaped and refined the drafts.

Third, the Conference, Council and Protocol Affairs Division, under Mr Rouighi, provided first-rate support in both the logistics and mechanics of preparing, editing, translation and circulation of drafts. We wish to acknowledge, in particular, the efforts of Mr Fadda, Mr Dowd, Ms Saif, Ms Piacentini, and Mr Petrov, although we recognize that many others, too, laboured quietly in the background.

Fourth, we conducted each of our drafting sessions, on a trial basis, with equipment that allowed us to see current the draft projected on a screen as we were editing it collectively. We understand that this is the first time that this technology has been applied in a Council setting. We felt that it

greatly facilitated and speeded up the drafting process, and strongly recommend that this practice be continued in the future.

And, fifth, our work in the Committee was made much easier because the Council's discussions and decisions in Plenary this week had proceeded so smoothly. And that, we believe, was due in no small part to your leadership, Mr Chairman, in steering the Council towards positive outcomes.

We appreciate all the support we received, and are pleased to present this draft report to the Council for its consideration and recommend its adoption en bloc.

LE PRÉSIDENT

M Brakel, je souhaite vous remercier ainsi que les Membres du Comité de rédaction pour le travail accompli. Le Conseil souhaite-t-il adopter le rapport de la session en bloc? Y-a-t-il des observations à ce sujet?

Le Rapport de la 128ème session du Conseil est adopté.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je voudrais maintenant donner la parole à Monsieur le Directeur général.

LE DIRECTEUR GÉNÉRAL

Quand on arrive au terme d'une session aussi fructueuse, mais aussi fatigante, je pense que la meilleure chose à faire est de parler le moins possible. Je voudrais donc vous exprimer toute ma gratitude pour la manière dont vous avez dirigé les travaux et remercier tous ceux qui ont participé, non seulement aux discussions, mais à la rédaction des différents rapports et qui nous ont permis de gagner, en plus, un jour de travail puisqu'il était prévu que nous finissions demain.

A tous, donc, je voudrais exprimer ma profonde gratitude pour le travail important que vous avez bien voulu faire pour nous guider dans les actions que nous serons amenées à conduire pour répondre à la fois au Mandat de l'Organisation mais aussi aux demandes des Etats Membres.

Encore une fois, tous nos remerciements pour votre soutien, pour votre action et tous nos souhaits de retour dans les meilleures conditions dans vos foyers et pour ceux qui restent avec nous à Rome, naturellement, notre espoir est de les revoir bientôt et de continuer notre excellente collaboration.

Je vous remercie de votre aimable attention.

Bui QUANG MINH (Vietnam)

Monsieur le Président, le Vietnam désire remercier sincèrement les Membres du Conseil d'avoir choisi le Vietnam comme candidat à la présidence de la trente-troisième session de la Conférence de la FAO.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Merci, Monsieur le délégué du Vietnam et je réitère mes félicitations pour votre candidature à la présidence de la Conférence.

Ewald WERMUTH (Netherlands)

On behalf of the European Community and its 25 Member States, as well as on behalf of Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, I would like to express brief closing statement.

Actually I do want to compliment the Council, you as Chair, Ambassador Mekouar and the entire FAO Secretariat for the excellent results and the efficient way we conducted the work this week.

The European Community welcomed the substantive discussions on ways and means to further the implementation of the goals of the World Food Summit and the Millennium Development Goals. We have clearly shown FAO's way forward as a major and proactive player within the UN system and as an advocate for agricultural and rural development and in its contribution and in its contribution in achieving the MDGs.

We welcome the Independent External Evaluation process, which is well on its way and is taking place in a positive, collaborative atmosphere. We are looking forward to see the final report of the Intersessional Working Group at the next session of the Council in November.

Finally, we would like to thank the Chair of the Drafting Committee, Mr Willem Brakel, for his leadership and the efficient drafting process and we thank our Member States colleagues for the constructive collaboration. The regional groups have proved to be a useful and effective mechanism during this Council.

Helmy BEDEIR (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the African Group and on my own behalf, I too would like to share with Council very much the same considerations as expressed by other speakers. That is, to extend to all delegations my thanks for the efforts deployed.

I would also like to reiterate what was said by my colleague, His Excellency the Ambassador from the Netherlands, in highlighting the intense nature of this Council session and the resolve on the part of all to pursue the objectives, the MDGs and development progress and also the work of the Intersessional Working Group on Independent External Evaluation and in the interest shown in everything that was discussed in the course of this Council session.

By way of conclusion, I would like to thank the Independent Chairman of Council for his wisdom, for the experience that he gave proof of during his helmsmanship, and also thank the Chairman of the Drafting Committee and all the members of the Drafting Committee for the excellent work which they did in such a way as to enable a report to come before this Council that was approved en bloc, and in record time, and hoping that the same success shall shine over future sessions.

Ms Lamya AL-SAQQAF (Observer for Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the Near East Group I would like to thank His Excellency, Ambassador Aziz Mekouar for his leadership during this Council session and also extend thanks to the Secretariat for their constant support in the course thereof.

I would like to thank Mr Brakel very much for his excellent Chairmanship of the Drafting Committee and wish all success in future Council sessions.

Richard J. HUGHES (United States of America)

I would like to thank a number of people here, particularly the Drafting Committee members. I participated over a number of years on drafting committees and I have found a great synergy this time among the regions, which tells me that there is greater cooperation in this Organization among the regions, and there are various reasons for that and I commend all the members from the various regions.

I would also like to extend my gratitude for a very very well conducted Drafting Committee by my colleague from the United States of America, but also to the FAO Secretariat - they did an absolutely fabulous job under the time constraints, the constant shifting of papers to get them to the membership of this Organization so that we could continue the business of poverty reduction, malnutrition and all the other things that are important to the members of this group.

Fousseyni DIARRA (Mali)

La délégation du Mali vous remercie de lui avoir donné la parole pour s'insinuer dans le dernier virage dans lequel vient de s'engager notre Session et je voudrais, en cette circonstance, qu'il me soit permis de faire état de notre grande satisfaction pour les résultats auxquels nous sommes parvenus et vous féliciter pour la dextérité avec laquelle vous avez su mener cette session.

Je voudrais aussi féliciter le Comité du Secrétariat pour la qualité des documents qui, dans leur ensemble, font preuve de fidélité avec l'esprit des débats qui ont émaillés notre session. Qu'ils en soient salués.

Je voudrais terminer, Monsieur le Président, en réitérant l'intérêt que ma délégation accorde à un appui plus poussé de la FAO auprès des pays en développement dans les négociations pour l'avènement d'un environnement sain en matière de commerce international et dans la mise en œuvre de programmes permettant une évolution rapide de l'agriculture pluviale vers une agriculture basée sur la maîtrise de l'eau, cheminement nécessaire aujourd'hui pour parvenir à la sécurité alimentaire et à la lutte contre la pauvreté dans nombre de nos pays, notamment de ceux au sud du Sahara, dont le Mali.

Noel D. DE LUNA (Philippines)

On behalf of the Asia Group, before we congratulate everybody, we would like to express our serious reservation on the dates of the Draft Report. It was stated that from 20-25 June 2005, when it should really be up to 24 June. Otherwise, it will not reflect the efficiency by which the Council had worked. But seriously on behalf of the Asia Group, we would like to congratulate everybody. This is one of the most harmonious drafting experiences the Asia region ever had.

Flavio MIRAGAIA PERRI (Brasil)

Tengo el honor de hablar en nombre del grupo de países de América Latina y el Caribe. No está la Presidente de Costa Rica y me han pedido hacerlo.

Debo decir que estamos todos muy contentos de esta reunión, no sólo por el equilibrio que hemos obtenido en la redacción del informe; debemos agradecer a nuestro amigo Brakel por toda la labor que ha hecho para coordinar las distintas posiciones dentro del Comité de Redacción. Debemos destacar la importancia que tiene su conducción, Sr. Presidente, la importancia de la tranquilidad que usted nos da con su categoría diplomática, con su estilo personal que nos asegura buenos resultados. No puedo dejar de resaltar el trabajo de la Secretaría que ha obtenido, en esta reunión, un grado de eficiencia extraordinario. Creo que la intervención del Director General sobre los proyectos de la Cumbre del Milenio merezca toda la atención de la comunidad de países que trabajan en este foro. Es allí donde vamos a demostrar la importancia de la Organización y el sistema de Naciones Unidas en la progresión de los objetivos de los países para superar el subdesarrollo y favorecer la idea del desarrollo integral y que debe hacerse equilibradamente. Creo que el Director General ha obtenido una primera relación importante, interesante y sustantiva sobre la cual continuaremos trabajando. Mis congratulaciones al Director General.

LE PRÉSIDENT

Je voudrais tous vous remercier pour l'excellent esprit de coopération que vous avez démontré pendant cette session du Conseil. Cela nous a permis de terminer nos travaux très rapidement et de permettre justement au Comité de rédaction de terminer ses travaux le 24 et non pas le 25 juin. Je voulais, bien entendu, remercier le Secrétariat et surtout les interprètes qui nous ont beaucoup, beaucoup, beaucoup aidé et sans lesquels nous ne pourrions pas travailler.

Il ne me reste plus qu'une chose à faire, c'est de vous souhaiter un bon week-end en déclarant la cent vingt-huitième Session du Conseil close.

The meeting rose at 19.40 hours

La séance est levée à 19 h 40

Se levanta la sesión a las 19.40 horas