

REPORT

Jakarta
Indonesia
15-19 May
2006

Twenty-eighth FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific



FAO member nations in the Asia Region

| | | |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Afghanistan | Kazakhstan | Republic of Korea |
| Bangladesh | Kyrgyzstan | Sri Lanka |
| Bhutan | Lao People's Democratic Republic | Tajikistan |
| Cambodia | Malaysia | Turkmenistan |
| China | Maldives | Thailand |
| Democratic People's Republic of Korea | Mongolia | Timor-Leste |
| India | Myanmar | Uzbekistan |
| Indonesia | Nepal | Viet Nam |
| Iran, Islamic Republic of | Pakistan | |
| Japan | Philippines | |

FAO Member Nations in the Southwest Pacific Region

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Australia | Nauru | Tonga |
| Cook Islands | New Zealand | Tuvalu |
| Fiji | Niue | United States of America |
| France | Palau | Vanuatu |
| Kiribati | Papua New Guinea | |
| Marshall Islands | Samoa | |
| Micronesia (Federated States of) | Solomon Islands | |

Date and place of FAO Regional Conferences for Asia and the Pacific

| | |
|----------------|---|
| First | - Bangalore, India, 27 July – 5 August 1953 |
| Second | - Kandy, Ceylon, 20–25 June 1955 |
| Third | - Bandung, Indonesia, 8–18 October 1956 |
| Fourth | - Tokyo, Japan, 6–16 October 1958 |
| Fifth | - Saigon, Republic of Viet Nam, 21–30 November 1960 |
| Sixth | - Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 15–29 September 1962 |
| Seventh | - Manila, Philippines, 7–21 November 1964 |
| Eighth | - Seoul, Republic of Korea, 15–24 September 1966 |
| Ninth | - Bangkok, Thailand, 4–15 November 1968 |
| Tenth | - Canberra, Australia, 27 August – 8 September 1970 |
| Eleventh | - New Delhi, India, 17–27 October 1972 |
| Twelfth | - Tokyo, Japan, 17–27 September 1974 |
| Thirteenth | - Manila, Philippines, 5–13 August 1976 |
| Fourteenth | - Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 25 July – 3 August 1978 |
| Fifteenth | - New Delhi, India, 5–13 March 1980 |
| Sixteenth | - Jakarta, Indonesia, 1–11 June 1982 |
| Seventeenth | - Islamabad, Pakistan, 24 April – 3 May 1984 |
| Eighteenth | - Rome, Italy, 8–17 July 1986 |
| Nineteenth | - Bangkok, Thailand, 11–15 July 1988 |
| Twentieth | - Beijing, China, 23–27 April 1990 |
| Twenty-first | - New Delhi, India, 10–14 February 1992 |
| Twenty-second | - Manila, Philippines, 3–7 October 1994 |
| Twenty-third | - Apia, Western Samoa, 14–18 May 1996 |
| Twenty-fourth | - Yangon, Myanmar, 20–24 April 1998 |
| Twenty-fifth | - Yokohama, Japan, 28 August – 1 September 2000 |
| Twenty-sixth | - Kathmandu, Nepal, 13–15 May 2002 |
| Twenty-seventh | - Beijing, China, 17–21 May 2004 |
| Twenty-eighth | - Jakarta, Indonesia, 15–19 May 2006 |

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SUMMARY OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

Ministerial-Level Session of the Conference

Matters Arising from the 33rd Session of the FAO Conference

For the attention of Governments and FAO

The Conference:

1. stressed that FAO had a unique role to play in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and reiterated its strong support to the reform of FAO to make the Organization a more efficient and effective knowledge organization to lead the world and assist member countries in fighting hunger and ensuring sustainable agricultural development.
2. supported proposals for streamlining FAO's financial and administrative procedures, including consolidating many of them, as appropriate.

Many delegates emphasized that further reforms, beyond those approved by the 33rd Session of the FAO Conference, should be initiated only after careful assessment of the initial reforms and further consultation with member countries, taking into account the findings of the IEE and the ongoing wider United Nations reforms, including the High Level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence. While there was a view that further reform should be implemented after careful assessment of the initial reforms and the conclusion of the IEE, some member countries urged the Director-General to implement the reform expeditiously.

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

3. urged the active involvement of member countries in the IEE.
4. encouraged member countries to contribute to the IEE Multilateral Trust Fund, to the extent possible, in order to enhance ownership of the evaluation.

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

5. urged FAO to further identify and focus on areas of highest priority and those for which FAO has a comparative advantage within the United Nations system, and to seek voluntary contributions from member countries to support the implementation of the reform.

General Debate on Food and Agriculture Situation in the Region

For the attention of Governments and FAO

The Conference:

6. called on all member countries, working in close cooperation with international organizations, to urgently translate political commitment for achieving the targets of the World Food Summit and the Millennium Development Goals into concrete programmes and actions, and to increase resources to ensure food security for all.
7. requested FAO, other international organizations and donors to provide targeted support to address the challenges of Small Island Developing States through early warning systems, disaster preparedness and management, appropriate agricultural production systems, value-added processing, marketing and policy support.
8. urged support for the second phase of the South Pacific Regional Programme for Food Security.
9. requested FAO and other international organizations to increase support for combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing through effective monitoring, control and surveillance practices, and the establishment of related strong governance.
10. urged FAO, in collaboration with other international and regional organizations, to increase efforts to build capacity for sustainable forest management and combating deforestation and forest degradation.

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

11. urged all countries to demonstrate flexibility and commitment in advancing multilateral agricultural trade negotiations.

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

12. requested FAO to continue providing advice and capacity building for multilateral and bilateral agricultural trade negotiations.
13. requested FAO to support member countries in their efforts to develop practical and cost-competitive bioenergy sectors.
14. encouraged FAO to further strengthen mechanisms for the exchange of technical knowledge and experience and the implementation of technical programmes through South-South Cooperation, Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC), regional networking, and partnerships and alliances among stakeholders.
15. requested FAO to continue its support for the formulation and implementation of codes and guidelines for responsible forest practices.
16. requested FAO to continue its facilitating role as Chair of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests under the United Nations Forum on Forests.

Adjustment and Restructuring in Major Asian Economies and Their Implications on Food Security and Poverty in the Rest of the Region

For the attention of Governments and FAO

The Conference:

17. acknowledged that agriculture remains a very important sector in most developing countries and agreed that continued vigorous attention to the agricultural sector by governments and international organizations was warranted, particularly in those countries that are currently lagging in their performance; it recognized the need to facilitate efficient and timely restructuring of the agricultural sector.

18. recommended increased bilateral and regional cooperation, and enhanced collaboration with international research centres, to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, technologies, skills and genetic resources, including those of coconut trees and pandanas.

19. urged member countries and FAO to assist farmers and fisherfolk, particularly small producers, by providing suitable technologies for alternative crops and enterprises, credit and marketing support, improved irrigation services and risk mitigation measures.

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

20. recommended that all countries in the region accord due priority to agriculture and rural development, including fisheries and forestry, in their economic development frameworks and boost resource allocations to these sectors, as appropriate.

21. urged member countries to undertake policy studies on changing food demand, trade and marketing patterns and the roles of government, with a view of developing appropriate strategies and technologies for assisting farmers and consumers.

22. urged member countries to carefully review policies, practices and institutional arrangements to ensure efficient and sustainable conservation and use of forests, land, water and other natural resources, including plant and animal genetic resources, needed to sustain agricultural productivity.

23. recommended that member countries strengthen agricultural research and development, to increase productivity and market competitiveness of farmers, especially in disadvantaged areas and indigenous communities.

24. urged countries to create conducive policies and favourable conditions for private sector investment in agriculture.

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

25. suggested that FAO expand its diagnostic study on the implications of rapid economic growth for agriculture and food security to include additional countries, and the likely implications of further economic development and anticipated restructuring of the agricultural sector.

26. requested FAO, in the context of the Regional Strategic Framework, to continue assisting member countries in formulating pro-poor policies and strategies to enhance the competitiveness of the agricultural sectors and their contributions to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

27. requested FAO to continue facilitating the South-South Cooperation and other technology exchange initiatives beneficial to the rural poor.

28. recommended that FAO continue building the capacity of member countries to enable them to deal effectively with the rapid changes in agriculture, resulting from continued economic development and technological advances.
29. urged FAO to be strategic in the use of its limited resources for addressing priority areas, to maximize impact in developing countries, and to avoid activities that might be better carried out by countries themselves, other organizations, or the private sector.
30. requested FAO to give particular attention to the special needs of Small Island Developing States, land-locked countries, post-conflict areas and others facing special challenges in capturing the benefits of rapid economic growth and trade liberalization.
31. recommended that FAO assist member countries in developing and enhancing diversification, value-added processing, food product innovation, agro industries and marketing.
32. requested FAO to continue assisting countries in enhancing their capacities to meet international food quality and sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards to facilitate trade and safeguard plant, animal and human health, and assist in establishing and maintaining appropriate regulations, monitoring and surveillance to ensure food quality and safety.

Reducing Vulnerability to Natural Disasters and Promoting a Livelihood Approach for Rehabilitation and Reconstruction

For the attention of Governments and FAO

The Conference:

33. urged greater commitment and resources to effectively develop and implement policies, action plans and strategies to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters.
34. recognized the importance of building a resilient rural society through the adoption of good agricultural practices and sustainable rural development, and encouraged member countries and FAO to support a livelihood approach in all phases of disaster management.
35. urged member countries and donor organizations to be proactive by investing more in preparing for future disasters, rather than simply responding with assistance after disasters had occurred.

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

36. urged member countries to develop multi-hazard early warning systems to identify impending hazards and allow sufficient time for mitigation.

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

37. recommended that FAO take a lead role when disasters impact heavily on the agricultural sector and assume a supporting role when disasters impact more on other sectors.
38. urged FAO to collaborate closely with all relevant partners at local, national, regional and international levels.

39. urged FAO to continue its support activities related to tsunami rehabilitation and avian influenza, and to be well prepared to assist in the relief and rehabilitation efforts of future disasters.
40. requested FAO to enhance its support for integrated watershed management, integrated coastal area management, codes of conduct for sustainable forest and fisheries management and good agricultural practices.
41. requested FAO to provide technical assistance to support the implementation of disaster reduction plans, including actions involving improved food reserves and practical insurance schemes, with particular attention to the special needs of vulnerable Small Island Developing States.
42. recommended that FAO become more actively engaged in all activities of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction as outlined in the Hyogo Framework.
43. encouraged FAO to allocate increased expertise and financial resources in giving higher priority to reducing vulnerability to natural disasters in member countries.

Regional State of Food and Agriculture

For the attention of Governments and FAO

The Conference:

44. acknowledged the benefits of increasing trade of agricultural products, but noted the need to strengthen national capacities for analyzing trade issues, enhance the competitiveness of small producers in terms of price and quality of products, and improve safety nets against hunger for the most vulnerable.
45. urged renewed attention by FAO and member countries to enhancing productivity and securing access to food.

Pesticide Management and Its Relationship to the Rotterdam, Stockholm and Basel Conventions

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

46. recommended that member countries ratify and implement the Rotterdam, Stockholm and Basel conventions, and commit to adhering to the Code of Conduct to maximize the synergies from a comprehensive life-cycle approach to the management of pesticides.

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

47. requested FAO and other international organizations to provide support to member countries in building capacity for safe and appropriate handling and use of pesticides.

48. requested FAO to enhance coordination with other international organizations to harmonize the classification of hazardous chemicals and to promote consistent and efficient approaches for pesticide management.

Recent Developments in FAO's Programme on Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADS)

For the attention of Governments and FAO

The Conference:

49. requested FAO and other international organizations to support countries with limited technical capacity in addressing highly pathogenic avian influenza by developing and implementing effective national disease control strategies and regional mechanisms for cooperation, networking and information sharing.

50. requested donors to enhance their funding support, and FAO and other international organizations to provide continued technical support, for dealing with transboundary animal diseases.

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

51. requested FAO to explore the potential for widespread application of innovative technologies for animal identification used to effectively track animals and products.

Bioenergy: A Development of Option for Agriculture and Forestry in Asia and the Pacific

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

52. requested FAO to continue monitoring emerging issues related to bioenergy development, including the potential opportunities and challenges for agriculture and rural development, and to facilitate the sharing of information and experiences among member countries.

53. urged FAO to conduct studies and advise on the financial and economic viability of bioenergy development and the possible impacts on the prices and availability of food as a result of expanding bioenergy production.

Post-Session Technical Presentation on Avian Influenza

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

54. recommended that countries develop and implement effective community-based surveillance systems that detect and report both poultry and human cases of avian influenza.

55. encouraged countries to design “multi-hazard” surveillance and response systems covering a variety of potential emerging infectious diseases – not only avian influenza – as a way of ensuring sustainability and cost effectiveness.

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

1. The Twenty-eighth FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific was held in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 15 to 17 May 2006. The Conference was organized in two parts: a Senior Officers Meeting from 15 to 17 May, followed by a Ministerial-level Meeting from 18 to 19 May.
2. Representatives from 30 member countries participated in the Conference. The Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council, observers from 1 United Nations Member Nation, 1 non-member Nation, 12 international non-governmental organizations and 3 intergovernmental organizations were also in attendance. Representatives of seven other United Nations organizations participated. A complete list of Conference participants is given in [Appendix B](#).

INAUGURAL CEREMONIES

3. Mr Biplab Nandi, Secretary of the Twenty-eighth FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific, greeted delegates on behalf of the Conference Secretariat.
4. The Senior Officers Meeting was opened with addresses by Mr He Changchui, Assistant Director-General and FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific, and His Excellency, Dr Anton Apriyantono, Minister for Agriculture, Government of the Republic of Indonesia.
5. Mr He expressed appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Indonesia for its excellent support in hosting the conference. He noted recent developments and trends in agriculture in the region over the past two years, including increased production of paddy rice, maize, livestock, fish from aquaculture, oilseeds, fruits and vegetables, and continued rapid expansion of intra-regional trade. He also highlighted the important challenges related to avian influenza, reconstruction of tsunami-affected areas, floods and other natural disasters, overfishing, illegal logging, pollution from industrial livestock production and increased demands for water. Mr He warned that the region was unlikely to meet the World Food Summit target of halving the number of undernourished by 2015 and stressed that achieving this goal, or exceeding it, must be given the highest priority. He cited the value of the FAO Regional Strategic Framework, endorsed at the Twenty-seventh Conference, in guiding FAO's work in the region, and noted the need for more innovative and efficient approaches and additional resources, to achieve the World Food Summit target and the Millennium Development Goals.
6. His Excellency, Dr Anton Apriyantono, welcomed delegates and participants to Jakarta on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia and formally opened the Senior Officers Meeting. He highlighted the importance of agriculture in the region's economy, particularly in supporting rural development and livelihoods. His Excellency emphasized the importance of sound policies, effective support services, diversified production, modern infrastructure, value-added processing, efficient marketing and progressive trade strategies. He highlighted the need for developing new technological innovations, increasing external assistance for developing countries, reversing the declining trends in agricultural commodity prices, promoting free and fair international trade, and effectively dealing with trans-boundary animal diseases. His Excellency urged increased exchange and cooperation among countries in the region to address the pressing needs and challenges facing the agriculture sector.
7. The Inaugural Ceremony of the Ministerial Meeting was held on 18 May. Mr Jacques Diouf, Director-General of FAO, warmly welcomed the President of the Republic of Indonesia and all participants to the Conference. He appreciated the importance accorded to the meeting, exemplified by the large number of participating ministers and secretaries of agriculture.

8. His Excellency Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of the Republic of Indonesia, delivered the Conference inaugural address. He stated that any conference about food was really a forum about the sustainability of human life, and that the right to food was essentially the right to life.

9. The President lauded the solid achievements of countries in Asia and the Pacific in the field of agricultural productivity over the past several decades. He noted that this progress had been underpinned by factors that are still at work, including sensible macroeconomic policies, a young population, high savings and investment rates, entrepreneurial cultures and the high value placed on education. The President stressed, however, that greater efforts were needed to overcome the challenges of increasing population, natural disasters, inefficiencies in agricultural production and food distribution, resource degradation and distortions in international trade.

10. The President urged member countries to increase regional cooperation, with support from FAO, to enhance agricultural productivity, address environmental degradation, overcome distortions in international trade, protect against transboundary animal diseases and find practical solutions to the high costs of energy.

11. The text of the inaugural address of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono is given in Appendix D.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON, VICE-CHAIRPERSONS AND RAPPORTEUR

12. Delegates unanimously elected Dr Hasanuddin Ibrahim, Secretary General, Ministry for Agriculture of Indonesia, as Chairperson of the Senior Officers Meeting. They also elected all the heads of delegations of Vice-Ministerial and Secretary for Agriculture rank as Vice-Chairpersons of the Senior Officers Meeting, and Mr Zulkifli Idris, of Malaysia, as Rapporteur.

13. His Excellency Dr Anton Apriyantono, Minister for Agriculture, Republic of Indonesia, was elected as the Chairperson of the Ministerial Meeting. Delegates also elected all of the other Ministers present as Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference, and His Excellency M.K. Anwar, of Bangladesh, as Rapporteur of the Conference.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

14. The Conference adopted the agenda, which is given in Appendix A. Documents submitted to the Conference are listed in Appendix C.

STATEMENT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

15. In his statement, Mr Jacques Diouf observed that hunger and poverty were now recognized as the two major scourges of humanity. He warned that progress in reducing the number of undernourished persons in the world had slowed and that at present rates the target of the 1996 World Food Summit of halving the number of undernourished people by 2015 would not be achieved. He noted that some 854 million people in the world were still undernourished, including 552 million in the developing and transition economies of Asia and the Pacific.

16. The Director-General highlighted the challenges constraining progress toward the World Food Summit target in Asia and the Pacific, including degradation of natural resources, continued population growth and frequent natural disasters. He also noted the recent developments in multilateral negotiations on trade liberalization and the associated challenges of capturing maximum benefits for the poor. He stressed the need for more appropriate policies, regulations and technologies, as well as strategic investment to modernize agricultural systems, develop effective early warning systems, and build regional capacity to address these challenges.

17. The Director-General emphasized the importance and value of collaborative agricultural research and South-South cooperation in tackling the challenges facing the agriculture sector in Asia and the Pacific.
18. The complete text of the Director-General's Statement is given in Appendix E.

STATEMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT CHAIRPERSON OF THE FAO COUNCIL

19. Mr Noori Naeini, Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council, addressed the Conference. He reflected on the advances made by Asia and the Pacific in reducing poverty and malnutrition and highlighted the importance of investing in the poor. Mr Naeini provided an update on the state of the FAO budget and finances, and called on member countries to expedite the payment of any arrears. He urged all members to make the Independent External Evaluation (IEE) a product of the membership and to contribute to the IEE Multilateral Trust Fund established by FAO. He also introduced the voluntary guidelines for the "Right to Food".

II. MINISTERIAL-LEVEL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE

20. The Ministerial-level Session of the Conference involved the full delegations of all participating countries and organizations, including 15 Ministers and 3 Vice-Ministers responsible for agriculture.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 33RD SESSION OF THE FAO CONFERENCE

21. Mr Jacques Diouf, Director-General of FAO, introduced key matters arising from the 33rd Session of the FAO Conference, held in Rome from 19 to 26 November 2005.¹ He described his revised proposals for FAO reform, briefly outlined a vision for FAO in the twenty-first century, and informed the Conference of developments since the 33rd Session of the FAO Conference. He also informed the Conference of recent work by the Programme and Finance Committees regarding the FAO budget and streamlining of programme entities.

22. Elaborating on his vision for the future, the Director-General emphasized the need for FAO to focus on its important roles related to capacity building, sharing of knowledge and multi-disciplinary approaches for agricultural development. He outlined several opportunities for improving cost-effectiveness and improved delivery of services to member countries, through further decentralization, restructuring, streamlining of administrative and financial procedures, and closer affiliation with Regional Economic Integration Organizations.

23. A Representative of the Asian Members of the Council Committee on the Independent External Evaluation (IEE) provided the Conference with a progress report on the work of the evaluation team.

24. The Conference emphasized its commitment to ensuring the efficient and effective management of FAO. Delegates recognized the difficult challenges of reform, and expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to consult, share views and advise on reform in a transparent manner. The Conference strongly endorsed the need for reform in FAO to enhance efficiency and improve the delivery of services and support to member countries.

25. The Conference highlighted the importance of the IEE and urged the active involvement of member countries in the IEE. It encouraged member countries to contribute to the IEE

¹ APRC/06/6 and RC/2006/1

Multilateral Trust Fund, to the extent possible, in order to enhance ownership of the evaluation. The Conference reiterated that the IEE and FAO reform were to be mutually supportive.

26. Acknowledging the challenging financial position of FAO, the Conference urged FAO to further identify and focus on areas of highest priority and those for which FAO has a comparative advantage within the United Nations system.

27. The Conference highlighted the need for FAO to seek voluntary contributions from member countries to support the implementation of the reforms.

28. The Conference supported proposals for streamlining FAO's financial and administrative functions, including consolidating many of them, as appropriate.

29. Many delegates emphasized that further reforms, beyond those approved by the 33rd Session of the FAO Conference, should be initiated only after careful assessment of the initial reforms and further consultation with member countries, taking into account of the findings of the IEE and the ongoing wider United Nations reforms, including the High Level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence. This would provide information to governing bodies to assess impacts and plan implementation.

30. The Director-General provided a clarification that the Conference resolution clearly stressed that the IEE and the reform proposals should be mutually supportive. The Director-General further clarified that the resolution also authorized him to start progressive implementation of his proposals for change to the organizational structure in FAO headquarters, in addition to those reform proposals that fall under his own authority.

31. The Director-General observed that his proposal for decentralization is one important measure to improve the Organization's efficiency and cost saving. He observed an inconsistency in requesting FAO to cut costs, while discouraging further decentralization. He clarified that the mix of expertise required by any new regional or sub-regional offices would be determined based on local needs and in consultation with countries.

32. With regard to a request for a detailed reform proposal, the Director-General noted that he was not able to provide a proposal at this stage, as he needed to continue wide consultation with partners. He indicated that he expected to submit his proposal to the FAO Council in November 2006.

GENERAL DEBATE ON FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SITUATION IN THE REGION

33. Mr He Changchui, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific, reported on the major FAO activities in the region over the past biennium.² He summarized FAO's work in the region in relation to the Millennium Development Goals and the FAO Regional Strategic Framework. He highlighted the timely and comprehensive nature of FAO's response to the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and the destructive outbreaks of avian influenza. While elaborating the comprehensive FAO support to the region through consultations and expert meetings, workshops and training, policy advice, technical support for field projects, publication of guidelines and technical reports and collaboration with national and regional partners, Mr He emphasized that a lot remained to be done in supporting member countries in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and, for this purpose, there was a need for strengthening FAO's multi-disciplinary capacity in the region.

34. Mr Zulkifli Idris, Rapporteur of the Senior Officers Meeting, introduced the report of the Senior Officers Meeting to the Ministerial-level Session and summarized the key findings and

² APRC/06/4

recommendations resulting from the deliberations during that portion of the Conference. The Ministers and other delegates approved the findings and recommendations of the Senior Officers Meeting, which comprise an integral part of this Conference report.

35. In validating and reinforcing the conclusions and recommendations made by the senior officers, the Ministers and other delegates noted that many countries in the region had made significant advances in reducing poverty and enhancing food security, but that progress was highly uneven. The Conference was highly concerned that the overall pace toward reducing the number of undernourished was far too slow.

36. Member countries renewed their commitment to achieving the targets of the World Food Summit and the Millennium Development Goals. The Conference called on all member countries, working in close cooperation with international organizations, to urgently translate political commitment into concrete programmes and actions, and to increase resources to ensure food security for all.

37. The Conference stressed that FAO had a unique role to play in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and reiterated its strong support to the reform of FAO to make the Organization a more efficient and effective knowledge organization to lead the world and assist member countries in fighting hunger and ensuring sustainable agricultural development. The Conference recognized the decision by the 33rd Session of the FAO Conference that the IEE and the reforms should be mutually supportive. While there was a view that further reform should be implemented after careful assessment of the initial reforms and after the conclusion of the IEE, some countries urged the Director-General to implement the reform process expeditiously.

38. The Ministers and other delegates cited numerous challenges and constraints in the pursuit of food security. Particular attention was drawn to difficulties arising from growing populations and food demand, globalization, increasing gaps in income between urban and rural areas, market access and associated trade-related challenges, natural and man-made disasters, civil strife, inadequate rural infrastructure, expanding urbanization and associated loss of farm lands, invasive species, increasing demand for water resources, degradation of forests, declining fish stocks, low levels of mechanization and increasing prices of inputs for agricultural production.

39. The Conference noted the devastating loss of life and property in the region as a result of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2005 South Asia earthquake and the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza. The Conference expressed its gratitude to FAO and other bilateral and international partners for their timely and generous support in providing emergency and rehabilitation assistance.

40. The Conference noted the many special challenges facing Small Island Developing States, including their distance from markets, reliance on imports to supply many basic commodities, reliance on a narrow base of exports, susceptibility to natural disasters, vulnerability to the effects of climate change, lack of infrastructure and low levels of investment. The Conference requested FAO, other international organizations and donors to provide targeted support to address these challenges through early warning systems, disaster preparedness and management, appropriate agricultural production systems, value-added processing, marketing and policy support. The Conference urged support for the second phase of the South Pacific Regional Programme for Food Security.

41. Ministers and other delegates recognized a broad range of mechanisms to enhance food security and alleviate rural poverty. Particular focus was given to the roles of sound agricultural strategies and policies, increased domestic food production, diversification to high-value crops, fair and open trade, sustainable management of natural resources, integrated water resources management, prevention and management of pests and transboundary diseases, dissemination and application of appropriate technologies, harnessing the potential of biotechnology, participatory approaches and partnerships with local communities and local organizations, empowerment of the rural poor, enhanced research and effective extension, rural credit, post-harvest and processing

technologies, improved food distribution, creation of off-farm rural employment and harmonization of plant quarantine and food safety standards.

42. Ministers and delegates attached great importance to fair and free trade to enhance food security and reduce poverty. The Conference expressed its disappointment at the failure thus far to make substantive progress in the World Trade Organization Doha Round negotiations. The Conference stressed that only a short time remained for achieving major progress in the Doha Round. The Conference urged all countries to demonstrate flexibility and commitment in advancing multilateral agricultural trade negotiations. FAO was requested to continue providing advice and capacity building for multilateral and bilateral agricultural trade negotiations.

43. Concerned with the escalating costs and negative environmental impacts of fossil fuel use, the Ministers and other delegates highlighted their efforts to develop practical and cost-competitive bioenergy. The Conference requested FAO to support these efforts and to assess the potential impacts on food prices and availability.

44. The Conference stressed the valuable roles of FAO in supporting member countries' efforts to achieve food security. Particular attention was given to the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS), FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), early warning systems, integrated pest management (IPM), integrated water resources management, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, FIVIMS, standard-setting bodies such as the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and CODEX, strengthening capacities for meeting sanitary and phyto-sanitary requirements, and trade-related technical and policy assistance, and nutrition improvement programmes.

45. The Conference noted with appreciation the offers of financial and technical support by several member countries. It encouraged FAO to further strengthen mechanisms for exchanging technical knowledge and experience, and implementing technical programmes through South-South Cooperation, Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC), regional networking, and partnerships and alliances among stakeholders.

46. The Conference expressed concern over the continuing depletion of fish stocks and highlighted the importance of sustainable management of fisheries resources. The Conference requested FAO and other international organizations to increase support for combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing through effective monitoring, control and surveillance practices, and the establishment of related strong governance.

47. Ministers and delegates recognized that forests and trees outside forests played highly important roles in poverty reduction and food security. The Conference recognized the significant advances that had been made in developing forest plantations in some countries, but expressed concern over the continued loss and degradation of natural forests because of illegal and unsustainable logging, invasive species, forest fires and conversion to other land uses. The Conference urged FAO, in collaboration with other international and regional organizations, to increase efforts to build capacity for sustainable forest management and combating deforestation and forest degradation. It requested FAO to continue its support for the formulation and implementation of codes and guidelines for responsible forest practices. It also requested FAO to continue its facilitating role as Chair of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests under the United Nations Forum on Forests.

ROUNDTABLE ON EFFECTS OF TRADE ON FOOD SECURITY AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND MAKING TRADE WORK FOR THE POOR AND HUNGRY

48. An informal Ministerial roundtable on the effects of trade on food security and poverty alleviation, with a focus on capturing the benefits of trade for the poor and hungry of the region, was convened on 18 May.³ A note on the roundtable is given in [Appendix F](#).

III. ADJUSTMENT AND RESTRUCTURING IN MAJOR ASIAN ECONOMIES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS ON FOOD SECURITY AND POVERTY IN THE REST OF THE REGION

49. The Conference considered the experiences, lessons and implications of rapid economic growth for agriculture and food security in the region based on a diagnostic study carried out by FAO in China, India, Republic of Korea, Thailand and Viet Nam.⁴ The study had revealed generally positive experiences in the five countries with respect to poverty reduction, food security and rural development, but had also exposed important challenges related to growing income disparities, declining rates of agricultural growth, and environmental degradation.

50. The Conference commended FAO on the quality of the diagnostic study and the value of the conclusions and recommendations. It suggested that FAO expand the study to include additional countries and potential implications of further economic development and anticipated restructuring of the agricultural sector.

51. Delegates recognized that the unprecedented economic growth in the Asia-Pacific region over the past three decades was having profound impacts on agriculture and rural development. Increasing per capita income, growing urbanization and the influences of globalization were seen as representing both opportunities and challenges for the agricultural sector. Food consumption, marketing and trade patterns were changing swiftly and, together with increased competition for resources from other sectors, were exerting tremendous pressure on the agricultural sector to become more productive, more competitive and more efficient. At the same time, increasing commercialization and specialization of agriculture were leading to concerns that small farmers may be left out of the growth process unless specifically empowered to effectively participate and benefit from it.

52. The Conference acknowledged that agriculture had played a pivotal role in the early stages of economic growth of the five countries studied, and that it remains a very important sector in most developing countries. Noting that lingering poverty and hunger across the region is disproportionately concentrated among agricultural households in rural areas, senior officers agreed that continued vigorous attention to the agricultural sector by governments and international organizations was warranted, particularly in those countries that are currently lagging in their performance.

53. The Conference recommended that all countries in the region accord due priority to agriculture and rural development, including fisheries and forestry, in their economic development frameworks and boost resource allocations to the sectors, as appropriate.

54. Recognizing the need to facilitate efficient and timely restructuring of the agricultural sector, the Conference urged member countries to undertake policy studies on changing food demand, trade and marketing patterns and the roles of government, with a view of developing appropriate strategies and technologies for assisting farmers and consumers. It requested FAO, in the context of the Regional Strategic Framework, to continue assisting member countries in

³ APRC/06/5

⁴ APRC/06/2

formulating pro-poor policies and strategies to enhance the competitiveness of their agricultural sectors and their contributions toward the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

55. Recognizing the serious negative impacts of the degradation of the natural resource base, the Conference urged member countries to carefully review their policies, practices and institutional arrangements to ensure efficient and sustainable conservation and use of forests, land, water and other natural resources, including plant and animal genetic resources, needed to sustain agricultural productivity.

56. The Conference recommended that member countries strengthen agricultural research and development to increase productivity and market competitiveness of farmers, especially in disadvantaged areas and indigenous communities.

57. Recognizing that many smaller countries with limited resources and infrastructure for conducting advanced agricultural research were particularly disadvantaged, the Conference recommended increased bilateral and regional cooperation, and enhanced collaboration with international research centres, to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, technologies, skills and genetic resources, including those of coconut trees and pandanas. The Conference requested FAO to continue facilitating the South-South Cooperation and other technology exchange initiatives beneficial to the rural poor.

58. The Conference recommended that FAO continue building the capacity of member countries to enable them to deal effectively with the rapid changes in agriculture resulting from continued economic development and technological advances. It urged FAO to be strategic in the use of its limited resources for addressing priority areas, to maximize impact in developing countries, and to avoid activities that might be better carried out by countries themselves, other organizations, or the private sector.

59. Recognizing the important roles of the private sector in agriculture, the Conference urged countries to create conducive policies and favourable conditions for private sector investment.

60. The Conference requested FAO to give particular attention to the special needs of Small Island Developing States, land-locked countries, post-conflict areas and others facing special challenges in capturing the benefits of rapid economic growth and trade liberalization.

61. Noting the trends toward improving dietary consumption and increased demand for processed and semi-processed food as economies grow, the Conference recommended that FAO assist member countries in developing and enhancing diversification, value-added processing, food product innovation, agro industries and marketing.

62. The Conference urged member countries and FAO to assist farmers and fisherfolk, particularly small producers, by providing suitable technologies for alternative crops and enterprises, credit and marketing support, improved irrigation services and risk mitigation measures.

63. FAO was requested to continue assisting countries in enhancing their capacities to meet international food quality and sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards to facilitate trade and safeguard plant, animal and human health. The Conference also requested FAO to assist countries in establishing and maintaining appropriate regulations, monitoring and surveillance to ensure food quality and safety.

IV. REDUCING VULNERABILITY TO NATURAL DISASTERS AND PROMOTING A LIVELIHOOD APPROACH FOR REHABILITATION AND RECONSTRUCTION

64. The Conference considered the importance of reducing vulnerability to natural disasters and promoting a livelihood approach to rehabilitation and reconstruction following natural disasters.⁵

65. The Conference noted that over the past ten years, 90 percent of the people affected by natural disasters were residents of Asia and the Pacific, and that disasters had inflicted huge economic and social damage on the region. It was further recognized that the rural poor were the most vulnerable to natural disasters. Floods, storms and typhoons, drought, famine, wildfires, volcanic eruptions, epidemics, and more recently tsunamis, had all wreaked devastating impacts on the rural poor and their livelihoods. The increase in the frequency of these natural disasters in recent years, as well as the looming threats associated with global warming, was highlighted.

66. Delegates acknowledged their severe vulnerability to the many natural disasters that affect the region. Small Island Developing States particularly highlighted their vulnerability to climate-induced hazards. The Conference noted that many countries have developed policies, action plans and strategies, as well as some technologies, to reduce these vulnerabilities, but urged greater commitment and resources to effectively implement these programmes and initiatives.

67. Delegates noted that there were many agencies working to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters, but that FAO had a special role to play in ensuring that rural communities engaged in agriculture (including fisheries and forestry and coconut trees) benefited from global and regional action programmes to address natural disasters. The Conference recommended that FAO take a lead role when disasters impacted heavily on the agriculture sector and assume a supporting role when disasters impact more on other sectors. The Conference urged FAO to collaborate closely with all relevant partners at local, national, regional and international levels.

68. The Conference acknowledged the important roles that the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific had played in relief and rehabilitation efforts after the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, and in controlling and mitigating the effects of avian influenza in the region. It urged FAO to continue its support in these areas, and to be well prepared to assist in the relief and rehabilitation efforts of future disasters.

69. The Conference encouraged member countries and FAO to support a livelihood approach in all phases of disaster management, from prevention, risk assessment, early warning, preparedness and remedial actions, to rehabilitation and reconstruction. Delegates emphasized that this required a cross-sectoral approach that fully considers the assets that contribute directly to, or affect access to, various livelihoods of vulnerable communities.

70. Delegates recognized the importance of building a resilient rural society through the adoption of good agricultural practices and sustainable rural development. In this connection, the Conference requested FAO to enhance its support for integrated watershed management, integrated coastal area management, codes of conduct for sustainable forest and fisheries management and good agricultural practices.

71. The Conference urged member countries to develop multi-hazard early warning systems to identify impending hazards and allow sufficient time for mitigation. The Conference requested FAO to provide technical assistance to support the implementation of disaster reduction plans, including actions involving improved food reserves and practical insurance schemes. FAO was

⁵ APRC/06/3

urged to give particular attention to the special needs of vulnerable Small Island Developing States.

72. The Conference recommended that FAO become more actively engaged in all activities of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction as outlined in the Hyogo Framework. These activities included: (i) raising awareness and incorporating disaster management strategies into national policy and legislation; (ii) identifying, assessing and monitoring disaster risks, and enhancing early warning systems; (iii) improving knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety; (iv) reducing the risk factors; and (v) strengthening disaster preparedness.

73. Delegates noted several issues and constraints limiting FAO's efforts to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters. In this respect, the Conference urged member countries and donor organizations to be proactive by investing more in preparing for future disasters, rather than simply responding with assistance after disasters had occurred.

74. The Conference also encouraged FAO to allocate increased expertise and financial resources in giving higher priority to reducing vulnerability to natural disasters in member countries, particularly in the areas of awareness raising, knowledge sharing and education, provision of technical advice, creation and maintenance of information systems, risk assessments, sharing of experiences and lessons learned, capacity building and assistance for effective implementation of disaster reduction plans and strategies.

V. REGIONAL STATE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

75. The Conference was briefed on the state of food and agriculture in Asia and the Pacific.⁶ Delegates noted that long-term trends were positive for a broad range of quality-of-life indicators, including life expectancy, poverty rates, anthropometric indicators of malnutrition, dietary diversification and access to clean water. Per capita production of most crops and livestock was increasing. Less positively, per capita production from capture fisheries and per capita wood production was declining, in part due to over-exploitation of resources in the past, but also because of changing management objectives that give more attention to biodiversity protection, maintenance of watersheds, and efforts to rebuild resource stocks.

76. Delegates acknowledged the rapid growth in international trade of agricultural products. They noted that trade and competition were likely to increase in the future as a result of improved infrastructure, economic growth and dietary diversification. The Conference concluded that for farmers to successfully meet future challenges, they would need more and better agricultural research, improved networks of rural roads, more reliable irrigation, higher quality extension services and education, clearly defined property rights, better management of natural resources, more developed marketing systems, and more vibrant non-farm income opportunities.

77. The Conference took note of the need to update the data and information regarding the current status of food and agriculture in member countries.

78. Delegates noted an imbalance among countries in the region in terms of agricultural productivity and food security and urged renewed attention by FAO and member countries to enhance productivity and secure access to food.

79. The Conference acknowledged the benefits of increasing trade of agricultural products, but noted the need to strengthen national capacities for analyzing trade issues, to enhance the competitiveness of small producers in terms of price and quality of products, and to improve safety nets against hunger for the most vulnerable.

⁶ APRC/06/INF/5

VI. PESTICIDE MANAGEMENT AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE ROTTERDAM, STOCKHOLM AND BASEL CONVENTIONS

80. The Conference reviewed the importance of sound pesticide management and its relationship with the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides (Code of Conduct), and the Rotterdam, Stockholm and Basel Conventions.⁷

81. Delegates recognized the importance of regulating all stages in the life cycle of hazardous chemicals to minimize the adverse effects from the large quantities of pesticides that are used in the region. They noted that various international agreements provide for a comprehensive regulatory framework for such a life-cycle management of pesticides, with the Stockholm Convention seeking to eliminate the production of persistent organic pollutants, the Rotterdam Convention providing an early warning system for avoiding potential problems from hazardous chemicals through prior informed consent, the Code of Conduct setting globally recognized standards for the distribution and use of pesticides and the Basel Convention setting standards for safe management of hazardous waste.

82. The Conference recommended that member countries ratify and implement all three conventions and commit to adhering to the Code of Conduct to maximize the synergies from a comprehensive life-cycle approach to the management of pesticides. Widespread compliance with the three conventions and the Code of Conduct was recognized as an effective means of ensuring harmonized national regulations consistent with international standards, which would in turn yield health, environmental and trade benefits.

83. The Conference requested FAO and other international organizations to provide support to member countries in capacity building for safe and appropriate handling and use of pesticides. It also requested FAO to enhance coordination with other international organizations to harmonize the classification of hazardous chemicals and to promote consistent and efficient approaches for management of pesticides.

VII. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN FAO'S PROGRAMME ON TRANSBOUNDARY ANIMAL DISEASES (TADS)

84. The Conference was informed of the development of a global framework for the control of transboundary animal diseases and the key elements of the framework.⁸ The Conference was also briefed on FAO's support to member countries in dealing with the following four transboundary animal diseases in the region: (i) highly pathogenic avian influenza; (ii) rinderpest; (iii) foot and mouth disease; and (iv) haemorrhagic septicaemia.

85. The Conference was advised of the continuing threat to global trade and agricultural livelihoods from transboundary animal diseases and the need to strengthen the capacity of animal health services, especially in the areas of emergency preparedness, surveillance, mitigation, management and contingency planning. Regional cooperation in programmes to control transboundary animal diseases was strongly encouraged, especially to facilitate mobilization and effective use of donor funds.

86. Delegates noted the progress being made through national programmes to control highly pathogenic avian influenza and foot and mouth disease, and also the progress towards demonstrating freedom from rinderpest according to World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) standards. Recognizing the unique challenges in addressing highly pathogenic avian influenza,

⁷ APRC/06/INF/6

⁸ APRC/06/INF/7

the Conference stressed the need for developing and implementing effective national disease control strategies and regional mechanisms for cooperation, networking and information sharing. The Conference requested FAO and other international organizations to support countries with limited technical capacity in these measures.

87. Delegates expressed appreciation for FAO's timely and valuable technical inputs to national and regional disease control programmes, and for efforts to coordinate the activities of international organizations and countries in the region. The Conference requested donors to enhance their funding support, and FAO and other international organizations to provide continued technical support, for dealing with these challenging, destructive and dangerous threats.

88. Delegates noted that new and innovative technologies for animal identification could potentially be used to effectively track animals and products. FAO was requested to explore the potential for widespread application of such technologies.

VIII. BIOENERGY: A DEVELOPMENT OPTION FOR AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

89. The Conference was informed of recent developments related to bioenergy and the potential opportunities for agriculture and forestry to benefit from renewed interest in alternatives to conventional energy sources.⁹ Recent spikes in the price of fossil fuels had motivated many countries to explore options for substituting bioenergy for conventional fuels. Improved production and utilization technologies, coupled with escalating costs of fossil fuels, meant that many forms of bioenergy were now cost-competitive with traditional energy sources.

90. The Conference noted the potential benefits of bioenergy, including: (i) clean and safe energy; (ii) potential cost savings; (iii) reduced dependence on fossil fuels; (iv) enhanced energy security; (v) new markets for agricultural and forestry products; (vi) reduced greenhouse gas emissions; (vii) enhanced environmental conditions; and (viii) rehabilitation of degraded lands.

91. The Conference also recognized the risks associated with bioenergy production: (i) potential trade-offs between energy production and food production; (ii) increased competition for land and water; (iii) higher food prices; (iv) dominance by large producers to the detriment of small farmers; (v) expansion of bioenergy production at the expense of native forests; and (vi) negative impacts of intensive biomass energy production on biodiversity.

92. The Conference was informed of FAO's recent launching of the International Bioenergy Platform, and of the potential to obtain FAO support for biofuel resources assessments and enhancement of productivity, supply and demand studies, review of possible impacts of bioenergy production on food prices and availability, formulation of national bioenergy programmes, management of bioenergy resources and production processes, and support for addressing social and institutional issues.

93. The Conference requested FAO to continue monitoring emerging issues related to bioenergy development, including the potential opportunities and challenges for agriculture and rural development, and to facilitate the sharing of information and experiences among member countries. It urged FAO to conduct studies and advise on the financial and economic viability of bioenergy development and the possible impacts on the prices and availability of food as a result of expanding bioenergy production.

⁹ APRC/06/INF/8

IX. POST-SESSION TECHNICAL PRESENTATION ON AVIAN INFLUENZA

94. The Conference was briefed on the current state of highly pathogenic avian influenza in the region. The distribution and status of the disease was reviewed, along with the broad socio-economic impacts, including the public health impacts. The general principles of the global strategy for dealing with highly pathogenic avian influenza were outlined, along with FAO's strategic framework for the development of local plans.

95. Member countries shared information about the prevention and control measures that had been undertaken to date. Important elements of these programmes included: (i) sound preparedness plans; (ii) vigilant surveillance; (iii) effective sharing of information; (iv) public awareness campaigns; (v) rapid culling of poultry in affected areas; (vi) prompt and fair compensation for culled birds; (vii) ready provision of vaccines and vaccinations; (viii) effective industry rehabilitation plans; and (ix) increased investment in animal health services.

96. Recognizing the extreme importance of timely and specific detection of human cases of avian influenza, the Conference recommended that countries develop and implement effective community-based surveillance systems that detect and report both poultry and human cases. The Conference also encouraged countries to design "multi-hazard" surveillance and response systems covering a variety of potential emerging infectious diseases – not only avian influenza – as a way of ensuring sustainability and cost effectiveness.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

97. Mr Durga P. Paudyal, Director General of the Center on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP), provided information on the results of the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD), held 7-10 March 2006, in Porto Alegre, Brazil. He called on the Conference to support follow-up actions for the implementation of the recommendations contained in the ICARRD Final Declaration.

98. Representatives from three civil society organizations from the International Planning Committee for Civil Society (IPC) addressed the Senior Officers Meeting to share their views. They expressed strong concern over the slow progress being made toward meeting the target of the World Food Summit and in addressing the issues of food security in the context of the Millennium Development Goals. They stressed that activities in the region, especially with regard to agrarian reform and the right to food, needed further strengthening through increased participation by non-governmental and civil society organizations.

99. Mr He Changchui, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative, upon agreement by the Chairperson, specifically invited the International Planning Committee for Civil Society representatives to address the Ministerial Meeting on 19 May, in the morning session, but the IPC representatives were not available.

100. The Conference acknowledged the Jakarta Joint Ministerial Statement on Regional Partnerships Toward the Achievement of Food and Livelihood Security in Asia and the Pacific, which had been proposed by the Government of the Republic of Indonesia and drafted during a series of meetings by a Technical Committee comprised of interested delegates, and issued by the Ministers. A copy of the Jakarta Joint Ministerial Statement is given in Appendix G.

101. The Conference appreciated the excellent exhibits on various aspects of agriculture, forestry, fisheries and rural development prepared by FAO and several Indonesian Government agencies.

XI. CONCLUDING ITEMS

PROPOSED ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE TWENTY-NINTH REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

102. The Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative outlined the procedures for identification of agenda items for the next session of the Conference, including seeking advice from the Asia-Pacific Group, consultation among FAO staff in the regional and sub-regional offices and in headquarters, and final approval by the Director-General.

103. Recognizing that conditions and circumstances may change before finalization of the agenda for the Twenty-ninth Session, it was suggested that agenda items could appropriately focus on areas of work elaborated in FAO's Regional Strategic Framework.

DATE AND PLACE OF THE TWENTY-NINTH REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

104. The Government of Pakistan graciously informed the Conference of its interest and willingness to host the twenty-ninth Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific in 2008. The Government of the Republic of Korea expressed its wish to host the Conference at some point in the future, preferably in 2010.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

105. The Conference unanimously adopted the report as presented by the Rapporteur after discussion and minor revisions.

CLOSURE OF THE CONFERENCE

106. On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia, His Excellency Dr Anton Apriyantono thanked the participants for their constructive and positive contributions, which had contributed to the Conference's success. In closing the Conference, he noted that it had advanced the common understanding of the strategies, policies and actions needed to reduce hunger and ensure sustainable rural development throughout the region.

107. Participants expressed their heartfelt appreciation to the people and Government of the Republic of Indonesia for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements in hosting the Conference.

APPENDIX A

AGENDA

SENIOR OFFICERS MEETING

15–17 May 2006

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1. Opening of the Senior Officers Meeting
2. Election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of Agenda and Timetable

II. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

4. Adjustment and Restructuring in Major Asian Economies and their Implications on Food Security and Poverty in the Rest of the Region
5. Reducing Vulnerability to Natural Disasters and Promoting a Livelihood Approach for Rehabilitation and Reconstruction

III. INFORMATION ITEMS

6. Regional State of Food and Agriculture
7. Pesticide Management and its Relationship to the Rotterdam, Stockholm and Basel Conventions
8. Recent Developments in FAO's programme on Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADs)
9. Bioenergy: A Development Option for Agriculture and Forestry in Asia and the Pacific

IV. OTHER MATTERS

10. Any other business

V. CONCLUDING ITEMS

11. Adoption of the Report of the Senior Officers Meeting
12. Closure of the Senior Officers Meeting

PLENARY SESSION

18–19 May 2006

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1. Inaugural Ceremony
2. Election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of Agenda and Timetable

II. STATEMENTS

4. Statement by the Director-General
5. Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council
6. Matters Arising from the 33rd Session of the FAO Conference
 - FAO Reform: Part I. The Director-General's revised proposals
 - Part II. A vision for the twenty-first century
 - Independent External Evaluation
7. Report on FAO Activities in the Region (2004-2005) and Actions Taken on the 27th APRC Recommendations
8. Round Table on Effects of Trade on Food Security and Poverty Alleviation and Making Trade Work for the Poor and Hungry

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

9. General debate on food and agriculture situation in the region
10. Report on FAO Activities in the Region with a Focus on the Achievement of the MDGs
11. Report of the Senior Officers Meeting

IV. OTHER MATTERS

12. Proposed items to be considered for the Twenty-ninth Regional Conference

V. CONCLUDING ITEMS

13. Date and Place of the 29th FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific
14. Adoption of the Report (including the Report of the Senior Officers Meeting)
15. Closure of the Conference

APPENDIX B**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AND OBSERVERS**

MINISTERIAL MEETING

| | |
|--|---|
| Chairperson: | Anton APRIYANTONO (Indonesia) |
| Vice-Chairpersons: | Akhilesh Prasad SINGH (India) Martin Puta TOFINGA (Kiribati) Siene SAPHANGTHONG (Lao PDR) Tan Sri Dato' Sri Muhyiddin HAJI MOHD YASSIN (Malaysia) Abdullah KAMALUDEEN (Maldives) Sikandar Hayat Khan BOSAN (Pakistan) Matthew SIUNE (Papua New Guinea) Domingo PANGANIBAN (Philippines) Taua T. Kitiona SEUALA (Samoa) Chamal J. RAJAPAKSA (Sri Lanka) TUITA (Tonga) |
| Rapporteur: | M.K. ANWAR (Bangladesh) |
| Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council: | Mohammad Saeid Noori NAEINI |

SENIOR OFFICERS MEETING

- Chairperson: **Hasanuddin IBRAHIM (Indonesia)**
- Vice-Chairpersons: **Abdul Rahim SAYEDJAN (Afghanistan)**
Sangay THINLEY (Bhutan)
Jang Chang CHON (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)
Akhilesh Prasad SINGH (India)
Tahlim SUDARYANTO (Indonesia)
H.E. Javad TAVAKOLIAN (Iran)
Martin Puta TOFINGA (Kiribati)
Siene SAPHANGTHONG (Lao PDR)
Dato' Lily ZACHARIAH (Malaysia)
Abdullah KAMALUDEEN (Maldives)
Frederick H. MULLER (Marshall Islands)
U. Khin Zaw WIN (Myanmar)
Taua T. Kitona SEUALA (Samoa)
Chamal J. RAJAPAKSA (Sri Lanka)
TUITA (Tonga)
- Rapporteur: **Zulkifli IDRIS (Malaysia)**
- Independent Chairperson of the
FAO Council: **Mohammad Saeid Noori NAEINI**

MEMBER NATIONS IN THE REGION**AFGHANISTAN**

Delegate: **Abdul Rahim SAYEDJAN**
Ambassador
Embassy of Afghanistan in Indonesia

Alternate: **Azizullah OMAR**
Second Secretary
Embassy of Afghanistan in Indonesia

AUSTRALIA

Delegate: **David WILLIAMSON**
General Manager
International Technical Branch
Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry

Alternate: **Fiona CORNWELL**
Manager
International Cooperation, FAO and Pacific Section
Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry

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Delegate: **M.K. ANWAR**
Minister
Ministry for Agriculture

Alternates: **Tarik AHSAN**
Minister of Embassy of Bangladesh in Indonesia

Md Taudehul ISLAM
First Secretary
Embassy of Bangladesh in Indonesia

BHUTAN

Delegate: **Sangay THINLEY**
Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture

Alternate: **Tenzin CHOPEL**
Senior Planning Officer
Ministry of Agriculture

CHINA

Delegate: **Baowen ZHANG**
Vice-Minister

Ministry of Agriculture

Alternates:

Xiangjun YAO

Deputy Director-General
Ministry of Agriculture

Jinbiao WANG

Deputy Division Director
Ministry of Agriculture

Changjiang WANG

Director for Division of Animal Disease Prevention and
Control Veterinary Bureau
Ministry of Agriculture

Yujun CHU

Department of Crop Production
Ministry of Agriculture

Ma YOUXIANG

Permanent Representative of China to FAO Agencies in Rome

Pang YULIANG

Third Secretary
Permanent Representation of China to FAO Agencies in Rome

Feng WANG

Deputy Division Director
Ministry of Agriculture

Ming LUO

Division Director
Ministry of Agriculture

Jian YANG

Director-General
Ministry of Agriculture

Shaopin YANG

Director-General
Ministry of Agriculture

Xijun ZHANG

Officer
Ministry of Agriculture

DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Delegate:

Jang Chang CHON

Ambassador Extraordinary
DPRK Embassy in Indonesia

Alternates:

Jong Sun WON

Secretary General
National Committee for FAO

Rim Song CHOL
Coordinator
National Committee for FAO

Jan Yong HOAN
First Secretary, DPRK Embassy in Indonesia

Pak Chun IL
Consul, DPRK Embassy in Indonesia

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Delegate: **Luke V. RATUVUKI**
Chief Executive Officer for Agriculture, Sugar and Land Resettlement

Alternates: **Sakiusa TUBUNA**
Chief Economist
Ministry of Agriculture, Sugar and Land Resettlement

Viliame GUCAKE
Principal Economic Planning Officer
Ministry of Agriculture, Sugar and Land Resettlement

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Delegate: **Akhilesh Prasad SINGH**
Minister of State for Agriculture, Consumer Affairs
Food and Public Distribution

Alternates: **Hemant Krishan SINGH**
Ambassador
Embassy of India in Indonesia

Ramalingam PARASURAM
Minister (Agriculture) and Alternate Permanent Representative to FAO
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Anita CHAUDHARY
Joint Secretary
Department of Food, Public Distribution

T. S. TIRUMURTI
Deputy Chief of Mission
Embassy of India in Indonesia

J.C. KALA
Director General of Forest and Special Secretary
Minister for Environment and Forests Government of India

Manika JAIN
First Secretary

Embassy of India in Indonesia

Gyan SINGH
Second Secretary
Embassy of India in Indonesia

Sanjay Vikram SINGH
Director
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Ministry of Agriculture

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Minister
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M.S. KABAN
Minister of Forestry

Freddy NUMBERI
Minister of Fisheries and Marine Affairs

Alternates:

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Secretary-General
Ministry of Agriculture

Tahlim SUDARYANTO
Director

Ministry of Agriculture

Susanto SUTOYO

Ambassador for Indonesia in Rome

M. Slamet HIDAYAT

Director-General Multilateral
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Andin H. TARYOTO

Secretary-General
Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries

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| APRC/06/3 | Reducing Vulnerability to Natural Disasters and Promoting a Livelihood Approach for Rehabilitation and Reconstruction |
| APRC/06/4 | Report on FAO Activities in the Region with a Focus on the Achievement of the MDGs |
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APPENDIX D**INAUGURAL STATEMENT**

H. E. DR. SUSILO BAMBANG YUDHOYONO
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

AT THE OPENING SESSION OF
THE TWENTY-EIGHTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

JAKARTA, 18 MAY 2006

*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim.
Assalamu'alaikum Warrahmatulallahi Wabarakatuh,*

*Excellencies Ministers of the FAO Member Countries,
Your Excellency Dr. Diouf, Director General of the FAO,
Distinguished Delegates and Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

On behalf of the Government and the people of Indonesia, I welcome you all to Jakarta as we meet for this 28th FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific.

Indonesia is honored to host this important Regional Conference. It is one way of demonstrating our full commitment to the UN mission and vision in Food and Agriculture development sectors.

Let us start with the thought that any conference about food, such as this one, is really a forum about the sustainability of human life and its age-old enemy, the wolf of hunger.

All of humankind should indeed unite in a fight against hunger, not only because it kills human beings in large numbers but also because it kills in a way that deprives its victim of his human dignity.

The right to food, then, is the right to life. And when this right to life is not protected and promoted by governments and societies, and when—for any reason—an individual is not able to exercise this right, then all the other rights are meaningless.

A man dying of hunger cannot properly exercise his right to vote. A child in the throes of malnutrition cannot benefit from his right to education.

That is why we all would like to see a world that is secure with its food supply and all the means to sustain life, like water, medicine, clothing and shelter. But there remain large expanses of poverty where these life-sustaining items are lacking, and they form the basic challenge of our time.

Consider these grim statistics. One of every five human beings on this planet lives on less than one US dollar a day. One of every five human beings has no access to clean water.

About 800 million people in the developing world suffer from malnutrition. Every year some 10 million children die of preventable diseases. That means that between this morning and

this coming midnight, 30,000 children shall have died for lack of money to buy medicine or food. Those who survive malnutrition face another grim reality : some 115 million school-aged children are out of school.

Clearly, if we are going to change these awful statistics into the positive numbers of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) achieved by 2015, we have to try harder and work in greater concert than we are doing now.

That means that agricultural production, and its post-harvest follow up, have to improve several times over—for agriculture is the economic activity that directly produces food. And it remains the pillar of many Asian-Pacific economies.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

For decades now, the countries of Asia and the Pacific have had solid achievements in the field of agricultural production.

That was what the Green Revolution was all about. And it is true that the factors underpinning Asian growth are still at work: sensible macroeconomic policies, a young population, high savings and investment rates, entrepreneurial cultures and the high value placed on education.

But these have not been enough to match the region's increase in population and its expanding need for food security.

Natural disasters also regularly form a constraint to productivity, as do political, economic and social factors. And the trade policies of our developed trading partners often militate against our development.

We in Indonesia recognize these challenges, as we pursue our transition to a modern, inclusive, tolerant democracy. We continue to adopt and adhere to pragmatic policies to support a growing market economy that is still considerably based on fishery and agricultural production. We are fortunate that we have more than enough natural resources to match our food production requirements.

But our drive toward food security is hampered by many constraints both internal and external.

One internal constraint is the large number of our vulnerable people living in chronically food insecure regions. We are now rectifying inefficiencies in agricultural production and food distribution. And we frequently suffer transient food insecurity due to natural disasters—such as the earthquake and the tsunami that devastated our province of Aceh and Nias.

We also face major external constraints, such as the imbalances and inequities of the international trading regime, which limit our capacity to export our agricultural commodities.

Nevertheless, agriculture contributes about 15 percent of our national GDP and is the main source of income for our rural population. Although Indonesia has had a high rate of growth in the industrial and service sectors during the last few decades, over half our population is still living in rural areas.

The increasing rural population and the reduced economic growth rate in recent years have been putting considerable pressure on arable land. Large areas have become degraded because of misuse and over-exploitation. We intend to reverse this trend.

My administration is fully committed to reinvigorating the agriculture sector of the Indonesian economy. This policy is part of our strategy for reducing unemployment, alleviating poverty and rectifying imbalances in the country's development.

Another strategy that we have adopted is to bring more resources for development to the rural areas through a programme of decentralization. This programme began in 1999 as part of our efforts at democratic reform. Now it is also part of our economic strategy: decentralization

gives local governments a more substantial share of revenues and the power to decide on their own priorities. Thus, they have been empowered to take ownership of their development paths.

At the same time, we have been confident enough to open up our economy, including our agriculture sector. Consumer confidence, which is today driving the Indonesian economy, has made Indonesia a large food purchasing country.

Unfortunately for developing countries like Indonesia, the playing field of international trade is not level. Protectionist trade policies in the developed world have impacted negatively on developing countries. We the developing countries are the ones suffering the downside of trade liberalization.

In this regard, I commend the FAO for encouraging countries to actively participate in the current multilateral negotiations on the reform of agricultural trade rules. Heartened by the FAO's advocacy, I look forward to the realization of the Doha Development Agenda. This will enable developing countries to benefit from trade in a way that will boost their development—particularly rural development and food security.

I hope the FAO succeeds in opening up opportunities for developing countries in the Doha Round. Thus, subsidies that distort trade and production will be reduced or eliminated. With the laying down of trade rules that are more friendly to development, economic constraints now burdening developing countries can be overcome while imbalances in the international trade regime can be rectified.

I would also like to express Indonesia's appreciation of the FAO's strong support for countries grappling with outbreaks of Avian Influenza. This is a formidable challenge not only because of its threat of a human pandemic that can decimate whole populations, but also because of its adverse effects on food security and poverty alleviation.

The international community has responded to the threat of a human pandemic promptly and vigorously, considering that no country is immune to this threat. Pledging conferences have been held in Geneva in late 2005 and in Beijing in early 2006. Still, the stakes are so high that the FAO must never cease reminding the international community to give full financial and technical support to the fight against Avian Influenza.

For more than five decades now, the FAO has served as a reliable partner of the countries of our region in poverty alleviation and food security through increased agricultural productivity and rural development.

Today, we also need the FAO as a partner in promoting cooperation in the field of agriculture so that nations can learn from one another's experience and expertise. One of the problems that we can address together in this manner is the degradation of the environment.

The doubling of Asia's energy demand every 12 years has serious consequences on air quality and worsens global warming. We are already seeing across the region the consequences of unrestrained overuse of fertilizers, irrigation systems and pesticides. The FAO can be of great help as we come to grips with these ecological concerns.

Like many other nations, Indonesia looks to the FAO for help in its efforts to meet its commitments to the World Food Summit Declaration and to the Millennium Development Goals. We appreciate the support and technical assistance that we are getting from the Organization. So do many other nations that have benefited from its work. Hence, we should all be strengthening our cooperation with the FAO in every way.

And we do have an opportunity to reciprocate the FAO's helpfulness to us. In the light of its undeniably difficult mandate, we can and should vigorously support FAO reform. A stronger FAO will be even more effective in helping us attain our Millennium Development Goals in spite of such challenges as natural catastrophes, trans-boundary animal diseases, energy crises and distortions in the international trade regime.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

The fire of hunger burns in millions of human stomachs everyday. While that fire burns, the world we live in will be never be truly secure and just. With the help of the FAO, let us put out that fire.

With that appeal, I declare this Ministerial Meeting in the Twenty-Eighth FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific officially open.

Wassalamu'alaikum Warrahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

APPENDIX E**STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

*Mr Chairman,
Distinguished Ministers,
Honourable Delegates,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Introduction

It is a great honour and pleasure for me to welcome you to Jakarta, the capital of the Republic of Indonesia, for the Twenty-eighth FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific. On behalf of the Organization and on my own behalf, I should like to express my profound gratitude to His Excellency, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and to his Government for their kind invitation, their warm welcome and their generous hospitality.

State of food insecurity in the world and in Asia and the Pacific

Hunger and poverty are now recognized as the two major scourges of humanity. While the number of undernourished persons in the developing countries fell by 26 million during the first half of the 1990s, it rose by 23 million between 1995-1997 and 2001-2003. At this rate, the objective of the 1996 World Food Summit of halving the number of undernourished people by 2015 will obviously not be achieved. This objective was reaffirmed in 2000 in the Millennium Development Goals.

Global *per capita* food production has risen steadily during the past thirty years. Yet, some 854 million people were still undernourished in the world in 2001-2003, with 552 million in the developing and transition economies of Asia and the Pacific. However, it needs to be said that the number of undernourished people in the developing countries of the region fell by 41 million between 1990-1992 and 2001-2003.

There has also been an improvement in the diets of the developing countries of Asia and the Pacific, where *per capita* daily calorie intake increased from 2 530 to 2 670 kcal between 1990-1992 and 2001-2003. The anthropometric indicators thus improved substantially among children under the age of five in virtually all countries of the region during the 1990s. Education and the change in status of women have contributed significantly to reducing child malnutrition.

However, 35 percent of the world's undernourished population reside in South Asia and the prevalence of underweight, stunting and wasting is higher in this region than anywhere else in the world.

Agricultural development in Asia and the Pacific in 2004-2005: the results

The growth in food and agriculture production has helped raise the incomes of farmers and the wages of unskilled labourers. Poor consumers have had access to more affordable food supplies. Poverty and hunger have declined and the standard of living in the region has improved.

Food production

- *crops*

Per capita cereal production continues to recover from the poor performance of 2002, while remaining below the peak of 1999. The region's agricultural economy continues to diversify, with vegetable production up 90 percent, oilseeds up 60 percent and fruit up 55 percent between 1994

and

2004.

- *livestock*

The developing countries of Asia now have the world's highest growth rates for the production and consumption of food derived from livestock. Poultry production grew by 73 percent and egg production by 63 percent between 1994 and 2004.

Fish and aquaculture production

Aquaculture production rose by 114 percent between 1994 and 2004 and accounts for 91 percent of the world total. Capture fisheries, on the other hand, only increased by 6 percent because of overfishing of the region's marine resources.

Forest sector

The forests of Asia and the Pacific are an important source of livelihood for approximately half a billion people, and the region is the world's leading exporter of tropical timber. Asia, as a region, managed to reverse the alarming trend of deforestation and to post a modest gain in forest cover during the 2000-2005 period, thanks to the vast reforestation campaigns waged by China.

Agricultural commodity trade

Agricultural commodity exports from Asia and the Pacific amounted to US\$218.2 billion in 2004, which was 10.9 percent higher than the previous year.

At the same time, agricultural commodity imports amounted to US\$231.8 billion, which represented an increase of 15.6 percent.

The balance of trade in agricultural commodities was therefore in deficit by US\$13.6 billion in 2004, three times the deficit of 2003.

Constraints

Natural resources and environment

The region's natural resources are under heavy degradation because of greater pressure and competition resulting essentially from population growth and urbanization. The industrialization of agriculture and livestock production is causing serious pollution of water resources. Irrigation is suffering the consequences of poor management and maintenance, especially of drainage basins. More appropriate policies, regulations and technologies need to be adopted, and strategic investment is required to modernize irrigation and drainage systems and to build regional capacity in order to create more productive and sustainable systems.

Natural disasters and transboundary diseases

Natural disasters, such as droughts and floods, highly pathogenic avian influenza, tsunamis and earthquakes, continue to threaten farmer livelihoods. In order to deal with transboundary pests and animal diseases, the international community and governments must invest in preventive measures, early warning systems, surveillance with reinforced capacity and the latest scientific information.

FAO's work since February 2004, during the recent avian influenza epidemic, has helped put in place regional surveillance networks to improve diagnosis and the timeliness and transparency of reporting of outbreaks of avian influenza. A Global Strategy for the Progressive Control of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza has been established by FAO and the OIE, in collaboration with the WHO, with a specific medium- and long-term plan for the restructuring of the poultry sector. As regards the tsunami and the earthquake in Pakistan, emergency relief has progressed very rapidly and FAO has already distributed US\$34 million to the victims. However, much remains to be done to move from relief to reconstruction and to the sustainable development programmes that will require five to ten years of effort.

Structural changes and decentralization

Many governments have launched decentralization programmes aimed at providing local communities and administrative units with the means to manage their own affairs, in a framework of participation.

The decentralization of governance shows promising results for achievement of the critical objectives of rural development. It fosters the planning and implementation of programmes and activities at local level and improves access to vital services and to employment.

Regrettably, some programmes have run into challenges that have caused major setbacks. Discrepancies continue to exist between policy, planning and implementation.

Agenda of the Regional Conference

The Regional Conference will be examining a number of key issues:

- ***Adjustment and restructuring of major Asian economies and implications for food security and poverty***

The general agricultural environment is evolving rapidly, especially under the impact of major internal structural changes implemented in many countries of the region, particularly the very large economies such as China and India. Appropriate policies and strategic responses will be needed to help the agricultural and rural sector rise to the challenges and exploit the opportunities opened by trade liberalization, investment and globalization, and to mobilize regional cooperation and integration for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

- ***Reducing vulnerability to natural disasters and promoting a livelihood approach for rehabilitation and reconstruction***

The Asia and the Pacific region is prone to a wide range of natural disasters. As guided by the Hyogo Framework for Action, FAO will take every possible step to reduce the risks of disaster, to enhance early warning systems, to create a culture of safety based on knowledge, innovation and education, to reduce underlying risk factors and to strengthen preparedness.

- ***Report on FAO activities in the region***

The Conference will be examining a report on FAO activities in the region, with a focus on achievement of the objective of the World Food Summit and the Millennium Development Goals and on actions taken on the recommendations of the Twenty-seventh Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific.

- ***Round table on the effects of international trade on food security and poverty alleviation***

The Ministerial Round Table is a new initiative that aims to give Ministers attending this Conference a forum in which to informally discuss and agree the best way to meet the challenges and seize the opportunities of trade liberalization and increasing world interdependence.

The outcome of the Thirty-third Conference of FAO

The Thirty-third Conference of FAO, which took place in Rome in November 2005, adopted a budget of US\$765.7 million for the 2006-2007 biennium, which represents zero nominal growth plus security expenditure and US\$6 million for priority programmes. The Conference also examined my proposals for reform of the Organization. Among other aspects, it approved a number of changes to the organizational structure at Headquarters from 1 January 2006, together with implementation of the decentralization proposals in one region and the opening of one new subregional office. I have decided to start this exercise with the Africa region and the Central Asia subregion.

FAO will also have to raise some US\$15 million from voluntary contributions to cover the transition costs of reform.

The Programme of Work and Budget 2006-2007 accommodates these initial changes in the organizational structure of Headquarters and the decentralized offices, and places special emphasis on the dissemination of knowledge and the building of capacity in developing countries.

Main challenges and priorities for the future

- ***Reform of FAO***

The document *A vision for the twenty-first century* explains the necessary reforms proposed at this turning point in the life of the Organization. The intention, going beyond the preliminary decisions of the Conference of FAO, is to achieve coherent reform in the different regions of the world, so that the Organization is better able to respond to the needs of its Members, to the transformation taking place in the United Nations system and to the changing international environment.

- ***Challenges and prospects in the Asia and the Pacific region***

Given the events of recent years, it is obvious that the handling of natural disasters will be a key challenge for the region in the years ahead. FAO is striving to increase preparedness and cooperation and, as a knowledge organization, is providing expertise to ensure that actions taken are based on the latest available scientific knowledge. It is currently providing technical and operational assistance to help determine the epidemiology of avian influenza in order to control the disease at its source – the animal – in order to avert a major human pandemic and socio-economic disaster. FAO is working with countries and regional organizations to put regional networks in place and to strengthen their veterinary services, and to improve surveillance and local practices on farms and markets in order to implement biosecurity measures for the prevention and eradication of the disease. So far, more than US\$32 million have been requested for this region, including US\$5.6 million from FAO's TCP funds for the avian influenza crisis. Furthermore, through implementation of a US\$61 million emergency assistance programme for the victims of the tsunami, FAO's technical assistance and know-how are making an important contribution to the recovery of rural and fisheries livelihoods.

It is truly a challenge to constantly increase agricultural production to meet the demands of an ever growing population without undermining the viability of the natural resource base upon which that production depends. Forests are cleared, capture fisheries are depleted, arsenic infiltrates groundwater and threatens people's health and fertilizer runoff creates dead zones in water bodies. Such trends must be curbed if we are to assure the sustainability of agriculture in the region for ourselves, for our children and our children's children. Science, technology and capacity building have a crucial role to play in meeting this challenge.

FAO is helping to resolve these problems in many ways, but I should like to draw your attention to our role in facilitating South-South cooperation and the exchange of agricultural experts and technicians between developing countries. These experts know what it is like to live in difficult conditions and can thus provide effective solutions to the many problems by imparting information and good practices. I am especially proud that the leaders of China and India have recently decided to provide several thousand experts and technicians, and to form a strategic alliance with FAO for South-South cooperation in order to eradicate hunger from the world within ten years. I hope that other countries of the region, and of the entire world, will join us in this endeavour.

Another key challenge facing the region is the liberalization of trade in agricultural commodities and its impact on food security and the alleviation of poverty. The meetings that took place in Hong Kong served to make progress in the agricultural sector, notably agreement on a specific date – 2013 – by which to put an end to export subsidies. While other activities will be needed to turn the Doha Round into a genuine development programme, advances in technology

and bilateral agreements mean that trade will continue to grow regardless of the outcome of future negotiations. At the Ministerial Round Table, you will be explaining to FAO the policies that have worked for your countries in trying to draw maximum benefit from the two-edged sword that is trade liberalization. I sincerely hope that you will be willing to share your knowledge with others, as a way of further reinforcing South-South cooperation.

Conclusion

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Only nine years separate us from 2015, the date by which the world's leaders pledged to halve hunger and extreme poverty. Despite this commitment, the state of hunger and malnutrition in the world remains as distressing as in 1996, when the World Food Summit was held. At this half-way stage, it now seems that unless we redouble our efforts in the next years, our objective will not be attained until 2150.

Studies in the region have shown that, dollar for dollar, agricultural research has been one of the most effective investments made by governments to reduce poverty in both rural and urban areas, and that agricultural growth in Asia is more pro-poor than growth in all the other sectors. The importance of agriculture to the macroeconomy and to the poor clearly indicates that investment in agriculture needs to be accelerated and strengthened.

I am confident that this Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific will be able to guide us towards the promotion of agricultural and rural development and the realization of food security in the region.

I wish you every success in your work and thank you for your kind attention.

APPENDIX F**NOTE ON THE ROUNDTABLE ON EFFECTS OF TRADE ON FOOD SECURITY AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND MAKING TRADE WORK FOR THE POOR AND HUNGRY**

1. As *The State of Food and Agriculture in Asia and the Pacific 2006* notes, the impact of trade policy on poverty, food security and inequality in developing countries is at the center of an intense international debate on the role of international trade in development. The current Doha Round of WTO negotiations makes development and poverty reduction a top priority. In addition, the Millennium Declaration underscores the importance of fair and open international trade in the context of development and the elimination of poverty.
2. Members noted the important role of donors and international financial institutions in promoting agricultural development, especially in terms of science, research and technology transfer. The Roundtable also noted that support for agriculture had declined during the past 20 years, and that renewed support was crucial for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and food security.
3. The Roundtable discussed the challenges in building a more open and fair global trading system that would enhance food security in member countries that meets the needs of the poor. It was agreed that this was an important goal of the Doha Round, but there were serious reservations expressed that the Round would address the needs of developing countries in accessing profitable markets that currently face significant trade barriers.
4. Members emphasized that trade should be not only open, but also fair. In particular, the Meeting noted the importance of special and differential treatment (SDT) and special safeguard mechanisms (SSM). They agreed that simply making the trading system freer does not automatically bring benefits to all parties. Small countries and the poor in most countries face special difficulties in benefiting from expanded trading opportunities. FAO was asked to provide assistance that focused on these special problems as part of further efforts to liberalize agricultural trade, including assistance to identify areas of comparative advantage. The Meeting also noted that comparative advantage may lie outside of agriculture.
5. The Roundtable suggested that this assistance could be structured in three layers. At the “bottom of the pyramid” FAO can draw on its extensive experience in helping farmers raise their productivity and incomes. There was widespread agreement that raising rural productivity was the highest priority and should be the first focus for FAO programmes. Emphasis was placed on the development of “knowledge-based agriculture” as an important way to increase productivity.
6. Second, the Roundtable noted that helping farmers, fishers and foresters to build marketing skills and obtain market information would enhance competitiveness and facilitate domestic and international trade.
7. Third, the Roundtable members requested that FAO provide more support for capacity building to strengthen the ability of developing countries to effectively participate in international trade negotiations. Members also expressed their view that barriers to their exports must be reduced. These barriers can be direct, such as through high tariffs or discrimination against value-added products (tariff escalation). But the barriers can also be indirect and subtle, in the form of subsidies to continued production in high-cost agricultural economies. Special concern was expressed over the use of sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards as *de facto* barriers to trade, and FAO’s extensive experience in this area was specifically requested by several member countries to support their efforts to meet these standards. FAO was also asked to provide technical

assistance in understanding the full impact of trade barriers on the prospects for pro-poor economic growth in member countries, and bringing this analysis to bear on trade negotiations.

8. The Roundtable expressed widespread support for the general list of recommendations in *The State of Food and Agriculture in Asia and the Pacific 2006*. These include:

- Agricultural trade reforms can be conducive to poverty reduction and improved food security if they are carefully designed and implemented within an explicit pro-poor strategy.
- The sequencing of reforms is important. Phased reforms are likely to allow society to study unanticipated outcomes that emerge during implementation.
- Finding mechanisms to encourage and assist the private sector is vital.
- Improving rural infrastructure and support services is important for successful policy reform in most countries, but it is particularly needed in low-income areas.
- Policies to encourage the development of rural non-farm employment are also important for the rural poor. These can include the development of microfinance, simplification of regulatory regimes, infrastructure improvement, and special incentives for rural industrialization in poor areas.

APPENDIX G

JAKARTA JOINT MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF FOOD AND LIVELIHOOD SECURITY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

28th FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific**Jakarta, Indonesia, 15-19 May 2006**

1. We the Ministers and Representatives of Member Nations of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations from the Asia and the Pacific region gathered in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 15-19 May 2006 for the Twenty-Eighth FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific.
2. We recognize that while Asia and the Pacific is experiencing vibrant economic growth, it is at the same time facing tremendous challenges that require strengthened regional partnerships, especially within the context of the FAO.
3. We reaffirm and reinvigorate our commitments to the outcomes of the World Food Summit (WFS) and to realizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, given that the majority of the world's poor live in the region. To this end, we reaffirm our support for FAO's initiatives to expedite progress in meeting the WFS and MDG targets, including the Anti-Hunger Programme, International Alliance against Hunger and the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS).
4. We recognize the devastating effects of transboundary animal diseases, particularly avian influenza and foot and mouth disease. We thus underscore the importance of accelerating the implementation of the FAO-led regional plan of action for the livestock sector to address transboundary animal diseases, including the strengthening of regional partnerships incorporating capacity building and the mobilization of resources to develop avian and human influenza pandemic prevention, preparedness and mitigation plans.
5. We recognize the high susceptibility of the region to natural disasters that can reverse the progress of development and poverty reduction. We thus underline the importance of fostering regional partnership, including through FAO, to increase regional capabilities in disaster management and rehabilitation in a sustainable manner.
6. We underscore the high potential of certain agriculture products as alternative sources of energy. We therefore recognize the need for enhanced partnership, including through FAO, to intensify the development of bio-energy for the achievement of sustainable energy systems and the diversification of the rural sector while considering the impact on food prices and availability.
7. We recognize that trade, as an engine of growth and development, must support the efforts of poverty eradication. To that end, we underline the need to strengthen regional partnerships to ensure that trade liberalization supports the region's efforts to improve food and livelihood security as well as rural development, in line with the spirit of the WTO Doha Development Agenda.
8. We further recognize that the partnership established in Asia and the Pacific can be extended to other regions. It is in this spirit, that we reaffirm our solidarity with people in other regions who are facing agricultural deterioration contributing to poverty, such as in Sub-Saharan Africa. We thus express our readiness to enhance our partnership to help farmers in other regions to rehabilitate their agriculture sector, especially through the sharing of experiences in this field.

9. We underline the need for the FAO Secretariat to undertake efforts to streamline its decision-making process to better assist the needs of its members in a timely manner, particularly in the field of technical assistance and capacity building. We further note the need for FAO to maintain adequate funding for international standards setting and capacity building. To this end, we support the ongoing efforts to reform FAO, in accordance with the 33rd Conference Resolution on reforms, with guidance from the Independent External Evaluation (IEE) of FAO. We also urge all members to make the evaluation a product of the membership and contribute to the IEE Multilateral Trust Fund.

10. We express concern over the weakening financial resources of FAO, reducing its capacity to effectively respond to the needs of the members. In this context, we underline the need for the FAO to prioritize its programmes and activities, taking into account its financial condition, including the large amount of arrears, and activities of other UN agencies, national governments and bilateral as well as regional arrangements.

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