

council

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ROME

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REPORT OF THE FOURTH SESSION
OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE (COAG)

(Rome, 20 - 28 April 1977)

Summary

The Report of the Fourth Session of the Committee on Agriculture is herewith presented for the Council's information. The matters requiring attention by the Council are listed after the table of contents.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>MATTERS REQUIRING ATTENTION BY THE COUNCIL</u>	Page iv
	<u>Paragraphs</u>
<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	1 - 5
<u>REVIEW OF FAO'S PROGRAMME OF WORK IN THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL SECTOR</u>	6 - 103
Implementation of the Programme of Work 1976-77	6 - 39
Medium and Long-Term Outlook for Food and Agricultural Development	40 - 59
Summary Programme of Work and Budget 1978-79	60 - 103
<u>SELECTED DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS</u>	104 - 150
Reducing Post-Harvest Food Losses	104 - 124
Small Farmers' Development	125 - 142
<u>PROGRESS REPORTS ON ACTION SINCE THE THIRD SESSION</u>	143 - 150
Agricultural Extension and Training	143 - 145
Improving Productivity in Less Favourable Environments	146 - 149
International Agricultural Adjustment	150 - 150
<u>AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE COMMITTEE</u>	151 - 153
<u>OTHER BUSINESS</u>	154 - 158
<u>DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION</u>	159
 <u>APPENDICES</u>	
A - Agenda of the Fourth Session	
B - List of Delegates and Observers	
C - List of Documents	
D - List of Member Nations of the Committee	
E - Statement by Dr E. Saouma, Director-General	
F - Amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Committee	

MATTERS REQUIRING ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL

Medium and Long-Term Outlook for Food and Agricultural Development

The Council to note the views of the Committee on the primary importance of the two major programmes, namely increasing production in developing countries and increasing world food reserves to a safe level (paragraphs 47-58).

The Council to consider, with the assistance of the Programme Committee, the question of the content and future presentation of the document on the Medium and Long-Term Outlook and its relation to other medium-term documents (paragraph 59).

Summary Programme of Work and Budget

The Council to note the views of the Committee on the main priorities viz. Post-Harvest Food Losses, Trypanosomiasis and Tick-borne diseases, Seeds and Fertilizers, Rural Development, CARIS, Commodities, Food Security, and other programme changes in considering the programme of work and budget of the two Departments in 1978-79 (paragraphs 60-62).

Reducing Post-Harvest Food Losses

The Council to note the Committee's:

- (i) request to initiate the preparation of a list of loss reduction activities, including the resources being devoted to them, of member countries and aid agencies (para.108);
- (ii) endorsement of the guidelines presented for future loss reduction activities by member countries, by FAO and by other agencies (para. 109);
- (iii) endorsement of the principle of the action programme proposed by FAO (para 112);
- (iv) emphasis on the need for training in post-harvest technology and practices at all levels (para 113);
- (v) support for the proposal to establish an FAO Fund for Food Loss Reduction (para. 114);
- (vi) general support of the criteria proposed for approval of projects (para. 119);
- (vii) approval of the proposed mechanism for dealing with project requests submitted by member countries (para. 121).

Agenda for its Fifth Session - Other Business

The Council to suggest further subjects under Selected Development Problems for the agenda for the Fifth Session of the Committee (paragraphs 154-158).

INTRODUCTION

1. The Fourth Session of the Committee on Agriculture was held in Rome from 20 to 28 April 1977. The Session was attended by 67 of the 83 members of the Committee, by observers from 5 other Member Nations, by the Permanent Observer from the Holy See, by representatives of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Labour Organisation, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme, and by 10 observers from international organizations. The list of member nations of the Committee is attached as Appendix D and the list of participants as Appendix B.

Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairmen

2. In accordance with Rule I of its Rules of Procedure, the Committee elected its officers for the biennium 1977-79. Mr. B. Samanez Concha (Peru) was elected Chairman of the Committee; Mr. G. de Bakker (Netherlands) First Vice-Chairman, and Mr. A. I. Machayo (Kenya) Second Vice-Chairman.

Adoption of the Agenda and Arrangements for the Session

3. The Agenda as adopted is set out in Appendix A. The list of documents is attached as Appendix C.

4. The Committee appointed the following members to the Drafting Committee: Benin, Colombia, Indonesia, Iraq, Sweden, Switzerland, Uganda, United States. Mr. H. A. Ismet Hakim (Indonesia) served as Chairman of the Drafting Committee.

Statement by the Director-General

5. The Committee heard a statement by Mr. E. Saouma, Director-General. The text of the statement is attached as Appendix E.

REVIEW OF FAO'S PROGRAMME OF WORK IN THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK 1976-77

6. This item was included in the agenda following the recommendation of the Committee at its second session in 1974, later endorsed by the Eighteenth Session of the FAO Conference, that the Committee should review the implementation of the biennial programmes of work in areas falling within its competence. Since it was the first time that the implementation of the programme of work was to be discussed as a separate agenda item, the Committee felt that the discussion should focus on the broad lines of work rather than be a detailed review of all the activities listed.

7. The Committee expressed satisfaction about the inclusion of this item in the agenda since this provided a background for establishing future priorities in the forthcoming biennial programme of work and budget. This review should be continued in future sessions. The document should be improved by reflecting more clearly the priority areas and by a deeper analysis and evaluation of results achieved. The organization-wide evaluation of the Regular Programme recommended by the Council at its 70th session would facilitate this. The document should also cover the activities of the Regional Offices.

8. The Committee gave considerable attention to the major constraints identified in the implementation of programmes and projects. It noted that field programmes had, in general, been hampered by lack of human, financial and material resources. In particular, the Committee drew attention to the serious lack of trained manpower at all levels which was evident in many programmes. It strongly supported the Director General's priority emphasis on "grassroots" training and underlined the need to strengthen national systems of agricultural education, training and extension at all levels, and complementary rural institutions.

International Fertilizer Supply Scheme which since 1974 has supplied half a million tons of fertilizers (approximately 200,000 mt of plants nutrients) to needy countries, and continue to operate.

52. The Committee recognized that increases in the use of pesticides needed to be carefully monitored to avoid environmental problems. In this connection post control by non-chemical means as part of an integrated post control system should be encouraged. At the same time further efforts were needed to develop new pesticides with lesser potential ecological side effects. The Committee noted the special role which FAO needed to play in the coordination of control of migratory pests which required international action.

53. The Committee agreed that high quality seeds of improved varieties were usually the central part of effective production package, and that there was a need to improve the seed industries in many developing countries. Besides the lack of resources one of the constraining factors recognized in this area was the limit in availability of skilled manpower, and instances were cited of the development of special training facilities for this purpose. Some delegates stressed the need that, in addition to seed production activities performed by governmental institutions, provision should be made for incentives to attract participation of private enterprises.

54. Carefully balanced use-systems for power which recognized local conditions when integrating mechanical power into hand and animal labour use into agriculture were felt to be important by the Committee. Nevertheless, it was stressed that wherever feasible and economically desirable, non-mechanical power sources should receive preference because of employment and foreign exchange considerations. The Committee also recognized that commercial energy inputs into agriculture represented at present a very small share of total energy use, and that efficiency considerations in their use were similar to those of all high-priced cash inputs.

55. In the development of land resources for agricultural production including the opening up of new land the Committee suggested that agricultural development strategies should consider possible trade-offs between area expansion and yield increases as main approaches. The possible dangers for degradation from mis-use of land resources as a result of intensification in land use were felt to be avoidable if amongst other activities sufficient research was carried out to establish the capacity of different lands. In this connection, the Committee urged to speed up the publication of the Soil Map of the World and appreciated the efforts being made within the framework of FAO's Agro-Ecological Land Capability-Study.

56. It was suggested that more attention be paid to the use of agricultural by-products for the feeding of pigs and poultry. For ruminant production the main emphasis should be on grassland usage. Furthermore, gains in the productivity of individual animals based on the improvement of the genetic capability, in the feed base and in health care, should receive added attention. It was indicated that in specific locations goats and sheep should receive new attention as a source of meat.

57. The Committee emphasized the importance of education and training, especially with respect to extension activities related to teaching farmers new technology. These activities however had to be based on well tested locally applicable and practical packages if the effort was to succeed. The Committee recalled its useful discussions and the recommendations of the previous session of COAG and suggested that bringing women more directly into development action was necessary.

58. The Committee reiterated its view that the issues involved in achieving a more satisfactory food and agricultural development were very complex. The Committee however, felt that this complexity was becoming better understood and was reflected in more realistic approaches to rural problems. Undoubtedly, the primary objective should be to ensure that both nationally and internationally the agricultural sector of developing countries received the benefit of a higher priority in terms of policy emphasis, of incentives to producers, and in the allocation of resources and assistance.

59. The Committee also considered the question of the content and future presentation of the document on the Medium and Long-Term Outlook bearing in mind the view that conditions and objectives changed comparatively slowly. A related point was the existence of other medium-term documents and their respective inputs into FAO's biennial programmes which were not apparent from the documents. The Committee recommended that the Council, with the assistance of the Programme Committee, might consider these questions with a view to any necessary changes.

SUMMARY PROGRAMME OF WORK AND BUDGET 1978-79

60. The Committee in line with its expanded terms of reference endorsed by the Eighteenth Session of the Conference reviewed the appropriate sections of the Organization's biennial programme of work. The Committee had before it an extract of the Council Document CL 71/3 on the proposed priorities and programme changes for the 1978-79 biennium in Major Programme 2.1 Agriculture, covering the main activities of the Agriculture and Economic and Social Policy Departments, the Regional Offices and Joint Divisions, arranged in line with the new programme structures approved by the Council at its 70th Session.

61. The Council at its 66th Session had agreed that the Committee should focus on the general lines of work and the broad aspects of agricultural development rather than on a comprehensive review of the various specific activities. It was widely felt that COAG was the appropriate forum in which to discuss the rationale of selecting priorities. The Committee considered the document COAG 77/5, which gave it the opportunity to focus its discussion on broad priorities and thus influence the shaping of the substantive technical programmes of the two Departments.

Priorities

62. It was noted that the following six main priorities are reflected in the proposed programme changes in Major Programme 2.1 Agriculture, namely, Post-Harvest Food Losses; Trypanosomiasis and Tick-borne diseases; Seeds and Fertilizers; Rural Development; CARIS; as well as Commodities and Food Security. There was general concurrence with the high priority given to these subjects.

Post-Harvest Food Losses

63. The Committee supported that the high priority given to this subject was in line with one of the major resolutions of the Seventh Special Session of the General Assembly. It further noted that the Organization will be making a determined attack on avoidable losses in food production, particularly on the post-harvest system. National programmes would be initiated to improve storage of food crops at farm, village and urban levels, including rodent and pest control measures, improved harvesting, collection, handling, drying and storage; and to introduce better processing and marketing facilities. The Committee noted the Director-General's proposal to strengthen Headquarters and Regional Offices to initiate this campaign and to provide a focal point for stimulating activities.

64. It was noted that the cost/benefit ratio of Post-Harvest Loss reduction activities was favourable and reached down to the poorest and most vulnerable groups, and as such it was an important issue for developing countries in their efforts to make more food available to their populations.

65. The Committee welcomed the initiatives that had been taken so far, and were assured that the activities of crop protection, and storage and handling would be fully integrated with marketing, credit and processing components. There would not be any duplication with the coordinating activities of the Group for Assistance on Storage of Grains in Africa (GASCA).

Trypanosomiasis and Tick-borne diseases

66. The Committee strongly supported the high priority given to the programme against these diseases and their vectors, which have inhibited livestock development and many of which have affected the health of the population in large areas of the African continent.

67. On tsetse and Trypanosomiasis control, the Committee emphasized that control of the fly and the disease was not an end in itself; but that together with the health measures which are being undertaken under the Programme it was essential to provide for the socio-economic development of cleared areas. This involved all facets of rural development.

68. It was recognized that the expansion from pilot control operation to large-scale area development of the magnitude envisaged could be covered only to a limited extent under the Regular Programme and would require very substantial additional funds, e.g. extra-budgetary, bilateral and multilateral. The Committee considered it desirable that bilateral aid should be channelled through multilateral institutions. The Committee stressed that the Organization had a responsibility under its Regular Programme to coordinate the programme, assist in the mobilization of resources, undertake training and develop a long-term plan. Special contracts would be made with national institutions in Africa to monitor and alleviate the possible impact on the environment as the tsetse control programme proceeds; and that the work on tick and tick-borne disease control in its relation to the trypanosomiasis programme would be expanded.

Seeds and Fertilizers

69. The Committee agreed that the Organization should continue to place priority on the promotion of improved seed production, introduction of seed and planting material, and the efficient utilization of fertilizers and manures, and their provision at reasonable prices. The Committee urged that FAO continue its close cooperation with international research centres concerned with seeds and fertilizers. The importance of developing the private sector input to seed production was also noted.

70. The Committee considered that while seed and fertilizers were of the highest priority in promoting development and were the key to improving the income of the small farmer, other inputs such as pesticides and mechanization should not be overlooked.

Rural Development

71. The Committee noted that this priority included a number of linked activities covering: Agrarian Reform, Small Farmers Development, Rural Institution Building, Credit, Women in Development, and Training.

72. The Committee in its discussions on implementation of the programme of work in 1976-77 had drawn attention to the constraints imposed by lack of trained manpower at all levels. Although it was not possible from the summary document to separate out the total resources to be devoted to training and related activities in 1978-79, the Committee welcomed the emphasis on training in a number of Programmes. The Committee endorsed the proposal to create a focal point in the Human Resources Division and a strong Inter-Departmental Working Party to enable FAO to develop integrated policies for training and to coordinate the various training activities under the management of the technical divisions concerned.

73. The Committee strongly supported the special emphasis which the Director-General proposed for ensuring that development, extension and training schemes take proper account of women's role in development. A number of Members, noting that strengthened provision was proposed to inject a women's component in existing and new programmes, welcomed the assurance that the objective would be to integrate rural women into the mainstream of national development efforts. Support was also given to the establishment of a focal point within the Secretariat to act as a catalyst in relation to programmes specifically designed to enhance the role of women in development.

74. The Committee recognized the importance for the Organization to place priority on the small farmer. There was need to identify the constraints to his playing a full role in the development process, to ensure his involvement in the planning and implementation of projects, to establish training, cooperative, credit and marketing institutions, to ensure that small farmers had equitable access to farm inputs, and to determine those farming enterprises and systems in which they may have a comparative advantage.

75. The Committee recognized the importance of credit in increasing productivity and welcomed the initiatives being taken to assist the development of national credit systems for small farmers, through technical support to the Scheme for Agricultural Credit Development and to the newly created Regional Credit Associations.

CARIS

76. The Committee noted that, as also noted by the Sixty-Ninth Session of the Council, steps had been taken to assure FAO's coordinating role.

Commodities and Food Security

77. The Committee was informed that through a rearrangement of programmes it was possible to give considerable emphasis to support for UNCTAD in its Integrated Programme for Commodities for work on the Third Development Decade, Economic Cooperation Among Developing Countries (ECDC), the Food Security Assistance Scheme, and Policy Analysis and Training.

78. The Committee noted that the major emphasis of the reorientation would be towards activities of direct relevance to the needs of the developing countries in the areas of commodities and development policies and planning. Some members singled out for special comment the important role of FAO in the preparatory work and follow-up to the resolutions of UNCTAD IV.

Consolidation of Related Activities

79. The Committee generally endorsed the three proposals to consolidate various units and related activities in the Agriculture Department: namely,

- (i) to establish a new Fertilizer and Plant Nutrition Service in the Land and Water Development Division which would include the International Fertilizer Supply Scheme, activities on fertilizer use promotion, the FAO Fertilizer Programme and the work on fertilizer supply/demand monitoring.
- (ii) to transfer the Research Development Centre and the Executive Secretary to the Technical Advisory Committee to the Consultative Group on Agricultural Research to the Office of ADG, Agriculture Department, a move which would not preclude participation of other technical departments (ES, FO and FI) as these were represented on the Inter-Departmental Working Group on Research which is under the chairmanship of the ADG, Agriculture Department, and
- (iii) to transfer the Remote Sensing Unit to the Land and Water Development Division, where it would be closer to the activities of soil and water assessment, without diminishing its Organization-wide collaboration.

Programme Changes by Programme

80. Programme changes resulting from priorities have been reported in the previous section and are only cross-referenced in the following paragraphs.

2.1.1 Natural Resources

81. The Committee noted that the objectives of this Programme were to improve the assessment of land and water resources and their development within the framework of appropriate farming systems. The Committee agreed to place emphasis on irrigation potential, drainage and the productive capacity of the world's lands, farm management and production economics, in particular the identification of the constraints to increased production at the small farmer level, the integration of the Organization's fertilizer work, the recycling of organic material, the management of tropical soils, the conservation of natural resources, and the coordination of FAO's activities on environmental requirements for natural resources development with activities of UNEP and other UN agencies.

82. Several Members stressed the importance of Farm Management at the micro-economic level and were pleased to note the increase in resource allocation to support for field programmes and towards manpower training.

2.1.2 Crops

83. The Committee noted that the main aims of this programme were to increase the production of major crops; to foster the adoption of improved production techniques, including the use of improved seed and adoption of appropriate plant protection measures; and to promote post-harvest technologies, including the development of rural agriculture processing.

84. It further noted that this programme contained two of the priority areas; namely, seed industry development (paras 69-70) and reduction of post-harvest food losses (paras 63-65).

85. The Committee agreed with the major adjustments made in this programme and at the same time was pleased to note that work on crop genetic resources, pre-harvest plant protection and plant quarantine would not be neglected. Some members expressed the wish that the specific programme of desert locust control should keep its identity.

86. The Committee agreed that the Organization had a special role to play in farm mechanization, particularly in the promotion of tools and techniques appropriate for small farms, for farms in dryland areas especially in developing countries, and on the training of machine operators and maintenance personnel.

87. Several members stressed the importance of strengthening the work on rural processing industries and noted the proposed allocation of additional resources to assist countries in the improvement of the milling of sorghum, millet, grain legumes and oilseeds. Active collaboration with UNIDO was to be encouraged in setting up blue-prints for rural industries.

2.1.3 Livestock

88. This programme aimed at increasing animal production in the developing countries, through training, improved resource utilization, better disease control, and better feeding of farm animals as well as improved breeding including the development of artificial insemination. The Committee noted that emphasis would be given to the interaction between livestock development in relation to the management of arid and semi-arid rangelands and the development of tropical pastures.

89. Several Members commended the programme for the inclusion of activities aimed at the better utilization of agricultural by-products in animal feeding, called attention to recent developments in the conversion of agro-based wastes into balanced and acceptable production rations even for high-yielding stock, especially for ruminants in order to minimize the competition for food suitable for human consumption.

90. The Committee supported the priority within this programme: namely, the control of Trypanosomiasis and tick-borne diseases (paras 66-68).

91. The Committee noted that in view of the difficulty in obtaining donor support for investment projects already identified under the International Meat Development Scheme and the International Scheme for the Coordination of Dairy Development, it was envisaged to change the emphasis more towards the provision of direct technical assistance with priority on training by FAO staff and consultants, using extra-budgetary funds to the maximum extent.

2.1.4 Research Support

92. The Committee endorsed the proposal to utilize economies in Headquarters to meet the needs of strengthening national and regional capacities for agricultural research in developing countries, with particular reference to research extension and training, and to support the application of research elements to farming practices. The strengthening of the support to CARIS was also noted, although concern was expressed for the wisdom of absorbing into the Regular Programme the costs of coordination on a continuing basis. It was also suggested that an evaluation of the workability and also the useability of the output of CARIS would be desirable. Support was expressed for the European and other international research networks.

2.1.5 Rural Development

93. The Committee agreed with the high priority given to this programme and noted the involvement of both the Departments as well as the Regional Offices (paras 71-75).

94. The Committee noted that a considerable budgetary increase was involved for the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development to be held in 1979. It further noted that the intention was to make the Conference a working one that could provide real benefits to developing countries. Some Members, however, expressed the view that they would prefer other uses to be made of the resources involved.

2.1.6 Nutrition

95. The Committee endorsed the main objective of this Programme, to assist developing countries to improve the nutrition of the rural and urban poor, especially the vulnerable groups. It considered that priority emphasis on Regular Programme support to national food and nutrition programmes was justified and some Members also felt that more Regular Programme resources should be allocated to the support of field programmes.

96. The Committee noted the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme which services the Codex Alimentarius Commission, thus providing a unique forum for the harmonization of food laws.

97. Additionally, in the framework of the new institutional arrangements for nutrition within the UN system, the Committee attached importance to the role which FAO had at the international level towards implementation of the decisions of the World Food Conference on nutrition.

98. The majority of Members expressed regret at the proposal to abolish one of the two posts dealing with nutrition in the Regional Office for Africa. They expressed the wish that this post should be maintained to ensure better coverage of the continent. The Committee recommended that the countries of the region be given assistance in the training of national staff as nutritionists.

2.1.7 Food and Agricultural Information and Analysis

99. The Committee welcomed the proposal to further streamline the various activities under this Programme so that on balance, after the strengthening of some activities at the country level, a net reduction in the budgetary allocation would be achieved.

100. The Committee was informed that the Global Information and Early Warning System and the proposals for its strengthening had been the subject of a detailed review undertaken by the Committee on Food Security earlier in the month.

101. As regards technical and statistical publications, some Members considered that the scope for further budgetary cuts was now limited, especially in view of the usefulness of many of the existing FAO publications to the developing countries.

2.1.8 Food and Agricultural Policy

102. The Committee noted that this Programme would undergo a major reorientation towards increased FAO support to policies and programmes for a New International Economic Order and that these changes would be reflected in country, regional and global activities as well as in FAO's contributions to inter-agency programmes.

103. The Committee welcomed the selection of a number of these activities for inclusion in the main priorities of the Organization for the 1978-79 biennium.

SELECTED DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS

REDUCING POST-HARVEST FOOD LOSSES

104. This item was placed on the agenda as one of two agricultural development problems selected for review and appraisal for the Committee. The Seventieth Session of the FAO Council requested 1/ the preparation of a paper to define the post-harvest food loss problem; to review on-going activities; to describe the objectives and main elements of the activities to be carried out by countries, FAO and other organizations; and to propose a programme for action, indicating the resources needed. It also authorized 2/ the preparation of a specific proposal for a \$20 million fund to finance an assistance programme to reduce pre-harvest, harvest, and post-harvest losses. The paper, COAG/77/6, and the proposal COAG/77/6/Suppl.1, provided the basis for the discussion by the Committee.

105. The Committee welcomed the statement prepared by the Secretariat on the definition, magnitude and causes of post-harvest food losses. On the level of losses to foodgrains, estimated in the paper in the range 10-20%, several members quoted much higher losses from particular case studies. The lack of definitive loss data in many countries was recognized by the Committee, together with the need to conduct loss surveys before launching loss reduction programmes. Current work being undertaken by several agencies on loss assessment methodology was noted and the need for coordination to produce standardized terminology and methodology as soon as possible was emphasized. Action is being taken to broaden the terms of reference of the FAO Panel of Experts on Pest Resistance to Pesticides and Crop Loss Assessment to include attention to all post-harvest losses. Loss survey projects, to test and refine the methodology, were suggested.

106. The Committee endorsed the emphasis on losses to staple durable foods and to roots and tubers. Attention to roots and tubers was particularly welcomed by several members, since these commodities form the staple food of many millions of people. Cassava was mentioned especially. Many members drew attention to the need to extend loss reduction activities as soon as possible to perishable foods.

107. The Committee agreed that for most losses remedies are known which could produce considerable reduction, although some further research and development in loss reduction techniques was necessary. The constraints to widespread application of existing remedies by Member Governments were identified under three headings: lack of information, of infrastructure and of finance. Information on the extent of loss in quantity or quality at particular stages in a system is a starting point for any loss-reduction programme.

1/ CL 70/REP, para. 19

2/ CL 70/REP, para. 20

Information may also be lacking on specific remedies which have been successfully applied elsewhere. With respect to infrastructure, lack of trained manpower at all levels, supply and distribution systems for necessary inputs, legislative measures and all the components of an efficient marketing system were listed. Lack of the necessary financial resources to implement loss reduction programmes was a serious constraint.

108. Past and present FAO activities to reduce food losses were commended and several members requested an analysis of the results achieved and the impact obtained from these activities. Many member countries and aid agencies listed their loss reduction activities and it was regretted that at present there was no comprehensive listing of all such activities, including the resources being devoted to them. FAO was requested to initiate the preparation of such a list.

109. The Committee endorsed the guidelines presented for future loss reduction activities by member countries, by FAO and by other agencies. The keystone of a country programme must be a commitment to reduce losses, to establish a plan of action and to provide the resources to implement it. In developing a country programme in post-harvest loss reduction, all stages of the post-harvest system(s) of the country's staple crop(s) will be considered: loss surveys will be commissioned as necessary; the need for pest control programmes and for pesticide supply, distribution and legislation will be evaluated; investment in drying, storage and processing installations and in marketing infrastructure will be planned; manpower, education and training needs will be evaluated; the need to establish or strengthen a central technical unit to support the programme will be considered. The outcome should be phased action programme in which priority areas are clearly identified and the resources needed for each area are estimated. The action-oriented approach, through national programmes for food loss reduction, was particularly commended. There was unanimous support for the need to consider the whole post-harvest system, and indeed to integrate post-harvest loss reduction with agricultural development and crop production systems, including pre-harvest loss reduction measures. The importance of marketing, including infrastructure and pricing policies, was emphasized.

110. FAO and other agencies also needed to have guidelines in planning their activities on post-harvest loss reduction. In broad terms, the primary task was to assist developing countries to develop and implement national programmes, and the major input would be through investment in manpower, finances and physical resources for these programmes; this required cooperation and coordination between agencies within each individual country, possibly through a National Committee. For technical support to loss reduction activities, some governments have found it useful to establish a central Food Conservation Unit, attached to a principal agricultural research station. This unit, with a multi-disciplinary staff in relevant aspects of post-harvest technology, acts as a focal point for all post-harvest problems, whether on the farm or in the marketing system.

111. The Committee was informed that FAO activities, implemented through Food Security Assistance Scheme, World Food Programme and Industry Cooperative Programme and through the proposed new Fund, would be coordinated in Headquarters and in Regional Offices by small units established for the purpose. There was also need for coordination of international, regional and inter-country activities to be undertaken, in order to minimize duplication of effort, to make the best use of scarce expertise and to adopt uniform standards and approaches to post-harvest problems which were similar in a number of countries. Coordination of external assistance was essential and many members requested FAO to take the lead in organizing it.

112. The Committee endorsed the principle of the action programme proposed by FAO, while recognizing that the model projects outlined were indicative only, and must be combined and adjusted as necessary to meet local requirements. The importance of simple, direct-action projects, using local skills, materials and techniques, and designed to benefit small farmers, was stressed by many members. Some concern was expressed on the feasibility of completing project action within 1½ - 2 years and it was generally agreed that, while FAO would be able to initiate such projects, efforts must be continued for many years to achieve a lasting impact. It was also pointed out that before specific project proposals could be prepared, the need for preliminary field studies should be examined. Such studies should be carried out by the country concerned, with the assistance of FAO.

113. The need for training in post-harvest technology and practices at all levels was agreed. Most of this training should be within developing countries and the desirability of using and strengthening national institutions for this purpose was emphasized. The global shortage of expertise in tropical post-harvest technology, and the need for an imaginative approach by aid agencies to develop such expertise, were noted.

114. The majority of the Committee expressed support for the proposal to establish an FAO Fund for Food Loss Reduction. Some members reserved their position on the proposal until the June session of the Council. Others felt that the programme should be a part of the Regular Programme budget. Still others felt a decision on a fund could only be made after a review had been made of on-going efforts in this area. Several members felt that this programme should be carried out in all regions of the developing world.

115. The Committee recognized that projects financed from the proposed Fund would form only an initial part of the total effort required to implement National Programmes for Food Loss Reduction, which would require expanding investment over the next ten years. FAO would assist in mobilizing funds from other sources for such expansion.

116. The Committee was informed that action under an FAO Programme of Food Loss Reduction, after an initial build-up period, would involve expenditure of about \$10 million per year. Assuming an initial Fund of \$20 million it is expected that successful implementation of projects during the first 2 to 3 years would attract further contributions from donors.

117. With regard to service charges on donor contributions to the Fund, the Committee was informed that it is proposed, in view of the high proportion of materials and equipment cost in estimated project costs, to institute a standard service charge of 5 percent. Contributions in kind by donors - e.g. provision of expert services, materials or equipment - would be welcomed provided that the nature of such contributions was suitable for and consistent with the objectives of the projects concerned.

118. Maximum flexibility in the operation of the Fund would be achieved if donor contributions were in cash and were pledged for general disbursement from the Fund, subject to the agreed criteria for project approval. Where appropriate, project requests would be submitted for implementation through FAO/Government Cooperative programmes or bilateral programmes. Close collaboration would be maintained with other agencies and donors to ensure that all projects in member countries contribute to the integrated action necessary to implement National Programmes.

119. The Committee generally supported the criteria proposed for approval of projects by the Director-General. These were:

- the project should have high priority in a country's Programme for Food Loss Reduction;
- the activities proposed should have direct impact in reducing post-harvest losses of staple foods;
- priority should be given to the needs of the least developed and most severely affected and food priority countries,
- the main project action should normally be completed in 1½ to 2 years;
- training programmes should be of short duration, conducted within the country and directed towards farmers, warehouse-keepers and operating staff;
- facilities to be provided should be simple to construct and operate and be of appropriate design and materials for the country concerned;
- country to provide counterpart contribution of facilities and services necessary for successful execution of project;
- projects in pilot areas should be capable of expansion, to attract further investment;
- all projects should include loss assessment, in order to monitor progress of loss reduction.

120. Several members stated that the criteria, while giving priority to Least Developed Countries and Most Seriously Affected Countries, should not exclude other developing countries, and that account should also be taken of the priority given to projects within country programmes.

121. The Committee approved the proposed mechanism for dealing with project requests submitted by member countries to FAO Headquarters:

- a small Central Unit in the Agriculture Department would examine and finalize requests in collaboration with AGO and the technical units concerned;
- the Unit would submit projects for approval to the Director-General;
- approved projects would be implemented by AGO, following established procedures on recruitment, purchasing and contracting. (Some projects will be sub-contracted to national institutions).
- project would be monitored by the Central Unit and evaluated by established evaluation procedures.

122. The Committee welcomed that the Director-General would make progress reports to COAG on the implementation of projects under the Food Loss Reduction Programme.

123. The advantages of such a mechanism were noted to be:

- uniform formulation, preparation and presentation of project requests;
- rapid decisions on project requests;
- coordination of project implementation, e.g. scheduling of experts for continuity, and transfer of experience between countries;
- standardization on the preparation of training materials and the supply of equipment and materials such as instruments and pesticides;
- monitoring and analysis of project implementation, enabling rapid expansion of successful projects to be undertaken.

124. The Committee concluded by emphasizing that while the difficulties of achieving an impact, especially at the village and field level, were undoubtedly very great, the prize of success would be enormous. A 50 percent cut in post-harvest losses for cereals and coarse grains alone, assuming a conservative estimate of 10 percent losses, would mean savings of 40 million tons of cereals, or half the projected imports of developing countries by 1985. At a weighted current export price of US \$176 per ton, this would bring about foreign exchange savings of approximately \$7.5 billion a year. Even more important would be the provision of the foundation for an adequate diet for hundreds of millions of people.

SMALL FARMERS' DEVELOPMENT

125. This item was proposed for discussion by the Committee at its third session in April 1975 ^{1/} with a view to suggesting the adoption of practical measures intended to improve production and efficiency in the small farmer sector.

126. The Committee examined with interest the document COAG 77/7 which presented a useful analysis of the problem, reviewed alternative approaches to programmes for small farmers' development and drew attention to the role of FAO in giving assistance in this field. Some members felt that some policies relating to the improvement in the conditions of small farmers were not adequately developed in the document, e.g. in such areas as marketing, cooperative action and rural electrification. Other members regretted that the document did not include studies and works carried out in the European Region. It was also pointed out that the document should have dealt with the problems of the small farmers in the developing and developed countries in Europe since they constituted a major element in the agricultural development of these nations.

^{1/} CL 66/3 para. 181(i).

127. The Committee took note that since a World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development was scheduled to take place in July 1979 with FAO taking the lead in cooperation with other UN agencies, advice was sought to ensure its careful preparation by both Governments and the Secretariat. The Committee agreed with the view that the problems of small farmer development should be a major issue for discussion in the World Conference since in most developing countries they comprise the majority of the population. With reference to the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, and taking into account Resolution 3/71 of the Sixteenth Session of Conference, approved on 24 November 1971, it was proposed that the Committee examine the possibility of setting up a Sub-Committee which should give proper attention to the aspects relating to rural development, and in particular to the reform of agrarian structures, and provide effective advice.

128. The Committee admitted that a universal definition of small farmers was difficult since economic and social conditions vary from one area and/or country to another, depending on population density, availability of land and the degree of intensification of production. There was also a problem concerning the term "small farmers" in some parts of the world where the household and not the individual is the base of a farming unit. The Committee therefore generally accepted that for present purposes the definition of small farmer development would be the improvement in the productivity and welfare of relatively disadvantaged groups of farmers and landless agricultural workers, within the context of a balanced national development.

129. The Committee agreed with the analysis in the paper that the high labour intensity of small-scale agriculture is an important feature in view of the rapid population growth in many developing countries. It also agreed that once the small farmers leave the subsistence economy, they are responsive to price increases and swift in adopting new methods of production. The Committee felt that these features are clearly advantageous in those developing countries where labour is particularly plentiful, but where land and capital resources are scarce, provided that the constraints to the development of small farmers are removed.

130. The Committee recognized that the problems of small farmers had regional, sub-regional and national characteristics, and that in spite of development efforts which have taken place in the past decades there had been a general deterioration in the situation and a worsening of rural poverty. In some countries, a substantial proportion of small landowners become tenants or landless agricultural workers, many of them unemployed or under-employed. This in turn leads to migration from rural to urban centres in search of work, which is usually unavailable, thus increasing still further the social and economic problems of the countries.

131. The Committee stressed that one of the main prerequisites was the will of the Governments to allocate their resources and plan development programmes in a way which would improve social and economic conditions of the small farmers and so provide off-farm employment opportunities for excess farm labour. Action at the international level should therefore be geared, whether it was in the form of technical or financial assistance, to the choice made by individual governments in this respect. Government action would therefore initially aim at the removal of constraints: such as those of a political, legal, technical and financial nature so that national and international efforts for the development of small farmers could be successful.

132. It was recognized that, in spite of the relative abundance of publications and studies, there was still a lack of basic information and analysis of the conditions of small farmers, and that a considerable effort had to be made to collect more information, for instance, through case study programmes and exchange information, in order to provide a basis for the discussions at the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development.

133. The Committee underlined the importance of incorporating small farmers' development as a basic objective in national development plans. This would facilitate subsequent provision of the necessary resources, and action to provide the small farmers with the essential support and services for increasing production and ensure the active participa-

tion of the marginal sectors of the population. Such action would involve the provision of priority requirements such as credit, fertilizer, pesticides, appropriate technology, extension etc., depending on the conditions, preferably in package programmes.

134. The Committee recognized that the need for improvements in the productivity and in the income of small farmers make it essential that new production potentials be opened up for them through the use of new appropriate technology. Such new technology would have to be often developed or adapted to the special conditions of small farmers. To this end, more empirical knowledge was required on the organization and constraints of their farming operations.

135. The Committee noted that the main emphasis on new technology and its application must be on crop and livestock production, but beyond this, the opportunities for intensification and thereby increasing incomes from their limited resources often involved the promotion of integrated crop/livestock production. This also pointed to the need for small farmer oriented technology to reflect the specific resource mix available to them and to be conscious of the limited ability of small farmers to engage in high-risk ventures.

136. The Committee agreed that whenever choices were available, small farmer promotion programmes should use technologies which made optimal use of inputs based on the farmers' own resources whether these were plant nutrients, plant protection measures, or power inputs to be supported by cash inputs from the economy.

137. The Committee was of the view that supporting services should be provided in a form that would be acceptable and readily usable by the small farmers and for that purpose there was a strong need to reinforce the extension services and initiate action-oriented research programmes for the development of this sector. Provision should also be made to ensure marketing outlets for the produce of the small farmers and for improvements to be made in the transportation network, particularly through the construction of feeder roads, and in processing and in the reduction of post-harvest losses. Suitable storage facilities should also be established to maximize returns. Other services, such as public health, rural electrification, were also of importance in order to discourage migration, particularly by the youth, from the rural areas.

138. The Committee recognized the importance of creating organizations and institutions which would give small farmers access to economies of scale and the possibility of involvement in decision making and planning, thus leading to the better utilization of their resources. The importance of the participation of small farmers in decision making was stressed by most members of the Committee and for this purpose it was felt that emphasis should be given to training for small farmers and their leaders to make it possible for them to become more and more involved in the management of their own resources, particularly when grouped into associations, cooperatives and/or similar types of organizations. Moreover, several speakers noted the decisive role women play in agricultural production and the bias against them in many rural extension services, training programmes and provision of technology. In fact they are frequently ignored altogether. The importance of assuring them equal access to resources for production and to other income-earning opportunities was stressed. It was emphasized that the needs and importance of women should be recognized at the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development.

139. A number of members suggested that in order to help governmental administrations understand the pertinent problems of the poor small farmers and the landless labourers, government officials should familiarize themselves with small farming communities. Structural economic and social measures should also be introduced to discourage the rural exodus, and generally to correct the tendency towards urban bias.

140. With regard to the preparatory work for the World Conference, the Committee agreed that it was essential in the background documentation that account be taken, not only of the experience of developing countries, but also as appropriate, that of developed countries that have successful programmes in this field. For this purpose, the country review papers

will be of great importance to the secretariat, together with the case studies proposed by FAO, the other concerned UN agencies, and bilateral and international organizations which cooperate in the preparations for the conference.

141. The Committee proposed that the documentation should also analyze the growth rate of the production of small farmers in various parts of the world and that measures undertaken for reform should be examined, and policy instruments specifically geared to improve the conditions of small farmers should be analysed and assessed, particularly as to their effects on food production and the economic and social conditions of the disadvantaged producers. An analysis of the constraints which impede the implementation of such measures should also be undertaken as well as an evaluation of reasons for failure or success of specific strategies for reform. The Committee also appreciated the efforts within FAO to ensure the cooperation of all departments concerned. The Committee noted with satisfaction that a start had been made on effective cooperation between FAO and other UN agencies in the preparation of the Conference. Attention was drawn to the relevance to this work of the activities of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development, of which FAO would become the lead agency from the beginning of 1978.

142. A number of members were of the opinion that attendance at the Conference should include representatives of farmers and the rural workers as members of their national delegations. The reports of the regional consultations between FAO and the trade unions should be utilized as an input into the conference documentation.

PROGRESS REPORTS ON ACTION SINCE THE THIRD SESSION

Agricultural Extension and Training

143. The Committee appreciated in general the work accomplished by FAO in this field and requested some additional information on a few points. The Secretariat explained that the purpose of the forthcoming Expert Consultation on the Contribution of Agricultural Faculties and Universities to Development (ref. para 5 of the document COAG/77/8), was to make an analytical review of alternative options for increasing the institutions' involvement in development action at policy-making level, through in-service training of serving staff, and above all, through direct work with farmers/rural communities. Examples of relevant activities are being drawn from a number of selected universities throughout the developing world, and the Consultation was expected to appraise the methodology used, assess merits and demerits and to draw up guidelines for the implementation of action programmes which promised immediate and marked results, especially at the grassroots level.

144. Emphasis on training of women for agricultural production and in extension, as well as training in home economics subjects was stressed by some members. The secretariat explained that the total role of women in rural development was being given due consideration by FAO. Women had a very important role to play in this respect and FAO policy was to assist Member Countries in promoting training programmes for women both in home economics subjects as well as in agricultural work. An FAO Inter-Divisional Working Group for Women in Rural Development had been established. This Group had prepared an inventory of development projects in which women were involved or should be involved.

145. In responding to an enquiry on training at the producer level, the Secretariat explained the high priority given by FAO to this type of training. Some Member Countries had made appreciable progress in training at university level and to a lesser extent at the intermediate level. However, relatively little progress had been achieved in training at the producer level. Therefore, FAO was now shifting emphasis to this area so that technical know-how and other production facilities could reach the small farmer and rural people.

IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY IN LESS FAVOURABLE ENVIRONMENTS

146. The Committee noted that apparently little progress had been made with programmes under this category.

147. The Committee was informed of the very substantial effort made by the Government of Pakistan through the work of the Punjab Barani Commission to prepare a comprehensive development programme for one of its major low rainfall area provinces. It noted that any implementation programme in the area would be a very costly venture. The Government of Pakistan and FAO would jointly determine the type of collaboration and follow-up feasible.

148. The Committee requested FAO to present a more precise progress report in quantitative as well as qualitative terms to permit members to better analyse what had been accomplished.

149. Some members again requested that increased attention be given to the problem of the Humid Tropics and Savannahs.

INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

150. The Committee noted that the report to Conference which would monitor and assess the progress in International Agricultural Adjustment against the objectives and guidelines contained in Conference Resolution 9/75 was under preparation and would be completed by the end of July 1977. The Committee felt that the monitoring operations should not be restricted to those guidelines which included quantified goals but should also extend to include as far as possible the monitoring and assessment of progress with respect to those of the guidelines which were expressed qualitatively. The report to Conference should examine the nature and direction of policy developments bearing on agriculture as well as analyse the actual performance of the sector. The Committee also requested that the report should include proposals for further work by FAO to develop methodologies and expertise in monitoring and assessment of the progress of International Agricultural Adjustment.

AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE COMMITTEE

151. The Committee noted that, as a result of the amendments to Rule XXXII of the General Rules of the Organization (GRO), concerning COAG, which had been adopted by the Conference in 1973 (Res. 10/73), it would seem necessary to bring its Rules of Procedure into line with Rule XXXII GRO.

152. The proposed amendments ^{1/} concerned mainly the timing of sessions and the eligibility for participation in an observer capacity of non-member States of FAO that are members of a Specialized Agency or of IAEA. In addition, certain editorial improvements designed to ensure consistency in the use of terminology were proposed.

153. After having considered the draft amendments, the Committee unanimously adopted these amendments, which are set forth in Appendix F to this report.

OTHER BUSINESS

154. The Committee noted that, in accordance with Rule IV of its Rules of Procedure, the Director-General, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, should prepare a provisional agenda.

155. The Committee considered possible topics which could be included under the part of the provisional agenda dealing with selected development problems.

^{1/} Document COAG/77/9

156. The following two proposals were supported by many members:

(i) The On-farm Use of Water

It was recognized that while water was an essential input in agricultural production, its development would be expensive, especially when irrigation systems were involved. It was therefore necessary to apply carefully the water after its delivery to the farm. There was a need to appreciate soil, water and plant relations at the point of application if there was to be effective water management. This topic involved irrigation and drainage technology, water management research and extension services.

(ii) Agricultural Mechanization and its effect on Employment and Income Distribution

This topic was considered a follow-up to small farmer development and should be taken in a broad sense to cover the technical and social aspects of the application of improved equipment and power sources to all on-farm operations, including land preparation; planting through harvesting of crops; fertilizer, pesticides and herbicide application; and handling, drying and processing of agricultural products; on employment possibilities and income distribution in the developing countries.

157. The Committee stressed that these main topic reviews should be made from a scientific and technical point of view and take into account not only the experience gained from FAO field programmes and evaluation of past and ongoing activities, but also the experience of international agricultural research institutes, etc. The reviews should define the problems involved, indicate alternative and policy options and should describe the objectives of the main elements of activities which FAO would recommend to Member Countries.

158. Some members considered that it was difficult to select topics as far as two years ahead of the next session, while others pointed out that they would need to consult with their governments. The Committee agreed that further subjects could be suggested by the Session of the Council in June 1977 and the Nineteenth Session of the Conference.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION

159. The Committee noted that in accordance with Rule XXXII-3 GRO and Rule II of its Rules of Procedure, it shall determine the date and place of its sessions. In line with the recommendation that sessions should be held in Conference years, the Committee recommended that its Fifth Session should be held in Rome in April 1979. The Committee asked that the Director-General, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, propose exact dates and ensure that the session is scheduled before the spring sessions of the Programme and Finance Committees, to enable them to review the recommendations of COAG.

APPENDIX A

AGENDA OF THE FOURTH SESSION

INTRODUCTION

1. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairmen
2. Adoption of the Agenda

REVIEW OF FAO'S PROGRAMME OF WORK IN THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

3. Implementation of the Programme of Work 1976-77
4. Medium and Long-Term Outlook for Food and Agricultural Development
5. Summary Programme of Work and Budget 1978-79

SELECTED DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS

6. Reducing Post-Harvest Food Losses
7. Small Farmers Development

OTHER MATTERS

8. Progress Reports on Action since the Third Session
 - (i) Agricultural Extension and Training
 - (ii) Improving Productivity in Less Favourable Environments
 - (a) Study on Humid Tropics and Savannahs
 - (b) Improving Productivity in Low Rainfall Areas
 - (iii) International Agricultural Adjustment
9. Other Business
10. Date and Place of Next Session

REPORT

11. Adoption of Report

LIST OF DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS
LISTE DES DELEGUES ET OBSERVATEURS
LISTA DE DELEGADOS Y OBSERVADORES

Chairman/Président/Presidente:	B. SAMANEZ CONCHA (Peru)
First Vice Chairman/Premier Vice Président/ Primero Vicepresidente:	G. DE BAKKER (Netherlands)
Second Vice Chairman/Deuxième Vice Président/ Segundo Vicepresidente:	A.I. MACHAYO (Kenya)

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Federal Ministry of Agriculture
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Ministère de l'Agriculture
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Commissioner for Agriculture
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Ministry of Overseas Development
London

*Alternate D.C.P. EVANS
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United States of America/Etats-Unis D'Amérique/Estados Unidos de America

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Administrator
Agricultural Research Service
Department of Agriculture
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- *Alternate C.R. BENJAMIN
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International Programs Division
Agricultural Research Service
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- *Alternate C. HIGGINSON
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Office of International Assistance
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Agency for International Development
Washington
- *Adviser D.M. DAUGHERTY
Liaison Officer
ARS-USDA/TAB-AID
Department of State
Washington
- *Adviser M.L. WITCHER
Deputy Executive Director
International Organization Affairs
Foreign Agricultural Service
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Venezuela

- *Representante H.L. CLAVERIE RODRÍGUEZ
Representante Permanente alterno
de Venezuela ante la FAO
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Rome

Viet Nam

- *Représentant T. HUYNH
Chargé d'Affaires
Ambassade de la République Socialiste du Viet Nam
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*Representative M. PENCIC
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Director of Research Institute
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Directeur des Etudes et de la
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Département de l'agriculture
Kinshasa

*Suppléant N.M. MAPELA
Représentant Permanent Adjoint
Ambassade de la République du Zaire
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Zambia/Zambie

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Director of Agriculture
Ministry of Rural Development
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HOLY SEE - PERMANENT OBSERVER

SAINT-SIEGE - OBSERVATEUR PERMANENT

SANTA SEDE - OBSERVADOR PERMANENTE

*S.E. Mgr. FERRARI-TONIOLO
Permanent Observer of Holy See to FAO
Vatican City, Rome

*Mgr. B. NOTARANGELO
Ecclesiastical Counsellor, COLDIRETTI
Rome

OBSERVERS FROM MEMBER NATIONS NOT MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE
OBSERVATEURS D'ETATS MEMBRES NE SIEGEANT PAS AU COMITE
OBSEEVADORES DE LOS ESTADOS MIEMBROS QUE NO SON MIEMBROS DEL COMITE

Burma/Birmanie/Birmania

SHWE ZAN AUNG
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
and Permanent Representative of the Socialist
Republic of the Union of Burma to FAO
Embassy of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma
Rome

*THAN HTUN AUNG
Second Secretary and Alternate Permanent Representative
of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma to FAO
Embassy of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma
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Central African Empire/Empire Centrafricaine/Imperio Centrafricano

*N. CHOISY
Deuxième Secrétaire
Ambassade du Empire Centrafricaine
Rome

Mexico/Mexique/Estados Unidos Mexicanos

*V.D. BLANCO DELGADO
Agregado Agrícola de México ante la FAO
Representación Permanente de los Estados Unidos
Mexicanos ante la FAO
Rome

Saudi Arabia/Arabie Saoudite/Arabia Saudita

*O.T. SHABY
Director of Agriculture and Water
Ministry of Agriculture
Taife

*M.A. KHAN
Ministry of Agriculture
Taife

Uruguay

*R.G. AMATO
Delegado Permanente Alterno del Uruguay
ante la FAO
Embajada del Uruguay
Rome

OBSERVERS FROM NATIONS MEMBERS OF UN/ OBSERVATEURS D'ETATS
MEMBRES DES NATIONS UNIES/ OBSERVADORES DE LOS ESTADOS MIEMBROS
DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics/l'Union des Républiques
socialistes soviétiques/la Unión de Repúblicas Socialistas Soviéticas

*I.P. LOUPASHKO-STALSKY
Head of Division
Ministry of Agriculture
Moscow

*Y. ILJIN
First Secretary
Embassy of the USSR
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REPRESENTATIVES OF UNITED NATIONS AND SPECIALIZED AGENCIES
REPRESENTANTS DES NATIONS UNIES ET INSTITUTIONS SPECIALISEES
REPRESENTANTES DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS Y ORGANISMOS ESPECIALIZADOS

United Nations Development Programme/Programme des Nations Unies pour le développement/
Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo

*K.N. SATYAPAL, (25-26 April)
Senior Technical Adviser
Technical Advisory Division
UNDP
New York

International Labour Organization/Organisation internationale du travail/
Organización Internacional del Trabajo

*I. CORDISCHI
Assistant Director
ILO Branch Office
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*C.G. LAMM
Deputy Director, Joint FAO/IAEA Division
Vienna

United Nations Environment Programme/Programme des Nations Unies pour
l'environnement/Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente

*L. DE ROSEN
Director, UNEP Industry Programme
Paris

*F. MATHEZ
Nairobi

OBSERVERS FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
OBSERVATEURS DES ORGANISATIONS INTERNATIONALES
OBSERVADORES DE ORGANIZACIONES INTERNACIONALES

Abu Dhabi Arab Economic Development Fund/Fonds Abu Dhabi pour le développement économique Arabe/Fondo Abu Dhabi para el Desarrollo Económico Árabe

*H.M. SELIM
Director, Research Department
Abu Dhabi

Associated Country Women of the World/Union mondiale des femmes rurales/
Union Mundial de Mujeres de Campo

*Ms. P. WEBSTER
Rome

Central African Customs and Economic Union/Union douanière et économique de l'Afrique centrale/Unión Aduanera y Económica de Africa Central

*J. F. NGUEMA-NZE
Directeur du Département de l'Economie
Bangui

International Alliance of Women/Alliance internationale des femmes/
Alianza Internacional de Mujeres

* Ms. L. ARULPRAGASAM
Rome

International Confederation for Agricultural Credit/Confédération internationale
du crédit agricole/Confederación Internacional del Crédito Agrícola

A. CRANOIS
Président, Caisse Rég. de Crédit Agricole Mutuel
de l'Ile-de-France
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International Confederation of Free Trade Unions/Confédération internationale
des syndicats libres/Confederación Internacional de Organizaciones
Sindicales Libres

*U. LAMAGNI
Permanent Representative to FAO

International Federation of Agricultural Producers/Fédération internationale
des producteurs agricoles/Federación Internacional de Productores Agrícolas

Ms. B.B. Vomwo
Secretary for Developing Countries
Paris

*Ms. G. Pela
Rome

International Federation of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers/
Fédération internationale des travailleurs des plantations, de l'agriculture
et des secteurs connexes/Federación Internacional de Trabajadores de las Plantaciones
Agrícolas y Similares

*U. Lamagni

International Raiffeisen Union/Union Internationale Raiffeisen

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Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/Organisation de coopération
et de développement économiques/Organización de Cooperación y Desarrollo Económicos

*G. VASTA
Paris

World Federation of Trade Unions/Fédération Syndicale Mondiale/Federación Sindical Mundial

*G. CASADEI
Representant permanent auprès de la FAO

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

COAG/77/1	Provisional Agenda
2	Proposed Timetable
3	Implementation of the Programme of Work 1976-77
4	Medium and Long-Term Outlook for Food and Agricultural Development
5	Summary Programme of Work and Budget 1978-79
6	Reducing Post-Harvest Food Losses
6 Supp.1	Proposal for a Fund to Reduce Food Losses
7	Small Farmers' Development
8	Progress Reports on Action Since the Third Session
9	Amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Committee - Secretariat Note
9 Supp.1	Rule XXXII of the General Rules of the Organization
COAG/77/Inf. 1	List of Documents
2	Information for Delegates
3	List of Participants
4	List of Member Nations of the Committee

APPENDIX D

LIST OF MEMBER NATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

Algeria	Ghana	Philippines
Argentina	Greece	Poland
Australia	Guinea	Portugal
Austria	Hungary	Romania
Bangladesh	India	Senegal
Belgium	Indonesia	Sierra Leone
Benin	Iran	Spain
Bolivia	Iraq	Sri Lanka
Brazil	Ireland	Sudan
Bulgaria	Israel	Sweden
Burundi	Italy	Switzerland
Cameroon	Japan	Thailand
Canada	Jordan	Togo
Chile	Kenya	Trinidad and Tobago
Colombia	Korea, Rep. of	Tunisia
Congo	Lebanon	Turkey
Costa Rica	Libya	Uganda
Cuba	Madagascar	United Kingdom
Cyprus	Malaysia	United States of America
Czechoslovakia	Malta	Venezuela
Denmark	Nepal	Viet Nam
Ecuador	Netherlands	Yemen, People's Dem. Rep. of
Egypt	New Zealand	Yugoslavia
El Salvador	Nicaragua	Zaire
Ethiopia	Nigeria	Zambia
Finland	Norway	
France	Pakistan	
Gabon	Panama	
Germany, Fed. Rep. of	Peru	

STATEMENT BY MR. EDOUARD SAOUMA

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I consider it an important opportunity and a great pleasure to address you in connection with the opening of the Fourth Session of the Committee on Agriculture. Your transactions will help us steer the work of FAO even more vigorously toward faster and more equitable agricultural development through technical and social-economic programmes designed to give rural people a better life all over the world.

The dramatic food crisis that had engaged your attention and that of the World Food Conference in Rome in 1974 has eased considerably in the two years since the Committee's last session. However, while the danger of food shortages in the world has indeed grown relatively less acute, it will not do to forget that, in the long run, food production trends in the developing countries remain extremely unfavourable, portending a whole retinue of baneful effects on nutrition, incomes and the economic development of poor nations.

This continuing crucial task of improving food production and productivity in agriculture calls for more effective support from FAO to member nations in their own efforts in this direction. To achieve this, in the last 18 months I have revised the priorities for FAO's work and instituted new approaches for carrying it out. Among the priorities, our attention to concrete development action in the field is oriented specifically to investment activities and to training at the practical level. The best examples of radically new approaches are the establishment of the Technical Cooperation Programme, under which FAO can provide direct development assistance from its regular budget, the emphasis on inter-departmental task forces to concentrate on problem solving,

and the decentralization away from Headquarters to the field, especially to the country level, as represented by the new FAO Country Representatives.

This re-orientation of FAO's work is also a response to the new urgencies and new opportunities that have emerged from the changes on the international scene. Here I wish to refer specifically to the establishment of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, which will provide a new stream of investment funds for agriculture in developing countries, and to the close cooperation that is expected to develop between it and FAO.

A similarly important milestone in the development of international relationships is the proposal by the UN General Assembly to establish a New International Economic Order, calling for a just and equitable world. This has important implications for agriculture since it emphasizes the basic human right to food and the need of increased agricultural export earnings for developing countries. Within the overall effort of the UN Organizations, FAO has undertaken to provide a rational basis for the decisions that could lead to the establishment of a New International Economic Order, by performing commodity analyses for use in UNCTAD negotiations and through its development study "Agriculture towards the Year 2000", which will complement the UN Study on the Future of the World Economy.

These revised priorities and new approaches are clearly reflected in the reports presented to you concerning the Implementation of the Programme of Work for 1976-77, in the analysis of the medium and long-term outlook for agricultural development, and in the Summary of FAO's Programme of Work and Budget for 1978-79. In all of these reports you will find a

concentration of effort around clearly defined high-priority areas, presented along the lines of the new programme structure proposed. Your comments and observations on these proposals can help us to further improve upon them.

Two areas have been singled out for your special attention in this session. The Reduction of Post-Harvest Losses, which is the first of these, offers a major opportunity to increase food availability to the poor and hungry of the world by elimination or reduction of waste throughout the food production system. The importance of this proposed activity has been widely recognised and in the 70th Council of FAO in November 1976 a proposal was made towards the establishment of a Trust Fund out of which to finance a major programme in this area. Your attention is invited both to the proposed action programme for the Reduction of Post-Harvest Losses and to the specific proposal for a mechanism whereby FAO could implement such an action programme. Your concrete suggestions for the need, feasibility, content, and best operation of this important programme, are expected to assist the forthcoming Council and Conference in their decisions which, hopefully, will generate widespread support for its adoption. The programme could enable developing nations to come closer to achievement of more satisfactory nutrition and more rapid development.

The second major specific area calling for your analysis and suggestions is centered on the problems related to the Promotion of Small Farmer Development. As you are aware, we are in the midst of preparations for a World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development where many of the issues related to small farmer development will be at the centre of discussion. Thus we invite you not only to view this occasion as an opportunity to review FAO's present and future activities aimed at bringing hopes for better development to small farmers,

but also to suggest to us what governments and the secretariat could most usefully do to prepare for a full-scale substantive discussion at the World Conference.

My being here today is a clear reflection not only of the importance that I, and FAO, attach to the sound advice and comments you will offer for the benefit of our work in the future, but beyond this it demonstrates that agriculture, in both its technical and social-economic aspects, stands at the centre of rural development. It is the best use of the world's scarce land and water resources in systems of farming, using the most appropriate technologies, and taking place in the world socio-economic context, that will create a better fed and more just world for all. FAO is looking forward to your help in charting the best course in this direction.

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE ^{1/}

Rule I

Officers

1. At the first session [[]after the appointment of its Members by the Council, pursuant to Rule XXXII.1 of the General Rules of the Organization []] in each biennium the Committee shall elect a Chairman, a first Vice-Chairman and a second Vice-Chairman from among the representatives of its Members, who shall remain in office until the election of a new Chairman and new Vice-Chairmen.

2. The Chairman, or in his absence one of the Vice-Chairmen, shall preside at meetings of the Committee and exercise such other functions as may be required to facilitate its work. In the event of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairmen not being able to preside at a meeting, the Committee shall appoint a representative of one of its Members to take the chair.

Rule II

Sessions

1. The Committee shall hold sessions as provided in Rule XXXII.3 and 4 of the General Rules of the Organization.

2. Any number of separate meetings may be held during each session of the Committee.

3. Sessions of the Committee shall normally be held once in each biennium, preferably early in Conference years. Sessions shall be convened by the Director-General in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee taking into account any proposals made by the Committee.

[[]3. The Committee shall determine the date and place of its sessions. Normally, the Committee shall hold one session during each biennium to be convened by the Director-General in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee. The Committee shall preferably meet early in the non-Conference years.[]]

4. If required, the Committee may hold additional sessions on the call of the Director-General in consultation with its Chairman, or on request submitted in writing to the Director-General by the majority of the Members of the Committee.

5. Notice of the date and place of each session shall normally be communicated at least two months in advance of the session to all Member Nations and Associate Members of the Organization, and to such non-member States [[]nations[]] and international organizations as may have been invited to attend the session.

6. Each Member [[]Nation[]] of the Committee may appoint alternates, associates and advisers to its representative on the Committee.

7. Presence of representatives of [[]members representing[]] a majority of the Members [[]Nations[]] of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for any formal action by the Committee.

^{1/} Words in square brackets to be deleted; words underlined to be added.

Rule III

Attendance

1. Participation of international organizations in an observer capacity in the work of the Committee shall be governed by the relevant provisions of the Constitution and the General Rules of the Organization,^{1/} as well as by the General Rules of the Organization on relations with international organizations.
2. Attendance by nonmember States [nations] of the Organization at sessions of the Committee shall be governed by the principles relating to the granting of observer status to nations adopted by the Conference.
3. (a) Meetings of the Committee shall be held in public, unless the Committee decides to meet in private for discussion of any items on its agenda.

(b) Subject to the provisions of subparagraph (c) below, any Member Nation not represented on the Committee, any Associate Member of any nonmember State [nation] invited to attend in an observer capacity a session of the Committee may submit memoranda and participate without vote in any discussion at a public or private meeting of the Committee.

(c) In exceptional circumstances, the Committee may decide to restrict attendance at private meetings to the representative or observer of each Member Nation of the Organization.

Rule IV

Agenda and documents

1. The Director-General, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, shall prepare a provisional agenda and shall normally circulate it at least two months in advance of the session to all Member Nations and Associate Members of the Organization and to all nonmember States [nations] and international organizations invited to attend the session.
2. All Member Nations of the Organization and Associate Members may request the Director-General normally not less than 30 days before the proposed date of the session to insert an item on the provisional agenda. The Director-General shall thereupon circulate the proposed item to all members of the Committee, together with any necessary papers.
3. The Committee in session may by general consent amend the agenda by the deletion, addition or modification of any item, provided that no matter referred to it by the Council or on request of the Conference may be omitted from the agenda.
4. Documents not already circulated shall be dispatched with the provisional agenda, or as soon as possible thereafter.

^{1/} It is understood that in this context the terms "Constitution" and "the General Rules of the Organization" are to be taken to include all general rules and policy statements formally adopted by the Conference and intended to supplement the Constitution and the Rules, such as the "Statement of principles relating to the granting of observer status to nations", [the "Principles and procedures which should govern conventions and agreements concluded under Articles XIV and XV of the Constitution, and commissions and committees established under Article VI of the Constitution"] and the general rules regarding relationships between the Organization and governmental and intergovernmental organizations.

Rule V

Voting

1. Each Member of the Committee shall have one vote.
2. The decisions of the Committee shall be ascertained by the Chairman, who shall resort, upon the request of one or more members, to a vote, in which case the pertinent provisions of Rule XII of the General Rules of the Organization shall apply mutatis mutandis.

Rule VI

Reports

1. At each session, the Committee shall approve a report embodying its views, recommendations and decisions, including, when requested, a statement of minority views. Any recommendations adopted by the Committee which affect the programme or finances of the Organization or concerning legal or constitutional matters shall be reported to the Council with the comments of the appropriate subsidiary committees of the Council. The reports of the Committee shall also be placed before the Conference.
2. Reports of sessions shall be circulated to all Member Nations and Associate Members of the Organization and to nonmember States [nations] invited to attend the session, as well as to interested international organizations entitled to be represented at the session.
3. The comments of the Committee on the report of any of its subsidiary bodies and, if one or more Members [Nations] of the Committee so request, the views of those Members [Nations] shall be incorporated into the Committee's report. If any Member Nation so requests, this part of the Committee's report shall be circulated as soon as possible by the Director-General to the States [nations] or international organizations which normally receive the reports of the subsidiary body in question. The Committee may also request the Director-General, in transmitting the report and records of its proceedings to Members [Nations], to call particular attention to its views and comments on the report of any of its subsidiary bodies.
4. The Committee shall determine the procedures in regard to press communiqués concerning its activities.

Rule VII

Subsidiary bodies

1. In accordance with Rule XXXII.12 of the General Rules of the Organization, the Committee may, on an exceptional basis, establish subsidiary or ad hoc bodies where it considers that such action is conducive to facilitating its own work and will not adversely affect the multidisciplinary consideration of questions submitted to the Committee for examination. The Committee may include in the membership of such subsidiary or ad hoc bodies Member Nations that are not members of the Committee and Associate Members. The Council may admit to membership of such subsidiary or ad hoc bodies established by the Committee States [nations] which, while not Member Nations or Associate Members of the Organization, are members of the United Nations, any of its Specialized Agencies or the International Atomic Energy Agency.
2. Before taking a decision on the establishment of any subsidiary or ad hoc body, the Committee shall examine the administrative and financial implications of such a decision, in the light of a report to be submitted by the Director-General.

3. The Committee shall define the terms of reference, composition and, as far as possible, the duration of the mandate of each subsidiary or ad hoc body. Such subsidiary or ad hoc bodies shall report to the Committee. The reports of the subsidiary or ad hoc bodies shall be made available for information to all members of the subsidiary or ad hoc bodies concerned, all Member Nations and Associate Members of the Organization, nonmember States /nations/ invited to the session of the subsidiary or ad hoc bodies, and to interested international organizations entitled to attend such sessions.

Rule VIII

Suspension of Rules

The Committee may, by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, decide to suspend any of the foregoing Rules of Procedure, provided that 24 hours' notice of the proposal for the suspension has been given and that the action contemplated is consistent with the Constitution and the General Rules of the Organization.^{1/} Such notice may be waived if no Member objects.

Rule IX

Amendment of Rules

The Committee may, by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, amend its Rules of Procedure, provided that such amendment is consistent with the Constitution and the General Rules of the Organization. No proposal for the amendment of these Rules shall be included in the agenda of any session of the Committee unless notice thereof has been dispatched by the Director-General to members of the Committee at least 30 days before the opening of the session.

^{1/} See footnote to Rule III, paragraph 1.

