

10 June 1997 • 10 juin 1997 • 10 de junio de 1997



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations

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

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

COUNCIL

CONSEIL

CONSEJO

Hundred and Twelfth Session • Cent douzième session • 112° período de sesiones

Rome, 2-7 June 1997
VERBATIM RECORDS OF PLENARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

Rome 2-7 juin 1997
PROCÈS-VERBAUX DES SEANCES PLÉNIÈRES DU CONSEIL

Roma 2-7 junio de 1997
ACTAS TAQUIGRÁFICAS DE LAS SESIONES PLENARIAS DEL CONSEJO

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APROBACION DEL INFORME****DRAFT REPORTS PARTS 1-10 (CL 112/REPS 1-10)****PROJETS DE RAPPORTS 1-10 (CL 112/REPS 1-10)****PROYECTOS DE INFORMES 1-10 (CL 112/REPS 1-10)***Page/Página***289****289**

2 June 1997



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations

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

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

COUNCIL

CONSEIL

CONSEJO

Hundred and Twelfth Session • Cent douzième session • 112° período de sesiones

FIRST PLENARY MEETING
PREMIERE SEANCE PLENIERE
PRIMERA SESION PLENARIA

2 June 1997

The First Plenary Meeting was opened at 10.15 hours
Mr. José Ramón López Portillo,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding

La première séance plénière est ouverte à 10 h 15
sous la présidence de M. José Ramón López Portillo,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la primera sesión plenaria a las 10.15 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. José Ramón López Portillo,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

I INTRODUCTION - PROCEDURE OF THE SESSION

I INTRODUCTION - QUESTIONS DE PROCEDURE

I INTRODUCCION - CUESTIONES DE PROCEDIMIENTO

EL PRESIDENTE: Señoras y señores, declaro abierto el 112° período de sesiones del Consejo. Como ustedes saben, este Consejo es el primero que se celebra después de la exitosa Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación que inauguró una nueva etapa en la lucha por alcanzar la seguridad alimentaria para todos. Espero que en consecuencia, el espíritu que prevalecerá durante nuestros debates y decisiones será muy positivo y muy constructivo.

Tenemos frente a nosotros la alta responsabilidad de promover y materializar los objetivos y las actividades del Plan de Acción aprobado en noviembre pasado.

Distinguidos miembros del Consejo, observadores, permítanme en primer lugar dar la bienvenida y agradecer la presencia del Director General de la FAO, así como de los altos funcionarios de gobierno que representan a sus delegaciones en esta ocasión. Permítanme, asimismo, antes de pasar a los temas que nos ocupan, dar la palabra al señor Director General de la FAO en virtud de que tendrá que asistir inmediatamente a un acto conmemorativo del Gobierno de la República Italiana.

Señor Director General, sin más le paso a usted la palabra.

3 Statement by the Director-General

3 Déclaration du Directeur général

3 Declaración del Director General

LE DIRECTEUR GENERAL: Monsieur le Président indépendant du Conseil, Excellences, Mesdames, Messieurs, Je suis très heureux de vous accueillir à Rome pour cette 112ème Session du Conseil qui revêt une singulière importance. Non seulement vous aurez à examiner les grandes orientations des activités de l'Organisation pour les années à venir, et en particulier pour le prochain biennium, mais c'est aussi le premier Conseil après la tenue du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation. Les engagements du Plan d'action et les tâches importantes confiées à l'Organisation pour le suivi du Sommet auront des implications importantes pour le Programme de travail et de budget.

Un autre élément de vos débats est la situation actuelle de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture, dont les tendances récentes présentent des aspects encourageants bien qu'il ne faille pas perdre de vue l'ampleur des problèmes qui restent à résoudre.

La production mondiale d'aliments de base a connu une augmentation sensible en 1996 et, parmi les régions en développement, c'est l'Afrique qui a eu les taux de croissance les plus élevés. Pour 1997, les estimations préliminaires indiquent que la croissance de la production vivrière devrait se poursuivre, non seulement pour les céréales, mais aussi pour les principaux oléagineux, le manioc, la viande et les produits laitiers. Les récoltes mondiales de céréales, qui avaient atteint des niveaux record en 1996 après un fléchissement inquiétant, pourraient atteindre des niveaux semblables ou même quelque peu supérieurs cette année. Cependant les stocks mondiaux de céréales, malgré leur augmentation attendue en 1997, devraient rester en-dessous du seuil de sécurité de 17-18 pour cent de la consommation.

Par ailleurs, la situation économique actuelle offre dans l'ensemble un contexte plus favorable à la sécurité alimentaire, marqué par une certaine augmentation de la production mondiale surtout dans les pays en développement, une croissance rapide des échanges internationaux et un fléchissement général des taux d'inflation et d'intérêt. Les conditions économiques dans beaucoup de pays à faible revenu ont été améliorées sensiblement ces dernières années, surtout en Afrique. Il reste cependant à assurer que cette croissance se traduise par des effets positifs sur le pouvoir d'achat des populations les plus démunies afin d'améliorer leur accès à la nourriture.

La situation de l'alimentation est cependant encore caractérisée par de grandes disparités régionales et locales dues aux conditions climatiques défavorables, aux catastrophes naturelles ou aux crises provoquées par l'homme. Depuis janvier 1996 la FAO, à travers son Système mondial d'information et d'alerte rapide, a réalisé, souvent en collaboration avec le Programme alimentaire mondial, plus de 40 missions d'évaluation des récoltes et des approvisionnements alimentaires dans les pays vulnérables et les plus touchés. Les résultats de ces missions ont fortement contribué à la mobilisation de l'aide d'urgence en faveur de millions de victimes. En une année et demie, j'ai approuvé, conjointement avec le Directeur exécutif du PAM, 23 opérations d'urgence d'une valeur totale d'environ 860 millions de dollars pour venir en aide à 15 millions de bénéficiaires. Rien qu'en Afrique, 16 pays sont actuellement confrontés à des crises alimentaires exceptionnelles et la situation qui prévaut dans la région des grands lacs, en Corée du Nord ainsi qu'en Iraq continue d'être inquiétante.

Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, Le Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale a été chargé par le Sommet d'assurer le suivi de la mise en oeuvre du Plan d'action et les progrès réalisés pour atteindre l'objectif minimum de réduire de moitié le nombre des personnes sous-alimentées en 2015 au plus tard. Il s'est réuni en avril et a adopté une procédure provisoire d'établissement de rapports à utiliser en 1997 par les gouvernements, les agences des Nations Unies et autres organisations internationales intéressées à la mise en oeuvre du Plan d'action. Le Comité a aussi discuté les amendements au Règlement général de l'Organisation qui sont soumis à votre examen en vue d'une décision de la Conférence.

De plus, le Comité administratif de coordination, le CAC, qui regroupe les chefs exécutifs de toutes les organisations du système des Nations Unies est chargé d'assurer la coordination interinstitutionnelle du suivi du Sommet. La proposition commune de la FAO et du FIDA sur les modalités de cette coopération a été adoptée par la dernière réunion du CAC en avril à Genève.

La FAO va donc préparer un rapport sur les résultats et le suivi du Sommet qui sera discuté par le Conseil économique et social avant d'être soumis à l'Assemblée générale.

En mars dernier, la FAO a organisé une Consultation technique sur le Système d'information et de cartographie sur l'insécurité et la vulnérabilité alimentaires avec la participation des experts et des représentants de toutes les agences concernées des Nations Unies ainsi que d'institutions et d'organisations non-gouvernementales nationales. Le résultat de cette consultation a déjà reçu l'approbation du Comité de sécurité alimentaire mondiale et une série d'actions a déjà été entreprise pour mettre en oeuvre les éléments à court terme du plan de travail adopté.

En outre, les propositions du Programme de travail et de budget 1998-99, présentent un nouveau sous-programme interdisciplinaire qui a été inclus pour consolider et renforcer les activités d'information et de cartographie afin d'aider les Etats Membres à développer et maintenir un système national qui permette d'identifier de façon rapide et précise les populations vulnérables ou souffrant de malnutrition, mais aussi de préciser les causes de cette situation et de prendre les mesures de correction nécessaires.

La FAO a aussi saisi la Commission des droits de l'homme des résultats du Sommet et a mis au point un accord avec le Haut Commissaire des Nations Unies pour les Droits de l'Homme en vue d'une collaboration pour mieux définir le droit à la nourriture comme l'un des droits fondamentaux de l'homme. Le Haut Commissaire compte organiser une réunion d'experts à ce sujet, en juillet/août de cette année.

La FAO a surtout entamé très tôt, une collaboration étroite avec les experts des pays membres, pour la préparation de stratégies nationales de développement agricole à l'horizon 2010, afin de traduire au niveau national les engagements pris à l'échelle mondiale dans le Plan d'action du Sommet et aussi de promouvoir la coopération avec les partenaires du développement dans leur mise en oeuvre.

Cet exercice a commencé par les pays à faible revenu et à déficit vivrier pour ensuite couvrir les autres pays en développement et en transition, ainsi que les pays développés qui le souhaitent. Les documents ainsi préparés sont d'abord transmis aux organisations du Système de Nations Unies, aux Institutions de Bretton Woods et aux banques régionales de développement, puis ensuite soumis aux ministres de l'agriculture pour une large concertation en vue de leur adoption formelle par les gouvernements.

Mais il est évident que l'une des contributions les plus importantes attendues de la FAO pour la mise en oeuvre du Plan d'action du Sommet, en particulier l'Engagement numéro 3, se situe sur le plan du développement agricole. Dans ce domaine le Programme spécial pour la sécurité alimentaire dans les pays à faible revenu et à déficit vivrier déjà entamé bien avant le Sommet avec votre accord, restera un des éléments majeurs de l'action de terrain de la FAO. En effet, les 840 millions de personnes qui souffrent aujourd'hui de sous-alimentation chronique sont essentiellement des habitants de pays en développement ou en transition. Deux ans après son lancement, le Programme spécial est aujourd'hui opérationnel dans 18 pays, et il est en cours de lancement ou de formulation dans sept autres. Le concept de ce Programme est connu; il est destiné à augmenter la production et à améliorer l'accès aux aliments par une approche multidisciplinaire et participative qui préserve l'environnement et assure l'équité sociale. L'objectif ultime est bien sûr d'améliorer les conditions de vie des populations rurales les plus démunies, en particulier les femmes. Le Programme spécial appartient aux Etats Membres qui désirent y participer et à leur agriculteurs; la FAO n'intervient qu'à la demande expresse des gouvernements concernés notamment pour les interventions financées par le Programme de coopération technique dont je le répète, les critères sont strictement respectés.

Mais les objectifs de la Déclaration de Rome sont ambitieux et nécessitent des ressources substantielles. En cette période de rigueurs budgétaires auxquelles tous les gouvernements et organismes internationaux sont confrontés, il faut impérativement faire preuve d'innovation dans la mobilisation des moyens nécessaires à la mise en oeuvre du Plan d'action du Sommet. Dans ce cadre, la FAO a renforcé sa coopération avec les partenaires du développement, les pays donateurs, les autres agences et programmes des Nations Unies, les institutions financières inter-régionales et régionales, les institutions décentralisées, le secteur privé et les organisations non-gouvernementales, mais aussi les instituts internationaux ou nationaux de recherche.

C'est ainsi que j'ai signé en janvier 1997 des accords avec les Présidents de la Banque mondiale et de la Banque africaine de développement pour promouvoir le développement rural et la sécurité alimentaire en Afrique. Dans ce cadre, chacune des deux banques s'est engagée à considérer favorablement les requêtes des Etats Membres pour le financement d'activités pilotes du Programme spécial jusqu'à hauteur de 1,5 million de dollars par pays. De même, des discussions très avancées sont en cours avec la Banque islamique de développement qui devraient déboucher sur la signature d'un accord de coopération en matière de sécurité alimentaire. Des discussions sont également en cours avec la Banque asiatique de développement et la Banque interaméricaine de développement, le FIDA et le Programme alimentaire mondial en vue de susciter leur participation au Programme spécial. Par ailleurs, l'Institut international de recherche en matière de politique alimentaire est la première institution du Groupe consultatif sur la recherche agricole internationale à avoir décidé de participer au Programme, en particulier, pour l'étude des contraintes socio-économiques. Enfin, des accords de coopération sud-sud sont progressivement mis en oeuvre pour permettre l'affectation auprès des agriculteurs bénéficiant du Programme spécial de techniciens expérimentés fournis par d'autres pays en développement.

Parallèlement, pour tirer profit de la dynamique créée par le Sommet qui a vu la participation active des parlementaires, des organisations non-gouvernementales et des représentants du secteur privé, plusieurs initiatives ont été lancées pour mobiliser ces divers secteurs de la société civile ainsi que les institutions décentralisées.

C'est dans cette optique de mobilisation qu'il faut considérer le thème choisi pour la Journée mondiale de l'alimentation 1997 : "Investir dans la sécurité alimentaire". C'est également dans le cadre des manifestations de cette Journée que s'inscrit l'opération TeleFood, programme audiovisuel à l'échelle mondiale, conçu d'abord pour maintenir une sensibilisation de l'opinion publique aux décisions du Sommet et ensuite pour faire appel à la solidarité de tous ceux qui se sentent concernés par le problème de la faim dans le monde.

Cette mobilisation nécessite l'engagement résolu des gouvernements, car il est évident que les objectifs du Plan d'action du Sommet ne pourront être atteints sans une participation active de tous les secteurs de l'Etat et de la société civile. A cet effet, le Plan prévoit que les gouvernements lanceront des campagnes nationales sur le thème "De la nourriture pour tous" afin de mobiliser dans chaque pays toutes les parties prenantes de la société et leurs ressources, pour mettre en oeuvre les mesures concrètes contenues dans le Plan d'action. Il est souhaitable que le premier pas dans cette voie soit la création dans chaque Etat Membre d'un forum national avec tous les acteurs et partenaires du développement, notamment le secteur privé, les organisations non-gouvernementales, les universités, les instituts de recherche, les parlementaires, les associations de femmes et de jeunes, les médias et la société civile.

Il est encourageant de constater que certains pays développés et en développement ont déjà entrepris le lancement de ces campagnes. D'autres gouvernements devraient prendre aussi les initiatives appropriées pour l'établissement de ces forums. La FAO naturellement est prête à les soutenir dans de tels efforts.

Parallèlement à toutes ces actions de mobilisation ou de coordination des énergies pour le suivi du Sommet, l'Organisation a poursuivi ses activités normatives traditionnelles qui conservent toute leur importance. Deux exemples pour lesquels les avancées ont été substantielles ces derniers mois peuvent être cités:

Le premier concerne la révision de la Convention internationale pour la protection des végétaux qui permet aux Etats Membres de prendre des mesures pour prévenir et empêcher l'introduction ou l'extension des maladies et prédateurs, tout en veillant à ce que ces mesures soient raisonnables et n'entravent pas le commerce international de manière injustifiée. Le texte de cette révision, résultat d'un long processus de consultation, est soumis à votre examen en vue de sa finalisation et transmission à la Conférence comme le recommande le Comité de l'agriculture. Parallèlement, le Comité a également soumis pour adoption par le Conseil et la Conférence, de nouvelles normes pour l'harmonisation des mesures phytosanitaires.

La Commission des ressources génétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture a aussi tenu deux sessions en l'espace de six mois, essentiellement pour poursuivre les négociations en vue de la révision de l'Engagement international sur les ressources phytogénétiques afin qu'il soit en harmonie avec la Convention sur la diversité biologique. Cette révision devrait permettre de favoriser l'accès aux ressources génétiques, de mieux définir les droits des agriculteurs et d'assurer la conservation et l'utilisation durable de ces ressources ainsi que le partage équitable des bénéfices qui en découlent. Il s'agit là d'un domaine complexe, mais les progrès réalisés sont substantiels et, à condition qu'il y ait une réelle volonté politique d'aboutir, il devrait être possible d'arriver à un accord à brève échéance.

L'examen des organes statutaires et des groupes d'experts figure aussi à l'ordre du jour. Dans le cadre des directives du Conseil pour des économies et des gains d'efficacité en matière de gouvernance, le Comité du Programme et le Comité financier ont élaboré des directives sur la conduite et l'organisation des réunions et recommandé des changements aux calendriers de certains des Comités faisant rapport au Conseil pour les années où la Conférence se réunit. Il s'agit en effet de renforcer leurs contributions à l'élaboration du Programme de travail et de budget. A leur réunion conjointe d'avril dernier, les Comités ont également examiné les propositions du Secrétariat

concernant l'examen des organes statutaires et des groupes d'experts qui avait été entamé par le Conseil en novembre 1995.

A cet égard, l'intervention du Secrétariat consiste à fournir des informations, à mettre en lumière les problèmes et à aider à la formulation de conclusions. Mais cet exercice est avant tout du ressort des organes directeurs. Dans ce cadre, le Comité du Programme et le Comité financier ont désigné un petit groupe de travail basé à Rome, présidé par le Représentant permanent de la Belgique, pour examiner plus en détail les recommandations contenues dans le document du Secrétariat et fournir des orientations supplémentaires aux Comités à leur session de septembre 1997.

Le Conseil pourra donc examiner les mesures proposées par le Secrétariat afin de compléter cet examen et assurer la rationalisation effective des organes statutaires et des groupes d'experts. Le souci majeur est de recourir davantage à des organes ad hoc chargés de tâches spécifiques sur une période bien définie, plutôt que de créer des organes statutaires qui risquent de perdre leur raison d'être au bout d'un certain temps.

Monsieur le Président, Mesdames et Messieurs, Le point le plus important de l'ordre du jour est le Sommaire du Programme de travail et de budget 1998-99. Conformément aux recommandations du Comité du Programme et du Comité financier, formulées lors de leur session conjointe de janvier dernier, le Sommaire a été établi sur la base d'un budget à croissance réelle zéro, en le complétant par deux scénarios supplémentaires:

- une option à croissance réelle rétablissant les réductions de programmes techniques et économiques effectuées sur le budget 1996-97. Le Comité du Programme et le Comité financier avaient souhaité que leurs montants puissent être rétablis lors du prochain exercice biennal. Ce scénario implique une augmentation de 11 millions de dollars E.U. dont la totalité serait consacrée à des activités normatives prioritaires;
- une option à croissance nominale zéro qui obligerait à maintenir le budget à 650 millions de dollars malgré des augmentations de coûts de 39 millions de dollars. Pour ce faire, il faudra réduire les programmes.

Cette dernière option a été préparée sur la base des critères définis par le Conseil pour la sélection des activités à supprimer. Les réductions ont été imputées au maximum sur les domaines administratifs, mais sans pouvoir atteindre naturellement les résultats de l'exercice 1996-97, où 70 pour cent des 57 millions de dollars d'économie avaient été obtenus grâce à des gains d'efficacité ou à des réductions dans les chapitres non techniques du budget.

La préparation d'un budget à croissance nominale zéro se poursuit tout en essayant de réduire au minimum l'impact négatif sur les programmes, notamment en suivant les avis du Comité du Programme et du Comité financier sur les augmentations de coûts et l'impact du taux de change.

La question de l'Assurance maladie après cessation des activités mérite une attention particulière. S'il faut en effet adopter les normes comptables acceptées dans ce domaine et financer le déficit actuariel qui s'est accumulé au cours des trente dernières années, il ne peut être question de faire ces dépenses administratives aux dépens des programmes techniques de l'Organisation. Il convient par conséquent de chercher des solutions à ce problème, notamment par le règlement de cette obligation sur plusieurs exercices biennaux au fur et à mesure du paiement des arriérés de contribution.

Le Comité du Programme et le Comité financier ont également demandé *d'identifier des activités qui seraient éliminées si le budget se situait en-dessous du niveau de croissance nominale zéro.*

Il convient cependant d'examiner le principe d'une croissance nominale zéro appliquée sans distinction à toutes les institutions spécialisées pour 1998-99. Il semble en effet difficile de ne pas tenir compte de la différence d'impact qui résulte des conditions d'adoption du budget 1996-97, certains organismes ayant déjà opéré des baisses importantes par rapport à l'exercice 1994-95 et effectué des réductions douloureuses du niveau du personnel, alors que d'autres ont enregistré au contraire des augmentations notables de ressources durant la même période. En outre, on ne peut ignorer la différence d'impact du taux de change sur les institutions selon que leur budget est exprimé en dollars ou en monnaie du pays du siège.

Pour la FAO, le budget à croissance nominale zéro entraînerait une réduction de près de 6 pour cent avant ajustement du taux de change entre le dollar et la lire et de 4,3 pour cent environ au taux de change actuel. Le Conseil devrait donc bien mesurer les conséquences d'une telle option sur la capacité de l'Organisation à mettre en oeuvre les recommandations des différents comités techniques et les décisions du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation.

L'ordre du jour est donc particulièrement chargé et le Conseil aura à examiner des questions parfois difficiles. Il est cependant indispensable de donner au Secrétariat des directives claires qui lui sont indispensables, en particulier pour mener à son terme la préparation du Programme de travail et budget pour le prochain biennium.

Je souhaite plein succès aux travaux du Conseil et un agréable séjour à Rome aux représentants des Etats Membres ainsi qu'aux observateurs.

Je vous remercie de votre aimable attention.

EL PRESIDENTE: Señor Director General, a nombre del Consejo le doy las gracias por este exhaustivo informe que ha tocado todos los puntos que conciernen la agenda que tenemos en frente, ha usted nutrido con ello la información que tenemos a la mano y también ofrecido importantes lineamientos que, estoy seguro, los Miembros del Consejo tendrán en consideración en sus debates. Por esa claridad y profundidad le agradezco. Y si quieren, Miembros del Consejo y Observadores, vamos a suspender unos minutos nuestros trabajos para despedir al Director General.

Creo que podemos continuar nuestros trabajos. En primer lugar desearía yo informarles que este Consejo se honra con la presencia de cinco nuevos Miembros: Dinamarca, Mauritania, Pakistán, Senegal y Sudáfrica. A estos países y a los altos funcionarios de sus Gobiernos que están aquí presentes, les doy la más cordial bienvenida. El Consejo se honra también con la presencia de otros altos funcionarios de Gobierno a los cuales les reitero nuestro agradecimiento y bienvenida.

Deseo informarles que este Consejo está integrado hoy por 47 Miembros y no por 49, en vista de que dos países han tenido que renunciar al mismo. Quisiera hacer una breve comunicación. Como ustedes saben, la Comunidad Europea participa en esta reunión de acuerdo con los párrafos 8 y 9 del artículo 2 de la Constitución de la FAO, y también llamar su atención sobre la declaración hecha por la Comunidad Europea y sus Estados Miembros y que se encuentra en el documento CL 112 INF/11, que ha sido distribuido a todos ustedes.

1 Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

1 Adoption de l'ordre du jour et du calendrier

1 Aprobación del programa y el calendario

EL PRESIDENTE: En la versión española del documento CL 112/1 hay un error en el Tema 13; hay que tachar el Tema 13.3 que no aparece en las otras versiones de este documento y el Tema 13.4 será ahora el 13.3. Esto es solamente para los documentos en español. En relación al Tema 11 quisiera recordarle al Consejo que durante la Sesión del COAG se planteó la posibilidad de formar un Grupo de Trabajo. Yo creo que es indispensable que el ánimo que prevaleció entonces de

continuar trabajando sobre el texto revisado de la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria se continúe en este Consejo. Tras realizar algunas consultas creo que estoy en buena posición para proponerles a ustedes, que constituyamos un grupo informal de composición abierta para que continúe trabajando sobre los aspectos que aún se encuentran entre corchetes en ese texto de Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria. Un grupo informal así constituido, de composición abierta, podría ayudarnos a avanzar substancialmente en la preparación de un texto final que le permita a la próxima Conferencia, a la 29ª Conferencia de la FAO, aprobar el texto final de la Convención. No avanzar en ese sentido ahora podría llevarnos a arriesgar la aprobación del texto en esta Conferencia y esperar otros dos años.

Les recuerdo también que la región africana tendrá una reunión que seguramente se está llevando a cabo ahora, con expertos que van a revisar el texto de la Convención. Se aseguró, en el interés de todos, que en esa revisión se harán contribuciones desde luego positivas intentando, claro, no entrar en la reapertura de las discusiones respecto al texto que ha sido en principio, ya acordado.

Por eso y por respeto a la reunión que está celebrando este grupo de expertos africanos, el grupo informal que les propongo constituir, en virtud de que muchos expertos llegarán el día miércoles, se reúna ese mismo día. Yo les avisaré exactamente la hora y el lugar. Pero sí desearía que en principio acordáramos la utilidad de un grupo con estas características. De esta manera el grupo podrá reportar al Consejo sobre este tema el día jueves por la mañana.

Bien, si el Consejo está de acuerdo, podríamos convocar este grupo informal. ¿Hay algún comentario u objeción? Bien, entonces más adelante les informaré con respecto a los arreglos para llevar a cabo tal reunión.

Bien, si no hay tampoco ninguna observación o comentario sobre el Programa Provisional y el Calendario que está a la vista de todos ustedes, lo daríamos por aprobado. Se aprueba.

2 Election of Three Vice-Chairmen, and Designation of the Chairman and Members of the Drafting Committee

2 Election des trois Vice-Présidents et nomination du Président et des Membres du Comité de rédaction

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

EL PRESIDENTE: Hemos llevado a cabo algunas consultas con los diversos grupos regionales y a través de ellos, se me ha informado de tres propuestas para las tres Vicepresidencias de este Consejo, Su Excelencia el señor Embajador Constantin Mihail Grigorie, de Rumania, Su Excelencia el señor Nasreddine Rimouche, de Argelia, y Su Excelencia el señor Roberto Villambrosa de Argentina. Si ustedes están de acuerdo, en vista de las altas cualidades que distinguen a estos tres candidatos para la Vicepresidencia del Consejo y, que sin duda, serán de enorme respaldo en mis trabajos, les suplico que por aclamación leselijamos. Gracias.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Bien, mis congratulaciones a estos tres distinguidos Vicepresidentes a quienes les doy la bienvenida e igualmente, tras consultas en lo que se refiere al Comité de Redacción, me han llegado algunos nombres de los Miembros de dicho Comité salvo dos; me voy a permitir leer la lista de aquéllos Miembros que tengo a la mano: Francia, Alemania, Japón, Australia, Estados Unidos, Uganda, Senegal, China, India, Cuba y Uruguay. Les repito, faltan todavía dos Miembros, y en el momento en que tengamos sus nombres les informaré.

Me han informado que el señor Daniel Berthery, de Francia, presidirá el Comité de Redacción. Si ustedes lo tienen a bien, de nuevo por aclamación, elegimos estos Miembros con la reserva de conocer el nombre de los dos restantes. Gracias.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

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21.1 Invitations to Non-Member Nations to Attend FAO Sessions

21.1 Invitations d'Etats non Membres à assister à des réunions de la FAO

21.1 Invitaciones a Estados no Miembros para asistir a reuniones de la FAO

EL PRESIDENTE: Bien señores, así se acuerda este Tema de nuestra agenda y pasamos al 21.1 que es: Invitaciones a Estados no Miembros para que asistan a las reuniones de la FAO. El documento CL 112/LIM/2 informa los Miembros del Consejo de las solicitudes de Estados no Miembros de la FAO recibidas por el Director General. En primer lugar para participar en este período de sesiones del Consejo, vemos los casos de la Federación de Rusia y también de la República de Kazakstán, y para asistir a otras reuniones de la FAO como se indica en el párrafo 7 del documento. En el párrafo 8 de ese documento se dan para información, los nombres de los países de Estados no Miembros que han asistido a reuniones de la FAO desde la última reunión del Consejo. Bien, si ningún miembro desea hacer uso de la palabra, en este sentido lo damos por terminado.

21.2 Applications for Membership in the Organization

21.2 Demandes d'admission à la qualité de Membre de l'Organisation

21.2 Solicitudes de ingreso en la Organización

EL PRESIDENTE: Pasemos ahora al Tema 21.2 Solicitudes de ingreso en la Organización, documento CL 112/16, que nos informa que el Director General ha recibido la solicitud de ingreso a la Organización por parte de la República de Kazakstán, la cual será considerada a su vez por el 29º período de sesiones de la Conferencia, en noviembre próximo. Mientras tanto, se le pide al Consejo que autorice la invitación a Kazakstán por parte del Director General en capacidad de Observador a las sesiones de este Consejo y del próximo, así como a las reuniones regionales que puedan interesar. Pienso, por tanto, que no tendremos ningún inconveniente en autorizar las invitaciones de parte del Director General a la República de Kazakstán y si no hay ninguna otra observación al respecto damos por concluido este Tema 21.2.

II WORLD FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SITUATION

II SITUATION MONDIALE DE L'ALIMENTATION ET DE L'AGRICULTURE

II SITUACION MUNDIAL DE LA AGRICULTURA Y LA ALIMENTACION

4 Current World Food Situation

4 Situation mondiale de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture

4 Situación actual de la alimentación en el mundo

EL PRESIDENTE: Este Tema en nuestros debates nos brinda la oportunidad de efectuar un primer examen sobre las tendencias alimentarias recientes, a la luz de las medidas adoptadas o reforzadas en los diferentes países en cumplimiento con las recomendaciones y compromisos contraídos en la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación. Como ustedes pueden ver en el documento, las tendencias recientes en la alimentación mundial, tal como quedan resumidas allí, nos dan motivo de satisfacción; el Director General ha hecho una semblanza clara de ello, la producción total de alimentos de base, creció significativamente en 1996 y esto obviamente, se tradujo en un mayor equilibrio en los mercados internacionales de cereales y también en una cierta baja en los precios de los mismos desde mediados del año pasado. Estas son indudablemente buenas noticias para los países importadores de alimentos; debemos en particular tomar nota, con satisfacción, del crecimiento relativamente fuerte de la producción alimentaria en Africa, después, claro, de varios años de estancamiento inclusive de descenso; el documento también destaca la forma en que las capturas mundiales de peces y de crustáceos han aumentado y, desde luego, esta expansión es bienvenida mientras esté respaldada por el respeto a los principios de sostenibilidad de los recursos pesqueros, en cuanto esto significa también una contribución importante al logro de la seguridad alimentaria para millones de personas.

Sin embargo, distinguidos delegados, estos y otros aspectos que se destacan en el documento no deben hacernos perder de vista la persistencia de otros problemas fundamentales, como lo ha destacado ya el Director General. En particular, el documento que tienen ustedes, nos pone en guardia sobre los problemas de inestabilidad de los mercados mundiales de cereales y las dificultades para el abastecimiento que continúan a agobiar a una parte importante de la humanidad, en particular, a países pobres importadores netos de alimentos. Dichos países, deben recordar ustedes, también fueron mayormente sujetos a una reducción y a una tendencia todavía descendiente de la ayuda alimentaria en estos últimos años, aún si el descenso de los flujos de ayuda alimentaria en estos tres años podría interrumpirse en 1996-97, si es necesario tomar nota de que los volúmenes de dicha ayuda seguirán siendo menos de la mitad de lo que era cuatro años antes.

En fin, distinguidos delegados, ustedes seguramente desearán hacer comentarios con respecto a esto; entiendo que hay algunos puntos que quizá se solapen o que sean comunes entre este Tema 4 y el Tema 5 que se refiere al seguimiento de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación. Si para ganar tiempo algunos de ustedes desean hacer una sola intervención respecto a estos dos Temas, sean ustedes bienvenidos pero para mantener el orden en el manejo de nuestro Programa separaremos el Tema 4 y el Tema 5.

H. de HAEN (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Development Department): In

fact, I can be very brief because the main message has been stated by the Director-General and also now by the Chairman and that is that the current world food situation can be characterized as encouraging. I will not go into detail again but I would like to point out that our revised estimates, revised after the completion of the document that is before you, indicate an even more favourable performance of world food production in 1996; that is, that the estimated growth in world food production, and I am not just speaking of cereals here - that I should underline -- has been revised upwards to 3 percent. The rate of growth of aggregate food production in developing countries is now estimated at 3.3 percent and in developed countries at 2.6. On examining total food production figures, the most noteworthy feature to be observed in 1996 is probably the very strong expansion of food production in Africa which, according to the latest estimates, is 7.3 percent for the whole continent.

I was prepared to say a bit more about world cereal production in general and stock development, but I think the Chairman has just summarized this so that I can just skip that part. However, I would like to add that our estimates of cereal stocks, of which it was said that they are being replenished but not reaching the minimum safe levels yet, are of course of a very tentative nature. It has to be said that a bad crop in 1998 could lead to physical shortfalls and high import costs of cereals in many developing countries again.

I wish to just add one remark to the reference to the still large number of countries suffering various degrees of food emergencies. This number of countries is now estimated at 29 and Africa remains the most affected region in this regard.

I think, with these very brief additional remarks, I would interrupt my introduction here and express the hope that we will have a very interesting discussion of this document.

Dato Ahmad Zabri IBRAHIM (Malaysia): Malaysia is grateful to the Secretariat for the very concise and informative documents CL 112/2 and CL 112/6 relating to the current world food situation and my delegation would like to associate ourselves with some of the issues highlighted in these documents.

While the report indicated that generally the food situation in 1996 has improved as compared to the previous year, we are still concerned at the slow-down in the food production growth operating in developing countries, especially the forecast for 1997 in Asia, in particular in regard to staple food rice. This is further evidenced by the no-change situation in cereal stock levels and a persistent low level of the ratio of end-of-season stocks to utilization. All this indicates that more efforts are needed by all parties, especially FAO, to ensure that food production be increased in developing countries and volatile fluctuations of food supply and food prices be minimized and stabilized.

In this regard Malaysia supports expanding FAO programmes that directly contribute to increasing food production in Member Countries, especially in low-income, food-deficit countries and in particular in the populous regions of Asia. It would also strongly support programme expansion in aquaculture, which has shown promising growth in supplying protein and food in view of declining harvests from the marine and inland capture fisheries.

Jalal RASSOLOF (Iran, Islamic Republic of): Mr Chairman, on behalf of my delegation, I express my pleasure at seeing you once again as the Chairman of this Session of the Council. I also would like to sincerely thank the Secretariat and all FAO's specialized departments for preparing the documents of the Council and commend them in their very high quality performance in this regard.

Regarding the current world food situation, which is discussed in document CL 112/2, my delegation is pleased to note the expansion of global food production in 1996 and the forecast of a similar situation in 1997. It is also encouraging to witness a fall in food prices which means more hope for low-income, food-deficit countries to increase their food utilization level. However, it is sad to note that, despite this overall positive development, food shortages continue to grip a number of low-income, food-deficit countries. It is also shocking to read that in spite of a sharp increase in export prices of food in 1995, which led to windfall export earnings for food exporting countries, food aid shipments have decreased in 1995 to 1996. We hope that, according to FAO's forecast, this would come to a halt in 1996-97.

Although my delegation is delighted to observe the relative strong expansion in food production on the African continent in 1996, following on the decline recorded in 1995 and the rather sluggish expansion of 1994, we would like to express our concern over the fluctuations of food production due to adverse climatic conditions all over the world and especially in developing countries. Climatic fluctuations in food production are the major source of uncertainty in food security at the global level and the most damaging factor in food security of developing countries. This problem not only prevents smooth planning for food security but, more importantly, it negatively affects the overall development activities of the developing countries. The meagre foreign exchange of these countries is their most important essential resource and should be delicately allocated to its best use. Unfortunately the uncertainty in food production and food imports related to climatic fluctuations is one of the major bottlenecks in optimum allocation of foreign exchanges and therefore causes unforeseen difficulties in other areas of resource allocation, economic policies and decision-making. Therefore, reducing the negative effect of adverse climatic conditions is a major step, or even the

major prerequisite, to any plan of action to help these countries. This can be achieved through several alternatives, but the most effective remedy is the supply of secure water resources and decreased dependency on rainfed agriculture in arid and semi-arid zones of the world.

This reasoning brings my delegation to the conclusion that the Special Programme for Food Security and its major component of security -- safe water resources ~ proposed by the Director-General of FAO should receive most attention, priority and resources in the plans and budget of the Organization. Our view that the future of food security requires genuine political commitment is to a large extent determined by population policies and investment in agriculture, food, jobs, nutrition and health. This is quite true, but as yet a key question remains to be answered and that is how to plan and administer a national objective to be pursued by a large part of the public sector in a coordinated and efficient fashion? Many argue that the answer differs under different conditions and in different countries and one should not look for a universal answer. In this regard we are of the opinion that a bottom-up approach to planning and administration is a highly effective balancing instrument. In this aspect, support for an expanded role of Non-Governmental Organizations and empowering and educating the household, particularly women, complemented by a wide participation of the private sector, are the key answers. Consumers are, of course, the ultimate decision-makers in the market.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, food security objectives are being pursued on three fronts during the second Five-Year Development Plan: population control, food availability and poverty alleviation. Our population control policies will continue on the same track as the previous Five-Year Development Plan. Our projected rate of growth for 1999 is 1.5 percent. In terms of food availability, our main objectives are to increase food production particularly through infrastructural activities, control of post-harvest losses and self-sufficiency in major foodstuffs. We expect, for instance, 95 percent self-sufficiency by the year 1999 in wheat production. Following the above-mentioned objectives in our developing plan for food security preservation, an efficient use of water in agriculture has been highly emphasized. By 1999 we expect to increase our secure water resources by 20 billion cubic metres and to improve efficiency in water utilization from the existing 33 percent to 45 percent through land consolidation on further development and expansion of pressurized irrigation system.

The real change in the next 20 years is effective translation of other potential into sustainable food security for approximately 100 million Iranians.

The agricultural sector has a prominent place in social and economic development in Islamic Republic of Iran. It accounts for 27 percent of GDP, 23.8 percent of employment opportunities, 82 percent of food supply and 35 percentage of non-oil export plus considerable raw materials of industrial use.

During the First National Development Plan investment in agriculture increased by an average annual rate of 4.6 percent. In this period, the agricultural value-added enjoyed an average annual growth rate of 6 percent. During the First National Development Plan over 2 million jobs were created and national unemployment declined from 14.2 percent in 1986 to 11.1 percent in 1991. Our goal is to reduce unemployment to a one-digit figure during the Second Five-Year Plan.

During the same period the Government spent 3055.1 billion rials on consumer protective food subsidies. Bread and some other basic foods, which altogether provide over 70 percentage of daily caloric needs of the low income groups, are heavily subsidized. The government policy during this Second Development Plan is to reduce the subsidies gradually and enhance agricultural production. On the food security side, within the next 10 years we will focus on economic growth, control of inflation, improved income distribution, poverty alleviation and increased food production as the main preconditions for food security. We also need to improve our food system management,

control post-harvest losses and work towards a balanced food consumption as well as consumer education and participation.

Returning to the document under consideration, I would like to quote the following facts which can be found in paragraphs 16, 17, 18 and 32.

First, global cereal stock. "...the expected stock build-up would be largely concentrated in the major exporting countries and in particular in the United States while total stocks in other countries would continue to decline for the third year in a row."

Second, "...the ratio of end-of-season stocks in 1997 to trend utilization in 1997-98 would increase from 14.3 to 15.8 percent but would still remain below the minimum safe level the FAO Secretariat regards as necessary for world food security."

Third, "...almost three quarters of world imports of cereals are now accounted for by the developing countries, compared with less than half 15 years ago."

Fourth, "The latest estimate puts the total cereal import bill of LIFDCs, at about US\$ 17 billion for 1995-96, US\$ 4.9 billion above the value of their imports during the preceding year."

In many low-income, food-deficit countries this had serious negative implications for their national economy. This fact clearly shows that on the one hand in the international food markets, while low-income, food-deficit countries suffered considerable losses, the exporting countries have enjoyed extra export earnings. On the other hand, due to low stock levels, and low food aid, developing countries are facing the danger of further suffering in the future. Therefore, it seems very legitimate that the developed countries, and especially food exporting countries, should take measures and steps to help developing countries to reduce the negative food trade impacts on their economy to improve their national food security.

My delegation strongly believes that this is the best possible assistance that can be provided by FAO to developing countries. This in turn needs extra resources and budget. We hope that the debates on Plan of Work and Budget for the next biennium witness the assumption of this very humanitarian responsibility by developed countries.

In conclusion, I should like to ensure all those interested in mankind's self-respect and honour that the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to actively participate in the movement for the realization of global sustainable food security. I also hope sincerely that the global community would comprehend the significance of collaboration and understanding and would succeed in adopting new scientific technical and functional approaches in order to make sustainable food security possible and provide food for all. The Islamic Republic Iran shall actively take part in this great responsibility with all its might and potential.

Juan NUIRY SANCHEZ (Cuba): Con cuanta satisfacción y confianza lo vemos de nuevo en la conducción de este importante 112º Consejo de la FAO. Cuba le expresa, señor Presidente, su reconocimiento tanto a usted por su actuación, como al hermano país mejicano que usted representa.

Sobre este punto de la agenda seremos breves, además que resulta difícil decir algo nuevo después de lo expresado en la reciente pasada Cumbre Mundial sobre el tema. Pero permítame destacar señor Presidente, la importante intervención del señor Diouf, Director General de la FAO, así como las precisas presentaciones tanto de usted señor Presidente como las del doctor de Haen de los documentos puestos a nuestra disposición por la Secretaría.

En relación a la Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial, Cuba distribuyó un amplio y detallado documento como informe en la Cumbre sobre toda la panorámica económica y social de nuestro país, haciendo

énfasis en la seguridad alimentaria dentro de la controvertida y compleja esfera internacional, que poco o nada ha cambiado. Este documento lo tenemos en nuestro poder, el cual ponemos a su disposición, titulado "Alimentos para Todos".

Por cierto, en su introducción recoge una cita de nuestro prócer José Martí, que ya en el siglo pasado manifestaba: *"debemos cuidar este planeta que no hemos heredado de nuestros padres, sino que tenemos prestado de nuestros hijos"*.

Como introducción, permítame señor Presidente, señalar que aún se escucha resonar en estos predios las palabras de Fidel Castro en la Cumbre, que llegó a todos los rincones del planeta cuando expresó: *"el hambre, inseparable compañera de los pobres, es hija de la desigual distribución de la riqueza y de las injusticias de este mundo"*.

Señor Presidente, Cuba es una isla bañada por el Mar Caribe en el mismo corazón de América, país fundador de la FAO, miembro de este Consejo y, aún más, fue Vicepresidente de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación. País soberano, pequeño, que lucha y trabaja por salir del subdesarrollo, que no está en guerra, que no es amenaza ni potencia mundial. A Cuba, señor Presidente, distinguidos colegas, le resulta difícil venir a hablar de la seguridad alimentaria mundial cuando a su población se le niega el derecho a la alimentación, a sus mujeres y niños, a sus ancianos, por un inhumano y anacrónico bloqueo que persiste increíblemente cuando nos separan días para entrar en un nuevo milenio. El mundo conoce este crimen. Esta medida del bloqueo y su recrudecimiento a Cuba ha sido rechazada como es conocido por la comunidad internacional, por su carácter violatorio de los principios del derecho internacional, reconocido en la Carta de las Naciones Unidas, así como su aplicación extraterritorial en contradicción con las normas institucionales, pretendiendo dictar arbitraria e ilegalmente reglas para ser cumplidas en otros países. Si el bloqueo siempre ha estado huérfano de razón, hoy también está carente de pretextos. Si como repiten los medios de comunicación, la guerra fría terminó, cómo explicar que se continúe en franca actitud de guerra hacia nuestro país.

Señor Presidente, estamos padeciendo limitaciones muy sensibles en alimentos, medicinas, en artículos imprescindibles para vivir; situación que crea graves efectos en la alimentación y, en consecuencia, en la salud de la población. Pocas veces en la historia un pueblo ha sido sometido a semejante prueba por una nación, además si se tiene en cuenta que ésta es la más poderosa del mundo, pero para que se tenga una cabal comprensión de esta problemática, Cuba resistirá. Cuba combatirá. Cuba ni se rinde ni claudica. El pueblo cubano está hecho de una arcilla distinta que no pueden conocer nuestros adversarios. Eso demuestra nuestra fortaleza interna, basada en la sólida unidad del pueblo en sus principios y soberanía. Pero pregunto: ¿existe alguna razón para esto?; ¿esta es la seguridad alimentaria mundial que Cuba puede analizar en esta reunión?; ¿es que radica la justicia en el criterio de los poderosos? Planteamos esto sin dramatismos, situación que todo el mundo conoce.

Pudiendo decir más, ahí están las reiteradas votaciones de la ONU, de las cumbres latinoamericanas de cuantos eventos internacionales a los cuales acudimos basados en preceptos inviolables internacionales de derecho y humano. Hoy, otra vez, nos referimos a ello en la FAO, en busca de definición dentro de la seguridad alimentaria mundial en este 112° Consejo, dentro del diálogo, que nunca hemos rehusado.

En esto, señor Presidente, distinguidos colegas, nos asiste como en aquel pasaje que relata la leyenda: representar el papel de la víctima. Gracias señor Presidente.

Mme Diane VINCENT (Canada): Le Canada aimerait exposer ses vues sur la situation alimentaire mondiale, mais d'abord nous aimerions informer rapidement le Conseil sur le suivi Canadien au Sommet Mondial sur l'Alimentation et faire quelques remarques préliminaires aux discussions qui se tiendront au cours de ce Conseil. Les objectifs fondamentaux de la FAO sont plus valables que

jamais et nous devrions tous nous employer à libérer le monde de la faim. Le Canada aimerait féliciter la FAO d'avoir organisé le Sommet mondial de l'alimentation, qui servira de phare à ceux qui veulent relever le défi d'enrayer la faim et la malnutrition.

La FAO en collaboration avec les autres organismes internationaux, les gouvernements et la société civile, donc tous ensemble devons faire tout ce qui est en notre pouvoir pour respecter les engagements du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation. Le Canada s'affaire présentement à élaborer son plan d'action national. Nous avons entamé un important processus de consultation auprès de notre société civile. Le Gouvernement canadien croit qu'il est essentiel de maintenir un dialogue avec l'ensemble de nos partenaires canadiens, afin que le plan d'action reflète l'important travail des diverses organisations de la société civile qui ont à coeur la question de la sécurité alimentaire. La déclaration de Québec en 1995 et la Déclaration de Rome en novembre dernier nous serviront à bien guider le travail de la FAO au cours des prochaines années. Nous devons également garder à l'esprit les autres engagements internationaux que nous avons donné à la FAO, entre autre à l'occasion d'autres sommets comme la Conférence des Nations Unies sur le développement et l'environnement, ainsi que les accords sur l'Organisation mondiale du commerce. Ce regard sur l'avenir prend également place dans un contexte de ressources financières limitées, qui fera ressortir la nécessité de prioriser les actions, de se concentrer sur les champs d'excellence de la FAO.

Dans ce contexte, notre travail consiste à débattre des orientations stratégiques de l'Organisation, à la fois pour le prochain biennium et les quatre années qui suivront. Pour ce faire la FAO a besoin d'un processus de planification stratégique mieux intégré, axé sur les résultats, avec un nombre limité d'objectifs stratégiques et fixant des indicateurs de performance appropriés. Le Canada considère que l'avantage comparatif de la FAO réside notamment dans les programmes normatifs, ce qui inclu la collecte et l'analyse de données et l'établissement des normes standards. Ce sont ces forces qui devront être à la base des choix stratégiques de la FAO pour les prochaines années. Pour les deux prochaines années, le Canada souhaite voir accorder davantage d'attention au programme de la foresterie et aux dispositions institutionnelles relatives à la Convention internationale pour la protection des végétaux. Afin d'éclairer les discussions budgétaires importantes qui se tiendront cette semaine, nous aimerions indiquer que le Canada, comme politique budgétaire pour les agences des Nations Unies, une politique de croissance nominale zéro.

Maintenant j'aimerais aborder de façon plus spécifique le rapport sur la situation mondiale de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture. Les perspectives de la production agricole mondiale semblent annoncer un avenir plus prometteur en terme de disponibilité des aliments. La situation de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale semble très positive, le document que nous avons sous les yeux montre que les indicateurs de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale sont tournés dans la bonne direction. Il reste toutefois des secteurs précis, comme la région Est de l'Afrique, qui continuent de nous préoccuper. Nous sommes encouragés par l'augmentation des revenus dans de nombreux pays industrialisés et aussi dans de nombreux pays en voie de développement. Il faut également se féliciter de l'assainissement du commerce international, résultat de la réforme des politiques agricoles.

Le Canada a, au cours de la dernière année, poursuivi la mise en place de ces réformes agricoles, ce qui a conduit à des réductions substantielles des subventions à l'agriculture. Le Canada affiche un niveau d'équivalent des subventions à la production agricole plus bas que la moyenne des pays de l'OCDE, et nous dépassons nos engagements de réduction de subventions faits dans le cadre des accords de l'Uruguay. Egalement en 1996 le Canada a connu une croissance de 11 pour cent de ses exportations agro-alimentaires, pour atteindre près de vingt milliards de dollars canadiens. En 1997, on prévoit une réduction de la superficie canadienne de blé, en faveur d'une augmentation des superficies de canola et de soja. Le Canada a connu des inondations printanières dans les prairies, en particulier au Manitoba, ce qui retarde l'ensemencement. Tout de même nous prévoyons des réductions de production de céréales et oléagineux, toutefois nous nous attendons à ce que les stocks et les exportations du Canada augmentent. Ainsi le Canada est fidèle à son engagement de faire du

commerce international une clé importante à la résolution des problèmes de la faim dans le monde. En tant que pays exportateur nous sommes non seulement engagé à être un fournisseur mondial fiable de produits agricoles et alimentaires, mais le Canada continue également à s'élever contre les restrictions à l'exportation qui sont, selon nous, contraire à l'esprit du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation. Nous avons encore beaucoup à faire pour améliorer le fonctionnement du Marché mondial, et de faire en sorte que les avantages d'une telle amélioration aient des effets multiplicateurs, surtout pour les économies en voie de développement. Le Canada est prêt à coopérer avec les pays en voie de développement pour préparer les négociations commerciales multilatérales de 1999, et nous encourageons la FAO à aider les pays à se préparer pour cette importante étape. En toute fin M. le Président, soyez assuré que le Canada va se joindre aux autres pays membres pour assurer le succès de cette 112ème session du Conseil, ainsi que le succès de la Conférence ministérielle de novembre prochain. Merci M. le Président.

James W. SCHROEDER (United States of America): The FAO's *Current World Food Situation* is, in general, accurate and reflects current market realities of increased global grain production, lower prices and slightly higher stock levels. We do, however, disagree with FAO's forecast for a significant decline in global cereal trade. The United States Department of Agriculture's recent estimates have been consistently more optimistic about global trade levels than FAO.

FAO sees a significant contraction of global cereals trade, down approximately 10 percent, while USDA (U.S. Department of Agriculture) expects trade volume to be only 1 percent below last year or approximately 200 million tonnes.

FAO forecasts a 9 million tonne decrease in coarse grain trade while USDA sees only a 0.7 million tonne decline.

FAO forecasts a significant decline in world wheat exports while USDA forecasts 94 million tonnes, a slight increase.

Like FAO, USDA expects declining grain purchases from China and Morocco but sees offsetting increases in a range of developing countries: in South Korea, India, Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Our United States' cereal crop prospects also differ from FAO's assessment. We expect soybean acreage in the United States to raise by 7 percent, the largest planting since 1982. Corn or maize acreage is expected to also rise by approximately 2.5 percent. Wheat acreage is expected to fall by 8 percent, not remain the same as FAO suggests.

The United States would encourage FAO to try and make future World Food Situation documents more forward-looking. At this point, 1997-98 grain output assessments are being released, and the focus of food security should move into this future period rather than focusing on the remainder of the current year. Although we certainly appreciate Mr de Haen's update on production estimates, I must say -- a quick calculation -- we would perhaps question whether, in fact, foreign wheat and coarse grain production will increase in the 1997-98 period.

Turning to another subject -- that of food aid -- food aid will continue, in our view, to constitute a diminishing role in long-term solutions to the global food insecurity problems. We note that the USA continues to be the single largest global donor of food assistance. However, we wish to emphasize the importance of well-functioning world food markets to global food security. Rapid price transmission in the post-Uruguay Round environment facilitated a rapid response to last year's short supplies and an increase in global stocks. Stock-holding behaviour is important to stable global markets, but stocks which are used to insulate particular countries from world markets rather than to respond to market forces can increase market volatility and reduce overall food security.

Finally we would like to suggest that, perhaps, the FAO reports should reflect certain broader aspects of food security. For example, there is no discussion of trade in fruits and vegetables. These high-value products are becoming increasingly important, adding to the incomes of many countries and thus increasing the ability to achieve real food self-reliance and security through increased trade.

With regard to biotechnology, new techniques will be important to meet the world's food needs. Biotechnology provides a set of tools that can potentially decrease dependence on chemical pesticides, increase yields, enhance nutrient content and reduce tillage and soil losses. This is an area that, perhaps, should be discussed. In order to realize the potential of this technology, we in the United States as well as many other countries, have instituted safety-assessment systems grounded in thorough scientific analysis to address risks so that products can reach the market. We believe that any current and future international activities in biotechnology should also be based on sound science. When good science permits safe products to be made available to our producers and consumers, food security improves. When bad science is relied upon to block market access for these products, food security suffers.

Finally, at the risk of being Goliath to my friend David I would, off the record and as a private American, like to say that as a cigar smoker and a baseball fan, I welcome the day when we will not have these problems. But as my friend from Cuba knows, the United States' goal has remained the same through many years - to seek a peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba, evidenced by respect for human rights, free and fair elections and an open economy. My friend is also correct that all have not agreed with the means to that goal, but our policy has remained to deny legitimacy and resources to the current Government in Cuba through economic embargo; to strengthen Cuban society through private humanitarian aid and to increase contacts and communications to facilitate safe and legal migration; to mobilize a multi-lateral push for democracy and to deter trafficking in property confiscated from U.S. citizens. Our goal has not changed. Our means have been questioned but they are the current means our Government is pursuing.

T. SUDO (Japan): I appreciate the efforts made by the Secretariat to provide the relevant documents as summary of the current world food security situation and I would like to express our agreement with FAO's assessment for useful resources.

I would like to make some comments on this item. The document CL 112/2 summarizes the current global food production, the often appreciable improvement in the world production of staple foods in 1996; prospects for 1997 cereal crops are generally favourable at this stage. However, I would like to recall negative effects for world food security which are caused by the steep rise of cereal prices during 1995-96, very low levels of cereal stocks and decrease of food aid, and also express my concern about the remaining low levels of global stocks. These situations renew concern not only of low income, food deficit countries but also of food importing countries, including Japan.

As we stated at the World Food Summit, Japan recognizes the importance of strengthening domestic production by utilizing domestic resources effectively in order to achieve food security for each country wherever possible and also has a view that the importance of domestic food production should be stressed, especially in low income, food deficit countries.

Regarding aquatic products, a large increase of the demand is expected in developing countries. However, it is foreseen that we may have a tight situation in the global aquacultural supply and demand. It is particularly important therefore to enforce the appropriate management of aquaculture and fisheries and environmental preservation in aquaculture, and I believe that the sustainable development of fisheries should be emphasized by the Organization.

Based on these observations I would like to say that Japan will continue to assist the self-help of developing countries in the food and agriculture fields by improving food production capacity in

those countries, and I would also like to expect FAO to continue its effective assistance to realize effective cooperation with developing countries in order to achieve global food security.

Oetomo SOEJONOPURA (Indonesia): Mr Chairman, it gives me pleasure to congratulate you and other distinguished members of the Bureau on your well deserved election. I believe that under your wise guidance our deliberations will arrive at a successful conclusion. At the same time, we wish also to extend our sincere appreciation to the Secretariat in preparing the important documents before us. The Indonesian delegation would also like to pay tribute to His Excellency, the Director-General of FAO, for his address.

The Indonesian delegation wishes to make a single intervention under Agenda Items 4 and 5. We noted that this Session is the first meeting of the Council after the World Food Summit. The Summit was extremely successful in drawing the attention of the International community and in increasing public awareness of the magnitude of hunger and malnutrition worldwide and of the consequences and prospects. Most importantly it resulted in the strong political commitment necessary to promote effective strategies and activities to achieve its targets of reducing the number of undernourished people to half their present level no later than the year 2015, eventually achieving food security for all and eradicating hunger in all countries.

We acknowledge the significant roles played by the Council in providing the guidance and necessary steps to promote world food security and ensuring that all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Therefore, the timely Sessions to discuss important issues emerge after the World Food Summit.

The Indonesian delegation is of the view that food security does not only enforce the production sector but it is also linked to other aspects such as populations, poverty and depletions of natural resources. This is clearly reflected by the world food situation today. The world food production is actually sufficient to meet the consumption needs of the world populations. However, we witness the fact that hundreds of millions of people are suffering from hunger, malnutrition and food shortage.

In our view, the situation is one of the primary tasks of this Organization and the international community as a whole. Therefore we should spare no effort to tackle the problems of hunger and food insecurity.

We recognize the importance of concerted actions at sub-regional, regional and international levels to support national efforts to achieve a sustainable food security. In this regard, the Indonesian delegation reiterates the importance of south-south cooperation and technical cooperation among the developing countries, and welcomes the initiative taken by the Director-General of FAO to promote south-south cooperation within the framework of the Special Programme for Food Security.

We would like to see the strategies initially set out by the Summit in the Plan of Action translated into practical action. In this connection, the Indonesian delegation is pleased to inform this meeting of the activities taken by Indonesia to follow up the World Food Summit at the national level.

Indonesia has set up national mechanisms consisting of interdepartmental and related agencies to implement the World Food Summit Plan of Action and to prepare the report that would be submitted to FAO. In addition, we are planning to hold seminars and workshops at several Universities in order to disseminate the outcome of the World Food Summit and to seek views on how to reduce the numbers affected by malnutrition.

In the meantime, Indonesia will convene the Sixth National Conference on Food and Nutrition, whose recommendations and outcome may be utilized as an input for preparing the formulations of

the national guideline policy on food and nutrition. There are five topics to be discussed during the Conference, namely agriculture resources and environmental production, industry, distribution and trade supply and demand, food security and status of nutrition, health and quality of life. The Indonesian Government continually implemented a programme of poverty eradication, and we set a target that by the end of the second five-year development plan -- in ten years, 2003 -- the number of people living below the poverty line will no longer exist.

In this regard, Indonesia has launched a presidential instruction programme on poverty alleviation aimed at promoting efforts for alleviating poverty in the least developed village in a sustainable fashion. In order to strengthen the implementation of this programme Indonesia has established a mechanism of regular three-monthly special Cabinet sessions to discuss particularly the progress and constraints of the programme on poverty alleviation. We observe that in general there are improvements in the global supply of most food commodities which were reflected in favourable changes of world food security in the indicators. In particular, production of food staples had recovered in 1996 and, furthermore, this rise of cereals was foreseen for 1997 provided that the weather conditions remained favourable. However, we also noted with concern that at first features of the world food security situation may remain very uncertain. These factors are undoubtedly closely related to the estimated 800 million people suffering from chronic malnutrition and poverty.

With regard to the decline trend in food aid, the Indonesian delegation recognizes the importance of food aid provided by donor countries. However, it must be clear that food aid from the donor country should not make recipient countries continuously dependent on such assistance. Food aid must only serve as a means for the recipient country to be able to gradually meet its own food demand. We believe that with such a spirit, the recipient country may continue to make the optimum use of the aid with the intention of improving its capabilities and not just for consumption purposes.

In the case of Indonesia, we are pleased to inform you that food security in Indonesia for the years 1995 and 1996 has been relatively stable and production of food staples, especially rice, had a significant increase. It is also expected that the production of rice for 1997 will remarkably augment in comparison with previous years due to the favourable climate, improvement of production and quality of seeds. Meanwhile, the government food reserve is also set to multiply and food prices are relatively stable.

This situation is supported by the dynamic economic performance of Indonesia and several efforts have been undertaken to reduce the number of people living below the poverty line, which in the end would improve national food security.

Bearing in mind the importance of food security, the Indonesian delegation recognizes the significant role of the regional commissions of food security for Asia and the Pacific as an appropriate forum to discuss the issue at the regional level, particularly as a follow-up to the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to reiterate Indonesia's strong commitment to the implementation of the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit and support the activity undertaken by FAO to achieve sustainable food security and to eradicate hunger and malnutrition.

Young Rae LEE (Korea, Republic of): I would like to express my appreciation of the Secretariat's effort to prepare the report on current world food situation. The Secretariat's report reveals that the global supply situation improved in 1996-97, prices fell and estimated cereal carry-over stocks are anticipated to rise modestly for the first time in four years.

I would like to make a few comments in this regard. Although the global food supply situation in 1996-97 improved over the preceding year, it is our observation that world food security is still in

an unstable state. All cereal stock levels are expected to increase from 13.3 percent to 15.8 percent but will remain below the minimum safe level, as indicated in paragraph 17. However, taking into account the possible production shortfall due to unpredictable weather the forecast year-start ratio would be low. Attention should also be paid to the inferences of the food security situation between countries or regions. We are carefully watching for structural changes in the world cereal stock distribution among individual countries as they occur. In particular, we note with concern that the anticipated increase of stock build-up would be largely concentrated in a small number of exporting countries while total stocks in other countries, mainly importing developing countries, would continue to decline as in recent years, although a third of world imports of cereals were now accounted for by the developing countries compared with less than half 15 years ago, as pointed out in paragraphs 16 and 18.

Korea would like to point out the structural programme of the pattern of the world food supply system which heavily depends on a few exporting countries. Under the circumstances, natural disasters and parallel conditions of the exporting countries will have serious impacts on the world market and cause critical damage to importing countries as such, probably increasing domestic production through effective utilization of existing resources in a positive and distinct way which countries should attempt to avoid and minimize risks to food security from worldwide food deficit, regional and international dispute, natural disasters and so on. In the same spirit the World Food Summit Rome Declaration and private action also reflected the importance of increased food production including developing staple food.

Finally, based on these observations, I would like to say that Korea supports each country's efforts to increase food production and stresses the importance of each country's food security strategies to maintain a reasonable level of self sufficiency.

Shahid RASHID (Pakistan): As has been stated earlier by several speakers, this is our first opportunity to review the *World Food Situation* after the World Food Summit. This enables us to examine the food situation in the appropriate perspective, in its proper context. While the targets established by the world leaders at the Summit provide us with the necessary goals and objectives, a review of the current situation does provide a useful starting point for the course established and a journey, we hope, already commenced.

The review of the current food situation is a mixed one. While we are pleased to observe an overall improvement in the global supply of most food commodities, particularly the expansion of food production in Africa, we view with some concern the decline in food production in Asia, a continent which is the most populous and also has the largest population of the hungry and the malnourished. The decline in food production in Asia is a very significant one, down to a mere 2.8 percent growth instead of the over 6 percent growth regarded for the previous year. This only goes to show that, despite the somewhat favourable prospects in overall terms, there is no ground for any complacency. It is therefore imperative that the situation of global food production, particularly in Asia, must be closely monitored and, in this regard, FAO must conduct a deep analysis into the causes for the decline in food production in Asia.

Mr Chairman, given the instability and often unreliability of food production in regional, as well as global terms, we would like to stress the importance of replenishment and maintenance of global cereal stocks. Until the required stock levels are reached and certainty of maintaining such levels is ensured, we must continue to seek ways for ensuring increases in food production and global food supply. Similarly, we believe that food aid in cereals must be ensured at, at least, the minimum necessary levels to alleviate situations of serious food deficits faced by many countries, due to reasons really beyond their control. The impact that fluctuations in food production have on international trade in cereals is closely linked with the food security of developing countries, particularly the net food importing countries. It is essential that FAO should keep Member Nations well informed and must regularly report on commodity markets and other relevant developments in

trade. This is an area which must be strengthened so that developing countries are properly advised of implications of developments and trade in agricultural commodities on the domestic food situations.

Mr Chairman, we in Pakistan continue to face a situation of food deficit and suffer from severe pressures on our balance of payments on account of the need to import substantial quantities of wheat. We are continuing our pursuit of increasing production of our staples through increased yields, so as to meet the needs of our population. We trust through better intelligence gained through the excellent work of FAO in this field will enable us to achieve the required improvements in our food situation.

Mohammed MEJBAHUDDIN (Bangladesh): My delegation kindly agrees with the contents of the document CL 112/2. We note with satisfaction the improvement of global production of food crops in 1996 and a positive projection for 1997, but Asia has not been able to perform quite satisfactorily. However, satisfactory global food production will not, by itself, alleviate poverty and food insecurity in LIFDCs. Excess of food is still a major issue that needs careful attention.

Mr Chairman, the decline in price of major cereal and coarse grains will help countries, especially LIFDCs, who have to spend hard and foreign currencies to import foodstuff. It will, somehow, reduce pressure on their balance of payments.

We note with deep concern the tendency of this fall in food aid during the last two years. We believe that it is a national responsibility to ensure food for all in the country but, still, the situation in many LDCs and LIFDCs countries, request concerted international efforts and assistance to help these countries to end the pangs of poverty.

Mr Chairman, we in Bangladesh have also shared some modest improvement in food aid and improved advance in global production in 1996. The annual average growth rate of food grain in our country for the last 24 years has been around 3 percent, which is higher than the rate of population growth of 1.8 percent. Over these years, however, the food import generally ranged between 1.5 to 1.6 million metric tonnes, which has created heavy pressure on our hard and foreign exchange resource. Since a large portion of our population lives below the poverty line, it is a moral obligation of the welfare state to protect these people from starvation in times of high prices, and also to take good care of these people. It is for this purpose that a safety net programme is being followed by the Government, in order to ensure supply of foodstuffs to the very poor and needy.

However, we think FAO can help us in our efforts by helping us in establishing a permanent early warning system which will strengthen the Government in performing its policy analysis and monitoring activities.

George APOSTOIU (Roumanie): C'est pour moi un privilège de pouvoir vous souhaiter la bienvenue et de féliciter les nouveaux vice-présidents de notre session. Je voudrais remercier Monsieur le Président, Monsieur de Haen, pour la présentation du document concernant la situation mondiale de l'alimentation. Etant donné que la présente session du Conseil est convoquée quelques mois avant la Conférence, elle revêt une importance capitale car nous sommes appelés à apporter notre réflexion sur le prochain programme sur la base de propositions formulées par notre Directeur général. Juste après le Sommet mondial de l'alimentation, nous examinons avec toute la mesure que nous imposent les circonstances et, je l'ai déjà constaté après les premières interventions, avec toute la gravité qui doit nous animer tous, la question complexe de la situation mondiale de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture.

Le Directeur général a insisté ce matin dans sa déclaration générale sur les grandes incidences du Sommet et des décisions prises au niveau de nos chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement sur l'activité de

notre Organisation. La délégation de la Roumanie partage entièrement cette approche. Monsieur le Président, dans l'examen réalisé par le Secrétariat sur la situation mondiale de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture, les documents CL 112/2, CL 112/6 et CL 112/15 réservent l'ordre des priorités dans l'accomplissement des tâches définies lors du Sommet: d'abord le développement rural intégré et ensuite la sécurité alimentaire. Les documents traduisent donc assez fidèlement l'esprit des engagements du Plan d'action adopté au Sommet. C'est pourquoi la délégation de la Roumanie apprécie les conclusions du Secrétariat concernant l'évaluation des niveaux de la production vivrière, les disponibilités alimentaires mondiales sensiblement améliorées en 1996-97 par rapport à l'année précédente.

Est-ce le contexte actuel, Monsieur le Président, sans danger pour la sécurité alimentaire? Les pays développés et ceux en développement se posent chacun à leur manière la question. Pour nous tous le Sommet mondial a permis de placer la question de l'agriculture et de la sécurité alimentaire au premier plan des problèmes de développement. La politique de notre Gouvernement vise à assurer un programme de sécurité alimentaire et à réaliser des excédents susceptibles d'aider l'ensemble de l'économie de la Roumanie, même un surplus pour l'exportation. Pour la Roumanie, la restructuration de l'agriculture est subordonnée à trois options: réforme, privatisation, passage rapide accéléré à l'économie de marché. Tout en étant consciente de la responsabilité pour son programme de réformes, la Roumanie considère que la coopération internationale dans le secteur agricole faciliterait l'harmonisation des politiques au bénéfice de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale. Elle permettrait à beaucoup d'Etats, en particulier à ceux qui se proposent d'accélérer les réformes, de profiter d'une plus large diffusion de nouvelles technologies, de l'expérience d'autres pays pour la croissance de leur production agricole.

La FAO, par l'intermédiaire de programmes de coopération technique, a beaucoup aidé dernièrement la Roumanie dans sa politique agricole ou concernant certaines filières de production. S'agissant de la Région, l'Organisation est intervenue dans la préparation de la quatrième session de la Réunion des Ministres de l'agriculture des pays de l'Europe centrale et de l'Est qui s'est tenue à Bucarest au début du mois de mai passé. C'était une occasion excellente pour tous de constater combien nous sommes préoccupés de concentrer nos efforts en matière de politique agricole nationale et d'étudier les modalités pratiques de l'implantation de la FAO dans nos pays respectifs. La délégation de la Roumanie estime que le chemin ouvert mérite nos efforts et notre énergie car, Monsieur le Président, nous pensons que la sécurité alimentaire mondiale ne peut être que confortée par la réactivation du secteur productif des pays de l'Europe centrale et de l'Est.

Gian Paolo PAPA (Communauté européenne): La Communauté européenne et ses états membres ont pris connaissance avec intérêt du document que le Secrétariat FAO a préparé sur ces points de l'ordre du jour. A ce propos, une remarque s'impose en ce qui concerne le contenu et la présentation de ce document. Le Secrétariat de la FAO met l'accent surtout sur la situation de la pénurie alimentaire dans certains pays et en général sur le suivi du Sommet mondial qui fut l'origine par ailleurs d'un autre point à l'ordre du jour. La Communauté européenne et ses états membres tiennent à faire remarquer que, si on fait référence à l'objet de ce point à l'ordre du jour, il faudrait plutôt examiner et analyser la situation en ce qui concerne les principaux produits agricoles. Dans ce cadre, permettez-moi, Monsieur le Président, d'illustrer brièvement la situation actuelle de la conjoncture agricole dans la Communauté européenne.

Cette année était la deuxième depuis la pleine réalisation de la réforme de la politique agricole commune de 1992. En termes généraux, l'amélioration de la situation économique de l'agriculture s'est poursuivie dans la Communauté. La tendance à une différenciation, en fonction du secteur de production, observée au cours des années précédentes s'est encore ressentie au cours de l'année 1996. Dans cette ligne, on peut dire que d'après les premières informations, se profile dans l'ensemble une tendance positive pour les agriculteurs communautaires. On peut s'attendre, pour les revenus agricoles de 1997, à une augmentation dans les secteurs qui ont connu des conditions de marché relativement plus favorables.

En ce qui concerne les principaux produits agricoles, on peut dire que, comparée à celle de l'année précédente, la production céréalière en 1996 a été très importante compte tenu de l'augmentation de la superficie emblavée en céréales, d'une réduction du taux de douze pour cent à dix pour cent, et d'une bonne augmentation des rendements dus en partie aux conditions climatiques.

En ce qui concerne l'utilisation des céréales, on s'attend à une stabilité dans la consommation humaine. Au niveau de l'exportation, on s'attend à ce que les perspectives d'écoulement sur le marché mondial soient meilleures que pour la campagne précédente.

En ce qui concerne les graines oléagineuses, on peut dire que la production globale a légèrement baissé en 1996 à la suite de la chute des productions de graines à usage non alimentaire, même si la production d'autres graines a augmenté de deux millions de tonnes environ atteignant 10,4 millions de tonnes. La production du sucre en 1996, grâce aux pluies d'automne et à des rendements élevés, est placée à un niveau comparable à celui réalisé en 1995. Pour le secteur de la viande bovine, la production a chuté de quelques 4 pour cent, principalement à cause de la crise qui affecte le secteur. En ce qui concerne les autres types de viande, il y a eu, en général, une augmentation de la production et en conséquence, une augmentation de la consommation intérieure et des exportations. Enfin, en ce qui concerne les produits laitiers, qui constituent la branche la plus importante de l'activité agricole dans la Communauté européenne, on devrait atteindre en 1996 le même niveau qu'en 1995, c'est-à-dire environ 121 millions de tonnes. En général, on peut affirmer qu'on s'attend à des perspectives plus favorables sur le marché mondial en considération de la baisse des cours mondiaux et de l'amélioration prévue pour les importations dans les pays à faibles revenus.

Deux facteurs pourraient jouer un rôle fondamental pour l'augmentation de la demande et le niveau des prix: l'augmentation de la population dans certains pays et un meilleur niveau de revenus dans les pays en voie de développement. Suivant certaines projections, on a calculé que entre 1997 et 2005, le produit intérieur brut augmentera plus rapidement que dans le passé. D'ailleurs, avec la décision de Marrakech en faveur des pays en voie de développement les moins avancés, et avec les résultats de la première Conférence ministérielle de l'OMC, un certain nombre d'initiatives concernant l'amélioration de l'accès au marché et la coordination de l'assistance technique ont été adoptées en faveur de ces pays. Enfin, Monsieur le Président, il faut rappeler le résultat d'une réunion informelle, qui a eu lieu au début du mois de mai de cette année à Toronto, entre les responsables du commerce de l'Union européenne, des Etats-Unis, du Japon et du Canada, qui ont confirmé l'appui au programme de l'OMC concernant notamment le projet d'accord sur les services financiers et les progrès sur les nouveaux dossiers comme le commerce et l'investissement. En outre, on a proposé, pour les pays les moins avancés, de mieux les insérer dans le système commercial international.

La Commission européenne a déjà établi un document spécifique à ce sujet en proposant une stratégie à long terme afin d'améliorer l'accès au marché aux pays moins avancés sur la base des pistes suggérées dans le Plan d'action de l'OMC. A ce propos, il faut signaler que le Conseil des Ministres de l'Union européenne a déjà discuté de ces stratégies et va bientôt approuver les conclusions y relatives. C'est dans cette direction qu'on peut s'engager davantage pour contribuer à améliorer l'approvisionnement des pays en développement.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México): Nos complace que a pocos meses de haberse realizado la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación, las perspectivas de la producción de alimentos sean positivos. Observamos, sin embargo que en 1996, en Latinoamérica y el Caribe la tasa de producción ha sido menor a la del bienio anterior. Ello pone de manifiesto la necesidad de incrementar los esfuerzos en nuestra región en esta área. Si bien la disponibilidad resulta un importante elemento en la seguridad alimentaria, no necesariamente constituye el principal. En tal sentido nos hubiera agradado que el documento incluyera un análisis de fondo de otros indicadores de la seguridad, en especial, por lo que respeta aspectos más vinculados con el acceso. En este sentido deseamos enfatizar la necesidad

de que en ese tipo de documentos se otorgue un enfoque integral y de largo plazo de la seguridad alimentaria, enfoque que endosara la Cumbre. Resulta relevante también que se otorgue la importancia debida a la producción de alimentos, tanto de origen animal como pesquero, muy en especial por lo que se refiere al aporte que la acuicultura puede realizar en la seguridad alimentaria.

Para los países importadores netos de alimentos, el comercio constituye un componente necesario. El documento elaborado por la Secretaría describe los significativos aumentos que registraron diferentes cereales durante el último año y que consecuentemente afecta en especial a países en desarrollo. En tal sentido apoyamos lo señalado por nuestro colega de Pakistán para que la FAO mantenga una evaluación cercana de los mercados sobre las variaciones de los precios de los cereales.

Nasreddine RIMOUCHE (Algérie): Je joins d'autant plus volontiers ma voix à toutes celles qui m'ont précédées pour vous exprimer ma sincère satisfaction de vous voir présider notre Conseil, et vous souhaiter plein succès dans la tâche délicate qui est la vôtre. Nos travaux qui porteront sur un ordre du jour particulièrement chargé et aborderont des problèmes d'alimentation et d'agriculture et des problèmes budgétaires, se dérouleront dans un contexte mondial défavorable et inquiétant et dans un climat peu propice aux efforts considérables mais limités, déployés par les pays en développement en vue de lutter contre la faim et la malnutrition. En revanche, la présente Session nous fournit l'occasion d'évaluer ensemble la situation et l'état alimentaire dans le monde et de tirer les engagements qui s'imposent.

D'après les documents qui nous sont soumis sur cette question, il y a lieu de constater qu'à l'échelle mondiale ces dernières années ont connu une progression alimentaire lente particulièrement dans les pays en développement et notamment africains qui ont été encore plus touchés. De tels résultats ne font malheureusement qu'accentuer davantage l'écart qui existait d'une part entre les pays pauvres où 10 millions de personnes, dont certaines d'entre elles continuent à subir les affres de l'insécurité alimentaire n'ayant même plus les moyens de se procurer leur nourriture, et d'autre part, les pays riches qui sont toujours confrontés à des problèmes de surproduction et de stock alimentaire. En effet, alors que ces pays développés continuent de connaître des rythmes de croissance régulièrement élevés, les pays en développement subissent toujours une période de stagnation voire de régression, exception faite pour un nombre très limité de pays. La production vivrière d'après les documents a progressé faiblement dans les pays en développement puisqu'elle a été en deçà de l'objectif et n'a atteint que 2,7 pour cent. De même, les exportations alimentaires et agricoles des pays en développement restent en deçà des attentes et des espérances malgré l'augmentation de la production d'aliments de base, tout en restant supérieures à la croissance démographique en 1996, tel qu'indiqué dans le paragraphe 5 du document CL 112/2 et notamment en ce qui concerne le niveau des stocks dans les pays en développement pour la période actuelle qui reste inférieur, ainsi que les prix sur les marchés internationaux qui n'ont pas connu une baisse notable.

A cet effet, il faut reconnaître que les pays en développement continuent de rencontrer beaucoup de difficultés liées aux dégradations de leur capacité de financement ou des conditions naturelles et a également accédé aux marchés internationaux. A cet effet, les actions suivantes nous paraissent impérieuses:

1. favoriser un système commercial international ouvert transparent, réglementé et non discriminatoire;
2. concevoir des arrangements spécifiques en vue de réévaluer à leurs justes mesures les prix de produits de base.

La production et l'exportation de produits alimentaires notamment de base continue d'être d'une importance vitale pour beaucoup de pays en développement. Cependant, l'un des aspects les plus préoccupants sont les difficultés économiques de ces pays dont la majorité est tributaire des

importations de produits agricoles. La situation de ces pays s'est aggravée à cause de la lourde facture alimentaire. Une assistance à ces pays s'avère nécessaire notamment dans le cadre de la décision ministérielle de Marrakech; je fais référence ici au document CL 112/6 et plus particulièrement au paragraphe 9 et ainsi qu'au document CL 112/15 paragraphes 25 et 26. Il faut signaler également que la situation alimentaire dans les pays à faible revenu et à déficit vivrier notamment africain ira en se dégradant.

Mon pays, l'Algérie, a entrepris aujourd'hui la mise en oeuvre d'un programme de réforme de grande envergure. A cet effet, en perspective d'un développement agricole se situant dans une stratégie à long terme, l'Algérie a élaboré un projet revêtant un certain nombre d'objectifs technico-économiques en passant par l'accroissement de la production agricole à un taux supérieur à celui de la démographie avec des incidences sur la balance commerciale.

En conclusion, la délégation algérienne souhaiterait communiquer quelques informations sur la situation de certains produits dans mon pays. Pour ce qui est de la céréaliculture, ce secteur jouit d'une position stratégique dans l'économie agricole aux regards notamment des surfaces qui lui sont consacrées, de l'emploi qui lui est lié et de sa contribution à l'équilibre économique dans certaines régions. Conduite quasiment à sec, la céréaliculture dépend essentiellement des conditions climatiques. Près de 70 pour cent des surfaces autour de 3 millions d'hectares sont localisés dans les zones à pluviométrie inférieure au seuil de production. Pour ces raisons, la production moyenne de céréales reste faible et se situe autour de 18 millions de quintaux ne couvrant que 25 pour cent des besoins nationaux. Aussi, le programme de développement envisagé vise les objectifs suivants:

- la sécurité d'une production de semences de qualité,
- la concentration des efforts pour l'intensification de la production au niveau des zones potentielles avec 1,2 millions d'hectares en pluviométrie supérieure à 450 millimètres/an pour valoriser au mieux les technologies de production performantes;
- la recherche d'un équilibre céréaliculture élevage au niveau des zones de production par le développement d'un système fourrager où la céréaliculture sera moins pénalisée;
- le redéploiement de l'encadrement technique disponible au niveau des Chambres de l'agriculture et des instituts techniques sur le terrain en vue d'apporter l'appui technique nécessaire aux céréaliculteurs;
- la mise en place de sites de démonstration sur les zones représentatives de la céréaliculture et plus accessibles pour un plus grand nombre d'agriculteurs.

En ce qui concerne les cultures légumières, le maraîchage occupe une superficie de 300 000 hectares environ pour une production de près de 3,5 millions de tonnes. Les zones littorales et sublittorales recèlent de grandes capacités de production susceptibles de contribuer à l'augmentation de nos exportations en hydrocarbure. Parmi les produits de base, la pomme de terre qui revêt un caractère stratégique de par sa place dans notre alimentation, les surfaces qui lui sont consacrées, l'emploi qu'elle procure et le volume de production qu'elle assure. L'augmentation des surfaces mises en production de 30 000 hectares en 1965 qui est passée à 80 000 hectares en 1995 ne s'est pas accompagnée d'une intensification alors que les réserves de productivité sont importantes. Les rendements sont néanmoins passés de 11 tonnes/hectare à 15 tonnes/hectare au cours des cinq dernières années plaçant ainsi l'Algérie juste au niveau de la moyenne mondiale.

Pour ce qui est de l'agrumiculture la production nationale n'a cessé de régresser au cours des 20 dernières années passant ainsi de 400 000 tonnes en 1974 à 296 000 tonnes en 1996.

Pour ce qui est de l'oléiculture qui représente l'espèce fruitière la plus importante avec une superficie de 191 500 hectares et dont plus de 90 pour cent donc 175 000 hectares sont situés dans les zones montagneuses. Il est important de signaler que l'huile d'olive est la seule huile végétale produite en Algérie. La production nationale moyenne est de 19 000 tonnes/métriques par an représentant moins de 5 pour cent des besoins nationaux de consommation qui sont estimés à 420 000 tonnes/métriques par an d'huiles et graisses végétales dont 95 pour cent sont importés.

Sur ces chiffres je conclus mon intervention et je vous remercie Monsieur le Président.

Adel Mahmoud ABOUL-NAGA (Egypt) (Original language Arabic): I would like to begin, Sir, by expressing our satisfaction at seeing you in the Chair of the Council Session because we very much appreciate your wisdom. I would also like to congratulate the other officers who have just been elected, in particular, my friend Rimouche. We shall certainly miss him at future sessions of the Council.

As you know, the report on the *World Food Situation* was discussed in the Committee on Commodity Problems and also in the Committee on Food Security. In addition to the information given to us in document CL 112/2 and by Mr de Haen this morning, we would like to express our satisfaction at the positive trend noted in the estimates of world food production, in particular, grains and world stocks and also the effect that this has had on world prices which are now coming back to levels which are more acceptable after an acute increase in 1996. These increases had a very bad effect on my country and also on a number of low income net food importing countries. As it says in the report, developing countries import 85 percent of all world grain imports. Thus, these countries are very vulnerable to any changes or fluctuations in prices. Here, I would like to mention one or two points to which my country attaches particular importance and which we consider is having serious effects on world food security.

First of all, we must ensure that we do not cut back on world food aid because such a step could have a very negative effect on the situations of Low-Income, Food-Deficit Countries, especially those in Sub-Saharan. We would also try to keep activities in development programmes at their present level, those directed at the poorest of the developing countries, since they badly need food for welfare programmes in order to promote development activities.

Secondly, my country would like to express its satisfaction at the first steps undertaken to decide food aid commitments and pledges in favour of the least developed and net food importing countries, as a result of the Marrakech and Singapore decisions and the commitments from the World Food Summit. We do hope that in a few months time we will be able to come to a decision and that these decisions will be faithfully and totally implemented.

Thirdly, we note that the level of protectionism in certain industrialized countries remains rather high and this restricts access to market for the commodities of some developing countries and this in turn, restricts developing countries' possibilities of financing adequately their imports of other products and commodities.

I hope that these points will all be taken into account in the recommendations reached by our Council. A large number of developing countries agree with what I have said, as I understand from what I have already heard this morning.

Tang ZHENGPING (China) (Original language Chinese): I am very happy to see you directing us in our work this morning. The Chinese delegation would also like to thank the Secretariat for the excellent document provided by the Secretariat.

Mr de Haen has given us the latest information and we are very happy to note that in 1996 the world production of the major grains and oil crops has increased remarkably which has served to

improve the world food supply situation and led to lower prices. Total grain carry over stocks might even for the first time show an increase, for the first time in four years. This equilibrium in the world food security situation does, nevertheless, remain.

Certain Asian and African countries are still facing a food deficit situation. World stocks of grains, cereals remain below the security threshold set by the FAO and food aid to developing countries is steadily being reduced, reaching only half the level of four years ago in respect of cereals. Thus, countries are having to make efforts in order to honour their commitments to the undertaken Plan of Action which was adopted at the World Food Summit.

On the one hand, we need to increase national agricultural production and, secondly, strengthen international cooperation so as to obtain a net and significant improvement in the world food situation. Last year food production in China reached 490 million tonnes which contributed to relieve the tension that existed in food supplies.

We are basing ourselves on past experience in order to push ahead with agricultural reform and thus, increase the effective availability of food, thus, hoping usefully to contribute to improving food security situation in the world. Therefore, we are also therefore of the opinion that countries should take their specific characteristics into account in order to increase agricultural investment, strengthen infrastructure and spread advanced science and technology. We must also promote trade and exchanges where there are no bilateral or multilateral levels and, guarantee and increase technical and food aid to Low-Income Food-Deficit Countries.

Consequently, every means must be used to increase local productivity and also to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of aid. We hope that the world food security situation in these countries will improve rapidly. Thus we could effectively contribute to improving food security throughout the world.

Moussa Bocar LY (Sénégal): Monsieur le Président, nous soulignons avec tout le monde, pour s'en réjouir, l'augmentation sensible de la production vivrière en Afrique en 1996. Mais cela démontre également la faiblesse de nos outils d'analyse, parce que c'est peut-être là un tableau simplement général du continent. Les instruments à notre disposition. Monsieur le Président, ne permettent malheureusement pas, pour l'heure du moins, de relever le défi que nous lance le Sommet mondial de l'alimentation.

Je m'explique: donc on dit que les tendances récentes sont encourageantes, mais c'est que l'ampleur des problèmes encore à résoudre est immense. Le Représentant du Japon l'a dit, nous avons à relever le défi d'améliorer la sécurité alimentaire dans le monde. Il se trouve que nous devons d'abord et avant tout nous tourner vers les pays à faible revenu et à déficit vivrier. Or, le document nous dit bien que 26 pays connaissent des pénuries alimentaires. 26 pays à faible revenu et à déficit vivrier dont 14 se trouvent en Afrique et 10 en Asie, et, dans sa présentation révisée. Monsieur de Haen nous dit que le nombre a atteint d'ailleurs 29 pays. Est-ce que l'on doit être satisfait quand on sait que ce si grand nombre de pays et de populations continue à connaître une situation critique et instable?

Un instrument d'analyse qui aurait pu permettre de repérer ces zones d'ombre aurait été constitué par le système de cartographie et d'information dont la FAO a initié l'examen. Malheureusement cette réunion d'experts n'a pu dégager des critères simples pour permettre de commencer ce travail. Nous nous trouvons donc actuellement, presque à un an du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation, sans instrument valable pour cibler les régions et les populations dans le monde qui connaissent une situation alimentaire critique.

Comment pouvons-nous alors, au tournant de notre monde, c'est-à-dire 2015 (c'est déjà à la porte), mesurer le nombre de populations qui souffrent encore de la sous-alimentation et de la malnutrition

pour dire que nous avons réalisé l'objectif fixé par nos Chefs d'Etats et de gouvernements de réduire au moins de moitié le nombre de sous-alimentés dans le monde d'ici 2015? C'est cette situation étrange d'incapacité qui continue à nous animer. Une deuxième raison de l'insuffisance de nos instruments d'analyse est constituée par le fait qu'en Afrique, avec un effort des gouvernements et surtout des populations pauvres nous avons pu connaître en 1996 une moyenne de croissance du PIB d'environ 4 pour cent. Et pourtant c'est notre continent qui connaît le plus de populations encore sous-alimentées. Alors il y a là comme un malheur qui nous poursuit et la FAO devrait pouvoir nous donner des pistes d'analyse pour voir pourquoi, malgré l'effort engagé par les gouvernements et les populations, qui a permis d'atteindre ces taux de croissance qui dépassent, et là je crois que l'Afrique doit relever la tête, le taux de croissance de la population qui est d'environ 2,8 pour cent, la situation perdure.

Donc, malgré le taux de croissance du PIB qui dépasse le taux de croissance de la démographie, comment se fait-il que l'Afrique ne puisse pas encore s'en sortir? Je crois que là, cela montre les insuffisances des outils d'analyse qui sont à notre disposition sur le plan international, la FAO constituant un des agents sur le plan international. De même la situation n'est pas si rose, comme on voudrait nous le faire croire, car les stocks mondiaux de céréales, bien qu'en augmentation, restent encore en dessous du seuil de sécurité fixé par la FAO. De même, comme l'a si bien dit le Représentant de l'Algérie, nous sommes pris à la gorge par les prix élevés des importations qui font que les dépenses d'importations des pays à faible revenu et à déficit vivrier ne cessent de devenir lourdes pour leur économie.

De même nous avons enfin noté, M. le Président, la baisse des expéditions d'aide alimentaire, or on sait la situation d'urgence que connaît la partie sub-saharienne de notre continent, et surtout la partie orientale et australe de l'Afrique. C'est pourquoi nous pensons que le programme spécial vient vraiment, à son heure, et, au Sénégal, nous aurons l'occasion d'y revenir dans un autre point de l'ordre du jour, les organisations paysannes sont maîtresses d'oeuvre de ce programme, et nous collaborons avec des experts d'autres pays en voie de développement; la République du Vietnam ici devrait être remerciée pour son apport sur ce plan au programme spécial du Sénégal. De même sur le plan national notre pays a fait de 1997 l'année de la relance de la production agricole avec un programme centré sur l'amélioration du crédit, l'approvisionnement des agriculteurs en facteurs de production et l'amélioration de la fertilité des terres, le programme spécial ne fait-il pas d'ailleurs large place à l'eau, source de vie et d'espoir pour demain ?

M. le Président, je voudrais finir, nous aurons l'occasion de revenir sur d'autres points de l'ordre du jour plus en détail sur ces questions d'importance, mais laissez-nous simplement dire que nous voyons un lien dans l'examen de toutes ces questions avec le programme de travail et budget.

En effet comment expliquer à nos populations dans les régions les plus reculées, que malgré la réunion au plus haut sommet des Chefs d'Etats et de gouvernements ici en novembre à Rome, voilà que le premier budget adopté après ce Sommet est en baisse, qu'elle soit nominale ou réelle du reste, et je crois qu'il faut être aussi réaliste, car l'on veut un budget à croissance nominale zéro et on nous dit qu'il ne faudrait pas tout de même toucher aux activités normatives.

Est-ce que l'on devrait dire alors que les pays en voie de développement doivent être pénalisés parce que bénéficiaires essentiels des programmes techniques. Nous voyons là que nous ne nous orientons pas vers l'accomplissement de nos tâches, pourtant exaltantes, fixées par les Chefs d'Etats et de gouvernements, et que Sa Sainteté le pape Jean-Paul II, qui se trouve actuellement sur sa terre natale, a soulevé dans le cadre de l'examen de la question importante qu'est le problème de la liberté. Il a dit qu'il n'y a pas de liberté sans lutte contre la faim dans le monde, et que, dans le cadre de notre monde d'aujourd'hui, qui connaît une technologie avancée, comment peut-on comprendre que le monde soit si insensible à la situation de la faim et de la malnutrition dans le monde. Cette voix autorisée devrait pouvoir nous faire réfléchir et nous faire dire que nous sommes

en train d'emprunter la mauvaise piste. Le Sommet mondial de l'alimentation a lancé un défi que nous devons relever et nous devons être dignes de notre humanité. Je vous remercie.

Juan NUIRY SANCHEZ (Cuba): No vamos a repetir ni polemizar ni caer en palabras vacías, ni responder argumentos, clichés que todos conocen y por tanto seré muy breve y si puedo, elegante.

Cuba es libre, independiente y soberana para determinar su forma de gobierno, que por otro lado no es tema de este evento. Nosotros seríamos incapaces de cuestionar el sistema político y de gobierno de los Estados Unidos y menos aplicarle un bloqueo. La Cumbre aprobó no utilizar los alimentos como arma política; señor Presidente, nos remitimos a la sensibilidad humana, reiterando ese gran derecho a la alimentación de niños, mujeres y ancianos, esto con todo perdón es inhumano. En fin, señor Presidente, distinguidos colegas, mantengo lo expresado con firmeza, lo demás, lo dejo a las conciencias. Finalmente expreso al muy distinguido representante de los Estados Unidos, que la historia dirá la última palabra.

Roberto O. VILLAMBROSA (Argentina): Señor Presidente, permítame en primer lugar expresarle la satisfacción de mi delegación por verlo a usted nuevamente presidir este Consejo de la FAO que tiene importantes decisiones que tomar y en el que estamos todos comprometidos. Quiero felicitar a los Vicepresidentes que han sido elegidos de las otras regiones, tanto el distinguido Representante de Argelia como de Rumania y agradecerle a la Sala la confianza que ha depositado en mi persona y en mi país para la Vicepresidencia de esta reunión.

Quiero hacer una evaluación de lo que es la situación del mercado mundial de granos que creo ya la hemos realizado en el Grupo Intergubernamental sobre Granos, pero que no está demás, hacer referencia a una serie de cuestiones de índole técnica que inciden en la consideración del punto 4 de la Orden del Día.

Las proyecciones de producción realizadas por el Departamento de Agricultura de los Estados Unidos y por el Consejo Internacional de Granos que suponen condiciones climáticas normales durante el desarrollo del cultivo, previeron el aumento de las producciones de trigo para la próxima campaña y, esto se confirmó, con un crecimiento de la producción de un 8 por ciento superior al registrado en la campaña precedente y llegó a 579, 1 millones de toneladas, lo que representa un incremento del 6 por ciento. Desagregando la producción por países, el incremento es de alrededor del 19 por ciento para la mayoría de los países exportadores, como por ejemplo Canadá, Australia, la Unión Europea y Argentina, mi propio país. Las estimaciones de producción de Estados Unidos que preveían una cosecha difícil por daño climático, han variado en su tendencia y el incremento será de un 5 por ciento, lo mismo que la producción de China, que es superior con respecto al período 95/96. Se espera también la recuperación de la producción en los países del este europeo. Se han confirmado entonces las previsiones del Consejo Internacional de Granos, que coinciden con el Departamento de Agricultura de Estados Unidos, en que el mayor incremento se dio en las cosechas de la Unión Europea, Argentina, Canadá y Australia.

Las perspectivas para el período actual 1997 en cuanto a consumo, son ascendentes aunque existen algunas diferencias en las estimaciones dadas. Las estimaciones del Departamento de Agricultura de los Estados Unidos son de 571,5 millones de toneladas y el Consejo Internacional de Granos estima que son 563 millones de toneladas, lo que representa un incremento de sólo un 1 por ciento. Existirá un aumento del consumo en la Unión Europea y, otra de las buenas noticias es el incremento de la producción en muchos países de Africa, que ha sido ya explicitado por muchos de los delegados y creo que ha sido un elemento importante y que contribuye a la seguridad alimentaria.

El Consejo Internacional de Granos que por otra parte, todos sabemos que se reunirá poco después de nuestro Consejo en Londres, evalúa que el efecto del incremento de los precios mundiales será muy limitado sobre el consumo y, esta falta de impacto obedece primero, a que muchos países

dependen para cubrir sus necesidades de la producción nacional de trigo, segundo, que los alimentos alternativos como el arroz y el maíz blanco también han alcanzado buenos precios y, tercero, que muchos países en vías de desarrollo siguen consiguiendo subvenciones al consumo y que los gobiernos dan prioridad a la financiación de importaciones por ser un elemento básico. Las importaciones mundiales, teniendo en cuenta el comercio intracomunitario, disminuirán en aproximadamente 7 millones de toneladas y esta disminución de demanda se sustenta en la baja de las compras del mercado internacional por parte de China, lo que representa una caída de los precios de importación. La caída de los precios mundiales a lo largo de los últimos meses, ha renovado el interés por el trigo forrajero y existen varios países de Asia que están comprando este tipo de calidad de trigo.

Cuando hablamos del tema "stocks", creo que es importante la aclaración que hizo el delegado de Estados Unidos respecto a las previsiones realizadas entre la FAO y el Departamento de Agricultura de Estados Unidos. Los departamentos técnicos del Ministerio de Agricultura de mi país, han realizado estimaciones que son coincidentes con el Departamento de Agricultura de los Estados Unidos con respecto a la relación de stocks. Pero al mismo tiempo, hay otro elemento que analizamos en la reunión del Grupo Intergubernamental sobre Cereales que me parece de mayor importancia, y es la actualidad de los documentos y las informaciones con que nosotros trabajamos y la forma en que los disponemos en el marco de la FAO. Lo que quiero destacar, con respecto a la volatilidad del mercado, es que es cierto que lo que tenemos que lograr es una mayor estabilidad del mercado y de los precios para lograr que existan condiciones de predictibilidad en el mercado, pero al mismo tiempo, en la medida en que nosotros analizamos muchos documentos que tienen características históricas, y tengo aquí el informe sobre indicadores de mercados del 28 de mayo -de hace 4 días- vemos como el mercado va respondiendo a las distintas tendencias y a las distintas condiciones climáticas que se presentan.

Voy a dar un par de ejemplos: los precios de exportación para el trigo de Argentina en Bahía eran al 27 de mayo -hace 5 días- 165 dólares la tonelada, al 20 de mayo eran 176 dólares la tonelada, es decir que actualmente, esta semana, han bajado los precios; hace un año eran de 208 dólares por tonelada. En todos los mercados, tanto Australia, Canadá como Estados Unidos, así como también en los mercados de la Unión Europea ha pasado lo mismo. Ha habido una marcada y drástica reducción de los precios pero en función de condiciones del mercado, que se refieren a cuestiones climáticas, porque el informe de los indicadores del mercado del Consejo Internacional de Granos, nos habla que los precios han bajado como consecuencia de la mejora de las condiciones climáticas, en particular en Estados Unidos, y por las lluvias beneficiosas producidas en ciertos sectores de Australia que mejoraron las condiciones de la cosecha. Entonces, para hablar de lo que ocurre en el mercado, hay que tener muy en cuenta la evolución del propio mercado, es decir, como debemos seguir en cada uno de los pasos, la evolución del mercado; esto también es un elemento que contribuye a la predicción y a la seguridad alimentaria. No nos tenemos que remontar a varios años anteriores porque lo único que hacemos es concentrarnos en debates de índole académica y lo que queremos aquí es mejorar las condiciones de la alimentación en el mundo.

Quiero resaltar que estamos comprometidos a que la FAO impulse la producción agrícola en los países en vías de desarrollo y, en particular, en los países con déficit de alimentos y, estamos también comprometidos, a que las medidas tomadas en el marco de la Ronda Uruguay verdaderamente se implementen para solucionar los problemas del hambre en estos países y, quiero hacer ahora un par de comentarios con relación a la utilización racional de los recursos renovables y a la producción del medio ambiente.

Existen sobradas muestras a nivel internacional, de que las distorsiones del mercado provocadas por subsidios a la producción, subvenciones y otras prácticas inducen a precios internacionales de granos que disminuyen, pero que a su vez, se proyectan al interior de las producciones nacionales, y esta baja artificial de los precios, fuerza a los productores de algunos países a adoptar prácticas perjudiciales para el medio ambiente, como la explotación excesiva de la tierra, el abandono de los

métodos de rotación de cultivos y la utilización de tierras marginales que no son conducentes a la producción. Creemos que en la situación en que se encuentra la agricultura mundial, y compartimos en esto el análisis que hizo Canadá, se permiten abrigar esperanzas hacia una tendencia positiva en las secciones llevadas a cabo para alinear los resultados de la Ronda Uruguay, en el marco de la política agrícola común y, al mismo tiempo, la aplicación de la Ley Federal de Reforma Agrícola sancionada en tiempo reciente en Estados Unidos. Todos estos elementos convergentes sustentan un escenario de progresiva liberalización del comercio agrícola y que van a contribuir a mejorar la situación de la seguridad alimentaria en el mundo.

Quiero con esto, señor Presidente, también destacar un elemento de producción en mi país, con cosechas récord como consecuencia de la respuesta de los productores al incentivo de los precios y que ha mejorado también la situación de seguridad alimentaria.

EL PRESIDENTE: Gracias señor Vicepresidente Villambrosa por esta información, que desde luego es muy útil al Consejo, y estoy seguro que el doctor de Haen explicará también la forma en que la FAO recoge información, la utiliza, la procesa y la presenta.

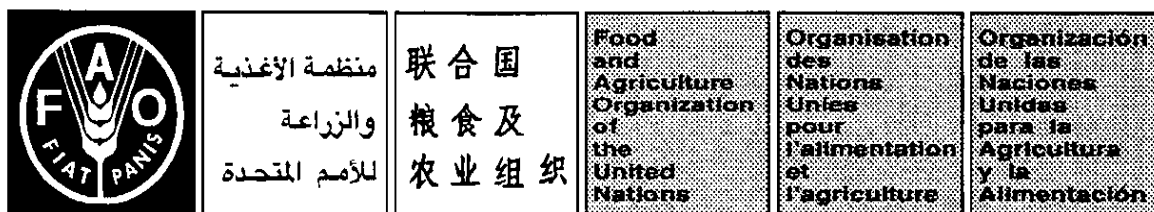
Bien señores delegados, es tarde ya. Vamos a levantar la sesión. Queda todavía en mi lista varios delegados: Tailandia, Uganda, Mauricio, Australia y Estonia, más los observadores que desean hacer uso de la palabra. Les convoco para estar puntualmente a las **14:30** horas y levantamos esta primera sesión.

The meeting rose at 13.20 hours

La séance est levée à 13 h 20

Se levanta la sesión a las 13.20 horas

2 June 1997



COUNCIL

CONSEIL

CONSEJO

Hundred and Twelfth Session • Cent douzième session • 112° período de sesiones

SECOND PLENARY MEETING
DEUXIEME SEANCE PLENIERE
SEGUNDA SESION PLENARIA

2 June 1997

The Second Plenary Meeting was opened at 15.50 hours
Mr. José Ramón López Portillo,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding

La deuxième séance plénière est ouverte à 15 h 50
sous la présidence de M. José Ramón López Portillo,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la segunda sesión plenaria a las 15.50 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. José Ramón López Portillo,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

- II WORLD FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SITUATION** (continued)
- II SITUATION MONDIALE DE L'ALIMENTATION ET DE L'AGRICULTURE** (suite)
- II SITUACION MUNDIAL DE LA AGRICULTURA Y LA ALIMENTACION** (continuación)
- 4 Current World Food Situation** (continued)
- 4 Situation mondiale de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture** (suite)
- 4 Situación actual de la alimentación en el mundo** (continuación)

EL PRESIDENTE: Señoras y señores, se abre la segunda sesión de este período de sesiones. Tenemos todavía una lista de cinco oradores para el Tema 4. El distinguido delegado de Estonia me ha pedido intervenir lo más pronto posible, en virtud de que tiene un compromiso inmediato y por tanto si me lo permiten los otros oradores le voy a dar la palabra al distinguido delegado de Estonia.

Ruve SANK (Estonia): Estonia is a small country and a very small contributor to the world food situation. We appreciate very much the increase in the world food production. We should, on looking backward and evaluating the situation in the world food production, take into account a few things regarding Europe, and Eastern Europe especially.

I am talking about the Council Report regarding the current world food situation on page 2. There is an interesting breakdown about world food production. We see that in very few parts of the world there has been a decrease of food production and the decrease is very modest. Somehow, hidden behind the figures reflected here is the situation in Eastern and Central Europe. In some parts of Central and Eastern European countries the decrease in food production has been, during the past five to six years, up to 40 percent of their 1991 level.

It is questionable whether we should continue to count food production in the geographical terms given here, counting the area of former Soviet Union. This state has not existed since a couple of years. In this regard, it is our opinion, that it is important to evaluate the resource of food production and besides other natural resources such as water and soil ability for plant growth, social resources should also be evaluated. We think that especially in Eastern Europe and among others, also in Estonia, there is a resource available for potential use for the future. This might be a subject in connection with other items on the Agenda and especially in regard to possible TCP projects.

Ms Kajonwan ITHARATTANA (Thailand): On behalf of the Thai delegation I would like to congratulate the Secretariat for the introductory statement, as well as the concise and substantial document relating to the current world food situation. In general, my delegation is very pleased with the increase of global food production in 1996 compared to 1995. We are so grateful to the African region for the expansion in food production in 1996. Now, let me highlight on the rice situation in Thailand.

Rice is the most common staple food in Asian countries. Therefore, rice is vital to our Asian countries in terms of producing, trading and stocking. Rice production in Thailand in 1996-97 slightly decreased from the previous year. It was estimated that 3.5 percent lower than 1995-96 level, which is of 21.3 million tonnes of paddy. The decline mainly came from the second rice crop due to drought and acreage reduction policy. On the contrary the production of the main rice crop increased slightly, however with this trend, we can ensure that Thailand will remain the reliable source to supply rice to the world market.

Thailand believes that the importance of agricultural export earnings of developing countries will definitely improve their food security, thus, the increase of global rice production is the response to the world rice market. In short, trade and food security is one of the commitments that was addressed by the World Food Summit.

Kezimbira Lawrence MIYINGO (Uganda): The Uganda delegation would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you, and the other officials elected, to steer the business of this Council. Uganda notes with satisfaction, the great concern that FAO has shown by focusing on food security consistently since the initiation of the process that led the World Food Summit. It is our sincere hope that this week, as we hold the 112th Session of Council, the discussions so far done, and the recommendations so far suggested, can be operationalized attaching reasonable budgetary provision for implementation.

While the developed countries are self-sufficient, and may need little stimulation, the developing world, especially the low-income, food deficit countries, need a lot of stimulation to get them to produce to self-sufficiency and eventually to realize surpluses for sale.

In Africa, Uganda is one of the countries which is not food-deficit, yet the prevailing changes in environment have started to worry us. As we review the world food security, Uganda wishes to appeal to FAO and the international community, to focus more objectively on the following:

The adoption of irrigation in all countries so that rainfed agriculture is not the only answer to food security. Uganda is well endowed with water bodies which include Lake Victoria and the great River Nile, yet, we get disorganized by one or two months of sunshine, losing thousands of acres of immature crops. A Special Programme on Food Security, which has a component of irrigation, should be extended to all Member Nations in Africa without discrimination.

Diseases threatening the achievement of food security, which include cassava mosaic disease, should be combatted and be focused on. Cassava is a food reserve for most African countries, often not requiring granaries. Its destruction poses a great threat to food security. Uganda like many other African states, is threatened because even the tolerant varieties are now succumbing to the infection. There is need therefore that intense research and focus be directed to cassava mosaics disease, either in adopting varieties that are more resistant or adopting alternative crops.

Uganda draws the attention of Council to a problem that has occurred with coffee. Coffee is not strictly a food commodity but it contributes greatly to food security in that many communities in Africa achieve food security through money that they obtain from the sale of coffee. A fungal coffee disease, commonly referred to as coffee wilt disease is threatening the coffee industry in Africa and could greatly affect the food security if not checked.

Since FAO has a budget for transboundary diseases for both livestock and crops. I appeal to this Council, to consider as an emergency coffee wilt disease and bring it to an end.

Back home, the Government has made deliberate efforts to transform the mainly small scale subsistence agriculture to a small scale modernized agriculture. We are determined to be self-sufficient and yet, be able to feed any food- deficit areas within the Great Lake Region. We, in Uganda, welcome the new environment now ushered into the Democratic Republic of Congo which widens our common market and therefore, is a stimulus to our people for more production. Peaceful coexistence between our sister states in the region will ensure good environment for production. As African states become more homonized food security will be enhanced. We anticipate solidarity from the developed nations.

Suresh Chundre SEEBALLUCK (Mauritius): The document under consideration provides very valuable statistics which I am sure will give us all food for thought. My delegation accordingly wishes to commend the Secretariat for this document.

This document highlights the recovery in food production at global level during the last year. This is especially so in Africa where the problem of food shortage is quite rampant. However the paper

also brings out many disturbing features. Firstly, the expected stock build-up of food with focus in only a few countries. There would be no change in the volume of stocks held by the developing countries.

Secondly, the developing countries account for nearly three-fourths of the world import of cereals compared to less than half 15 years ago.

Thirdly, in many cases, the increase in food production has taken place as a result of factors which are uncertain. For example, the increase in fish production has taken place *inter alia* as a result of the expansion of the highly fluctuating stocks. In other cases, increased production has been achieved as a result of favourable climatic conditions which do not occur year after year. But most of all, this paper draws attention to a deduction in food aid, especially to the low-income, food deficit countries, despite increase in the global food production. It is, therefore, essential that these issues be addressed.

FAO should strengthen its efforts to ensure that food production increase takes place all around the world and in a sustainable environment. But for FAO to do so, it must be provided with the necessary means. The proposal for a real growth over the Programme of Work and Budget of the FAO for 1996-97, as the Director-General has pointed out this morning, will only bring about a substantially reduced programme of FAO activities. It is important that the present momentum of growth in food production be maintained.

Andrew PEARSON (Australia): Sustainable domestic agricultural production is recognized as a contributor to the capacity of countries to feed their populations. However, this does not correspond to a blue-print for self-sufficiency. Rather improvements in food security will flow from a combination of actions, particularly promotion of improvements in supply, demand and distribution. This is better characterized as self-reliance. Historically, management of markets, whether domestically or internationally, has led to distortions and problems.

FAO's current assessment of the world food situation introduces some concerns in this respect. In paragraph 33 of CL 112/2, there appears to be an implicit call for increased concessional export arrangements. Australia suggests that subsidization of exports, particularly of grains, has created more problems than it has solved. The accurate transmission of prices to producers is an important element in encouraging production. The current strong production response in many countries, including Australia, following previous high grain prices, should only be further encouragement for the removal of such distortions. Like many other countries noted in their interventions this morning, Australia remains committed to further encouragement of food security through open and effective trade.

In paragraph 17 of the same document, the use of the FAO ratio for stocks to trend utilization, as an accurate indicator of the world's food security, has also been a subject of considerable debate at various technical meetings. While we would not wish to take up that debate here, Australia would observe that livestock holdings do not necessarily provide insurance against food shortages and price stability. In fact, the accumulation and subsequent release of substantial stocks onto world markets has created periods of considerable price instability and interference to production.

Finally, in considering food aid, Australia would certainly agree on the importance of food aid. However, its role is not to provide sustainable food security. While food aid has been declining, and this reflects a range of pressures on donor countries, these donor countries have also been endeavouring to ensure available resources are directed towards the most needy people in the most needy countries. For example, for the World Food Programme such targeting is expected this year to result in 90 percent of its emergency and development resources being directed towards least developed and Low-Income, Food-Deficit Countries.

Constatin Mihail GRIGORIE (Romania): I would like to add to the statement presented by my delegation during the morning session, with reference to the situation of food and agriculture at global level, a series of elements defining the official position of my Government on agriculture reform in Romania.

In the current international context when world food production, according to FAO document CL 112/2, is recording a positive development while there are still regions experiencing food insufficiency, we consider that through the new governmental policies Romania will be able to benefit from its high agricultural potential and will become again a major agricultural producer and food supplier.

The rich soils and favourable climatic conditions assist in the growing of a variety of products suited to various temperatures: vegetable products, mainly cereals, approximately one-third of the gross agriculture output; vegetables, approximately one-third of gross agriculture output; fruits, grapes and others.

The resources of animal feed create the basis to support the livestock industry. Animal production consists largely of meat and milk.

The agriculture sector contributes with 20 percent of the Gross Domestic Product, and 35 percent of the total active population works in agriculture.

Romania has over 14 million hectares of agricultural land, of which 9.5 million hectares are given over to arable land, 4.5 million hectares to pasture land, 0.3 million to vineyards and 0.3 million to orchards.

As a result of the land reform, private farms now own over 80 percent of the agricultural land and 70 percent of the arable land. The present private agricultural structure is: family agricultural exploitation on approximately 5 million hectares; family associations own approximately 1.4 million hectares; and legal agricultural companies own 1.7 million hectares. The main difficulties of this sector lie in the age structure and the level and capacity of the land owners to use the production means.

The newly formed programme implies favourable conditions for the development of a dynamic private agricultural sector integrated in the mechanism of the market economy, privatization of productive accessory agriculture, efficient use of resources and encouragement of private investments and trade.

To ensure food security, to develop a sustainable agriculture able to produce an economic surplus, to create an agriculture competition-wise environment, to dimension production and be structured in accordance with domestic and foreign demand are some of the main objectives of our policy. The achievement of these objectives will be considered under an integrated and ideally favourable rural development framework.

The main elements of the Government's programme for the agricultural sector are: reform of pricing, trade and subsidies regime for agricultural producers and the agri-food industry. This measure was accompanied by the termination of all premier subsidies and reform of the trade regime. Import tariffs were substantially lowered and export bans and other export restrictions were permanently removed. A rural financial system was developed, adapted to a market-orientated agricultural system. The State ceased to grant direct subsidies credit.

The new land legislation will ensure free land sales by individuals and the lower restitutions or sale of land owned by state farms.

Regarding institutional and infrastructure reforms in the cereals sub-sector, the Government's role in the cereals market will be substantially reduced through privatization of the National Agency for Agricultural Products.

There will be acceleration of existing privatization process and development of liquidation procedures for non-viable enterprises. The reform covers state farms, state-owned agricultural services, input enterprises, and pig and poultry enterprises. We appreciate that by mid-1998 all the commercial companies currently in the process of privatization will be privatized.

Before concluding my intervention, I would like to underline that bearing in mind the above-mentioned elements of the agricultural sector, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food will continue to change its role and will enable, by appropriate and efficient strategies, the development of a market-orientated agriculture. Its activities will be focused on agricultural policies, extension services and rural development.

Paul PAREDES PORTELLA (Observador de Perú): En primer término, nuestro agradecimiento al señor Director General de la FAO por sus esclarecedores comentarios efectuados esta mañana. En segundo lugar, nuestra satisfacción por tenerlo a usted, señor José Ramón López Portillo, al frente de nuestros trabajos lo cual, le confieso, es motivo de orgullo para nuestra región. En tercer término agradezco a la Secretaría por la documentación detallada que ha presentado.

Respecto del tema Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial, mi delegación quiere dejar constancia de su apoyo al Programa Especial de Seguridad Alimentaria. Esto siempre y cuando no afecte al volumen y al alcance de los Programas de Cooperación Técnica (PCT). Este programa, señor Presidente, considero que es necesario destacarlo por su importancia, no sólo en favor de los países en desarrollo sino también por su proyección en el contexto de la vigencia del organismo mismo a largo plazo. Creemos que es más importante trabajar temas de desarrollo y de esa manera, nuestros países puedan efectivamente llevar adelante lo que es seguridad alimentaria ya que nosotros consideramos que seguridad alimentaria es un concepto envolvente, dinámico, que abarca autosuficiencia, pero también abarca nociones como por ejemplo, comercio y competitividad internacional.

Otro elemento, señor Presidente, que es menester destacar, son las iniciativas de cooperación en favor de los países en desarrollo como alcance a las negociaciones comerciales multilaterales que, en el año 1999 ocurrirán en el seno de la OMC, como bien ha dicho Canadá esta mañana.

Mi delegación, acoge con beneplácito este gesto de Canadá y señala que este es un camino a seguir en el marco de la cooperación internacional.

Señor Presidente, al tratar el tema Seguimiento de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación, me referiré a tres temas específicos. Uno, las disposiciones institucionales; dos, plan de trabajo para determinar metas e indicadores; tres, sugerencias concretas para que nuestro esfuerzo llegue a los resultados que se esperan.

De manera preliminar quiero recoger, como bien dijo la delegación de Cuba esta mañana, que la región Latinoamericana tiene una propuesta relativa al seguimiento de la Cumbre. Es una contribución modesta, pero que valdría la pena retomarla y revisarla y que muy bien pueda ayudar en el contexto de nuestros trabajos. Por otro lado, nosotros creemos provisionales las declaraciones presentadas por el Banco Mundial, el IIPA, el FIDA, el PMA. Como se ve en el documento CL 112/15, en el contexto de seguimiento de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación, así como sus propósitos para llevar adelante la seguridad alimentaria en los sectores de desarrollo rural, análisis de políticas, alivio de la pobreza y asistencia alimentaria, nosotros confiamos en que tales esfuerzos se concretizarán al más breve plazo para mejorar la situación del hambre en el mundo. De otro lado, en lo que respecta a los informes por países, esos deberían efectuarse siguiendo un patrón

simple que el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria debería preparar para registrar el seguimiento y la forma en que se viene dando cumplimiento a los siete compromisos del Plan de Acción. Al mismo tiempo creemos que la revisión de informes de manera detallada, debe hacerse cada dos años, a efectos de que no se trate solamente de un ejercicio estadístico, sino más bien de un esfuerzo tendiente a mejorar y a presentar acciones destinadas a la ejecución del Plan de Acción.

El segundo punto, señor Presidente, es el Plan de Trabajo para determinar las metas e indicadores de la seguridad alimentaria mundial. Creemos que el FIVIMS constituye un elemento esencial en la elaboración de un esquema claro acerca de la inseguridad alimentaria. Consideramos necesario que otros organismos internacionales del sistema de Naciones Unidas, competentes también en esta materia, deberían participar más activamente en este ejercicio del FIVIMS; al mismo tiempo los países debemos apoyar el proceso, así como las entidades representativas de las sociedades a fin de que la información registrada sea cada vez más fidedigna.

Finalmente, señor Presidente, para mi delegación, el seguimiento de la Cumbre en ningún caso debe orientarse a un ejercicio deliberativo. Creemos que el seguimiento debe visualizar las acciones concretas de organismos internacionales, gobiernos, sociedad civil, en el alivio del hambre, en la aplicación del Plan de Acción. En este contexto se debe tener presente que, desde la Cumbre hasta ahora, el número de personas que sufren hambre en el mundo ha aumentado; en noviembre de 1996 era de 800 millones, ahora por una simple extrapolación es de 840 millones si nos atenemos a las últimas estadísticas emitidas por la FAO. Esta situación, señor Presidente, nos obliga a que los organismos internacionales, los gobiernos y la sociedad civil, lleven adelante acciones urgentes. Mi delegación modestamente sugiere que los informes nacionales y los de los organismos sean bianuales y que contengan información cuantificada, de forma tal que pueda apreciarse de manera evidente, clara y concisa, como se vienen aplicando los compromisos de la Cumbre, y entre otros, por ejemplo señor Presidente, el objetivo inicial de reducir a la mitad el número de personas que sufren hambre al horizonte 2015, se viene concretando año a año, bienio a bienio, con cifras y no como observamos ahora con pesar, que este número no ha hecho más que aumentar en los pocos meses que han seguido la Cumbre.

Mucho agradeceré, señor Presidente, que sea debidamente registrado este enfoque y que la Secretaría tenga a bien indicar la forma específica en que considera podrá asegurar el seguimiento efectivo de la Cumbre de manera tal que no se trate solamente de un ejercicio retórico.

Mohamed Said M.A. HARBI (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic): Mr Chairman, I join the ranks of preceding speakers in thanking you for guiding our work and we appreciate the considerable transparency of what is happening here. I think the Members have been very wise in the appointment of the various officers and I congratulate the Secretariat on the documents which have been distributed to our Embassies.

Referring to the World Food Summit, where my country participated with 30 delegates lead by the President of the Republic of Sudan, our participation, as you will realize, was on a large scale. This reflects the importance given by my country to this Summit. My country wishes to effectively contribute to the abolition of hunger.

The President of the Republic, in his statement, highlighted the fact that Sudan plans to contribute to solving problems of famine by creating agricultural areas for production to be used by those who wish to assist in the form of investment. We hope to see our Organization taking this into account in creating agricultural zones of the type suggested by Sudan, so that mankind as a whole can take advantage of them.

Mr Boutros Ghali, previous Secretary-General of the United Nations, and the Director-General in his term stressed the fact that each individual has the right to a balanced diet. This was the guideline to our Summit and society throughout the world should follow their request to the letter, whatever

the political system. We should take into account pure humanitarian considerations. The wealthy countries should take into account the fact that developing countries have their own pride and they will never accept food aid subject to conditions. The poet says "Do not give me something I need after humiliating me but at least show that you have some respect for me".

The problem of the World Food Summit and financial support for the commitments of that Summit has become a moral undertaking. It is necessary that each country which has some self-respect to show respect to these commitments. It is not necessary to shrug off commitments that one has accepted, when we bear in mind the fact that so many people are suffering from famine and are faced with certain death between now and the year 2000.

The State has made a praiseworthy effort as regards food self-reliance; 4.3 million tonnes of grain and cereals have been harvested. This amount is sufficient in my country, as regards feeding the country, but there are problems of transport and the lack of roads, so distribution is not always arranged in the wisest possible manner.

The Director-General of FAO, on several occasions, referred to this question of the Special Programme. In this respect I would like to compliment those 15 who have benefitted from assistance through the programme and I trust that my country, in its turn, will benefit in the same way.

We are observers here at this session of Council but we are nevertheless convinced that Council, under your wise helmsmanship and thanks to the transparency shown in these debates, will adopt a report which will embody information that will be in the interests of our developing countries.

Paul Kipsigei CHEPKWONY (Observer for Kenya): Thank you for according my delegation this opportunity to speak as an Observer following with keen interest the deliberation on this important Agenda Item on the current world food situation. Like many speakers before us, we are gratified to note the general improved global food supply as per the Secretariat's document CL 112/2, paragraph 1. Furthermore, we are particularly pleased to see an increase in food production in the African region but we must hasten to add our concern about reduced production in the Asian, Latin American and Caribbean regions, as also reflected in Table 1 of the same document.

The increase in global food production is therefore mixed, and in this regard we would wish to appeal to FAO to continue monitoring global food security using the stock utilization ratio of 17-18 percent to determine the level of food security, as referred to in paragraph 17. We also encourage FAO to continue giving assistance to low income, food deficit countries to improve domestic food production, through appropriate programmes, for food security.

My delegation, like many others before us, is also concerned about the continuing decline in food aid deliveries, as referred to in paragraph 25 of CL 112/2, which affect many low-income, food-deficit countries including those of Saharan Africa. While recognizing the past and continuing assistance provided by donors and the international community to the food-deficit countries in need, we wish to encourage them to enhance their contributions to these countries.

EL PRESIDENTE: Hemos tenido un debate enriquecedor, informativo y para aclarar las varias cuestiones que se plantearon, voy a pedirle al doctor de Haen que haga uso de la palabra.

H. de HAEN (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Department): Thanks to all delegates who provided interesting observations and illustrative reports about their respective food situation. I would also like to thank you for some questions which I will try to answer right now. At the outset let me say that the information provided to you, either through questionnaires or your reports here, is the basis for our assessments. To some extent we are in your hands: this is not to explain failures in our assessment but, to some extent also, I would like to remind you that we

appreciate any information that you may have that is not yet in our statistical database so that, in the interests of all, we can improve our assessment.

The distinguished delegate of the United States had such kind of observation on data and I would like to give some comments on these remarks. Firstly, I should say that the document which is before you was prepared in March and the latest figures have been revised somewhat, as I reported in my oral introduction. There is a difference between the US forecast for 1996-97 on trade and ours and this is due to a number of factors which may be of interest to the Council.

Firstly, our figures refer to world imports, whereas the US figures refer to exports. The decrease in exports is less than the one shown for imports; there are statistical differences between exports and imports on the global scale which I cannot dwell upon in further detail here, but this is to be noted.

Secondly, our year of observation and of reporting is July-June whereas the US figures refer to September-August figures for coarse grains and to June-May figures for wheat, and that explains another set of differences.

Thirdly, our latest forecast for cereal imports is for a smaller decrease and that is from 204 to 193 million tonnes, and this is not a ten but only a five percent decrease. For global exports, on the other hand, we are also forecasting a small decline by 4 million tonnes.

For 1997-98 we are projecting a small increase of overall exports and as a fourth observation FAO does not take different production figures from the United States. In our next food outlook we shall be using the same figures mentioned by the distinguished delegate of the United States and, on a point of detail, the document refers to harvested area for winter wheat even though there was a fall in the planted area. These are fine differences which may explain why we did not fully match the figures that the USDA has collected.

The distinguished delegate of the United States had two other observations which I wish to comment on. One was that he wished to see a more forward looking document. Firstly, let me remind you that at the recent session of the CFS we had a similar debate and so we have already taken note of these kinds of request. In this particular situation, it is unfortunate that this Council meets when we are just two weeks away from our next forecast for the 1997-98 period, so this will then bring us into a more medium-term forecasting period, at least until the end of the next year, and will hopefully then satisfy the interests of our Members.

It was said that it was wished that this report covered a broader range of aspects of food security and this was mentioned by a number of other delegates. Here again I would like to refer to the CFS. We are not producing a new document for Council; we are basing it on the more in-depth report to the CFS, which has already mandated the Secretariat to widen significantly the coverage of aspects including access, as was mentioned by the distinguished delegate of Mexico. So I hope that in the next report to the CFS you will find this kind of broadened view on issues of food security.

There were a few other comments -- one by the distinguished delegate of Pakistan on regional discrepancies, which we have also noted -- with regard to the world food situation. While he raised concern about the food production developments in Asia and concurred with what we have in the document, just to set the record straight, our estimates show a decline in the rate of growth of food production in Asia but not in the food production in Asia. The level is not declining; the rate of growth was declining mainly due to a slow growth in non-cereal food production, not so much in cereal production although also there. This is what I want to clarify: it is not a decline in production levels but in growth rates which is, of course, also somewhat encouraging.

The distinguished delegate of Senegal referred to the planned -- and, in fact, this is covered by the commitments in the Plan of Action -- introduction of the food and security and vulnerability

information mapping system to which the Director-General referred in some detail in his introductory speech. I just wanted to refer to it again because the Senegalese delegate suggested that as long as the improved FIVIMS does not exist we would have no instrument to target populations that need attention and support. While I would agree that much needs to be done, it is hoped that this information system, which we are building and improving with the collaboration of many agencies and experts and in fact many countries, would permit better targeting. However, I would submit that such pessimism is probably not opportune because there is already a lot of information and I only refer to the food outlook which reports not only about the acute situation but also refers to various FAO documents. I have just taken a look into the Internet and I must say there is a lot that we provide now, even at global level, with regard to acute and potential hunger and populations at risk. This is probably also a good reference to the statement made by the delegate of Peru who just noted that this is an important area of work. I want to take this opportunity to express gratitude to Peru which participated actively in the Inter-Agency Expert Consultation on this new initiative on FIVIMS.

I have two final remarks. The distinguished delegate of Argentina asked about any discrepancies in the database between figures of the USDA, the International Grains Council and FAO. We wish to assure you that, for instance, for 1996 we have almost the same figures, if not the same, for wheat production. We show a large increase for 1996. In January these databases should be fully compatible, of course with the disclaimer that there may be different interpretations sometimes, and sometimes different data series used such as those I have just referred to when I commented on the remarks of the delegate of the United States.

My last remark regards the comments made by Pakistan and Mexico on increased monitoring of stocks, prices and export earnings. I wish to ensure Council that this is what we feel mandated to do and what we shall be doing also in fulfilment of Commitment 4 of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

I hope that I have answered" most fully all of your questions.

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias doctor de Haen por sus respuestas y sus comentarios. Pregunto si hay algún otro comentario que los distinguidos delegados deseen hacer. Bien, si no es así me voy a permitir muy brevemente resumir los debates.

El Consejo tomó nota con satisfacción de la posición o del reconocimiento por parte de muchos delegados acerca del contenido y concisión del documento preparado por la Secretaría, así como de la visión integral de este documento, de la exactitud del panorama que reflejaba, con respecto a los suministros alimentarios, los problemas de mercado y los precios internacionales.

No obstante, en algunos casos varios delegados hicieron notar, como en el comercio internacional de cereales y otros, existen discrepancias con la información y los análisis de tendencia de otros organismos internacionales así como con agencias nacionales; se subrayó por tanto la importancia de compatibilizar y actualizar la información, de contar con datos de los movimientos del mercado, de los precios, de las existencias así como una visión de las tendencias a más corto plazo y de reportarlos sistemáticamente. La Secretaría obviamente aseguró que esto se hace rutinariamente y que se mantendrá informado a este Consejo y, desde luego, a los delegados a través de los Comités correspondientes.

A pesar de la mejora general de la producción alimentaria de base mundial, se expresó preocupación ante el gran número de países que sufren situaciones de inseguridad alimentaria y, en particular, de emergencia alimentaria debido a su situación precaria. Se destacó muy en particular el caso de los países africanos que, a pesar de haberse mejorado las cosechas en dicha región, siguen sufriendo este tipo de circunstancias. También se hizo notar situaciones de inseguridad alimentaria y de alta susceptibilidad a emergencias climáticas y a otras situaciones generadas por la mano del

hombre que prevalecen aún en muchos países de bajos ingresos y con déficit de alimentos en todas las regiones del mundo y sobre todo entre la población pobre en cualquier lugar del orbe. En este sentido se subrayó también el papel primordial que juega la promoción de la infraestructura agrícola, las medidas sanitarias, la lucha contra enfermedades transfronterizas, la reducción de pérdidas post-cosecha, y la promoción en general, de la autoconfianza agroalimentaria y de la agricultura comercial.

Varios países hicieron asimismo, un renovado llamado para considerar y responder a la situación agroalimentaria muy particular de Europa Central y Oriental que merecía una evaluación y un tratamiento particular e independiente de antiguos órdenes geopolíticos.

Se ha notado en el contexto de la situación agroalimentaria mundial, la necesidad, cada vez mayor, de solidaridad internacional, sobre todo en una época de globalización que contrasta, según lo hicieron notar muchos delegados, con la triste tendencia actual de disponibilidades decrecientes de ayuda alimentaria o de asistencia al desarrollo. Se reconoció asimismo, que las reservas internacionales de alimentos se encuentran por debajo de lo deseable.

Se subrayó la importancia de continuar con el proceso de reforma y de liberalización de mercados en conformidad con los compromisos de la Ronda Uruguay, reconociendo al mismo tiempo que, incrementar el potencial de la producción agrícola de manera sostenible, así como lograr la disponibilidad y el acceso más pleno a los alimentos, constituye la mejor garantía de seguridad alimentaria en todos los países.

Se destacó en particular, el papel de la biotecnología en el logro de estos objetivos, asimismo se subrayó la importancia de la cooperación entre todas las instancias involucradas, incluidas las Organizaciones No Gubernamentales. En particular se mencionó el papel catalítico de la FAO, algunos delegados advirtieron la conveniencia de fortalecer los programas normativos de la Organización que según ellos representaban su máxima ventaja comparativa.

Asimismo se argumentó en favor del fomento a la cooperación Sur-Sur y del efecto positivo de la cooperación técnica entre los países.

Bien señores delegados, hubo muchas otras cuestiones que ustedes tocaron, quizá las he dejado fuera, pero se recogerán con toda claridad y equilibrio el informe que ustedes aprobarán.

EL SECRETARIO GENERAL ADJUNTO: Se ruega a las delegaciones que deseen participar en el grupo informal de trabajo sobre la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria, que se inscriban en la Secretaría del Consejo en la oficina A-141, en este piso, teléfono interno 57608 antes del mediodía de mañana martes 3 de junio.

La primera reunión del grupo tendrá lugar el miércoles día 4, se anunciará oportunamente en la Orden del Día del miércoles, la hora y la sala en que tendrá lugar esta reunión. Como dijo el señor Presidente esta mañana, el grupo queda abierto a todos los países miembros de la FAO.

EL PRESIDENTE: Recuerdo nuevamente la necesidad de volver a subrayar que el mandato de dicho grupo informal es revisar el texto que se encuentra aún entre corchetes y no revisar la totalidad del texto que ha sido ya acordado en principio. De otra manera abriremos un debate y será completamente inútil que este grupo informal se reúna.

Vuelvo a repetir el mandato del grupo informal es revisar exclusivamente el texto entre corchetes. Yo entiendo, y así lo hicimos notar, que el grupo africano que se reúne ahora, está estudiando el texto pero esperamos, como así se ha asegurado, que las contribuciones sean positivas y que no representen ningún obstáculo para acelerar la finalización del texto de la Convención.

Bien, distinguidos delegados, el Tema 4 queda concluido y si no tienen ustedes ninguna otra observación o pregunta lo cierro.

Moussa Bocar LY (Sénegal): Monsieur le Président, je voudrais dire que le groupe africain aborde avec beaucoup d'ouverture et de disponibilité le travail sur la révision de la CIPV et que nous sommes tous d'accord avec vous pour l'accélération de ces travaux, mais je crois qu'on ne peut pas, en tout cas, préjuger des travaux. Moi je ne suis pas expert, je ne peux pas en préjuger. J'espère simplement - et j'en suis même sûr - que ces contributions seront positives, mais je crois qu'on ne peut pas en préjuger. Nous sommes conscients avec vous et avec le Secrétariat qu'il faut tout faire pour accélérer ces travaux, ce qui est dans l'intérêt de tous, mais il faut également une convention acceptée universellement dans l'intérêt de tous.

EL PRESIDENTE: Efectivamente yo expresé una esperanza. La esperanza de que no se tenga que reabrir un debate que iría en detrimento de la aprobación del texto, pero obviamente el grupo africano está en plena libertad de hacer los comentarios que desee. Sin embargo, vuelvo a subrayar que para que el grupo informal tenga sentido y pueda avanzar debería concentrarse, repito concentrarse, en los textos que aún se encuentran entre corchetes y tomar nota de las posiciones del grupo africano si es que discordan del resto del texto que ha sido ya acordado.

5 Follow-up to the World Food Summit

5 Suivi du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation

5 Seguimiento de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación

EL PRESIDENTE: Como ustedes saben, la Conferencia en su Resolución 2/95 pidió al Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial que informara por conducto del Consejo a la Conferencia en su 29º período de sesiones de 1997 acerca de todos los aspectos de la Cumbre.

Por tanto, el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial pide al Consejo que transmita a la Conferencia los resultados de sus deliberaciones acerca del seguimiento de la Cumbre, tal como se consignan en el informe del Comité que ustedes tienen delante. Los párrafos 28 al 48 contienen las conclusiones de la CSA y el Apéndice E trata con más detalle los preparativos y resultados de la Cumbre.

Bien, deseo solamente mencionar algunos puntos específicos sobre los cuales el Consejo puede, también, expresarse. Las disposiciones institucionales para el seguimiento y la presentación de informes sobre la ejecución del Plan de Acción, el sistema de información y cartografía sobre la seguridad alimentaria y la vulnerabilidad, los resultados del examen del seguimiento de la Cumbre realizado por el Comité Administrativo de Coordinación de las Naciones Unidas, la cooperación entre la FAO y el Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos, las medidas recomendadas para asociar más estrechamente las organizaciones de la sociedad civil a la labor del Comité y de la FAO y, también si ustedes lo consideran conveniente, podría incluir en esta parte de nuestros debates, los avances del Programa Especial de Seguridad Alimentaria (PESA) en esta fase piloto.

Los otros puntos discutidos por el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria serán considerados, como ustedes saben, en los puntos 6 y 20 de nuestra agenda, el día jueves 5 de junio próximo. Antes de ofrecer la palabra al señor Hjort, le voy a pedir al señor Vicepresidente del CSA, señor Sands Smith que en representación del Presidente de dicho Comité nos presente el informe que hace al Consejo.

David SANDS SMITH (Vice-Chairman, Committee on World Food Security): I think you yourself have largely introduced the report. I would make one or two remarks. The first thing is that Ambassador Medrano, the Chairman of the Committee on World Food Security, has asked me

to say how extremely sorry he is that it is not possible for him to be present today to present this agenda item.

I think many of you were in fact participants in the deliberations of the Committee on World Food Security in April. The report of that meeting is available to you. In these circumstances, I do not think I need to do more than to point to the wish that was clearly expressed at that meeting, to see action in implementing the Summit Declaration and Plan of Action. Rightly, if I may say so, attention was focused very much on reporting arrangements under which national governments, United Nations agencies, and other relevant international institutions will report on the action that they are taking towards the specific objectives under each of the seven Summit commitments.

An interim reporting arrangement will operate in 1997, a standard reporting format will be established for the following years. I would add that the World Food Summit set a noble objective, the halving of the present level of under-nourished people in the world no later than 2015. The reporting is the means of finding out what action is being taken. Self-evidently, it is the action itself which is essential.

Perhaps, I would just add one other word, there has been considerable reference already to vulnerability mapping. I think all I would say on this is that, as the Director-General himself said this morning, there was an Expert Consultation earlier this year. I myself was able to take part in that Expert Consultation as a member of the Bureau, and I think it was an extremely valuable occasion, it lasted for two years and I think it shows that the process has got off the ground.

With those few words of introduction I think that I need say no more.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: In view of the Director-General's statement this morning, where he referred explicitly and at some length to the follow-up to the World Food Summit, and the introductions that have just been received by the Council, I really see that there is no need for me to add anything and I would await with eager anticipation your comments and questions.

EL PRESIDENTE: Se que todos ustedes están conscientes de la situación y tienen frescos en su mente los debates del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial y del informe que resultó; me voy a permitir, por tanto, ofrecerles la palabra.

Juan NUIRY SANCHEZ (Cuba): En primer lugar queremos agradecer la presentación del señor Sands Smith; lo único que lamentamos es que con su experiencia y capacidad reconocida es una verdadera pena que nos abandone.

Señor Presidente, esta ocasión que nos reúne hoy tiene como fundamental valoración la de constituir el primer Consejo de la FAO que tiene lugar después de la Cumbre Mundial efectuada el pasado mes de noviembre. No creemos necesario repetir lo que este magno encuentro representó tanto en el orden interno como en su repercusión internacional, particularmente para nuestros países en desarrollo, los más despiadadamente azotados por el flagelo del hambre.

Pero sí creemos necesario hacer referencia a algunos aspectos a manera de reflexión. El promover internacionalmente la búsqueda de una seguridad alimentaria en el mundo, es sólo el propósito de tomar conciencia de su urgente necesidad. La Cumbre fue un desafío y se cumplió. Su objetivo, su valiente y oportuna convocatoria, su proceso previo, su organización y como colofón, su alto nivel de participación. Recordamos como parte de la historia cuando el Director General, señor Jacques Diouf, invitó a la Conferencia de la FAO a convocar una Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación en noviembre de 1996 aprobada en octubre de 1995 y refrendada el mismo año en diciembre por la ONU, luego aprobado en distintos Consejos de la FAO y conferencias regionales, etc.

Naturalmente no pueden dejar de mencionarse su complejo y difícil proceso de debates y negociaciones, los cuales llegaron a acuerdos que sentaron un precedente al llegar a sus conclusiones 15 días antes de comenzar la Cumbre, no exenta de dificultades, pero que surgieron señalando la voluntad política de su cumplimiento como piedra angular. De ahí salieron sus documentos, la declaración política, la llamada Declaración de Roma y su Plan de Acción.

Todo este trabajo desarrollado desde el principio en el seno de esta Organización nos lleva de la mano a discernir que a la FAO le corresponde ser el centro catalizador de la Cumbre dentro del sistema de las Naciones Unidas. No creo que nadie pueda discutir este derecho. Pero bien, una vez precisado este aspecto comenzamos otra etapa, otro desafío íntimamente ligado como a un todo a un mismo proceso: hacer cumplir lo acordado.

La FAO es de hecho el organismo encargado, a través de su Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria, de su Consejo, de su Conferencia, de debatir, analizar y evaluar estos acuerdos, velando para que los mismos no constituyan un punto más de la agenda, sino la propia agenda, así como de otros organismos del sistema de Naciones Unidas que tienen relación con estos acuerdos aprobados por los más altos niveles de todos nuestros países. Cuidando que sus acciones y medidas se estructuren de forma tal que permita, periódicamente, año tras año, conocer de aquí a la meta fijada, es decir el año 2015, lo que de manera modesta se acordó para ser cumplida.

La Cumbre en sí constituyó un mandato y de esta manera fijar objetivos y prioridades suficientemente claros como para ponerlos en práctica a través de una verdadera y efectiva cooperación internacional. Esta estrategia debe ser operacional para poderse medir en la práctica y concretarse por regiones para así garantizar su resultado.

No cumplir lo acordado sobre estos textos, señor Presidente, sería una verdadera vergüenza. Textos que, por demás, no fueron aprobados para interpretarlos sino para cumplirlos. La región de América Latina y el Caribe elevó un documento que fue entregado en la pasada reunión del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria, la cual solicité, como Presidente del GRULAC, sea puesto también a disposición de este Consejo cuyo texto precisa estos aspectos como modesta contribución.

Señor Presidente, como planteamos anteriormente, los documentos básicos de la Cumbre, son muy claros en cada uno de sus aspectos. El seguimiento a la Cumbre, como bien se expresa en el Compromiso 7, objetivo 7.3, se realizará a todos los niveles con igual importancia y, en consecuencia, se elaborarán los informes de seguimiento a nivel nacional, subregional, regional e internacional. El proceso de reestructuración iniciado en la Organización, otorga un papel fundamental a los procesos de descentralización y fortaleciendo cada vez más a las conferencias regionales. En ese sentido corresponderá también a las conferencias regionales, cada dos años, analizar el cumplimiento de los compromisos acordados en el Plan de Acción de la Cumbre y la presentación de su informe.

Señor Presidente, también corresponde a los gobiernos a nivel nacional, el cumplimiento y análisis de cada uno de los compromisos de la Cumbre, en coordinación con la sociedad civil basada en la voluntad soberana de cada uno de los gobiernos. Debe quedar claro que los gobiernos son los responsables, a nivel nacional, del seguimiento de los acuerdos de la Cumbre.

Señor Presidente, solicitamos que se utilice como modelo de proyecto de informe el mismo esquema del Plan de Acción aprobado por la Cumbre. De esta manera, se podrá informar acerca del cumplimiento de todos los compromisos, aspectos tan importantes como el acceso a los alimentos, el desarrollo rural, el derecho a la alimentación, la cooperación internacional, el sistema de información y cartografía, de la inseguridad y la vulnerabilidad alimentaria. Sobre este particular, proponemos que los informes se realicen analizando cada uno de los compromisos contenidos en el Plan de Acción de la Cumbre aprobado por todos nosotros. En este orden de cosas, entendemos

necesario reiterar consideraciones que nuestra región expresó en el 23° período de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria.

Nuestra región, señor Presidente, apoya el PESA. Es más, muchos países latinoamericanos y del Caribe se han incorporado a ese programa y están dando pasos hacia el objetivo de insertar acciones de la cooperación Sur-Sur y de la cooperación técnica entre países en desarrollo. Debemos dejar muy claro que dentro de nuestras características propias, somos una región donde un alto porcentaje de la población vive en la pobreza, el desempleo, la indigencia, donde se agudiza el hambre y la miseria de millones de seres humanos. Existen sobradas causas para que nuestros países luchen por salir del subdesarrollo, razón por la cual la cooperación internacional es imprescindible y, dentro de ésta, el PCT, por lo cual apoyamos la independencia y el fortalecimiento del PCT como herramienta indispensable para la cooperación en el seno de la Organización.

Señor Presidente, finalmente todas estas consideraciones han sido analizadas por nuestro grupo regional que, agrupadas, las elevamos a su consideración y las presentamos. Como Presidente del GRULAC me reservo, para no hacer más larga esta presentación, el poder ampliar y profundizar en las mismas en otras oportunidades.

Aidan O'DRISCOLL (Ireland): I do not wish to make a statement on this Agenda Item, but I wish merely to ask you to give the floor to the delegation of the Netherlands, who will then make a statement on behalf of the European Community and its Member States. You are aware, I think, of this procedure, Chairman, which has emerged from contact with the Legal Counsel, to deal with the difficulty caused by the fact that the Netherlands, which currently holds the Presidency of the EU, is not a member of Council.

EL PRESIDENTE: Efectivamente, el Consejo ha seguido este procedimiento en el pasado y no tiene inconveniente. Le voy a pasar la palabra al señor Observador por Países Bajos que hablará a nombre de la Unión Europea y sus estados miembros.

J.B. PIETERS (Observer for the Netherlands): Thank you, Ireland, outgoing Chairman of the European Union.

Mr Chairman, at the session of the CFS in April this year, we have already expressed, on behalf of the European Community and its Member States, our views on a number of initiatives taken by FAO on the follow-up of the WFS. At this stage, we want to confirm these remarks and, as a result, I can be brief.

Mr Chairman, after the Summit, we have concluded that it has met its three objectives. One, mobilizing public opinion and national governments with regard to the issue of World Food Security; two, providing a framework and a concrete Plan of Action to tackle this issue; and three, putting back the issue of World Food Security on the political agenda.

In the Rome Declaration on World Food Security, all States have emphasized the urgency of taking action now to fulfil our responsibility to achieve food security for present and future generations. Governments, all actors of civil society and international institutions, therefore, must take their responsibility and put this commitment into practice.

Mr Chairman, this momentum should be kept.

Member States of the European Community have already set in motion a national process of follow-up of the WFS, identifying approaches and possible actions at different levels, be it national, European or international.

In preparing for the WFS, we went through a process of long and detailed negotiations, which resulted in a text of the Declaration and Plan of Action acceptable to all. This text provides us with a well-balanced approach of the concept of World Food Security and how it could be achieved with an immediate view to reducing the number of undernourished people to half their present level not later than 2015.

Mr Chairman, the European Community and its Member States, hope that this attitude of cooperation will be maintained in the follow-up process. In discussing the implementation of the Plan of Action, in particular at international and inter-agency level, we must take full account of the on-going process of the United Nations' reform in the social and economic sector. It is worth recalling that the EU, as well as the Nordic countries, presented proposals in this respect. The outcome of this process will largely determine the framework of the integrated follow-up to the major UN Conferences in which the implementation of the Plan of Action is clearly embedded.

We call on FAO to take all necessary measures to cooperate with other UN Organizations in the follow-up process to the World Food Summit.

To conclude, Mr Chairman, after having brought up the so-called Country Briefs on Food Security and Agricultural Strategies in the CFS in April this year, the preparation of such a series of Country Briefs continues to raise concerns on our part. We reiterate that we are in favour of a country-driven implementation process and ownership of the respective governments. This implies that FAO should offer support to countries only upon their request. We cannot accept that the FAO Secretariat continues to prepare such Country Briefs on its own initiative.

Mr Chairman, we insist, therefore, that on-going activities which do not follow the principle of a country-driven approach, under the country's responsibility, be stopped.

Jalal RASSOLOF (Iran, Islamic Republic of): The follow-up to the World Food Summit is fully and in length discussed in Documents CL 112/8, 9, 10 and 15. All these documents have been deeply considered and adopted in other FAO fora. My delegation once again fully endorses all these documents and commends the FAO Secretariat for the excellent job in preparation of these documents.

However, in spite of the unprecedented success of the World Food Summit, the documents do not reflect the sincere spirit which is needed if the World Food Summit's recommendations and commitments are to be materialized. Almost all of the FAO Member Nations and especially the developing countries, hoped that the Summit would mark a milestone and turning point in FAO's roles in combatting hunger and malnutrition, but it seems that this feeling is not universal.

My delegation was surprised to see that, in paragraph 8 of document CL 112/9, a few members expressed the belief that a reduction from the current budget level would be necessary, so that the next budget could be fully financed. In addition, some delegates this morning pointed to zero nominal growth in the budget for biennium 1998-99. The question is, how is it possible to do much more, as is recommended by the Summit, with a decreased budget, unless, we believe that there are major inefficiencies in the Organization. We believe that most of the possible logical cost savings have been achieved since 1994, and any further budget reductions would cause major quality decreases and a proportional setback to the objectives of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

In this regard, my delegation fully agrees and supports what is mentioned in paragraph 25 of document CL 112/15, that is, "Increased resources and technical assistance would also contribute to boosting food production in a sustainable way". To achieve this, many delegates suggested that international cooperation should be strengthened, both among developing countries and in the form of assistance on the part of the developed countries.

My delegation also seizes the opportunity to thank the Director-General for all his sincere efforts in the follow-up to the World Food Summit, including regular visits and discussion with Permanent Representatives of Member Nations here in Headquarters. We also endorse the proposal of a Telefood Day in the 1997 World Food Day, as a major step forward in the direction of increased awareness and resource mobilization for the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has already set up a special committee, consisting of all members of the National Committee for the World Food Summit to closely cooperate with the FAO Representative in Iran and the FAO Secretariat for active participation in this very noble initiative. I am pleased to say that the Islamic Republic of Iran, regardless of some economic difficulties, stands ready to contribute its share to the full realization of the World Food Summit objectives.

Tang ZHENGPING (China) (Original language Chinese): More than six months have gone by since the World Food Summit, which aroused the interest of the whole world since that meeting. On several occasions, we have discussed the implementation of the results; during the 23rd Session of the Committee on World Food Security, where we gave special attention to this aspect. It is perfectly clear, and everyone agrees, that there is no denying that it is necessary to reflect, in concrete terms, the results of the World Food Summit. We have had an opportunity to refer to this during the CFA Meeting.

I would like to embroider on a number of specific aspects. First, the implementation of the spirit of the Summit calls for active measures, effective steps to be taken by the international community at large. We know full well that the most important issue, which is the very nub of the work of the Summit, is the combatting hunger and malnutrition, that is, food security throughout the world. Everyone knows that hunger and malnutrition are a phenomenon which exists particularly in the developing world, especially in the low-income, food-deficit countries. For historical and natural reasons, and others, those countries' capacity is weak. We have witnessed serious inadequacy in economic development. Poverty, then, is the main feature in those countries. Varying view points are expressed as to how those countries should develop. One thing is perfectly clear, from the historical point of view, is that international efforts are vital, that is why international organizations and regional bodies, and the NGOs, should harness every effort to propose a concrete plan in accordance with the Declaration and Commitments of the Summit.

It is up to FAO to play its role as being the lead organization in this respect, in order to implement the Commitments and the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit. Governments should also play a dynamic role. Developing countries themselves need to shoulder their own responsibilities, in order to apply those policies which will encourage the development of agriculture in rural economies, in order to guarantee the success of the combat against malnutrition. Every factor, every force needs to be harnessed to achieve this struggle in an effort to obtain food security.

In my country, China has taken measures to increase agricultural inputs and improve agricultural infrastructure, which will enable 65 million people who, at present, still live in tremendous poverty, to get out of that situation. The Chinese Government is also strengthening the extension of agricultural techniques and agricultural research, in order to ensure that science and technology play their proper role, their full role, in achieving increased food production.

I also believe that developed countries should also honour their commitments with full will and determination, bearing in mind the needs of hunger and malnutrition, because this is part and parcel of their international duty to take this into account. It is an international responsibility that they have, a humanitarian duty. They should also take effective and concrete measures to combat malnutrition and hunger.

Further, as regards the supervision of the Plan of Action, this point has been the subject of serious discussion during the 23rd Session of the CFA. We agree with the report of the Committee. I do not need to repeat the viewpoint of my delegation but we are going to send in a national report on this problem, in due course. In a word, I trust that the monitoring and drawing up of reports should be both practical and accurately reflect, in a timely manner, the results of the follow-up to the World Food Summit.

Dato Ahmad Zabri IBRAHIM (Malaysia): My delegation is grateful to the Secretariat for the document on the Follow-up to the World Food Summit, CL 112/15, and would like to make a brief comment.

The Rome Declaration, and specifically the World Food Summit Plan of Action, has provided us with a comprehensive framework and clear direction as to how countries and international communities, including civil society and private sector, must act to ensure global and household food security, and hence contribute to the reduction of malnutrition and hunger. In this regard, FAO has a lead role to coordinate the implementation of the Global Plan of Action and monitor its progress, as elaborated in the Plan. As much as we would like to see a monitoring system, that is, comprehensive and cost-effective, guided by a set of principles of simple and reliable indicators, my delegation is of the opinion that there are some essential elements of the Plan that need close monitoring.

One such element, relates to the investment by the international community in the agricultural sector that contributes the achievement of the Plan's goals. We strongly believe that, unless there is a commitment to mobilize and reallocate new and additional financial resources in the agricultural sector by national governments, the international community and the private sector, the growth of the sector in developing countries will continue to lag and the targets of the Plan will not be achieved, within the desired time frame envisaged by the Plan.

Mr Chairman, the other important element that needs closer attention and focusing, is the monitoring of progress made by vulnerable groups, children and women, including pregnant and lactating women. In this connection, FAO should work closely with other UN agencies, such as WHO, UNESCO, World Food Programme and IFAD, to develop appropriate indicators and coordinate the exchange of data and information. At the same time, case studies on successful projects for these vulnerable groups should be carried out by FAO and these should be highlighted to Member Countries, so as to enable replication efforts to be undertaken.

Ms Deborah MALAC (United States of America): We appreciate the Director-General's report this morning of what FAO is doing on Summit follow-up. We would like to take this opportunity to inform the Council of what actions the United States is currently taking in this regard and to make a few additional comments.

The United States believes that the World Food Summit built awareness for the need for actions to achieve global food security with the goal of reducing the number of chronically undernourished people in the world by half, no later than 2015. My country takes the commitments made at the Summit very seriously. We have adopted the Summit global target for 2015 as a domestic target for ourselves as well, to assure that we are doing our part to achieve food security both at home and abroad. We have undertaken, in partnership with civil society, the development of an action plan for the United States that complements our pre-Summit activity and also strengthens activities already underway. This plan will be completed by the end of this year.

We have just completed a national consultation to elicit views as to what priority topics should be included in this US Action Plan and to identify issues, possible actions and areas of disagreement with respect to those topics. These consultations took place simultaneously in 17 sites around the United States on 21 May. On 1 June, we will hold a follow-up meeting in Washington D.C. with

rapporteurs from each of these 17 sites. This meeting will synthesize the results of those consultations and reach consensus on priority topics to be addressed in the drafting of the Action Plan. Later in the month, we will establish drafting teams composed of government and civil society representatives to begin work on the actual plan.

FAO is also, clearly, actively pursuing what it sees as its role in the follow-up process. We applaud the seriousness with which FAO views the Summit Plan of Action. Collaboration within the UN system remains an essential element of the Summit commitment. The FAO-IFAD co-chairing arrangement of the ACC follow-up Committee is a good first step. We encourage FAO to also participate fully in the UN system's coordinated response to follow-up on all UN conferences, in addition to the Food Summit. We are, however, concerned by FAO's apparent willingness to ignore the emphasis on national responsibility contained in the Summit's Plan of Action. The Plan of Action clearly recognized the need for beneficiaries to participate at the outset in designing programmes that address food security, rather than rely on donor or institutional packages that may not respond to individual countries or communities needs. This disregard for a country-driven and participatory approach is manifest in FAO's country strategy and country brief process.

In the case of the right to food, we welcome FAO's initiative with the UN Human Rights Centre but note that the Plan of Action clearly invited the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to assume the primary action on this question. We would expect the new High Commissioner to have views on this matter. We firmly believe, however, that the expert human rights bodies, especially the Commission on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, have the mandate and resources within the UN system to direct, as was envisaged in the Summit Plan of Action, the follow-up on this issue and to report back to the CFS on a regular basis. FAO's contribution to ensuring all people have access to safe and nutritious foods is most appropriately aimed at its normative and programme activities that ensure countries can effectively implement their World Food Summit commitments.

Finally, on the issue of Telefood, we would have vastly preferred that the Director-General submit a work plan, including the cost of regular budget personnel involved in supporting this initiative, to the Finance Committee and the Council for approval prior to moving ahead. In the light of the Director-General's assurances, however, that no FAO Regular Programme funds would be used to support Telefood, and given that arrangements for this event are already underway, we accept this as a one-time experiment. We expect the Director-General, however, to provide governing bodies with details of the full costs, how those costs were covered, and the benefits of the Telefood event in order to determine if such fund-raising activities should become a permanent feature.

The report should include information on the impact of FAO fund-raising on other organizations involved in raising funds for food security activities. We are very concerned that the entry of FAO into such fund-raising activities could result in a net reduction in overall voluntary contributions to food security activities. FAO should coordinate with national and international Non-Governmental Organizations to ensure that Telefood attracts additional incremental resources to food security initiatives and does not compete for existing resources. Finally, the report should also include specific information on how and where money raised is to be used.

Mario MOYA PALENCIA (México): Como dijo el señor delegado de Cuba, Presidente del GRULAC, sin duda alguna la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación representó un avance significativo en los esfuerzos que la comunidad internacional debe conceder a la situación del hambre y la malnutrición en el mundo, al asumir un compromiso político de alto nivel. El reto que compete ahora, señor Presidente, es el de aplicar los acuerdos alcanzados para lograr una alimentación adecuada a las poblaciones de los países, muy en especial a los países en desarrollo y de sus grupos más vulnerables. Para lograr dicho objetivo se requiere la participación de todos los actores incluyendo los gobiernos nacionales, los organismos internacionales y otros agentes de la vida nacional e internacional.

Pero, señor Presidente, han pasado ya más de seis meses que se realizó la Cumbre. Ha crecido la población del mundo en otros 45 millones de habitantes, porque crece más o menos 90 millones al año, y de los números que hemos analizado y sobre todo de los problemas de desarrollo y de acceso a la alimentación que se perciben en la comunidad internacional, la situación no parece haber mejorado sino parece estarse agravando. Ya hemos hecho notar que aunque haya algunos indicios de mayor disponibilidad de alimentos, en realidad el crecimiento de esta disponibilidad es menor que hace varias décadas, las reservas también, y que, sobre todo, ha aumentado el número de países con déficit de alimentos y con situaciones de economía cada vez más precaria. Parece ser, señor Presidente, como si la Cumbre de la Alimentación se hubiese hecho una mañana en la isla de Itaca donde Penelope, ayudada por la FAO, tejía una tela muy hermosa y muy positiva, pero después tenía que destejerla porque, pasada la euforia de los compromisos políticos de los más altos directivos del mundo, las cosas seguían exactamente igual o peor, quedando esa tela destejida para tener que volverla a tejer.

El solo hecho de que la ayuda para el desarrollo y, en especial la ayuda para el desarrollo rural y alimentario siga descendiendo después de la Cumbre, es verdaderamente lamentable; ya se anuncian recortes también a los presupuestos de los organismos internacionales, especialmente de la FAO, que tratan de estos asuntos y hasta un pago menor en las cuotas ordinarias de los países más importantes.

Pero por otra parte, señor Presidente, éste es un fenómeno que se tiene que ver como algo compartido, y mi Gobierno quiere subrayar que está haciendo esfuerzos en su ámbito propio, para superar la pobreza y erradicar el hambre y la malnutrición. Mañana mismo, el Presidente de la República va a anunciar el programa de financiamiento del desarrollo en México, de 1997 al año 2000, en que concluye su período, en donde se dedicará una suma sin precedentes al desarrollo social, donde está comprendido, por supuesto, el desarrollo rural y la producción así como el acceso a los alimentos.

Dentro de este esfuerzo, señor Presidente, los esfuerzos a nivel nacional que realizamos para superar la pobreza y erradicar el hambre y la malnutrición, conjugan la promoción integral para atender tres aspectos básicos de las familias en condiciones más desventajosas. De esta manera se responde a uno de los tres ejes básicos de la política de nuestro país: primero, la superación de la pobreza o su conjuración; segundo el desarrollo de la infraestructura básica municipal del empleo y del desarrollo regional; y tercero, propiamente dicho, el Programa de Alimentación, Salud y Educación que para nosotros no pueden separarse. Este programa se llama PESA. Es Programa de Alimentación, Salud y Educación y tiene como objetivo apoyar a las familias en situación de pobreza extrema para que tengan acceso a una alimentación básica, a servicios primarios y preventivos de salud y nutrición, así como la educación primaria y secundaria.

Después de pasar una crisis económica muy seria, con el PESA se atenderá de manera integral las deficiencias alimentarias, los bajos niveles educativos y la deserción escolar, así como las precarias condiciones de salud, nutrición e higiene de las familias en pobreza extrema y así, de esta manera, incidir directamente en tres de las principales causas de la pobreza y la desigualdad: la desnutrición, el bajo nivel educativo y la atención a la salud.

A veces se reprocha a los países en desarrollo que no tienen programas de aplicación de las decisiones de la Cumbre; esto prácticamente es imposible señor Presidente; ningún Gobierno puede mantenerse en su puesto si no tiene unos programas más agresivos que le permita su capacidad económica para hacer frente al desarrollo rural, a la malnutrición y sobre todo al hambre del pueblo. Lo que sucede es que estamos escasos de recursos, sobre todo en el mundo del desarrollo, para poder realizar esta tarea en la mayor profundidad y porque tenemos índices demográficos y rezagos ancestrales que dificultan nuestro camino.

También quiero subrayar aquí, como dijo el señor Embajador de Cuba, Presidente de nuestro Grupo, que debemos proceder a la ampliación del Programa Especial sobre Seguridad Alimentaria de la FAO, 'PESA', de forma equilibrada, permitiendo a todas las regiones beneficiarse igualmente del mismo. Esa ampliación debería hacerse, señor Presidente, de tal manera que además de considerar a los países con bajos ingresos y déficit alimentario, la Secretaría de la FAO haga un análisis a nivel de poblaciones, comunidades marginadas y poblaciones vulnerables en los países, en particular de las regiones como América Latina y el Caribe, incluyendo, incluso, mi país México, los cuales no están exentos de situaciones de extrema pobreza, no obstante su nivel de desarrollo.

Para concluir, señor Presidente, creo que la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación fue sin duda un hito en las labores de nuestra Organización e implicó un serio y grave compromiso, pero no podemos dejarla morir, no podemos dejarla naufragar en el mar proceloso de la indiferencia o sólo pensando que las leyes del mercado van a resolver los ingentes problemas de la desigualdad del hombre.

N. SHIBANI (Syria) (Original language Arabic): Mr Chairman, since this is the first time we take the floor during this Session of the Council we too wish to congratulate you on your wise guidance through this meeting and through past meetings as well. We also thank the Secretariat for preparing these excellent documents and the serious follow-up given to the implementation of the commitments of the World Food Summit. This appears in the statement of the Director-General which was read this morning.

We also express our satisfaction for the remarkable improvement in the production of food commodities in accordance with the conclusions of the aforementioned Summit. We also wish to stress that some points are still unsatisfactory, such as food commodity reserves and the volume of development aid for which there has been no improvement in the field. We would like an improvement in these areas in future reports, especially since we are at the early stages of the implementation of the agreements adopted by the Summit.

Briefly, I would like to stress the fact that my country, Syria, in accordance with its commitments, is implementing the conclusions of the World Food Summit and attaches a great deal of importance to this matter. In the months since the Summit ended, my country has adopted a number of measures which has allowed us to increase grain production in 1997 by 10 percent compared to 1996. My country has also made special efforts to encourage investments in all sectors, the private and public sectors, and my country has also started economic development projects aimed at promoting the least favoured segments of society living in low-rainfall areas. My country has also adopted other measures in line with the conclusions of the World Food Summit.

However, we wish to underline certain difficulties which are an obstacle to our development efforts and prevent us from developing the food element in Syria. Forty percent of food production in Syria requires rainfall and is therefore rainfed, and climatic conditions certainly condition food production and its possible increase. We have therefore found great difficulty in marketing agricultural products, however good, in past years. This is because some countries provide subsidies to their exports. There is also a lack of credits, credits which are necessary to attain higher development rates. To conclude, we wish to support the documents submitted during this Session in general.

We also believe that it is necessary to underscore the following: firstly, to encourage broader participation of centres and agricultural research institutes. We believe that the Secretariat could come up with a formula allowing such broad cooperation. Secondly, to accord priority to the follow-up of international commitments for plant genetic resources so as to allow all countries to benefit. And thirdly, to provide the necessary support to the agricultural information centres and allow developing countries to benefit from the data that are at the disposal of these centres.

Philip MOUMIE (Cameroun): Je voudrai joindre la voix de notre délégation à celle des délégations qui nous ont précédé pour vous adresser nos félicitations et essentiellement aux vice-présidents qui ont été élus ce matin. Le Cameroun a pris part activement à toutes les phases préparatoires du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation ainsi qu'à la phase finale. Beaucoup d'efforts ont été déployés pour définir les objectifs à atteindre en matière de sécurité alimentaire à l'Horizon 2015 mais beaucoup plus pour arrêter un Plan d'action pour y arriver. Nous sommes actuellement à la période critique de mise en oeuvre de ce plan d'action. La délégation du Cameroun souhaite rappeler à la mémoire collective la nécessité qui s'était fait sentir de déterminer les responsabilités des uns et des autres à savoir les Etats, le secteur privé la Communauté internationale notamment à travers ses Organisations internationales dont la FAO, maître d'oeuvre dudit Sommet. Conformément aux engagements pris lors du Sommet, notre pays est en train de tout mettre en oeuvre pour amorcer la résolution des problèmes nombreux et divers qui entravent la sécurité alimentaire de ses populations. Notre délégation voudrait revenir, pour les appuyer, sur les dispositions que la FAO doit prendre pour remplir son rôle annoncé aussi bien en ce qui concerne l'appui aux pays en développement en vue de définir le programme pour l'exécution des projets du Programme spécial pour les pays à faible revenu et à déficit vivrier. Notre délégation appuie fortement cette approche réaliste dont la traduction dans les faits doit être visible dans le programme et budget du biennium 1998-99. Nous avons en tout cas la crainte que si tel n'est pas le cas, beaucoup de retard pourrait être pris et il sera illusoire de vouloir évaluer les choses sans une base claire et simple d'ou l'appui que notre délégation apporte aux actions engagées par le Directeur général dans ce sens, et qui ont fait l'objet de discussions pointues lors du dernier Comité de sécurité alimentaire.

Shahid RASHID (Pakistan): The World Food Summit, which marked a threshold in the life of this Organization, laid down an elaborate range of commitments, objectives and actions for reducing the hungry and malnourished by half by the year 2015. The primary responsibility for this rests with the national governments, but we are all aware that this responsibility is of such a magnitude, it cannot be borne by any single actor. The full involvement and commitment of international institutional bodies, as well as all of the relevant actors of civil society, is necessary for the achievement of the goals established at the Summit. In this regard we are glad that FAO, through its Committee on World Food Security, enjoys a pivotal position in monitoring the implementation of the Plan of Action.

We are heartened to see that the CFS has already initiated a number of steps to ensure the discharge of its mandate. We are also pleased to observe that FAO is working in close collaboration with its partners. The endorsement by the ACC of the arrangements proposed by FAO, jointly with IFAD, for elaborating the work plan for the implementation of the Plan of Action augurs well for the follow-up of the Summit. We would therefore urge FAO to vigorously pursue further steps in the follow-up of the Summit in collaboration with its partners.

We also welcome the initiative taken up by FAO for the development of formulae as a tool to monitor food security and vulnerability. We expect formulae to be elaborated in close consultation with all the relevant bodies, as well as the national governments. In this regard, we are pleased to note the Inter-Agency cooperation and hope it will be further strengthened too.

The steps taken to elaborate the reporting procedures and mechanisms, as well as the reporting format, have also been initiated. We trust this process will be further refined and clarified so that all actors involved in the implementation of the Plan of Action can proceed without any ambiguity, in an efficient manner and without any wastage of resources. We would stress that duplication and overlapping should be avoided so there is no wastage of effort, or resources or extra burdens imposed upon reporting countries.

The role of FAO in assisting in formulation of national strategies for food security and agriculture development is one which can provide the countries in need with necessary boosts such assistance,

taking into account international plans and priorities, will contribute to the realization of the Summit cause. This is a useful input in the process of implementation of the Plan of Action at the national level and we support this initiative.

In conclusion we would also like to state that efforts to raise resources to meet the objectives of the World Food Summit are essential, as the regular resources of the Organization cannot cater to the multifarious needs. We therefore urge exploration of new and innovative methods to increase the resources for the implementation of the Plan of Action and are happy to see that steps have already been taken in this regard, especially in collaboration with financial institutions and other regional bodies.

Patrick PRUVOT (France): La délégation française souhaiterait d'abord apporter un complément à la déclaration faite par le représentant des Pays-Bas au nom de la Communauté européenne et de ses Etats membres. Ce complément concerne les moyens de promouvoir le suivi du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation auquel le Directeur général se référait ce matin lorsqu'il évoquait par exemple l'opération alimentaire. La France entend participer à cette promotion du Sommet en relayant au niveau national la campagne d'information et de communication sur les thèmes de la sécurité alimentaire et sur les résultats du Sommet mondial sur l'alimentation. Elle le fera tout particulièrement en direction des médias francophones comme elle l'avait déjà fait dans la phase de préparation du Sommet, à savoir, en mettant des moyens et les compétences de ses experts en appui au service de la FAO. La France veillera par ailleurs à ce que cette campagne soit réalisée en France en parfaite concertation avec les organisations non gouvernementales nationales.

En second lieu, nous voudrions aussi rappeler à propos des stratégies nationales que la France avait remis, lors du Sommet, un rapport national qui détaillait les moyens disponibles ou envisagés en France pour assurer la sécurité alimentaire nationale mais aussi pour participer à la réduction de l'insécurité alimentaire mondiale. Nous avons d'ailleurs noté avec intérêt que le Secrétariat avait adopté un plan proche de celui du document français pour établir celui des documents de stratégie nationale proposé aux Etats membres. Des dispositions ont été prises au plan intérieur pour assurer en France le suivi des progrès qui seront réalisés. Ces dispositions permettent d'assurer une coordination interministérielle indispensable et d'associer étroitement les Organisations non-gouvernementales aux actions spécifiques qui visent à atteindre les objectifs fixés par le Plan d'action.

T. SUDO (Japan): I would like to remind the Member Nations of the significance of the result of the World Food Summit, where many Heads of State and Government discussed and re-pledged their political view to achieve food security for all and to eradicate hunger and malnutrition in all countries. The follow-up to the World Food Summit has a multi-dimensional nature which requires actions at the national, inter-governmental and the inter-agency levels and among these, above all, efforts at the national levels are indispensable.

Regarding measures to achieve world food security, Japan recognizes the importance of the adequate combination of three elements: domestic production, food imports and stock piling. From this point of view, I would like to stress the importance of commitment in Commitment 3 of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, which reads as follows: "We will pursue sustainable food, agriculture, forestry, fisheries and rural development policies and practices which are essential to adequate and reliable food supplies at the household, national, regional and global levels considering the multi-functional character of agriculture." To this end I would like to stress the important role of sustainable food production in each country. With regard to countries suffering from hunger and malnutrition, efforts will be made not only to implement emergency food aid effectively, but also to improve food production through the technical and economical assistance of international society.

With regard to the standard procedure and format of the report on implementation of the Summit Plan of Action, it should be concise, flexible and realistic, bearing in mind the importance of its implementation by all Members.

Luigi FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy): Mr Chairman, first of all let me congratulate you for the excellent way you are leading our work and for your important Chairmanship.

Let me raise a few points in line with the statement made by the Presidency of the European Union and suggest a few complementary elements. First of all we are convinced that the target of 2015, to reduce by half the number of the undernourished people, will be achieved if national governments and other organizations will take their responsibilities, undertaking urgent actions in accordance with the commitment in the objectives of the plan. Therefore, we think that the reports on the follow-up action should contain information on the measures taken in relation to each commitment and, at that point, I think that the Telefood programme, for which we are also in an advanced stage of organization, could help to recall those commitments.

We would like to also express satisfaction with the statements made by the Director-General of FAO this morning, as well as by the President of the World Bank, by the Executive Director of the World Food Programme and by the President of IFAD, which confirmed the willingness to provide each Organization's support for the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

It is our view that a very important result of the World Food Summit is the new comprehensive framework it offers for looking at the food situation in a food security perspective. Within this new framework, supply and demand factors are well balanced in assessing the nature of food insecurity and in drawing up a plan of action aimed at improving the situation for the future. It is our impression that the documents we are examining here, while accurately referring to the present situation on the supply side, tend to pay comparatively less and not fully adequate attention to the demand side. We obviously have nothing contrary to the attention paid to factors influencing production, trade, aid and thus food availability. We think, however, that there is a risk here of confusing the global food situation with food supply, the latter being only part of the former, although certainly a most important one. Should this be the case, we would also risk confusing the specific factors influencing food supply with the broader set of factors responsible for the present food situation and the unacceptable level of insecurity associated with it. This is not a criticism to otherwise accurate documentation, but a warning and a call to all of us on the need to constantly keep a balanced view in line with the result reached in the Summit, never forgetting that ultimately food insecurity is the insecurity of individuals and families deprived of an adequate access to food.

Another point referred to paragraph 21 of document CL 111/8, which recalled the vital contribution that forest and forest products made to food security and poverty alleviation. This is something in which I would like to stress the role of FAO, which has the institutional vocation of guaranteeing the balanced utilization of natural resources. I will come back to this point when we discuss the COFO report, but I would like to stress now the importance we attach to the role of FAO. We think that after the panel in New York has concluded its mandate, competencies on forestry should come back to FAO, which has the longest and largest experience in the sector and the primacy that nobody could contest.

J.C. MACHIN (United Kingdom): Allow me first to say that the United Kingdom delegation fully endorses the statement that was made earlier by the delegation of the Netherlands, on behalf of the European Community and its Member States, and in particular the recommendation that FAO prepare country briefs on food security and agricultural strategies only at the specific request of Member Countries. We too are strongly of the view that the progress must be country-led and under the ownership of the respective governments.

Allow me to make some other observations, but specifically on the Special Programme for Food Security. My delegation's fundamental wish is to ensure that FAO's resources are used to the very best advantage of those suffering from hunger and poverty in developing countries. We are seriously concerned that the Special Programme is not an effective use of FAO's resources. I will deal with our concerns under three headings: first the rationale for this Programme, secondly its content and thirdly the all-important question of the resources required to fund it.

First of all, on Programme rationale, the World Food Summit made clear that alleviating poverty is the first requirement for improving food security. While increasing sustainable food production is essential to food security in the long term, and one in which FAO has a crucial role to play, the Special Programme does not, in our view, effectively address the needs of the poorest and cannot live up to FAO's claim that it is the "spearhead" for achievement of FAO's goals in each country. A focus on food production alone will not, in our view, deal adequately with the multiple and complex causes of the lack of access to food experienced by the poorest. There is no point in farmers producing more food if there is no effective demand for it. Farmers often respond very well to increasing demand without external assistance.

Where assistance to food production is justified, the first priorities are often policy and administrative improvements rather than technical interventions based on demonstrations of standard packages. In our view, FAO will have a greater impact on poverty alleviation by working with others in the areas of policy and administrative reform than by implementing small projects. Technical interventions are, most likely, to be justified in lower potential areas to support the poorest and least food secure communities, most exposed to risk and with least access to resources, not, again in our view, in the areas with better potential targeted by the Special Programme.

Let me now turn to the Programme's content. Any technical interventions require three things: first, very carefully considered problem analysis and design; secondly, particular attention to sustainability in specific local circumstances; and thirdly, comprehensive monitoring and evaluation. It is not clear to my delegation that FAO is meeting these requirements in the Special Programme.

Next, and this is a fundamental point, of the four main components of the Programme's pilot phase an analysis of constraints should have the first call on resources. I think that is self-evident. But in a number of countries it has not been carried out at all under the pilot phase. Where a constraint analysis has been carried out, the constraints identified have been at an administrative and policy level. They were not technical constraints. The pilot phase activities, therefore, appear to be addressing the wrong questions. This reinforces our earlier point about the rationale for the Programme.

No information is available on what the Programme has achieved so far, in particular for the poorest groups. We believe that individual projects and the direction of the Programme as a whole should be subject to objective evaluation before any extension is considered.

Finally, let me turn to the matter of resources, which as I said is all- important. FAO has not said what total resources it intends to devote to the Special Programme. Secondly, it appears to us, that other FAO services to developing countries will be deprived of resources by the focus on the Programme. FAO has not made clear what the impact on these services will be. It follows that the Programme has an opportunity cost. Until that cost is made clear, the membership of the Organization is not able to make an informed choice as to the future of the Programme.

ByungHA CHUNG (Korea, Republic of): First of all, my delegation appreciates the Secretariat's efforts to take concrete follow-up measures of the World Food Summit. I believe that all contents in the Secretariat's documents will be helpful and useful guidance for each country. In addition to the Secretariat's documents, I would like to express some points concerning the follow-up measures of the World Food Summit.

The World Food Summit provided an insight into various causes of food insecurity, including hunger and malnutrition, and has broadened the range of food security issues. In this connection, one declaration established not only reducing the number of undernourished people to half by 2015, but also achieving food security for all, as well as the global food security. Accordingly, they should not be limited to eradicating hunger and malnutrition but they should face the various causes of food insecurity, including difficulties which the food importing countries are confronted with. The follow-up measures should also be handled from this prospective.

I would also like to point out that clear conveyance of the outcome of the World Food Summit to other international organizations, such as the WTO and OCD, is an important follow-up measure to the World Food Summit.

The World Food Summit holds its significance in that agricultural issues related to food security were not limited to trade issues, but were approached from an overall agricultural prospective. I hereby urge that the Secretariat exerts more efforts to convey this, of the World Food Summit, more accurately to other international organizations.

Felipe H. PAOLILLO (Uruguay): Mi delegación ve en el seguimiento del Plan de Acción de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación una de las principales tareas, si no la principal, que tendrá la FAO en los próximos años. No vamos a insistir aquí en la importancia de la Cumbre, en lo que todos estamos de acuerdo, ni en su carácter de hito decisivo en la evolución de la cooperación internacional, que hace que podamos hablar con relación a FAO de un *antes* y un *después* de la Cumbre.

La Cumbre ha impuesto a los gobiernos y a la FAO responsabilidades y tareas adicionales de cuya ejecución depende de que el Plan de Acción cristalice en un esfuerzo de cooperación efectivo y material, para lograr la seguridad alimentaria a todo nivel. Por eso es que me ha sorprendido mucho, probablemente porque soy un recién llegado a este Foro, cuando comprobé que en momentos en que se habla de la consecución de los ambiciosos objetivos de la Cumbre Mundial y de la ejecución del Plan de Acción, se manejen las hipótesis de crecimiento nominal cero o incluso, como se habló en algún momento, de reducción de presupuesto cuando se trata de proveer recursos a la Organización en cuyas manos precisamente está buena parte de esta tarea. Esto sin duda le quita credibilidad a los compromisos que nuestros gobiernos asumieron al más alto nivel y, desde un punto de vista de la opinión pública mundial, le quita credibilidad también a la cooperación internacional en general. Lo que deja más perplejo es que todo esto ocurra en un área de la cooperación que involucra valores tan delicados, al referirse a millones de seres humanos que padecen hambre.

Para mi delegación, en ningún momento de la historia de FAO ha sido más inapropiado que el momento actual para hablar de reducción de presupuesto o de crecimiento nominal que, como el Director General lo reconoce en su introducción al resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto, implica una reducción substancial de las actividades y del producto substantivo de los programas en beneficio de los Miembros. A la Cumbre Mundial nuestros gobiernos acudieron para solucionar un problema y de la Cumbre salieron con un nuevo compromiso de cuyo cumplimiento la FAO constituye un elemento fundamental. En esta situación, las alternativas de reducción o de crecimiento nominal cero no son alternativas verdaderas porque son simplemente abortivas de los objetivos propuestos.

En cuanto a las tareas que le incumbe a la FAO en el futuro de materia de seguimiento, la del establecimiento de instituciones y procedimientos para la presentación de los informes, es una de las principales y una de las más delicadas; en este sentido, en el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria se discutió ampliamente el asunto y se dieron los lineamientos generales sobre los que deberían de organizarse estos procedimientos.

Nuestra delegación insiste que en esta tarea se tenga en cuenta la experiencia generada en otros ámbitos de la cooperación internacional, en lo que se refiere al control del cumplimiento de obligaciones y presentación de informes. En particular, en las áreas de obligaciones relacionadas con el medio ambiente y en el respeto de los derechos humanos. Deberá asegurarse que este ejercicio de presentación de informes sea simple pero completo, reflejando la información relativa a todos los compromisos asumidos en la Declaración de Roma, se eviten duplicaciones y se haga todo lo posible para facilitar las tareas de los gobiernos.

Debe a toda costa evitarse lo ocurrido en otros campos, en que los estados que deben informar sobre el cumplimiento de ciertas obligaciones substantivas, no pudieron cumplir ni siquiera con la obligación procesal de informar, porque los requerimientos excedieron la capacidad institucional o los recursos de que disponían dichos gobiernos. Por lo tanto, deberá de actuarse con mucha cautela y basándose en experiencias de otros Foros a los efectos de una organización de los procedimientos que haga efectivo el cumplimiento de la obligación de informar.

Moussa Bocar LY (Sénegal): Monsieur le Président, il convient de rendre hommage au Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale et à son Bureau et pour cela vous me permettez de faire une mention spéciale à M. David Smith dont on mesurera l'absence qui sera vraiment ressentie.

En lançant l'idée du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation, beaucoup étaient sceptiques mais la préparation a montré une synergie qu'on ne soupçonnait pas des Etats Membres de la FAO, des ONG, des différents acteurs de la société civile. Et pourtant, après un dur travail, on est arrivé à élaborer une Déclaration politique et un Plan d'action adoptés au plus haut niveau par nos chefs d'Etat et chefs de Gouvernement. En lançant ce processus au Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale, on nous disait qu'il fallait faire en sorte que cette Conférence ne fût pas une conférence de plus. Mais à qui revenait cette tâche ? A nous tous, et nous avons tous fait en sorte que cette Conférence puisse aboutir à une Déclaration politique et à un Plan d'action. Maintenant, pour que cette Conférence ne soit pas "une de plus", c'est à nous, en mettant en oeuvre le Plan d'action et la Déclaration politique, qu'il revient d'assumer nos responsabilités. Le Plan d'action l'a bien compris qui met l'accent sur la responsabilité nationale tout en accentuant au niveau de l'Engagement 6 cet esprit de coopération et de collaboration internationale; du reste le Paragraphe 53 e) exhorte les partenaires au développement à mobiliser et à optimiser l'utilisation des ressources techniques et financières au niveau nécessaire pour assurer la sécurité alimentaire durable. Le Plan d'action a tracé de façon claire et précise les responsabilités qui reviennent aux différents acteurs que nous sommes tous ensemble.

2015 permettra de mesurer les réalisations concrètes de notre volonté politique qui a conduit à l'adoption du Plan d'action et de la Déclaration politique et de voir notre volonté réelle de ne pas faire de ce Sommet une conférence de plus.

Le Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale a bien commencé son travail en traçant les lignes d'action qui nous attendent. L'élaboration des rapports nationaux à ce sujet constitue un élément fondamental de ce processus. De même, bien que il y ait eu beaucoup de scepticisme nous sommes confiants, et nous devons le dire satisfaits, qu'à travers des consultations inter-agences, on ait abouti à une approche commune sur la proposition conjointe de la FAO et du FIDA pour le suivi au niveau du CAC inter-institutions de ce Plan d'action. Nous pensons que les bases d'une réussite sont là jetées, bases d'une collaboration inter-agences qui trouve sa source à Rome même où se trouvent la FAO, le FIDA et le PAM. De même, le Secrétariat de la FAO a pris des initiatives concrètes. L'une de ces initiatives évoquée ce matin par M. de Haen constitue la consultation sur le système d'information et de cartes sur l'insécurité et la vulnérabilité alimentaires. C'est un outil précieux dont il s'agit de poursuivre l'élaboration. Mais ici nous rappelons que malheureusement pour nous autres pays en développement et surtout pour les pays africains que mon pays a l'honneur de présider en cette année, la tâche est difficile, comme l'avait rappelé du reste il y a quelques mois de cela l'éminente Représentante du Canada.

En effet, dans notre continent, la collecte et le traitement des statistiques constituent une tâche léonienne. Aussi attendons-nous de la FAO qu'elle nous apporte une assistance concrète pour faire de ce système à naître, le SICIVA, une réalité concrète au service de nos populations les plus démunies. De même, la FAO, en associant bien sûr les gouvernements, a pu procéder avec ceux-ci à la conception et à l'élaboration de stratégies de développement national agricole Horizon 2010. A condition que les services nationaux intéressés puissent intervenir dans tout ce processus, et je crois que c'est assuré dans la mesure où l'adoption finale se fera au niveau des différents conseils ministériels des différents Etats, je crois que cette initiative vient à son heure et, ayant eu à participer à cette table ronde ici même, nous avons mesuré le degré d'utilité de ce processus. En effet, autour des représentants d'Etats Membres, les différentes institutions internationales financières et de développement se sont réunies et ont analysé chacune en ce qui la concerne l'aspect de stratégie qui l'intéressait, faisant ainsi converger les différents efforts vers l'élaboration finale de la stratégie qui ressort de la responsabilité suprême et ultime des Etats Membres et d'eux seuls. Nous ne voyons donc pas ici où devrait se situer le problème dans la mesure où au fond l'objectif d'augmentation de la production alimentaire trouve sa place centrale dans le Plan d'action que nos chefs d'Etats ont adopté.

De même, nous avons pu mesurer combien les organisations internationales ont trouvé cela utile dans la mesure où cela leur permettait de définir une action complémentaire. De même, l'initiative de Telefood, comme l'a bien souligné le Représentant de la France, permet de sensibiliser toutes les composantes de la société aux résultats du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation. Mon pays, tout comme la France, l'a prise très au sérieux en créant un groupe de travail qui puisse réunir tous les acteurs de la société dans cette initiative de Alimentel de façon à pouvoir concrétiser nos engagements, rechercher des ressources supplémentaires pour financer les décisions du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation.

Nous voudrions pour finir souligner le caractère essentiel et prioritaire du Programme spécial de sécurité alimentaire. Ce n'est pas nous pays à faible revenu et à déficit vivrier, ni nous pays en développement qui l'avons inventé. C'est le Conseil, organe directeur suprême après la Conférence, qui l'a adopté comme programme prioritaire en 1994 ici même, devant nous tous ici présents, du moins, la plupart peut-être. Nous nous souviendrons que le Conseil l'avait déclaré programme prioritaire après en avoir analysé toutes les composantes. Or, voilà qu'on nous pose des problèmes de conception et de philosophie. En tout cas, en ce qui nous concerne au Sénégal, après une phase pilote réussie, le Programme spécial est entré en 1997 dans une phase opérationnelle élargie qui voit la convergence de l'intervention des organisations paysannes maîtresses d'oeuvre du programme, des experts compétents de la République démocratique du Viet Nam, des services techniques nationaux et de la FAO.

Au niveau de ce Programme, formé de petits projets ruraux adaptés au milieu et à moindre coût, la participation paysanne, la responsabilisation des bénéficiaires, l'exécution par les organisations paysannes elles-mêmes constituent les mots-clés de ce programme. Ainsi les organisations paysannes ont en charge la mise en oeuvre et l'exécution de ce programme. Il s'y ajoute un programme de formation inter-organisations paysannes de façon à ce que celles-ci puissent vraiment prendre en main leur destin. Au plan de la conception, je crois que la Banque mondiale est une organisation indiquée pour mesurer le degré de conceptualisation de ces différentes stratégies et programmes et pourtant c'est la Banque mondiale elle-même qui a souligné ici devant nous au CSA la pertinence de ce programme, mieux qui, par une action concrète, s'est engagée en signant avec le Directeur général un accord pour appuyer le programme spécial. Qui mieux que cette institution internationale pouvait donner un crédit à ce programme? De plus, la Banque africaine de développement qui vient juste de se réunir à Abidjan, a donné une évaluation positive de ce programme.

Je signale en outre que la Banque africaine de développement a également signé un accord dans le même sens que la Banque mondiale en faveur de ce Programme spécial. Je crois que le processus va se poursuivre avec les autres organisations régionales financières qui couvriront les autres

régions que connaît notre monde. Je crois que la preuve est faite de l'utilité et de la pertinence de ce programme. Maintenant je crois qu'il s'agit, par nos différents concours, par nos différents apports - car je souligne que le Sénégal apporte financièrement sa contribution à ce programme - que chacun au niveau national et au niveau international s'y mette pour faire de ce programme une réussite et, en passant, nous devons souligner la contribution financière italienne importante ainsi que la Coopération sud-sud magnifiée par la participation des experts vietnamiens à ce Programme spécial au Sénégal. D'ailleurs nous pensons que d'autres pays partenaires du Sud pourront également participer à ce programme. Il s'agit de mesurer par une contribution concrète, la détermination et la volonté politique de chacun de nous de faire de ce Sommet mondial de l'alimentation, comme je le disais au départ, mieux qu'une conférence de plus.

Enfin, et dans le cadre de ces engagements pris au sein de ce Sommet mondial de l'alimentation, je devrais finir là où j'aurais dû commencer en redisant notre fierté de vous voir vous, membre du Groupe des 77, présider avec tant de brio et depuis le début, notre Conseil, organe appelé à jouer un rôle essentiel dans le suivi du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation. Avec vous je veux féliciter également le Bureau qui est composé d'hommes compétents. Nous soulignons que, comme par hasard, malheureusement, nous ne trouvons aucune femme dans ce Bureau, contrairement aux engagements que nous avons tous pris ici au sein du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation.

Roberto O. VILLAMBROSA (Argentina): Señor Presidente, mi delegación concuerda con los esfuerzos que deben realizar los países a nivel nacional para mejorar la situación alimentaria de sus poblaciones y en tal sentido, próximamente transmitirá a la Secretaría varios documentos y elementos relativos a la situación de la nutrición en la Argentina cumpliendo con los postulados que se han previsto en la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación.

Como usted nos invitó, señor Presidente, a referirnos no solamente a la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación sino también al Programa Especial de Seguridad Alimentaria, quiero decirle que la Argentina, fiel a los postulados y a los objetivos que se ha fijado la Organización, desea ratificar su tradicional compromiso de contribuir a disminuir las dificultades que enfrentan los países respecto de su seguridad alimentaria. No obstante su característica de país en desarrollo, es consciente de otorgar, una sustentabilidad a los proyectos que ha encarado la Organización. En tal sentido, y ya nos referiremos cuando llegue el momento, mi país es donante del Programa Mundial de Alimentos y ya nos concentraremos en el punto a que se refiere esto, que creo que es el 19. Ello, sin perjuicio de otras iniciativas que mi país ha diseñado y puesto en práctica para la Cooperación Sur-Sur, como es el caso del Fondo Nacional de Cooperación Horizontal para la Cooperación Sur-Sur.

Quiero destacar, señor Presidente, que, como lo hiciera en su momento el Grupo Latinoamericano del Caribe, la República Argentina ratifica el compromiso asumido ante la Organización con respecto al apoyo al Programa Especial para la Seguridad Alimentaria, y en tal sentido quiero anunciar que mi país está analizando detalladamente la posibilidad de implementar su participación en el esquema de dicho programa, a través del componente de Cooperación Técnica. En este sentido, entendemos que el proyecto Bolivia ofrece un adecuado marco que es un proyecto que se encuentra en su fase piloto. En este entendimiento, mi país espera llevar a cabo, en el momento oportuno, un encuentro de carácter técnico al fin de intercambiar ideas con los diferentes aspectos involucrados en este proyecto y evaluar adecuadamente las eventuales formas de cooperación en un análisis concreto del proyecto Bolivia.

Somos conscientes de la responsabilidad que tenemos para hacer efectivos los fines que ha trazado la Organización, pero también los países en desarrollo y en particular los países del área de América Latina, que cuentan con desigualdades en las diferentes regiones internas de sus propios países. Los llamados en mi región "bolsones de pobreza rural" son una realidad en América Latina y es por eso que mi región requiere de la cooperación internacional en el marco del Programa de Cooperación Técnica. Y por otra parte, también las obligaciones que las últimas negociaciones comerciales en el marco de la Ronda Uruguay nos han establecido y que, como en el caso del

Codex Alimentarius, nos llaman a ratificar la necesidad de una cooperación del Programa de Cooperación Técnica para nuestra propia región y para los temas de desarrollo rural, es decir que con esto, señor Presidente, quiero terminar mi intervención en la esperanza de que el componente de Cooperación Internacional y los objetivos que la propia Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación nos fijó, contribuyan para poder mirar con un espíritu abierto las posibilidades en el marco de esta Cooperación Internacional que nos ofrece la FAO.

Nasreddine RIMOUCHE (Algeria) (Original language Arabic): Allow me, Chairman, to thank you for the presentation of this Agenda item. We also wish to express our satisfaction about the many explanations and clarifications provided by the Secretariat on a number of occasions and especially during the sessions of the Programme and Finance Committee, in particular concerning the relationship between the Programme for Technical Cooperation and the Special Programme for Food Security.

We are convinced that the misunderstandings and ambiguities have now disappeared. We would like to seize this opportunity to reaffirm our support of the SPFS and also the interest we feel for the Technical Cooperation Programme and the need for increasing its resources so that this Programme can meet the expectations of developing countries.

With regard to the follow-up for the implementation of the Commitments of the Summit, we believe that it is necessary to stress the responsibility that national governments have for the implementation of these decisions in line with the principles of national sovereignty.

Furthermore, we also wish to stress the importance of international cooperation on an equal basis among states. It is also necessary to ensure that all those parties which are in society and all states cooperate in the implementation of the Commitments and Resolutions.

We also stress the importance of the coordinating role of this Organization in the follow-up to the Summit, in collaboration with Member Nations and the various institutions concerned, this through the CFS.

Furthermore, with regard to what is to be done from now to the year 2015, although FAO has an important catalyst role to play, it is states which are responsible and national reports should be provided. The Organization can very well help draft these reports, provide coordination and use the information provided by states. In this regard I would like to say that my country has received a draft report from FAO which was circulated to all departments concerned, and preliminary remarks have already been provided on this draft report.

With regard to the reports on the progress achieved in the implementation of the World Food Summit, we believe that we should further analyze the matter and lay down concerted criteria, agreed upon by Member Nations, so that there can be a common approach in the preparation of these reports which should be submitted regularly to the CFS. We also believe that it is necessary to have a common, joint procedure and a single format for national reports as well.

We are in a pilot phase in the preparation of these reports and, though these reports do not respond to a clearly defined methodology, we subscribe to the suggestions made by the CFS, which urges us to follow the outline and format of the Commitments of the World Food Summit, at least for the time being until a new meeting of the CFS is convened.

The implementation, the field of decisions and recommendations of the Summit cannot take place unless assistance is provided to the countries that require such assistance for the implementation of decisions and resolutions. This aid, which should be provided to these countries, is an imperative. If these countries had had their own resources to achieve their own food security, they would not have needed a World Food Summit. The attainment of the food security objective is the very *raison*

d'être of the support that countries gave to holding such a Summit. Food security cannot be achieved unless there is collective responsibility. These are the Commitments adopted during the World Food Summit. This should also help do away with imbalances, both domestically and internationally. There is a legitimate urge not to ignore the commitments and the pledges made during the World Food Summit.

Mohammad MEJBANUDDIN (Bangladesh): After the Food Summit the commitments made at the highest political levels, we believe the Summit commitments have generated a momentum towards reducing hunger and malnutrition around the globe. But even with all our commitments things have not improved as we have all desired, we understand that although the national governments will take major responsibilities for removing hunger, concerted international actions are also needed. In this regard, we welcome this Special Programme for Food Security that has been launched to address problems of food security and poverty.

We appreciate greatly the Director-General of FAO's initiative to mobilize resources, necessary funds for this purpose. In this respect the signing of agreements between FAO, the World Bank and the African Development Bank is a step in the right direction. However, in order to concentrate activities on all countries, SPFS, at least for the time being, should focus more on LIFDCs.

At our national level the Government of Bangladesh has taken seriously the commitments it had made during the Summit. The Government of Bangladesh, UNDP and FAO have agreed on the undertaking of a comprehensive review and analysis of the policy, institutional and investment programming issues affecting the food security of poor households. We believe that joint and concerted actions and cooperation will go a long way in alleviating the poverty and ensuring food security for vulnerable groups in the society.

Adel Mahmoud ABOUL-NAGA (Egypt) (Original language Arabic): We have given our support to the implementation of the recommendations of the World Food Summit. We have dealt with all these different points during the meetings that were held and I would like therefore to confine myself to making just a few points.

Regarding document CL 112/9, we wish to stress what is said in paragraph 11 that FAO should use its best endeavours to participate in the control of desertification and also ensure cooperation with the international agricultural research bodies, and paragraph 24, the strengthening of WTO- related activities and the strengthening of national capacity in developing countries. We likewise support what is stated in paragraph 26 of the document concerning research, programmes and the management of natural resources and technology transfer. We also support paragraph 27 which concerns the crucial role played by women in agriculture.

With regard to document CL 112/15, my delegation wishes to support what is stated in paragraph 36, which concerns the participation of the Organization in designing a strategy for food security as well as the role of the governments concerned and their participation, with the support and assistance of FAO. Likewise, we support what is stated in paragraph 38, the three different approaches suggested for the preparation of reports, and we likewise underscore the follow-up of the Summit on a regional and sub-regional level. We likewise endorse paragraph 39; we believe that national reports should be submitted every two years as suggested in paragraph 41.

Furthermore, we also attach great importance to the food insecurity and vulnerability information and mapping system, and we support what was stated by Algeria and Senegal concerning the assistance that should be provided to the countries that require such aid in preparing national reports. With regard to Special Programme on Food Security, we have stressed the importance of this programme and the great interest that developing countries, be they African or whatever, attach to it. We have stressed this at the CFS and we support what was stated by a colleague and friend, the Honourable delegate of Algeria, with regard to the clarity that should exist between these

programmes and the Technical Cooperation Programme. I wish to stress that these programmes should be considered as programmes which belong to the countries concerned. I also stress the importance of national strategies. We also attach great importance to South-South cooperation in this regard and we welcome the support provided by international financial institutions that have provided funds for the implementation of such programmes.

B. SANDAMU (Zimbabwe): Mr Chairman, we would like to join other delegations on complimenting FAO for the detailed papers they have prepared for discussion. We are pleased to learn that agricultural production increased in the last years and particularly so in Africa.

Zimbabwe has also been fortunate in the past two years with agricultural production, growing by over 40 percent in 1996, albeit coming from a drought-induced low base of 1995. Estimates for 1997 show an increase of over 7 percent in total agricultural production; however staple food crops, such as maize, sorghum and millets will register a slight decline compared to 1996 due to excessive rains experienced in January and February which resulted in waterlogging, leaching of plant nutrients, pests and weed infestations.

There is once again, after two devastating droughts in the 1990s, food self-sufficiency at national level. Food insecurity at household levels is still experienced by a large section of the population. Access to food at affordable prices on a continuous basis is the primary national food security problem.

The fundamental goal of the Government of Zimbabwe's agricultural policy is to raise the productivity and incomes of smallholder agriculture through a process of commercialization leading to enhanced rural purchasing power, an expanded base for industrial growth and improved backward and forward linkages with other sectors. Long-term goals are to reverse land degradation and to raise sectoral output above population growth on a sustainable basis that ensures food security at both household and national levels.

Zimbabwe has benefitted from external assistance in agricultural development and would like to acknowledge FAO's intervention in irrigation development; development of a framework for national agricultural research planning; elaboration of a national programme for the development, processing and marketing of small grains; and elaboration of a training programme in marketing for the agricultural unions.

Zimbabwe now has an almost free market for the production, marketing and export of agricultural products, providing exceptional incentives for farmers. The policy options that are being pursued by Zimbabwe in agriculture are consistent with goals and commitments of the World Food Summit as contained in the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

We have indicated our willingness to participate in the Special Programme for Food Security in an effort to improve household food security and alleviate poverty.

Arrangements for Telefood in Zimbabwe have already been set in motion working very closely with the FAO Sub-regional Office for Southern and East Africa. To show the measure of our support for the initiative, the task force on Telefood is being chaired by the Permanent Secretary for Agriculture.

Finally, Mr Chairman, we are honoured to host the FAO Sub-regional Office for Southern and East Africa, and given that Zimbabwe co-ordinates Food Security in the Southern African Development Community, FAO can easily link the Southern African Region through Zimbabwe.¹

EL PRESIDENTE: Con esto se cierra esta sesión sobre el Tema 5 de nuestra Agenda; me quedan todavía varios Miembros del Consejo que me han pedido hacer uso de la palabra: Tailandia, Rumania,

¹ Statement inserted in the verbatim records on request.

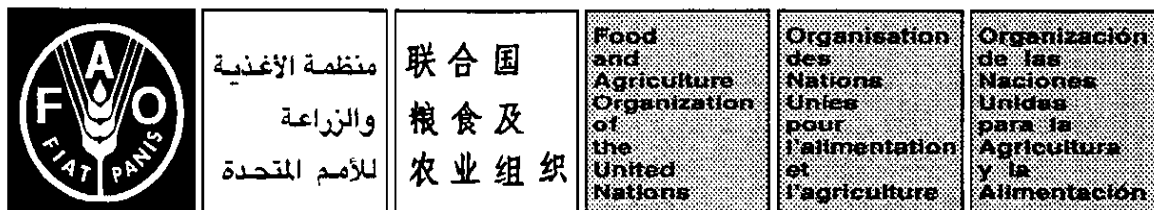
Uganda, Sudáfrica e India. Bien, la lista obviamente queda abierta y les convoco para que mañana nos encontremos en esta sala a las 09:30 en punto. Recuerden ustedes que la interpretación está ya pagada y que cada minuto que pase resta eficiencia a este Consejo y por tanto son recursos perdidos.

The meeting rose at 18.00 hours

La séance est levée à 18 h 00

Se levanta la sesión a las 18.00 horas

3 June 1997



COUNCIL

CONSEIL

CONSEJO

Hundred and Twelfth Session • Cent onzième session • 112º período de sesiones

THIRD PLENARY MEETING
TROISIEME SEANCE PLENIERE
TERCERA SESION PLENARIA

3 June 1997

The Third Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.45 hours
Mr José Ramón López Portillo,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding

La troisième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 45
sous la présidence de M. José Ramón López Portillo,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la tercera sesión plenaria a las 9.45 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. José Ramón López Portillo,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

- II WORLD FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SITUATION** (continued)
- II SITUATION MONDIALE DE L'ALIMENTATION ET DE L'AGRICULTURE** (suite)
- II SITUACION MUNDIAL DE LA AGRICULTURA Y LA ALIMENTACION** (continuación)
- 5 Follow-up to the World Food Summit** (continued)
- 5 Suivi du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation** (suite)
- 5 Seguimiento de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación** (continuación)

Mrs Kajonwan ITHARATTANA (Thailand): Regarding the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and World Food Summit Plan of Action, I think that we all agree, in principle, to achieving food security for all and an eradication of hunger and malnutrition. Therefore, the implementation of programmes needs to be carried out to achieve these objectives. In this regard, a follow-up to the World Food Summit, will help us to assess the progress of the action.

However, due to limited budget, some countries may not implement the programmes as planned. This would lead to a failure of their programmes and affect the objective of food security accordingly.

Meanwhile, the national food security information system and also, food insecurity and vulnerability information and mapping system at national level will be carried out, due to World Food Summit follow-up. To implement these activities, financial burden will be borne to the governments. We think that the burden should not be borne to the individual governments, particularly, to developing countries.

George APOSTOIU (Roumanie): Sur la question du suivi du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation, beaucoup d'options ont déjà été faites par de nombreux membres du Conseil. Je voudrais, si vous le voulez bien, en ajouter encore quelques-unes. La question soumise à notre examen s'inscrit dans la logique d'une conclusion commune. La sécurité alimentaire de l'humanité sera conditionnée par le développement des capacités de production agricole et le sens de la solidarité nationale et internationale.

La Roumanie attache une grande importance aux décisions du Sommet et est préoccupée de trouver le cadre adéquat pour leur mise en application. La responsabilité nationale est engagée; mon pays conçoit d'assurer sa sécurité alimentaire par le développement et la mise en valeur de son propre potentiel ainsi que par sa participation à la coopération internationale.

Le moment opportun d'une évaluation significative sera saisi pour informer la FAO par un rapport. Ma délégation considère que le cadre du Comité pour la sécurité alimentaire est adéquat pour les échanges de vue sur les progrès enregistrés dans différents pays en matière de sécurité alimentaire. Les informations et/ou les rapports restent de compétence et de responsabilité nationales. D'autre part, pour la Roumanie, les engagements pris par nos Chefs d'Etat et de gouvernements respectifs à Rome ont une valeur égale. Ils peuvent nous inspirer dans nos efforts visant à trouver des solutions aux problèmes de la sécurité alimentaire. Pour nous, la Déclaration de Rome et le Plan d'action définissent une perspective encourageante et offrent un large éventail de possibilités de collaboration qui peuvent être concrétisées dans l'esprit d'un partenariat réel sur le plan international.

Kezimbira Lawrence MIYINGO (Uganda): Uganda has identified areas that the agriculture sector needs to solve in order to fulfil the World Food Summit goals. Even before the World Food Summit recommendations were made, Uganda, through its Head of State, had pledged to the nation at the last general elections in May 1996, to see that agriculture is modernized and will become the basis for poverty eradication from Ugandans. Every home was to be self sufficient in food. We started the preparation for the food security before the World Food Summit.

The Minister of Agriculture organized a retreat in which it invited all stakeholders of the sector and reviewed the way forward to increase production and poverty eradication.

Our political organization and governance, which has decentralized power and has permitted participatory approach to all stakeholders from grass root, has discussed a document that is to be the way forward to modernizing agriculture and achieving food self-sufficiency. Forecast has been directed at five important areas, namely, the provision of water for production, that is, water for live stock and water for irrigation. This is an area that the special programme for food security could greatly assist Uganda.

Two, we have forecasted the provision of high yielding planting and stocking material for our farmers. The raw productivity has often been a result of planting low yielding seeds reserved from harvest of previous years. We intend to also improve the genetical potential by indigenous breeds which form 95 percent of livestock population. Uganda, therefore, supports the genetical resource discussions that are now going on under FAO.

Three, we have identified that the control of livestock diseases and crop diseases, is one of the limiting factors to food security. Today, Uganda is preparing for a nationwide campaign that will see the entire cattle population vaccinated against contagious bovine pleuro-pneumonia and rinderpest, thanks to the promised assistance by EMPRES of FAO in the provision of Rinderpest Vaccine.

We have also identified that there is a gap between strengthening of research, extension and farmer linkages, to ensure that research production figures are realized and are transferred into the field. It is not uncommon to see research centres which are producing results but the surrounding areas cannot even have use of up to ten percent of what is achieved in the research areas. My government is determined to see that the research is transferred to the grass root in form of the demonstration units which will be based at farmers' units and for the others to see.

Marketing is one of the main constraints that leads to reduced production and the Government is focussing seriously, on this, to ensure that there will be a market for all that is produced. We are very encouraged by the fact that we have regional markets developing like the East African Cooperation, Comesa and with these, coupled with international markets we are sure to double our production and therefore, bridge the gap of regional food insecurity. My Government has taken a deliberate policy to improve the road network in the country and we will spend US\$ 800 million on this ten-year programme. This work has already started.

I would like to turn on to the comment on the Special Programme for Food Security. This project is well intended and very clearly elaborated in the document SPFS, Document 4, Revision 1. His Excellency, President Yoweri Museveni cited this project as a very beneficial project for developing countries. This was when the Director-General paid a visit to Uganda during his tour of Africa. My President, expressed a deep interest in the project and requested the Director-General to furnish him with further details. The Director-General in his letter to the President, reference DG 86/539, supplied the details. I must, therefore, restate Uganda's full support for this particular project.

The developing countries will not be able to produce enough food and survive if dependent on only rain. This project will greatly benefit the developing countries. Yes, participation should be at their request but if FAO sees that the programme will lead to food security in a country, even if it does not request it, let it be shown the benefit and be attracted to take it up. After all, we have seen instances where, even military intervention has been forced on nations in the name of democracy, why not in the name of food security so that the set goals of reducing the number of people without adequate food is reduced by half by the year 2015.

Ms K. GINWALA (South Africa): In intervening at this meeting, for the first time, our delegation wishes to welcome you to the Chair and to congratulate you on the able manner in which you are once again conducting the proceedings of Council. We also wish to congratulate Algeria, Argentina and Romania on their election to assist you in this task. We appreciate your welcoming South Africa as a Council Member and commit ourselves to fulfilling our obligation in this regard, towards the Organization and Africa, as best as we can.

In response to your appeal for brevity and because we believe Agenda Items 4 and 5 are interrelated, my delegation has opted to make one statement concerning the current world food situation and follow-up to the World Food Summit.

Our thanks go to the Secretariat for the useful background documents they prepared for these discussions. As pointed out by a number of our speakers, the current world food situation is characterized by both positive and negative elements. As an African country, South Africa is particularly concerned about the huge efforts that still remain to achieve food self-sufficiency on this Continent.

While we recognize that the main responsibility to achieve food security lies with individual nations, it is important to emphasize the fundamental role international aid and development agencies can play in this regard. It is thus ironic and extremely disquieting that international food and development aid is decreasing, at a time, when ways of assisting developing countries to overcome their difficulties have probably never been better understood.

Hard-earned experience has taught us about the complexity of the food security equation and that a multisectoral integrated approach needs to be adopted to achieve positive results.

In our view, FAO's mandate requires it to assist developing countries, particularly the LIFDCs, to move towards food security by achieving the right balance between increased food production and market led agricultural reform. The need for FAO to focus on these two areas can thus not be over emphasized. There is a high priority for FAO to assist developing countries, analyze the implications of Uruguay Round requirements on their economies, thereby enabling them to formulate appropriate agricultural and rural development policies within a context of trade liberalization and globalization.

In this regard, South Africa is well on its way to satisfying Uruguay Round requirements for agriculture. We believe trade and market liberalization will have beneficial effects on agricultural production and food security. We thus support other delegations who have appealed to major producer and consumer nations to reduce their tariff barriers and subsidies in the interest of more liberal international agricultural trade.

We would point out that the restructuring of agricultural trade in South Africa, is being conducted in collaboration with other countries in southern Africa, to avoid major dislocation to individual economies within the sub-region. This is a complicated task requiring in-depth economic and institutional analysis which is often beyond the capacity of developing nations. We believe that FAO has an important role to play in assisting sub-regions to restructure their agricultural economies.

South Africa considers that the World Food Summit successfully raised an awareness of global food security issues and provides a useful framework to pursue the objectives set in Rome. We concur with facilitating, supportive and monitoring role for FAO agreed to by the CFS.

South Africa is in the process of pursuing its food security objectives by shifting from a policy of national food self sufficiency which left a good thirty percent of households with inadequate food, to a policy of household and national food security. As part of the country's reconstruction and

development programme, a number of production employment and nutritional programmes have been targeted at specific food insecure groups.

More fundamental and permanent change is being sought through the formulation of the previously mentioned food security policy which should be ready later this year. A food security policy unit is leading this inclusive and participatory process designed to provide direction to future food security programmes and South Africa's role regarding food security at sub-regional, regional and international levels. My delegation wishes to recognize expert advice provided by FAO during the process.

Another major challenge facing South Africa is the need to provide meaning to Article XXVII of our new Constitution, which includes, and I quote "everyone's right to have access to sufficient food and water". Here again, my Government will be seeking assistance from FAO in the formulation of legislative institutional and other measures, needed to provide for the implementation of the right to food and water within the a developmental context.

Regarding TeleFood structures have been put in place to sensitize public opinion in South Africa about food security matters and to contribute to the international fund raising exercise in the interest of global food security.

In conclusion, national governments and civil society, clearly have made major responsibilities in trying to achieve the objectives of the world food security. It is also patently clear that many developing countries still need considerable assistance from international agencies, such as FAO, to meet these objectives. My delegation hopes that this will be taken into account by all, when considering the budget level required by FAO to fulfil its economic and humanitarian function.

K. RAJAN (India): We join the other distinguished delegations in congratulating the Chairman in extremely ably conducting the affairs of this FAO consultation and compliment the Secretariat on a very comprehensive document which has been submitted.

We, in India, have been able to recover from a slight set back we received in food grains production in 1995-96 and have achieved almost record levels of grain production during the year 1996-97 with production touching 193 million tonnes.

We are conscious of the fact, and believe for food security meaning, ensuring economic and physical access of food to every segment of the society. There has been emphasis on improving productivity and production of food grains within the country, particularly important to build up the purchasing power amongst the poor, particularly the rural poor. We have launched an array of poverty elevation programmes and measures in order to build up the purchasing power amongst the rural poor.

In the country, following the World Food Summit, there was also launched a programme for targeting access of food grains to the rural poor, at a differentiated price, compared to the normal public distribution system. This has been launched very recently. We are also conscious of the need to bring about a greater cooperation amongst the different countries and to share the Indian experience in building up the food grains production and the extensive public distribution system which we have launched in the country.

In a large country like India it is but necessary that the food security and the food management will have to be centred around ensuring almost virtual self-sufficiency in food grains. It is true that following the recent liberalization, many of the trade barriers are being removed or are in the process of being dismantled.

We would like to ensure that as a part of the global commitment we will do in our part to see that the world is free from hunger.

Brett HUGHES (Australia): Australia would like to make two brief points. FAO will need to ensure that its follow-up activities are effectively evaluated, particularly against the Organization's core normative functions which remains the Organization's key means of meeting the Summit's objectives. In this regard, FAO should concentrate on utilizing existing normative programmes and mechanisms to achieve follow-up.

Australia would support concerns raised at the April Committee on Food Security meeting, regarding the need for full transparency of resources directed to Summit's follow-up for all programmes including the Special Programme on Food Security and the need for effective evaluation of all programmes, to ensure that they are meeting the Organization's objectives. In this regard Australia welcomes FAO's undertaking for a clear identification of the likely extent of such resource flows.

Australia would also emphasize the in undertaking follow-up activities, it is important the FAO recognizes that this will occur in an environment of budget pressures, due to budget constraints in Member countries and given the on going pressures for further efficiencies and savings within the Organization, FAO will need to ensure maximum benefits to its Members from follow-up activities.

Moussa Bocar LY (Sénégal): Je voulais juste ajouter un point. Je crois qu'il faut se féliciter que le Secrétariat de la FAO ait engagé avec le Haut Commissaire des Nations Unies pour les droits de l'homme des négociations pour aboutir à un protocole d'accord que nous attendons avec beaucoup d'intérêt. Nous avons également noté dans le cadre du dernier CSA les contacts avec la Commission des droits de l'homme et nous espérons pouvoir recevoir le plus tôt possible des informations sur la manière dont la Commission des droits de l'homme a pu traiter la mise en oeuvre de l'objectif 7.4, le droit à l'alimentation ou à la nourriture. Je crois que la Commission s'est également réunie en avril dernier; nous voudrions également, le moment venu, avoir des éléments sur l'analyse par cette Commission de ce droit à l'alimentation tel que reflétée par l'objectif 7.4. De même, et nous sommes d'accord avec le Représentant des Etats-Unis que le Comité des droits économiques, sociaux et culturels est un organe indiqué pour examiner ce point. Ce Comité qui est présidé par un éminent expert australien doit pouvoir apporter une contribution décisive au développement du droit à l'alimentation.

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias distinguido Representante de Senegal por la forma en que usted habla de mi país como un eslabón. Pareciera que estamos a la mitad del camino, un poco en el limbo pero sí quiero decirles, desde luego, que mi función aquí en la presidencia es absolutamente independiente, de manera que me siento, eso sí, representante un poco de todos los países que componen nuestra Organización. Pero en fin, muchas gracias por hacer alusión a este papel de intermediación que espero seguir llevando adelante hasta el fin de mi comisión.

Ms Susan MILLS (Canada): Depuis le Sommet sur la sécurité alimentaire tenu en novembre dernier, le Canada s'affaire à élaborer son Plan d'action tenant compte de l'important défi que nous aurons à réaliser d'ici à l'an 2015, afin de réduire de moitié le nombre de personnes sous-alimentées en ce monde. Nous avons entamé, il y a maintenant plusieurs mois, un important processus de consultation auprès des ministères fédéraux et provinciaux, des universités, des organisations non-gouvernementales travaillant dans le développement international et des associations des secteurs canadiens de l'agriculture, des pêches et des forêts et autres organismes du secteur privé. Le Gouvernement canadien croit qu'il est essentiel de maintenir un dialogue avec l'ensemble de nos partenaires canadiens afin que le Plan d'action reflète l'important travail des diverses organisations de la société civile qui ont à coeur la question de la sécurité alimentaire. Nous sommes convaincus que la réussite de cette importante mission que nous nous sommes donnée en novembre dernier

repose sur la volonté de chacun des pays membres de centrer ces actions en vue d'éradiquer l'insécurité alimentaire.

Le Canada encourage le travail du Comité sur la sécurité alimentaire dans ses efforts de coordination et de concertation auprès des organisations internationales afin d'assurer une plus grande synergie entre les activités existantes en ce qui a trait à la sécurité alimentaire. Nous sommes heureux de constater que le Comité sur la sécurité alimentaire a déjà amorcé ces discussions auprès du Comité administratif de coordination pour les organisations des Nations Unies, et que nous aurons l'occasion d'examiner la proposition faite conjointement avec le Fonds international de développement agricole pour la mise en place d'un mécanisme permettant de poursuivre les travaux de suivi.

Le Canada félicite également son initiative de coordination et de mise en place d'un Comité interinstitutionnel chargé d'élaborer et de mettre en place le système d'informations et de cartes sur l'insécurité et la vulnérabilité alimentaires. Nous reconnaissons également la tâche immense que pourra constituer l'élaboration du Plan d'action particulièrement pour les pays les plus défavorisés et nous encourageons la FAO à apporter sa contribution en fonction des ressources existantes à l'intérieur de l'organisation, tout en tenant compte des autres engagements auxquels elle doit faire face dans les années à venir. **(Continues in English).**

Canada believes that the Special Programme for Food Security provides an important contribution to aid the most vulnerable food deficit countries. We seek to ensure that the best results can be achieved in this important programme and suggest that it would be helpful to carry out an evaluation of the pilot models to integrate best experiences and change approaches where necessary. As one suggestion, we would make, we would suggest to ensure that sustainable long term results might be achieved through increasing participation by immediate beneficiaries in project design and implementation. We feel that the Committee on World Food Security has an important role to play in supporting the development of national action plans, the key to progress on food security.

Regarding TeleFood, the process of developing Canada's action plan on food security, will include major awareness building process within the procedures which I have explained at the beginning, and this will be in collaboration with the various interested non-governmental organizations. We have relayed information on TeleFood to our joint consultative committee which includes key nongovernmental groups, stakeholders and governments. There is some concern that this project, TeleFood, may be competitive to other fund raising activities. Nonetheless we have recommended that our Non-Governmental Organization representatives should be in touch with the FAO with regard to their interest in participating in such an awareness building project.

In closing, we particularly believe that FAO has a key role to play in setting up a vulnerability mapping system and the role of the Committee on World Food Security will be key in the monitoring of progress to achieve our common target in food security.

Suresh Chundre SEEBALLUCK (Mauritius): My delegation wishes to refer to the FAO Programme in the light of the outcome of the World Food Summit. The World Food Summit drew our attention, if you would recall, to a paradox in the production and supply of food. We were told then that enough food was being produced to satisfy the needs of the whole world and yet, more than 800 million people were suffering from hunger and malnutrition. This is clearly a situation of wastage and improper distribution of food on our hands and if this problem is not addressed effectively, we may not attain the objectives we have set ourselves for the year 2015, even if global food production increases at the desired level. Pockets of poverty will persist and disparity in food supply may even grow wider.

My delegation, therefore, considers that due attention be given to the problem of food distribution, which we feel is not clearly spelt out in the FAO programme.

Humberto MOLINA REYES (Chile): Quisiera antes que nada felicitarlo y nos complace verlo presidiendo nuestros trabajos, así como también agradecer por la calidad de los documentos que la Secretaría nos ha preparado.

Señor Presidente, quisiera referirme muy brevemente a tres aspectos que nos parecen importantes. En primer lugar quisieramos endosar la relación que el distinguido Representante de Cuba ha hecho en nombre de los países del GRULAC; compartimos esa posición y ha expresado muy bien nuestras ideas respecto a lo que significa la cooperación técnica para nuestra región, como así mismo la importancia que tiene el PESA en la lucha contra el hambre.

En segundo término, señor Presidente, quisiera destacar un hecho que nos parece vale la pena se mencione en el contexto de este Consejo y que refleja el compromiso que mi país tiene respecto a elementos que nos parecen esenciales y que son dos flagelos que afectan la humanidad. El primero de ellos es la superación de la pobreza y el segundo la lucha contra el hambre.

Creemos, señor Presidente, que la única forma de avanzar para, efectivamente, combatir estos dos flagelos son la solidaridad y la cooperación internacional, que se expresa de manera tangible. Llevando a la práctica estas ideas, el gobierno de Chile recientemente acaba de entregar a la Oficina Regional de la FAO un edificio que va a albergar las nuevas instalaciones con un costo de 6 millones de dólares. Este edificio fue inaugurado la semana pasada con la presencia del Director General. Esto, señor Presidente, creemos que es un reflejo fiel del interés que tiene mi país por apoyar la labor que hace la FAO en la región y creemos que, por cierto, va a ayudar a combatir la inseguridad alimentaria que se presenta en la región.

Por otra parte también queremos destacar, señor Presidente, que la cooperación internacional para mi país es sumamente importante. Hemos estado reforzando la cooperación en el marco de la Cooperación Sur-Sur; también hemos y estamos desarrollando un programa de cooperación triangular, es decir, recibimos aportes de algunos países desarrollados y con la capacitación técnica de Chile hemos podido llevar adelante positivos programas orientados hacia la lucha contra la pobreza en nuestra región.

Pero también, señor Presidente, así como mi país puede expresar sus inquietudes en la lucha contra la pobreza y el hambre en la región, también creemos que es necesaria una cooperación técnica cualitativa y que la Organización debe continuar otorgando. En otras palabras, señor Presidente, creemos que existen distintas necesidades de los organismos en la FAO; me refiero a los países miembros de la FAO y la Organización debe cubrir toda esa gama de necesidades.

Fassou ELIE DAMEY (Observateur de la Guinée): Je commencerai au nom de mon gouvernement par remercier le Directeur général de la FAO pour avoir mis en exergue toutes les problématiques liées à la situation de l'agriculture dans le monde, et particulièrement à la sécurité alimentaire. Nos remerciements vont également au Secrétariat qui a mis à notre disposition des documents contenant des informations très fiables.

Pour le suivi de la sécurité alimentaire, le Gouvernement guinéen, après le Conseil de l'alimentation, a pris quelques dispositions en ce qui concerne le suivi de la sécurité alimentaire. Nous disons que, en Guinée, les disponibilités alimentaires représentent plus de 90 pour cent des apports calorifiques nécessaires à la ration alimentaire de base qui est de 2100 calories par habitant et par jour, le reste étant apporté par les produits des animaux. On peut donc considérer que globalement la sécurité alimentaire est assurée, il est toutefois nécessaire de s'assurer que ces disponibilités alimentaires sont stables dans le temps et dans l'espace et accessibles aux catégories sociales les plus défavorisées.

En d'autres termes, une attention particulière doit être apportée aux zones pauvres et aux populations les plus démunies. Cependant, la Guinée dépend toujours largement des importations

pour son alimentation: 290,800 tonnes de riz importées en 1995 et 220,000 tonnes de riz importées en 1996. La sécurité alimentaire requiert aussi une moindre dépendance vis-à-vis de l'extérieur. Sur ce plan, la bataille de la sécurité alimentaire reste une bataille du riz puisque cette céréale représente 45 pour cent des calories d'origine végétale consommées en Guinée avec un taux d'indépendance vis-à-vis des importations de 39 pour cent. Et donc dans le cadre du programme spécial de la sécurité alimentaire, le Gouvernement guinéen a mis sur pied une cellule de réflexion sur deux sites compte tenu de la diversité des conditions édaphiques et climatiques du pays, à savoir une zone sous l'influence des eaux marines, et une zone sous l'influence des eaux douces. Aujourd'hui, les résultats restent très concluants, cependant il reste quelques contraintes à relever, à savoir le transfert du "packet" écologique en milieu rural et le circuit de distribution, comme l'a dit tout-à-l'heure un de mes prédécesseurs, à savoir par l'implantation rurale des équipements d'aménagement hydro-agricole et des pistes rurales.

Une autre contrainte consisterait en la fertilisation des sols qui doit inclure l'utilisation des fertilisants organiques. Monsieur le Président, de concert avec mes prédécesseurs, nous disons que des stratégies en Guinée sont adoptées pour atteindre la sécurité alimentaire d'ici l'an 2010 et, entre autre ces stratégies, nous avons l'intention de créer des groupements de producteurs pour la mise en marché afin que des volumes vendus permettent de mieux équilibrer la négociation sur les prix; améliorer le pouvoir de négociation des producteurs grâce à leur distance de concurrence entre acheteurs pour que le développement des infrastructures et des services en zone rurale soit assuré; rendre le crédit disponible aux producteurs; favoriser les échanges basés sur des contrats et des conventions, et à garantir ainsi une certaine permanence dans le temps et permettant de réduire les coûts des transactions. Une commission inter-ministérielle installée et qui inclut tous les partenaires dans le développement. Monsieur le Président, en plus de ce que mes prédécesseurs ont dit, voilà ce que le Gouvernement guinéen avait à vous présenter sur la sécurité alimentaire. Je vous remercie.

Giuseppe VASTA (Observateur pour l'Organisation de coopération et de développement économiques): Je vous félicite pour la façon de conduire nos travaux et je félicite aussi les trois Vice-Présidents. Je souhaite un bon travail à tout le Comité de rédaction, et je me réfère surtout à ce qu'on a dit hier à propos du manque d'eau potable. Je pense que ce problème est d'ordre mondial et je voulais, à ce propos, dire que l'OCDE a mis récemment en évidence que la demande en eau pour la consommation humaine a plus que quadruplé au cours des cinquante dernières années.

Aujourd'hui, un cinquième de la population mondiale n'a pas accès à l'eau potable et un autre cinquième ne peut satisfaire ses besoins quotidiens. Un quart des réserves mondiales totales d'eau douce pourrait être contaminé au début du siècle prochain. Afin de contribuer à l'effort des pays membres de l'OCDE de mieux gérer leurs ressources en eau, l'OCDE et le Gouvernement d'Australie ont organisé en février dernier une réunion d'experts afin d'étudier les moyens d'action et stratégies de nature à favoriser les modes de consommation de l'eau écologiquement viables. Le thème central des discussions a été examiné dans le cadre de sessions consacrées à l'agriculture, à l'industrie, au secteur commercial/résidentiel et à la gestion intégrée.

Cette manifestation s'inscrivait dans le Programme de l'OCDE sur les modes de consommation et de production écologiquement viables, qui a déjà permis d'examiner certaines des questions de fond que pose la mise en oeuvre de l'objectif des modes de consommation fixé en 1992 lors de la Conférence des Nations Unies sur l'environnement et le développement de Rio de Janeiro.

La réunion de Sidney a rassemblé aux côtés des participants des pays membres de l'OCDE des spécialistes de neuf pays non membres dont la Chine, le Brésil, l'Inde, l'Indonésie et le Viet Nam. Ce problème, à juste titre, attire toujours plus l'attention du monde entier.

EL PRESIDENTE: Con esto termina mi lista de oradores para este tema y le voy a preguntar primero al Presidente en funciones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria si quiere hacer algún comentario respecto de nuestros debates.

David SANDS SMITH (Vice-Chairman, Committee on World Food Security): I have listened with very great attention to the points that have been made. I can assure members of this Council that I will relay those to Ambassador Medrano, the Chairman of the Committee on World Food Security.

As I think many of you will know, with the Committee for World Food Security, in the case of the Committee on World Food Security, we have a very active Bureau which operates continuously, I would say, together with a very close collaboration with the Secretariat and which has a concern to know of points which Member Nations consider to be of particular significance and where follow-up action is required. What you have said in this discussion in the Council in that context has been extremely helpful, and I can assure you that the Bureau will take that very carefully into account in taking forward the question of follow-up to the World Food Summit.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: In contrast to my normal procedures I will address first the specific topics that were mentioned and then, come to a general comment.

First, I shall deal with the Technical Cooperation Programme and its relationship to the Special Programme on Food Security.

I believe that it is well that we recall that even though the TCP is called a programme, it in fact is a fund. It is a fund for Members, for small projects like, for example, integrated pest management programme or integrated plant nutrient programme. The Special Programme on Food Security is a programme, is owned by Members.

To use the TCP, Members request assistance from the fund. They specify the priority associated with their requests because, unfortunately, we never have sufficient resources to satisfy all of the requests. As you know, there are specific criteria for the use of the TCP and only if the request meets that criteria, it is considered. Any country eligible for the TCP may request assistance for a component of the Special Programme. Low-Income, Food-Deficit countries, who are eligible for the programme, but also non-low-income food deficit countries. That is, if, as the Ambassador of Mexico and the delegate from Uganda have stated, there is an area within their country where the Government believes that a/or components of the Special Programme on Food Security would address a high priority matter within their country, there is no reason why they should not submit that request for TCP funding. It will be judged, assessed, on precisely the same criteria as any other request received, and of course the government will have to specify the priority associated with that request.

Second, on country strategy papers or country briefs, we appreciate the very many expressions of appreciation for the initiative taken by FAO, which draws upon FAO's work including AT 2010, the background documents and the national country papers prepared for the Summit. We agree that this must be a country-driven process, as a strategy is only meaningful if it is owned by the country. The World Food Summit was a world food summit. It was not a summit for some countries.

Developed countries have an important role with respect to the World Food Summit that goes beyond their individual borders. In taking this initiative, the Director-General, as the Director-General of this Organization, could not discriminate and decline to offer assistance of FAO, to some of its members. Therefore, assistance was offered to all.

We fully understand and respect the sovereignty of countries and letters, following the comments that were made during the Committee on Food Security, have been sent to those who indicated concern about this initiative, to ascertain if they wish us to continue to assemble material and prepare a draft for consideration by their government or if they wish us to cease the activity, to inform us to whom the material that has been collected should be sent.

Third, with respect to the comments concerning the work related to the right to food and the involvement of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, it is our belief that we have proceeded with leadership provided by our Legal Counsel, precisely in accord with the provisions of Objective 7.4.

Fourth, with respect to the comments about the ACC initiative, we appreciate the supportive comments that have been made over our taking this initiative in collaboration with IFAD and we wish to ensure that the ACC follow-up mechanism is well integrated within UN System initiatives, at the country and global levels.

Fifth, on TeleFood, here again we are pleased to hear of the plans being made for it. It will take place during World Food Day week and there will be a major effort to, as the Director-General put it in his statement, "hold the decisions taken at the Summit in the public eye". We are hopeful that all people concerned about the problem of hunger in the world will have the opportunity to make a contribution, but the decision to participate here again is one for the countries themselves to take. All of the funds collected will be used in the fight against hunger and will be subjected to audits by well-known firms.

Sixth, the comments on the involvement of agricultural research bodies and genetic resources are appreciated. I wish to ensure you that the Organization encourages research and technical organizations and institutes to provide technical support to our field activities, including those in connection with the Special Programme on Food Security.

Seventh, on the Special Programme on Food Security, I wish first to recall that it was this body three years ago, I believe today or right these days that the Council unanimously gave its approval to the Special Programme. Since then, the concept has become a programme in a number of countries. Comments on the programme have been received from those who have initiated it and from those who have not, at various meetings of Council committees, the Council itself, including these days and during one-on-one discussions. All of the comments, positive and negative, have been taken into account. The Programme has been and continues to be fine-tuned to make it an even better programme than it was when it was launched. It is therefore somewhat surprising that after three years the Programme continues to be criticized by a few, very few Members, those who do not, themselves, have a serious food security problem.

The Representative from the United Kingdom has stated that poverty alleviation is the key to food security. Okay, but how will countries alleviate poverty? Income transfers are one option, but the overall climate for doing so is not very good. The only other way is for people to earn more income and in the Special Programme countries the opportunity to do so is largely within the food and agricultural sectors through increases in productivity and production, in a manner that enhances income to producers and creates jobs and income in off-farm activities.

During the pilot phase of the Programme, intensification, diversification and water control activities are tested, results are measured and constraints are documented. Once these activities have been appropriately tested and constraints documented, the programme moves to the second phase where policy and investment actions are planned and then implemented. I wish to inform that not a single country has had sufficient testing and documentation of constraints to be prepared to move to phase 2. Evaluation is an extremely important part of the Programme and as the results have been

obtained from the first season in the early countries, the initiatives, the activities are modified and fine-tuned within the country, to correct the deficiencies observed in the first round.

The appropriation for the Special Programme on Food Security is approved by the Conference. The amount appropriated is far less than the amounts needed by participating countries and therefore, extra-budgetary funds to FAO or directly to the governments concerned are necessary. We are indeed thankful of the offers of assistance from governments and inter-governmental organizations to help our Member Nations implement the Special Programme.

Finally, turning to the general comment, it is extremely gratifying to hear of the actions that are being taken to implement the commitments of the Summit. One sits here for a half-day and a bit more and, then comes the full impact of the importance with which you take the Summit - it is made very evident. We also are extremely appreciative of the offers of assistance, both from the south and the north, to implement the commitments of the World Food Summit.

Finally, I assume, given the comments that have been made, that the Council is prepared to approve the Report of the CFS and to transmit it to the Conference.

Fernando José MARRONI de ABREU (Brazil): We did not have the opportunity in this debate of expressing, again, our support to the Special Programme, as we did in the previous meeting. I would like to remind you that we took part, together with FAO, in a joint mission to the five African lusophone countries last year and, during the visit of the Director-General to Brazil in March, our President stressed again our political will to take part in this Programme.

It is not our understanding that a few countries are against this Programme. I think that every delegation, that every country, supports this Programme. What we still have are some doubts concerning the connection between the Special Programme and TCP. I would like to thank Mr Hjort very much for the information he gave at the beginning of his statement, but it is not one hundred percent clear, at least to myself, the connection between the Special Programme and TCP. We are working on a very limited budget but we understand and we support that the Special Programme gets priority in the execution of the budget. However, we would like to ask, in the case of a certain number of projects being presented to TCP for financing that are considered feasible and that go beyond the internal procedures in FAO, if they have second priority and we have limited resources, what kind of treatment are we going to give to these projects? I think it is important to a number of countries to have this very clear.

I repeat, it is our understanding that every delegation should support this Special Programme, but we need a clear understanding of this connection.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Perhaps I should stress a bit more about what I said with respect to priority. As far as the TCP is concerned, the requesting government is asked to array its request for TCP assistance in priority order and, therefore, it is the decision of the country itself if it wishes to put the Special Programme in first priority or last priority. I might state that a recent meeting with very senior government official of one of the Member Countries I was informed that they were interested in the Special Programme but that, in their view, at this time, it ranked down the list of priorities, and there were some other pending matters that they judged to be of higher priority. That priority ranking will be fully respected. In this particular case, the Special Programme came far enough down the list of priorities that it is highly unlikely that it will be able to be funded in this year.

FAO does not supersede the priority of a government with respect to the TCP. It is the government's prerogative and obligation to ascertain the priority that it assigns to its request for TCP assistance.

F.J. MARRONI de ABREU (Brazil): I do not want to establish a dialogue here but we are among the countries that are in an ambiguous situation, if you can call it so. We are both donor and recipient of TCP and, of course, we are not going to establish priorities between the two programmes, since we work with both hands.

What we understand by priority is the priority established by FAO to the Special Programme in relation to TCP. In that sense, I made my question.

EL PRESIDENTE: Hemos entendido cual es su preocupación, la misma la tienen también otros Miembros de este Consejo. Pero espero que las declaraciones ya expresadas y sobre todo la precisión respecto de la diferencia entre lo que es un *fondo* y lo que es un *programa* y la forma en que las decisiones y los criterios se aplican, les asegure a ustedes que esta situación de ambigüedad no debe en verdad existir.

Bien, distinguidos delegados, si no hay ningún otro comentario me gustaría entonces concluir estos debates sobre este tema tan importante, en particular porque, como ustedes recordaron, esta es la primera ocasión que se reúne el Consejo después de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación y ustedes recordaron que era muy importante evitar que se perdiera la fuerza, o el impulso del desafío suministrado en la Cumbre, para la superación de las condiciones de inseguridad alimentaria y del hambre.

Se coincidió en que estos retos deberían mantenerse al más alto nivel en la agenda política de todos los gobiernos y que debían materializarse también en acciones concretas. Se lamentó en este Consejo, por tanto, que a pesar del éxito de la Cumbre seguían descendiendo los flujos internacionales de ayuda alimentaria, de asistencia al desarrollo y también el apoyo financiero a programas internacionales. Se destacó en particular el caso de la FAO, cuyos recursos no necesariamente estaban en aumento. Se subrayó en este sentido el papel catalítico de la Organización, la importancia de su función técnica, así como su liderazgo en la promoción del Plan de Acción, la importancia de la cooperación plena de la FAO con el resto del sistema de las Naciones Unidas y también la necesidad de la convergencia de acciones a todos los niveles evitando la duplicación de esfuerzos y, desde luego, el desperdicio de recursos. Se coincidió en que la viabilidad del Plan de Acción dependía sobre todo de los esfuerzos a nivel nacional y de la capacidad de los gobiernos para convocar a la sociedad civil, en particular al sector privado. Se mencionó también de manera muy destacada las organizaciones no gubernamentales para cooperar en el diseño, ejecución, evaluación y en el seguimiento de los planes nacionales de seguridad alimentaria. Todos los gobiernos deberían por tanto tomar medidas urgentes y reportar sobre sus actividades y el cumplimiento de las metas conforme al Plan de Acción.

Respecto del Programa Especial de Seguridad Alimentaria, creo que podemos decir que este Consejo reconfirmó su apoyo al PESA, la gran mayoría de los Miembros asimismo apoyó su orientación y ejecución y su relevancia para el logro de la seguridad alimentaria y del Plan de Acción. No obstante, algunos países expresaron dudas respecto de la conexión entre el PESA y el PCT, a lo cual se dieron aclaraciones pertinentes y de la misma manera algunos otros países expresaron también dudas sobre la congruencia del PESA con los objetivos del Plan de Acción y respecto de la metodología, criterios seguidos, cooperación con otras instituciones, tanto nacionales como internacionales, y sobre el sistema de seguimiento y evaluación tanto en la fase piloto como en las sucesivas.

En cuanto a Telefood, el Consejo dio la bienvenida a esta iniciativa que consideró desde luego novedosa y pidió al Director General que proporcionara a los órganos rectores, información detallada de sus costos totales, la forma de financiarlo y de asignar recursos, de los beneficios esperados, a fin de evaluar su conveniencia futura y asegurar también la coordinación de este instrumento de recaudación de fondos con otras instituciones como organizaciones no gubernamentales.

Finalmente, el Consejo hizo diversos comentarios respecto a los temas tocados en el Informe del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria y, sobre todo de los debates del Informe, en particular sobre las disposiciones institucionales para el seguimiento y la presentación de informes sobre la ejecución del Plan de Acción, sobre el sistema de información y cartografía sobre la seguridad alimentaria y la vulnerabilidad, sobre los resultados del examen de seguimiento de la Cumbre, sobre la cooperación entre la FAO y el Alto Comisionado de Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos, y sobre la importancia de asociar las acciones de la Organización con las organizaciones de la sociedad civil y la labor del Comité y de la FAO.

Pero lo importante es destacar que este Consejo decidió transmitir a la Conferencia, junto con sus comentarios, el Informe del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria sobre todos los aspectos de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación. Estoy seguro que los comentarios específicos que ustedes hicieron van a recogerse en el Informe que ustedes aprobarán el día sábado.

Bien, distinguidos delegados, si no hay ningún otro comentario concluimos este tema y pasamos de inmediato al Tema 14 de nuestra Agenda.

IV PROGRAMME, BUDGETARY, FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

IV QUESTIONS CONCERNANT LE PROGRAMME, LE BUDGET, LES FINANCES ET L'ADMINISTRATION

IV ASUNTOS DEL PROGRAMA Y ASUNTOS PRESUPUESTARIOS, FINANCIEROS Y ADMINISTRATIVOS

14 Programme Evaluation Report 1996-97

14 Rapport d'évaluation du Programme 1996-97

14 Informe sobre la evaluación del programa 1996-97

EL PRESIDENTE: En el presente tema, el Informe sobre la evaluación del programa de periodicidad bienal, figura un examen detenido de tres programas importantes, a saber: el de fomento y ordenación de los recursos hídricos, recursos pesqueros y acuicultura y desarrollo y transferencia de tecnología; todos de gran interés para los Estados Miembros, en particular los países en desarrollo.

También figuran dos exámenes temáticos: Operaciones Especiales de Socorro de la FAO y Actividades de Publicación de la FAO, que deben tener un gran interés para todos los Miembros.

Esta versión es asimismo innovadora, como lo reconoció el Comité del Programa, en el sentido que por primera vez se incorporan observaciones de los directores de los programas pertinentes o de la administración superior sobre las principales cuestiones planteadas por quienes efectuaron las evaluaciones y sobre las recomendaciones formuladas. Esta versión da una impresión clara de que se han introducido cambios francos y objetivos que sin duda aumentan el valor del Informe.

También parece que, en el conjunto, el Informe ha sido bien recibido por los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas aunque, claro, como allí se destacó, siempre son posibles nuevas mejoras y estoy seguro que la Secretaría ha tomado ya nota de eso y que las estudiará.

Por lo que se refiere al capítulo relativo a las publicaciones, un aspecto práctico que el Consejo tal vez desee refrendar, es la necesidad de examinar el Artículo VI.9 del Reglamento Financiero. Tengo entendido que el Comité de Finanzas va a examinar el tema en su próximo período de sesiones en septiembre.

Bien, distinguidos delegados, me voy a permitir preguntarle al Presidente del Comité del Programa si desea agregar algo en esta introducción del tema y le doy la palabra.

D. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee): Mr Chairman, I think you did an excellent job in introducing this Report, including the comments the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee made. I just wanted to stress a few additional points.

First of all, in the debate we had yesterday and already this morning, several people referred to evaluation. Here we have the third edition of the Evaluation Report which Conference and Council had asked for and, therefore, it is a very important instrument to measure performance and impact. However, at the same time, as we say in our Report of the Programme Committee, the third edition of this Evaluation shows considerable progress made -- and we were satisfied with this -- but there are still considerable weaknesses we must recognize. The main weakness --and we say it in our report -- is that very few, or even none, of FAO Programmes have very clear targets and criteria to measure impact and to measure performance. Therefore, the new model which we will discuss together with the full Programme of Work and Budget, introduced in our recommendation, might considerably improve the situation.

The second point: it clearly shows in this Report that those reviews which used external inputs have gained considerably in transparency, in clarity and substance, which means addition of the in-house machinery for evaluation. It is very important to involve external evaluation aspects. Certainly, it will cost money and we have to consider this within the overall resource availability, but we cannot stress sufficiently that this is very important, that the membership sees this involvement of external opinions of the performance.

Finally, on the specific requests you made, I think it would be good to have the opinion of the Council on the proposals made for changing the Publications Programme. There are, I think, a number of important items -- the number of issues to be distributed, etc. -- which should have at least a first opinion voiced here. Certainly, I wanted to draw your attention to the specific fact that the review of the Special Relief Operations of FAO first of all brings together for the first time this whole programme, very well and very clearly. However, at the same time, I think we noted that we will receive a document on the development of a proposal by the Director-General for the strategy, the strategic role in emergency assistance of FAO within the UN organizations, which, at the same time, will provide maybe a better insight of how this collaboration is going to function and how the financial resources could be better identified and mobilized to make this very important programme more viable than it is at the moment.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation): As there has already been a fairly comprehensive introduction, I will limit myself to a couple of points, if I may. First of all, to clarify, this report was prepared by the Organization's Evaluation Service on topics which were selected, for the first time as a matter of interest, in consultation with the Programme Committee itself. The Chief of the Evaluation Service, Mr Kato, is at my right here and will be happy to answer any questions you may wish to put to him.

This report is normally handled by the Programme Committee, but on this occasion it was also forwarded to the Finance Committee because of the financial implications of the chapter on Publication Activities in FAO. If I may mention a couple of points in follow-up to Dr Bommer's statements on that particular chapter, I think it might be worthwhile.

I believe the Council will be particularly interested in two of the recommendations made in this chapter. The first concerns the proposal to move away from automatic quotas for publications, towards national publications accounts, where countries would, in effect, have an account with a credit against which they would be able to draw down by ordering those publications they feel to be of greatest value to them, rather than receiving a standard number of copies of all publications. So by this means we hope to relate supply to demand in a more effective way. The Committees agreed in principle with that proposal and have asked us, the Secretariat, to come back with more detailed

proposals. At this stage it would be interesting if the Council has any particular guidance it may wish to give us on this point so that we can take that into account.

Both Committees also welcomed the relatively strong policy statement on language versions, although they noted the need for selectivity and a certain degree of flexibility in this area. And again the Council may like to give its views on that issue.

Dr Bommer referred also to Chapter 4, the second thematic chapter on FAO's Special Relief Operations, and again both Committees have commented on that chapter in their reports. It was agreed that FAO has an important role to play in this continuum of prevention, early warning in particular of course, relief, rehabilitation and development. It was specifically recognized that the entry point of FAO into an emergency should be sufficiently early to allow effective advance planning by those providing assistance or essential inputs to produce food in the aftermath of an emergency as well as to reconstruction and rehabilitation.

The Chapters 2, 3 and 4, which deal with water development, fisheries resources and technology development, were studied in some depth by the Programme Committee, and you can see that from the report of the Committee which provided valuable advice on the areas which it considers more important for action and improvement.

I, and my colleague here, are available to assist the Council in its debate on this item.

Adel Mahmoud ABOUL-NAGA (Egypt) (Original language Arabic): I would like to thank Dr Bommer very much and also thank Mr Wade, and thank you, Sir, for the introduction that you have given to this Agenda item.

This is a point which for us, as we pointed out to the Programme Committee, is a point of utmost importance. Dr Bommer said that we talked a lot about the Evaluation Report and here before us we do have an evaluation of the Programmes that we have selected. There is no doubt whatsoever that the activities of the Organization in this regard were well received by the Members of the Committee and, in the course of our proceedings, we noted that great progress had been made in the preparation of the Report and in the evaluation activity as such. Perhaps the most important things were the external viewpoints and also the comments made by the Programme Directors and the senior officials in the Secretariat. I think, all that helps to achieve a greater degree of transparency and interaction between the distinct viewpoints with respect to the importance of this evaluation effort. Hence this image, this idea, this information, which is brought before the Governing Bodies, increases the transparency factor.

I do not really want to comment on the three Programmes which, to our mind, were well selected for consideration. Everyone agreed on the importance of these Programmes, but perhaps there may be some observations which could be made about the evaluation of the development and transfer of technology because the evaluation, as such, was not entirely satisfactory. It is perhaps due to the difficulty in evaluating the analysis of a series of activities that are implicit in that Programme for technology transfer and development. Also because this is a recent Programme, as we see it, it must be somewhat difficult to evaluate it in a satisfactory and total manner. The number of observations were also present in the document, also with regard to FAO's special relief operations. Here we would like to reiterate our support to the recommendations and observations made by the Programme Committee, especially with respect to the importance of the role played by the Organization in the field of reconstruction and rehabilitation.

We feel that this Report provides an opportunity for people to become very closely familiar with what is being done, especially what FAO does in close collaboration with other organizations, especially in this area, IFAD and WFP.

With regard to the publication activities of FAO, undoubtedly a large number of observations were made relative to that and we all agreed that the present system used for the distribution of FAO publications is not entirely satisfactory. Before us we have a proposal relative to the national publications account and this, as an idea, was well received by the Committee. We also talked in the course of our proceedings about the role to be played by Representatives here in order to ensure the distribution of publications according to what the actual country requirements are. This too is an aspect, as we see it, that was confirmed, considering its importance in the eyes of delegates.

With regard to language versions, I did voice the viewpoint of my region, the Near East region, and did so in the course of the Programme Committee meeting. Let me make this clear, we do not agree that we should talk about working languages. There are official languages of this Organization. We do not know who opted for this term "working languages"; we have official languages not working languages, as we see it. So who can assume the right to give greater importance to one language over another? We are all Members of this Organization, hence we want our countries to be able to benefit from the Organization's publications which, as we see it, do constitute one of the most important activities of FAO. I think it is the minimum that our countries and our citizens can expect from the Organization. Hence we would like to make it clear that we give utmost importance to this theme and would like to talk about it in those terms. In this Organization there are official languages which are to be the languages used during the activities of FAO and in the publications of our Organization. Besides that, we feel that were we to open this door on the pretext of generating savings it would be in contradiction with the main scopes of this Organization.

Ms J. DONECKER (United Kingdom): Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on the Programme Evaluation Report for 1996-97. The United Kingdom would like to express appreciation to the Secretariat for the improvements that have been incorporated into the Report since the 1994-95 version. We would wish to respond to the Director-General's invitation to offer constructive suggestions on the Report.

The UK attaches great importance to sound evaluation, for purposes of both accountability and internal lesson-learning. We believe that the key aim of evaluation should be impact-assessment. FAO and its Member Nations need to know to what extent the Organization is making a difference in the lives of poor people in the developing world.

Our comments are of two kinds. They cover, first, the format of the Report and, second, overarching themes that emerge from the Report.

Let me turn first to the format of the 1996-97 Report. We have two key observations on the alterations made since the 1994-95 Report. First, we welcome the introduction of the tabular summary assessment of programme performance including ratings of different dimensions of each programme. The points in the summary should, however, be more carefully and explicitly discussed in the main text of the report; otherwise there is a risk that the summary tables are seen as an oversimplification. The summary assessment should, we believe, be extended to all chapters of the Report.

Second, we welcome the addition of management comments on the recommendations of each programme evaluation. This will, we hope, stimulate discussion within FAO on evaluation findings and methodology. The 1996-97 Report suggests that such a debate is indeed taking place and we welcome this. The incorporation of lessons learnt in new activities is also crucial.

Turning now to the overarching themes of the Programme Evaluation Report. These themes recur throughout the Report and provide valuable insights into areas requiring priority action by FAO. There are three areas we would like to comment on: first, prioritization within each programme; second, targets and indicators; and third, monitoring.

First, prioritization within each programme. A theme that emerges strongly from this Report is the need to develop a clear strategy for each programme. This implies that activities need to be explicitly prioritized within each programme. The addition of activities over recent years has overstretched some programmes. This brings us back to the issue of opportunity cost. For any level of resources, additional activities, such as those related to the Special Programme for Food Security, reduce the ability to address more established areas of work. There is a need for a concentration of activities in FAO's areas of comparative advantage. This is happening to some extent, but the Report calls for more concentration and we support this conclusion.

Let me turn now to the issue of targets and indicators. According to the Report, and I quote, "Very few FAO programmes are so articulated as to have clearly defined achievement targets and indicators, making it difficult to gauge the degree of achievement". This area requires urgent attention. The reason for the urgency is simple: for FAO to maximize its effectiveness in improving food security in the developing world, it needs to know whether its programmes are meeting their objectives or not. This means that in each programme area, measurable and time-bound targets and indicators are essential.

Third, let me offer some comments on monitoring. Monitoring implementation is an essential element of programme and project management and provides the basis for in-depth evaluation and impact assessment. The Report suggests that in some programme areas the monitoring function needs to be strengthened. We welcome this suggestion of building monitoring capacity. Impact assessment should be designed as a system which covers careful selection of objectives and indicators *ex ante*, monitoring outputs and early indications of impact during implementation, and includes full impact assessment at the *ex post* stage. Monitoring is a crucial building block of an effective impact assessment system.

To close, I would like to commend FAO's Evaluation Service for its valuable work. Further, I would repeat and underline that impact assessment and, above all, lesson-learning are crucial if FAO is to become more effective in improving food security in developing countries.

Richard B. HELM (United States of America): We would also like to compliment FAO on the Report and on its accomplishments in this key area of programme evaluation.

We believe this is an especially important function for FAO during a period when many Member Nations along with FAO, are facing budget constraints as well as increased demands on their resources in connection with follow-up to the World Food Summit. As we have stated in different FAO fora over the last year, evaluating performance against clear benchmarks is essential in order to determine how available resources can best be allocated to priority areas. On that note, I would like to point out that the US Government has undertaken a similar initiative internally, entitled 'The Government Performance Results Act', which seeks increased budget and programme efficiency through a well-focused strategy which includes an evaluation of measurable inputs, outputs and benefits to US citizens.

In general, we consider the 1996-97 Programme Evaluation Report an important step forward in strengthening the internal evaluation process. We strongly support the three principal innovations outlined in the document. We also concur with the Programme Committee's findings that these innovations are useful and provide a clear focus on the Programme objectives and strategy as well as implementation results. We consider that the section on feedback from senior staff was particularly insightful in that it gave us an immediate impression of how well the Reports recommendations would be accepted.

Specifically, in the publications area, we support the recommendation that distribution of documents be evaluated. We suggest that FAO undertake an effort to identify where documents are being distributed within each Member Nation and to determine whether there is under-utilization of those

documents. As the country with the largest distribution of documents, the United States would be willing to work with FAO in undertaking this review in order to reduce the number of copies, where appropriate, and move expenses and apply savings to other high priority areas.

Another area, gender issues, we believe continues to be a major concern as was correctly identified by the evaluators. All areas of FAO must focus further on this important issue in order to better tap the wealth of unused resources available to us all. This applies to FAO's efforts in hiring, contracting, programme development, implementation and, last but not least, in promoting the interests of women farmers around the world.

We concur with the Report's emphasis on training and agree that training should be built in to all aspects of the work place. This goal should apply to FAO itself in order to maintain a level of excellence and in order to promote global food security through programme delivery to Member Nations.

The Evaluation Service has made several other important recommendations that we strongly support, such as the need for FAO to increase cooperation with other entities, to set sharper priorities, to provide both measurable objectives and timetables for projects and to recognize where FAO does or does not have a comparative advantage. Following up on these recommendations will strengthen the Organization as structural reforms are enacted.

There are references throughout the Report to the impact of reduced staff on programme implementation. As we have indicated several times, we believe FAO can bring its organizational structure more in line with other UN agencies and still achieve programme goals by setting clear priorities and by working with other organizations in hiring contractors, in some cases in order to save costs. We found the cost comparisons and resource management sections of the Report to be very useful in contributing to a broad overview of the areas under evaluation. We would caution that in areas where follow-up on accepted recommendation requires additional resources, such as expanding functions of the FAO regional representatives and translating all FAO documents into all FAO working languages, those resources be taken from other areas in order to offset costs.

In closing, we would like to respond to the Report's request for constructive suggestions and guidance for improving future Evaluation Reports. We suggest first, that FAO continue the innovations begun with this Report and update any of the 1995 Council criteria that they are subsequently amended. Two, that a system be implemented to evaluate all programme areas, not just problem areas, that are perceived to exist such as seems to be the case with the present evaluation. Three, that FAO look at ways to improve the evaluation by utilizing it in programme planning by FAO managers as they develop targets and indicators to be used in future evaluations and by factoring report findings into the medium-term plan. Four, that the Special Programme for Food Security be a priority area for the next Evaluation Report and five, that greater emphasis be put on the trade implications of FAO programmes in future reports.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on what we view as an increasingly important function for FAO.

Alan AMEY (Canada): Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important document.

Evaluation is a key function and should play an important role in the process of planning and budgeting. Canada compliments FAO on the improvements made to the Report through the inclusion of comments by the Programme Managers and on the evaluators' observations, as well as summary assessment of performance against the six Programme criteria established by the Council in 1995.

FAO, generally, has good expertise in conducting evaluations; however, it was noted that the two which involve outside evaluators reflected a wider perspective than those conducted exclusively by the evaluation service and we would like to see more such evaluations. There is a need to identify more explicit outputs and goals against to which evaluate progress.

Recent efforts in the last Programme of Work and Budget, in this regard, are appreciated but should be developed further. We will then be in a better position to assess impact achievement and overall cost-effectiveness.

Canada continues to express our desire to see the results of these evaluations reflected in the Programme of Work and Budget, as mentioned by the United States. Also, we would like to see a higher proportion of FAO's programmes scheduled for evaluation on a cyclical basis and to see more peer review incorporated into the evaluation process on a regular basis.

We support the identified need for more systematic internal monitoring and review to be built into the programmes. This will help identify the strengths and weaknesses and should identify those areas of expertise in which FAO has comparative advantage.

We would like to see the evaluation section more directly involved in the project approval process as the lessons of experience are invaluable to avoid repeating mistakes of the past.

Before entering into the specifics of the programmes, I would like to support the observations of the last Programme and Finance Committees concerning the Evaluation Report, and we appreciate the extra explanations given by Dr Bommer. For the research section in the face of dwindling resources, alternative means of programme delivery must be sought in order to achieve efficiencies. We are pleased to note the initiation of streamlining and consolidation of the programme structure, making it more efficient and coordinated. We appreciate the realignment towards the normative functions.

These actions should certainly be continued in order to achieve increased efficiencies and cross-programme initiatives could lead to more effective projects and use of resources. Close integration with the CGIAR institutions would facilitate technology transfer, and we note the emphasis the Programme Committee has given to this approach.

With regard to the Special Relief Operations, as recognized by the Finance Committee, we question FAO's desire to build up its presence in this area, where it does not necessarily have a clear advantage. We stress that it should not seek to strengthen its Special Relief Operations but rather should leave this to other Organizations, which already have the capability to order, deliver and monitor emergency supplies. Instead, FAO should concentrate on providing appropriate technical advice on the agricultural requirements or, as mentioned by Mr Wade, the upfront areas to predict emergencies. We look forward to the agreements with other UN Agencies which Dr Bommer mentioned.

With regard to the publication activities, in general Canada supports the recommendations to establish a publications strategy and that distribution should be demand-driven. We recommend that a Publications Review Committee, which would include outside membership, be established. We support, in principle, the idea of a quota system.

In closing, Canada considers that the evaluation process is improving; however, it needs to be more integrated into the full cycle of programme planning and budgeting.

Suharyvo HUSEN (Indonesia): On behalf of the Indonesian delegation, first of all I would like to thank and appreciate the work which has been done by the Secretariat in providing us with the document CL 112/14.

The Indonesian delegation is in agreement with the Programme Committee that commented with satisfaction on the latest edition of the Programme Evaluation Report. It was, in general, more analytical, with a clearer focus on the programme objectives and strategy as well as implementation outputs and results, including clearer identification of changes and deviations from the original plans outlined in the Programme of Work and Budget.

The Indonesian delegation would like to see, in the future, more frequent use of external expertise in the Programme Evaluation. My delegation would also like to associate itself with the Committee's concern on several cases of adverse effects of prolonged vacancies and long delays in staff recruitment, on programme implementation, and the late receipt of vacancy announcements. Therefore, for the effective and efficient implementation of the Programme of Work of the Organization, this situation should be overcome as soon as possible, such as by considering in depth the time and budget allocated in processing staff recruitment and based on the existing policy.

Concerning Chapter 1 - Water Development, Management and Conservation (Sub-Programme 2.1.1.4) -- the Indonesian delegation welcomes, with satisfaction, the considerable refocusing of the programme that had taken place during the recent biennia, as well as the achievements realized.

The Indonesian delegation also would like to associate itself with the Committee in supporting, in general, the recommendations contained in the review under this Chapter, especially the importance of ensuring practicability of the various computerized information systems and tools, like AQUASTAT, CROPWAT, CLIMWAT and SIMIS, establishing a realistic timetable for complementing the work on AQUASTAT, and providing adequate technical support to allow for effective implementation of the field projects.

Regarding Chapter 2 -- Fisheries Resources and Aquaculture (Programme 2.3.2) -- the Indonesian delegation agreed with the Committee view that this Programme was well focused and dynamic in addressing some of the essential aspects of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture development. In this context, my delegation has similar concerns to the Committee, as stated in paragraph 2.14, such as: the importance of the implementation of the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*, the unique potential of aquaculture and the importance of regional fisheries bodies in improving fishery resource management.

In conclusion regarding Chapter 3 -- Technology Development and Transfer (Programme 2.5.1) -my delegation would like very much to see in the future the strengthening of collaboration between FAO and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) system in the facilitation and transfer of appropriate technologies from CGIAR centres to National Agricultural Research Centres.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México): Coincidimos en la importancia de la actividad de evaluación como un elemento clave para la planeación de las actividades de la Organización.

Queremos referirnos, en concreto, al Capítulo II del documento presentado por la Secretaría del Programa sobre Pesca y Acuicultura. En este sentido, como lo señala el párrafo 264, nos preocupa el hecho de un desequilibrio que se está advirtiendo fuertemente en la Organización respecto al balance de actividades de campo y normativas.

Las actividades de campo lamentablemente han estado, como señala este documento, en desventaja en relación con otras actividades. En este sentido, nos gustaría escuchar de la Secretaría, hasta que punto concretamente la parte de pesca y, concretamente la parte de acuicultura, se han visto afectadas por los recortes presupuestales del último bienio.

Apoyamos lo señalado por la delegación de Indonesia respecto al fortalecimiento de las actividades en la aplicación del Código de Conducta de Pesca Responsable y, también, respecto a las

actividades en el campo de la acuicultura, una de las esferas de mayor potencial a la luz de los resultados de la Cumbre Alimentaria.

Finalmente, en relación con el nuevo proyecto planteado en el documento para la distribución de publicaciones, nos gustaría conocer si este proyecto, que desde luego estaría bien intencionado, conduciría a una complicación administrativa, dado los pasos y las fases que se incluirían en la distribución de publicaciones y que ahora no se contemplan.

J.A. THOMAS (South Africa): I have two brief comments, one of a general nature and one more specific. The general one is just in support of what has been said about the importance of sound evaluation, the need to continue with this and to improve the process.

Our specific comment regards Chapter Five, dealing with Publications Activities of FAO. We would just like to underline the point made in the Report of the Finance Committee about the centrality of information to the activities of FAO. This is probably the most important function of FAO, the generation and the transfer of information in various forms. Because of this it was rather disturbing to find that the Evaluation pointed to the fact -- and I am generalizing here -- that FAO publications are mainly used by academic and research institutions and central government in developed countries, whereas they are very relatively less used, relatively little used by local-level organizations in developing countries.

This begs the question of the relevance of FAO information on the one hand and, on the other, why this information is not reaching the intended target audience to the extent that we think it should. We would therefore like to support the recommendations in paragraph 3.27 of the Report of the Finance Committee where it is pointed out that this type of evaluation should continue to examine these particular issues. We would like to emphasize the need for this type of evaluation regarding this important function of FAO.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation): Thank you very much Mr Chairman, and thank you, also, to all of the delegates who spoke. I think it is not a question of answering questions. In fact, I think we can agree with pretty well everything that was said. What you are asking us to go for is what we are trying to achieve. It takes time and it will take more time to reach our goal in this.

I would like to mention briefly the continuum that we are working through to try and make the Programme more -- I do not know if the word exists -- evaluable, more able to be evaluated. You will see that in the short term what we have been doing is trying to make the Programme of Work and Budget much more specific, so each Programme element now has defined main outputs that will be achieved for the Programme element relation to the described objective for that element.

We are working very hard in the current Programme of Work and Budget Document to ensure a good line of cause and effect from the outputs that we are proposing to the objectives that we are defining. That, incidentally, is an exercise which is being carried out very much by the Evaluation Service. Because it is located in the Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation, it means that the feedback loop is very strong. So the submissions that are coming from Divisions are going to the Evaluation Service, which is applying its experience in this process to try and see how that whole definition of what it is we are setting out to do can be better defined and improved.

There are one or two specific comments which may be worth mentioning. I think on gender issues the distinguished delegate of the United States of America emphasised the importance of this. I would like to mention that we are making a particular effort in the 1998-99 budget to have all Divisions identify the actions they are taking on gender mainstreaming. In fact, we expect to provide a section in the Document, perhaps as an addendum, which will cover the resources being

applied to this effort. It came out of the Programme and the Finance Committees, actually on the Special Programme for Food Security and on Women in Development -- I have to say, for slightly different reasons -- that there was an interest in seeing what inputs were going into these Programmes from elsewhere within the Programme structure. Because you can "cut the cake" so many ways that it is very difficult to give a complete picture. So, we have chosen these two areas to try and give a cross-sectoral view of what inputs and outputs are going to be produced under those cross-sectoral Programmes.

Impact of reduced staff: again the United States of America, but other delegates did comment on this. It is worth mentioning that a lot of our problems have been due to the fact we could not fill posts and we could not use outside contractors because we did not have the money coming in fast enough. So, it is not just an administrative problem, it is also a problem of ensuring the contributions come through in time. That may not have come out clearly in the Report but it has to be recognized as one of the issues which the Organization faces.

The distinguished delegate of Mexico commented on paragraph 264 and the imbalance between normative and operational activities. I am not sure if I understood your comment correctly. Our concern, basically, is that the Fisheries Programme, in the field side, has declined so seriously that the feedback from practical experience in the field to the normative offices running this Programme is beginning to weaken, to a degree that might be serious. In other words, because, overall, development assistance to Fisheries Programmes has gone down, presumably as a reflection of the issue of capacity on high-seas fishing, etc., it has effected all elements of fisheries, including, quite illogically, aquaculture. We just do not have or the same volume of field programmes that you would expect. We are examining that issue to and try and find ways in which we can attract resources to those areas of the entire Fisheries Programme, which are so critical and on which more assistance is required.

You also raised the question about whether the suggested National Account System, replacing quotas, could become difficult in terms of budget and in terms of the administration of it. First of all, we will try very hard to come up with a proposal which does not include a lot of bureaucratic steps, otherwise it will clog the whole thing up. The second thing is that we are already spending a lot of money here. If I remember the figures correctly, it is US\$11 million a biennium that we spent in 1994-95 in providing free distribution of publications. What we felt is, that we could transfer that US\$ 11 million and make it available in a much more effective way. I agree with you that has to be done in such a way that it works, and we will be trying very hard to achieve that.

I think that is probably all we need to say at this stage.

M. HAYASHI (Assistant Director-General, Fisheries Department): Mr Wade has made already a good response to the queries made by the distinguished Representative of Mexico with regard to the activities in Fisheries. I would like to add simply that one of the ways to improve this situation caused by the decrease in the amount of assistance from donors would be to focus on stronger systems in the field of the implementation of the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*, as rightly stressed by the distinguished Representative of Mexico. Indeed we have several project documents prepared in support of the implementation of the Code and, if a sufficient amount of financial assistance will be coming in this area, we can considerably strengthen the activities in the field of better fisheries management because all the activities regarding improvement of management in the field of fisheries are included in this important document.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: I just wanted to make a comment in response to the comments of Canada with respect to our Special Relief Operations. I am sure there is a major misunderstanding, as there is no other body in the UN system that has a responsibility for the assistance in the provision of essential agricultural inputs in the aftermath of an emergency. This is an integral part of FAO's mandate. We have been responding to requests for emergency assistance

since the beginning days of the Organization, and have had this Special Office of Relief Operations for twenty-five years. Last year, for example, we operated 57 new projects in 31 countries. We specifically have the responsibility for the assessment of needs for essential agricultural inputs in the aftermath of an emergency. We have the responsibility to prepare the project profiles that appear in the Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeals that are put together by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. FAO is a full member, of course, of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on Humanitarian Affairs which meets at the Under-Secretary-General level, of which I therefore am a member. We have a responsibility to help governments coordinate the flow of inputs because inputs come from all different sources; some governments make contributions directly to NGOs, others provide it indirectly. We also have a responsibility for the operation of emergency projects if the governments so wish us to do so.

I thought it would be helpful to have that explanation, as there is nobody else that I know of that the members of this Organization can turn to when they have a flood, when they have a hurricane, when they have a drought, or any other emergency matter that involves the food and agriculture sector. They have a right to come to us for whatever assistance we can provide; we do our best to provide it. It is interesting to note that we do not use Regular Programme budget resources for this activity. It has been in operation all these years; it is fully funded from projects, from the donations that are made by Member Nations or World Bank or UNDP, for these activities.

D. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee): I only wanted to express on behalf of the Programme Committee Members, most of whom are here, our thanks to the Council for supporting the views we have expressed. If there has been a considerable improvement in the work, the Evaluation, we fully share in the thanks to the Evaluation Service. They have done an excellent job and we will further improve, you can be sure, in the future, after this very important exercise.

EL PRESIDENTE: Podemos concluir este tema, advirtiendo primero que el Consejo coincidió en la importancia de la evaluación como base para la planeación. El Consejo acogió el conjunto y de manera positiva las innovaciones introducidas en esta versión de la evaluación y, recomendó que debían mantenerse. Se destacó la utilidad de las observaciones de los directores de los programas pertinentes o de la administración superior sobre los principales temas, y las recomendaciones al respecto.

Se indicó que esto ayudaba sin duda a la transparencia de la Organización y a la mayor interacción entre los programas. El Consejo alentó a que se buscaran, desde luego, ulteriores mejoras para conseguir un análisis más pormenorizado de las actividades de la FAO. Se destacó que la evaluación debe comprender el efecto concreto de las acciones de la FAO sobre población, el objetivo y las metas concretas establecidas y que debía seguir lo que todo programa y proyecto debería contener, es decir, una clara identificación de la prioridad de los programas, los objetivos e indicadores de éstos y las fórmulas de seguimiento de los mismos y dar respuesta a cada uno de estos pasos.

Los resultados de las evaluaciones deberían reflejarse claramente en el Programa de Labores y Presupuesto y, en particular, de esto debería destacarse y centrarse más la función de la FAO en sus ventajas comparativas.

El Consejo ratificó las conclusiones y las recomendaciones en especial las de los dos exámenes temáticos relativos a las operaciones especiales de socorro de la FAO y las actividades de publicaciones de la Organización. Efectivamente, se reconoció que es imprescindible que la FAO continúe prestando asistencia con objetivos bien definidos en caso de situaciones de urgencia, particularmente para la fase de reconstrucción, desde luego en plena coordinación y cooperación con otras agencias involucradas.

Es igualmente importante que se mantenga un programa de publicaciones activo y pertinente, para satisfacer de manera más eficaz las necesidades de información en un mundo que está en rápido

cambio, en un mundo que se está globalizando, ejerciendo así la importante función que la Constitución de la FAO establece de difusión de la información. Se coincidió en que la distribución y la lista de destinatarios debería revisarse y optimizarse, particularmente con el fin de promover esta información en países en desarrollo, pero también con miras a que la distribución de publicaciones lleve a una reducción del número de ejemplares entregados conforme así proceda.

Finalmente, se recordó que los idiomas utilizados en la Organización son lenguas oficiales de la FAO y que son igualmente válidos y no deben discriminarse al respecto.

Obviamente distinguidos delegados, se hicieron otras observaciones y estoy seguro que el informe de la FAO las recogerá con todo el equilibrio necesario.

Kezimbira Lawrence MIYINGO (Uganda): I am sorry to have been taken a little aback by a comment on the documentation and the distribution of information that originates from FAO. In some of the developing countries, where the official languages of FAO are not the languages that are understood by the majority of the citizens of these countries, many publications that come from FAO remain on the shelves and do not benefit the majority of the people, especially the extension workers, and the resources for distribution and translation into the different languages are not available.

I was wondering if the selection of documents that are sent to these individual countries could not be limited so that a little fund is available at the local FAO offices to effect some translations of some of the documents in order to produce effective information.

EL PRESIDENTE: Se ha tomado nota de su petición y estoy seguro que se atenderá.

Si no hubiera ninguna otra observación damos por concluido el Tema 14 de nuestra agenda y pasamos al Tema 15, Plan a Plazo Medio 1998-2003.

15 Medium Term Plan 1998-2003

15 Plan à moyen terme 1998-2003

15 Plan a Plazo Medio 1998-2003

EL PRESIDENTE: Como ustedes saben, esta es la cuarta versión del Plan a Plazo Medio que se presenta al Consejo y a la Conferencia. Hay que destacar que este Plan se preparó muy poco después de conocerse las conclusiones de un acontecimiento tan importante como lo fue la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación y en efecto en él han influido notablemente los resultados de la Cumbre como espero ustedes apreciarán. En los lugares oportunos aparecen referencias a los compromisos de la Cumbre y no cabe duda de que los miembros del Consejo encontrarán interesante el cuadro ilustrativo de referencias entre las esferas prioritarias de los programas principales sustantivos y los compromisos de la Cumbre Mundial al final del Capítulo 3.

El Plan no se limita a proponer un conjunto homogéneo de prioridades programáticas a plazo medio, sino que además ofrece varios principios rectores para el examen de las políticas y contiene un resumen útil de las medidas previstas en los sectores administrativos y de apoyo.

El Presidente del Comité del Programa examinó las prioridades que se indican en el Plan. Los miembros de Comité hicieron un amplio ejercicio al respecto, señalando a nuestra atención, los sectores a los que considera debería darse mayor relieve.

A parte del contenido específico del Plan que tenemos ante nosotros, el Comité del Programa se detuvo también a examinar la finalidad y posible contenido de tales planes en el futuro, y al

respecto, se prevé un posible cambio de contenido que derivará del nuevo modelo de programa si la Conferencia, desde luego, aprueba su aplicación más generalizada.

El Comité de Programa también, como ustedes pueden ver, examinó el concepto de Plan Progresivo y consideró que podía interpretarse de varias formas, ya que los Estados Miembros pueden tener diferentes expectativas respecto del objeto y la función de tal documento de políticas en el proceso de adopción de decisiones. El Comité invita a este Consejo, y nosotros desde luego a la Conferencia, a reexaminar el proceso de planificación a plazo medio de la FAO, con objeto de que responda plenamente a las necesidades de los órganos rectores evitando al mismo tiempo toda repetición que sea innecesaria.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation): Mr Chairman, only very briefly because you have fully introduced the report. I will just add that the Secretariat is very interested in Council's view on the question raised by the Programme Committee about what the future of the Plan should be. Some have held the view that a concentrated effort to produce a brand new Medium-Term Plan every six years would result in a more innovative document and perhaps something more strategic instead of the inevitable incrementalism that occurs with producing a two-yearly update.

The information I wanted to add was that if Council decided to recommend that it didn't produce a Medium-Term Plan in one biennium or another, the savings in direct production costs would be about US\$ 55 000 per biennium.

E. Wayne DENNEY (United States of America): The current version of the Medium-Term Plan has undergone several changes in tone and focus. In recent years we have congratulated the Secretariat for gradually making improvements from the previous Plan. While the 1998-2003 Plan does contain some valuable information, is presented in a concise fashion and discusses several priority areas that we can support, we generally believe that it is not well-focused. It falls short of providing us a vision for the future, it does little more than restate arguments for the next Summary Programme of Work and Budget.

For this document to be truly useful it needs to provide a strategy for investing FAO resources combined with a clear estimate of what results we expect to attain in key areas at the end of the planning period. Such a strategic vision will allow us to better judge our performance and ensure that we are taking the necessary steps to meet our objectives.

We are pleased to see that the document concludes that the Plan will have to be implemented in a period of budgetary constraint. We agree with that conclusion. The Plan has several positive features, including the attention given to developing appropriate policies, the need to give more opportunities to women, the emphasis on agricultural research, biotechnology, trade liberalization, science-based standard setting, and the importance of expanded partnerships. But, we believe there is over-emphasis on the Food Summit and Food Security, as narrowly defined as FAO's primary focus and not enough attention to other recent international conferences which the World Food Summit complements, or signals that FAO Governing Bodies have sent regarding programme direction.

As the international community and the UN System committed in 1992, by promoting sustainable development as their broadest priority objective, we recognize the need for both a broader understanding of what constitutes food security at the World Food Summit. This larger vision and its multidisciplinary direction is inadequately addressed in the Medium-Term Plan under review. Nor is adequate recognition given to the vital importance of FAO's normative functions in contributing to world food security.

We find that much of the beginning portion of the document concentrates on areas where FAO may not have a comparative advantage, while the last half of the document, does not give us enough indication of where FAO is heading beyond what we know from reading the summary Programme of Work and Budget.

For these reasons, we recommend that FAO move to strategic budgeting and subsequent revisions of the Plan.

Aidan O'DRISCOLL (Ireland): Firstly, I would like to ask you to give the floor to the delegate of The Netherlands to make a statement on behalf of the European Community and its Member States. I would ask if you then add me to the list of speakers as I would also like to make a national statement subsequently.

J.B. PIETERS (Observer for the Netherlands): Indeed, I will speak on behalf of the European Community and its Member States. We would like to express our views on the Medium-Term Plan. I must say that the FAO Secretariat did not make our work easy because we received this document, as well as other important documents for the session, very late in the capitals. Therefore, we suggest that FAO make these documents available, for instance, on Internet.

This Plan is an important vehicle in setting the direction for the Organization to take, with vision and priorities. We would underline the need for careful analysis in order to achieve a soundly based strategic plan. Recognizing the perception that food security and sustainable development are essentially two sides of the same coin, it must be shown that this is more than just playing with words. In this connection, it should be made clear that poverty and insufficient food production is the basic cause of the extensive food insecurity in the world today. This forms, in our opinion, the context in which the Medium-Term Plan should define the role to be played by FAO.

In our view, the general orientation for assessing FAO's role should consist of several elements: (i) the universal character of FAO should be reflected in its priorities, as well as in the scope and coverage of its activities; (ii) the Organization should be a centre of excellence in the field of food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries which, in our opinion, means it has a leading position in partnership with others in these policy areas and is capable of reacting adequately to international developments; (iii) it is essential that FAO cooperates and coordinates with other UN organizations; (iv) priorities should be derived from the internationally agreed positions such as the areas of Agenda 21, for which FAO is the Task Manager, and the functions allocated to FAO in the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit; (v) the budgetary framework in which FAO must operate provides an increasing need to establish priorities in its Medium-Term Plan, and to be selective on the issues on which the Organization maintains or develops a leading position.

With respect to the policy context, we believe that the strength of FAO as all other Specialized Agencies, are to be found in their normative and guideline roles, highlighting the need for synergy between its normative and guideline roles and its operational activities. Its operational activities should in any event rest only on a comparative advantage criteria, in order to avoid duplication with other UN bodies.

We are somewhat disappointed with the small section on the governance in the document. Streamlining the governance's mechanisms is an ongoing process for any UN organization and in FAO we have the process of review of statutory bodies and panels of experts, initiated in 1996. In the broader UN context there is an ongoing process with particular reference to FAO, and that is the UN reform in the economic and social sectors. The Council may be aware that the European Union, as well as the Nordic countries, presented proposals in this respect.

The Secretary General of the United Nations will shortly present his proposals for this reform which, at this stage, will be limited to UN Headquarters. It is foreseen that as a next step this

process will be extended to the Specialized Agencies. In this connection, relevant aspects for FAO are: interagency relations and more intense coordination at the regional and field level. We would appreciate to learn about the Secretariat's views on this important process on governance within the UN system. We suggest that the Secretariat take a proactive stance on it which certainly merits inclusion in the Medium-Term Plan.

For the Secretariat, references to the World Food Summit Plan of Action seem to provide justification to include a large number of different programmes and sub-programmes in the Medium-Term Plan, calling it either a key main component or very important section or otherwise of high importance without any rating. We see a need for a clear differentiation between programmes of high and of low priority. At the recent sessions of the Committees on Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture where the respective parts of the Medium-Term Plan were discussed for the first time, the European Union has already stressed the need for a clear programme prioritization and for a clear delineation between high and low priorities.

We emphasize the important normative function of assisting in the formulation of fisheries and aquaculture policies, globally as well as in the framework of the regional fisheries bodies, which should be strengthened in the Medium-Term Plan. Implementation of the cult of context on responsible fisheries, particularly through strengthening regional fisheries organizations is of the utmost importance.

In the field of forestry, FAO should support the international dialogue on sustainable forest management in line with its role of Task Manager for the first three chapters of Agenda 21 and with particular emphasis on criteria and indicators. It should continue to provide normative and strategic support to international first initiatives, as well as assist and support countries with the development and execution of national forest programmes.

Turning to specific comments on the document itself, we welcome the new agricultural model in which FAO post WFS work should be directed. We can agree with the perceptions on which the model is based, since they integrate in a balanced way the many horizontal and vertical linkages, as well as the forward and backward linkages of primary production and of the agricultural sector as a whole.

Concerning modalities of implementation, three elements are highlighted in the document. Firstly, resource mobilization; secondly, decentralization; and thirdly, expanding partnerships. We agree that these are essential issues for any organization that wants to fulfil its mission.

More broadly, so far as FAO's agricultural activities are concerned, key tasks should, in our view, be derived from thorough analysis. We question the extent to which the Secretariat's document appears to focus on the Special Programme for Food Security.

Finally, we would like to ask the Secretariat to produce a revised version of the Medium-Term Plan, including the synoptic table on the basis of comments we and others have made during this debate under this item.

Aidan O'DRISCOLL (Ireland): Firstly, I would of course like to associate Ireland fully with the statement just made by the Presidency of the EU on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.

There is much that is positive in this document in its identification of the medium term challenges in Chapter 1, and in the strategic orientations in Chapter 2. We welcome, for example, the identification in Chapter 1 of the need for appropriate policies which do not penalize agriculture in paragraph 17. We would, however, have liked to have seen this point developed further.

In Chapter 2, we concur with the way in which the issues of food security and sustainable development are brought together. We also welcome many of the elements in the new model of agriculture in Chapter 2. We are happy, in particular, to see recognition of the need to go beyond primary production and to pay more attention to related upstream and downstream activities. We agree, also, that work on technical and economic programmes should be based particularly on capacity building.

While welcoming these and other elements in Chapters 1 and 2, we must also say that there are some very important gaps in these sections. The lack of emphasis on poverty as the source of food insecurity is one glaring example. The struggle against poverty must be put at the centre of FAO's mission.

It is, however, when we turn to Chapter 3 that the greatest difficulties with this documents arise. This is presumably where the plan should be, based on the strategic orientations in Chapter 2. However, we find no clear vision or meaningful strategy in this chapter. The list of priorities in Chapter 3 is, among other things, improbably long; many items are very generally stated and there is little emphasis on the strategic orientations from Chapter 2. For example, there is no sign of the integrated approach which is promised in the new agriculture model. What we would expect to see in a medium term plan is a clearer statement of where FAO is going in the period to 2003. This requires a number of steps or elements.

Firstly, there should be a clearer analysis of the environment in which the Organization must operate and of the opportunities and threats for the Organization in that environment.

Secondly, there must be an honest assessment of the Organization's own strengths and weaknesses.

Thirdly, there should be a statement arising from the first two steps of FAO's broad objective or mission.

Fourthly, there should be a clear set of strategic objectives and priorities for the period of the Plan, along with a mechanism for assessing performance against objective, which means having appropriate targets and indicators, an issue referred to by Mr Wade in his summing up remarks in the last agenda item.

Finally, there should be a work planning mechanism to ensure that the work undertaken by the units of the Organization follows the strategic objectives and priorities.

I am sure that many delegates will recognize these steps as the textbook elements of any strategic management or planning process which many of us have experience of in own administrations. FAO would benefit from this approach also. In that regard, I would like to welcome the reference in paragraph 185 to the introduction of a system of performance appraisal with identified objectives and outputs. This is a key issue in the planning process which should receive far greater attention in the document.

To conclude, I have emphasized that there are some good and some bad things in this document and many things that are missing. Nevertheless, taking a positive view, we welcome it as a working document. We look forward to seeing the Plan.

Andrew PEARSON (Australia): I, too, would firstly like to pick up the comments that have been made by the three preceding speakers - that takes up many of the detail which I will not repeat --but would just like to emphasize Australia's belief that a Medium-Term Plan is a very key organizational planning tool. It needs a focus on the key priorities and objectives, and the assessment of their outcomes for the Organization.

It also needs to be better linked with the technical committees. One of the drawbacks of a very compressed calendar and one which, I think, is important to look at in the future, is to ensure that the interaction between the discussions at the technical committees and their recommendations feed into something like updates of the Medium-term Plan, so that we get this interaction between implementation and assessment, because there is a need to ensure that we do not duplicate the technical contents of their discussions, but rather we consider the fundamental orientations that underpin programmes of this Organization.

Chapters 1 and 2 of the Medium-Term Plan are the sort of information that we need for our future documents along these lines.

Just drawing in particular, then, on paragraph 2.30 of CL 112/14, which notes that there are potential drawbacks in preparing a fully-fledged self-contained version for each biennium. Australia would certainly endorse that, but it is not because it entails, in many instances, substantial repetition between successive versions. It is because you are not producing the right kind of document at all, and so it is not duplication we are looking to avoid, it is, in fact, enhancing the capacity of the Organization to examine its directions and look at them carefully and honestly.

So, as a final point in relation to the suggestion of a possible alternative, a rolling plan on a six-year cycle is appropriate. However, it is important in considering the intermediate years, or the intermediate biennia, that it is not simply an update but it is a report that does analyze how the performance has been and whether, in the following biennium, there are some major changes that membership need to look at, particularly when we are considering the link into the next proposed Programme of Work and the potential budget that may be entailed in implementing that Programme of Work.

T. SUDO (Japan): With respect to the revised FAO's Mid-term Plan, taking into consideration the outcome of the World Food Summit, my delegation also regards it as a key element just after the World Food Summit and would like to endorse, in general, the documents produced by the Secretariat.

In this connection, I would like to touch on a few points in the documents.

Firstly, with regard to discussions at the 14th Session of COAG, the COAG confirmed the importance of EMPRES and IPPC, as well as the need to address the issues on the livestock sector, animals and plant genetic resources, pesticides and the formulation of agricultural trade policy.

Furthermore, in order to ensure food security, the COAG confirmed the importance of FIVIMS, as well as the Women in Development Programme and consolidation of the GIEWS function.

My delegation appreciates the work done by the Secretariat and it expects the Secretariat to make the order of priority more obvious under the budgetary constraints, and to strengthen their achievements in FAO's agricultural comparative advantage sectors.

Secondly, in the field of Forestry: the 13th Session of COFO indicated that FAO's future actions should focus on some works of FAO's comparative advantage among proposed actions of IPF. This includes the National Forestry Programme, Community Forestry, various statistics and FRA. As current priority items, my delegation considers the importance of sustainable forestry management and long-term outlook, and considers that duplication with other international organizations' activities should be avoided.

Finally, in the field of Fisheries: during the 22nd Session of COFI, as areas of high priority in future, FAO confirmed the following items: firstly, implementation of the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*, secondly, the reduction of excessive fishing, fishing capacity and fishing

efforts; thirdly, reduction of by catch and discards; fourthly, promotion of the introduction of the precautionary approach and the importance of monitoring control on surveillances; and, lastly, collecting data, formulating research needs and recommending management options.

In addition to these six items, Japan considers that FAO should actively address a study for marine species management and study for socio-economic implications, fisheries which are included in the Kyoto Declaration and Plan of Action as Japan proposed.

Ronald ROSE (Canada): The Canadian delegation certainly welcomes the opportunity to comment upon the contents and the purposes of the Medium-Term Plan. We strongly agree with the comments which have already been made by the United States, by the Netherlands on behalf of the Member States of the European Union, by Ireland and Australia, and this allows me to make my intervention that much more brief. I will refrain from stressing points that they have already made.

We believe that it is appropriate that we look at this Medium-Term Plan just after having looked at the Evaluation Report, because it is our hope that we will soon be looking at these two documents as well as others as part of an integrated whole, and that they become even more coordinated in the future.

We also strongly support the comments that were made by the Programme Committee concerning the weaknesses of the current Medium-Term Plan, particularly paragraph 2.29.

What Canada expected to find in reviewing the Medium-Term Plan was for the Organization to lay out its plans as to how FAO was going to fulfil the mandate which was foreseen for the period 1996-2001 in the previous Medium-Term Plan. We expected it to incorporate lessons learnt from programme evaluations and to provide guidance for the next Programme of Work and Budget, to set the targets for the next biennium, in order to achieve the objectives which had been set out in that Medium-Term Plan. But rather than a modification of the Medium-Term Plan that we had agreed to years ago, what we found was that the Plan was completely re-written, largely as a result of the World Food Summit, and that it reflects the prominence being given to the Special Programme on Food Security, both as a specific FAO programme and as a methodology for country-level strategic planning.

As pointed out by the Programme Committee, this re-write is contrary to the concept established by Conference that it would be a six-year plan, updated but not re-written every two years.

We agree that the World Food Summit was certainly an important event in the life of FAO and the life of the world, and much was decided which will have an impact on the work of FAO, in the short term and in the medium term. Nevertheless, we expected that the results of the World Food Summit would produce modifications to the objectives of the Medium-Term Plan and not a complete re-drafting. To borrow language from the jargon of space probes, we thought that the Medium-Term Plan would be subject to "mid-course corrections" and not re-writes.

We also feel that the current re-write of the Medium-Term Plan appears to be essentially an extension of the 1998-99 Programme of Work and Budget, rather than a distinct Medium-Term Plan. As a result, we have the problem that the future is being defined somewhat in terms of the past. As we have already mentioned and as will be mentioned when we discuss the Summary Programme of Work and Budget, these difficulties could be overcome by a more strategic approach to budgeting, which we are going to, as I mentioned, cover under a following agenda item.

We are concerned, as I mentioned, with the emphasis placed on the outcome of the World Food Summit in this re-written document, not because we do not feel that the World Food Summit was important, but we feel that, in addition to the World Food Summit, it is also important to note the demands made upon FAO from other Summits and from World Conferences, such as those at Rio

and Leipzig, demands flowing from the Uruguay Round of Trade Negotiations, and recommendations negotiated during meetings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, to name but a few.

Achieving world food security is certainly a fundamental challenge for governments, civil society and the international community. However, in Canada's opinion, the questions outlined in Chapter 1 mainly relate to issues of production, sustainability, trade and investment, which may be important in some countries, but not in all. Although FAO's mandate certainly covers these factors, future editions of the document, we hope, would also take into account, more explicitly, other aspects of food security related to access and other aspects of the seven Commitments of the Rome Declaration and Plan of Action.

Canada certainly feels that the normative actions for the monitoring analysis in reporting regarding nutrition, food safety and agricultural information, should be maintained and enhanced through such systems and organizations as the Codex Alimentarius, the Global Information and Early Warning Systems maintained by the FAO World Agricultural Information Centre and the Virtual Library, etc. The Global Perspective Studies and the World Food Security Analyses are important activities to be maintained and expanded where appropriate.

The Medium-Term Plan, in Canada's view, should be one of a series of tools that make up the planning system within FAO, but certainly one of the most important of those tools. The Medium-Term Plan should lay out the broad objectives of the Organization, taking into account the lessons learnt from programme evaluations and from the Programme Implementation Report, and should be augmented or supported by the Programme of Work and Budget which outlines how those broad objectives are going to be achieved in the next biennium.

In closing, I think it is fair to say that Canada found the Medium-Term Plan did not meet our expectations in charting the strategies and directions, either for the 1996-2001 period or for the 1998-2003. It should be a strategic document that should be developed in line with the instructions of the last Conference and provide a beacon for future directions.

In addition, we would certainly expect to see that the decisions made at the preceding COFO, COFI and COAG meetings will be eventually reflected in this Medium-Term Plan.

Jorgen Skovgaard NIELSEN (Denmark): First of all, I would like to make full reference to a statement made by the EU Presidency. Since this is the first time I have the floor, I would express my full confidence in your ability to preside this meeting, as well as the organizational skills of the FAO in arranging this meeting.

The Medium-Term Plans have, in many years, been considered to be core instruments for FAO Governing Bodies. The Plans provided the framework for longer range visions. It goes without saying that this function has grown in importance. With the ever-accelerating changes and developments in the world community, six years has become a long time span. Probably, changes in the period 1998-2003 will be even more dramatic than in the past period 1991-1997 and, therefore, I fully concur with the previous speakers and regret the lack of vision in the Medium-Term Plan we have in front of us.

The aim of FAO is therefore to be able to respond to or, even better, to influence decisively the ever-changing trends in the global community, in so far as they have an impact on food and agriculture. This is the moment for expressing visions rather than to extrapolate current programmes.

Globalization is such a strong feature in our time that it will keep its momentum, but also face serious challenges. A parallel feature is rapid urbanization. Sustainability is an excellent but also a

not very well-defined criterion. It is worrying that its application often has been too narrow. Until now, it has almost exclusively focused on the supply side. However, sustainability is a question of livelihood as well as respect for ecosystems. Sustainability should also focus on the demand side.

Globalization is increasingly comparing production norms with consumption norms. These differences in norms may be due to geographical distance but they can also exist in the same region. Urbanization has the same effect. The result is a growing risk of alienation of consumers in relation to food products and the consequence, too often, is fear and rejection of food, a rejection that is not always based entirely on proper documentation.

On the other hand, solid scientific documentation of food health and quality has appeared not to be sufficient to persuade consumers of today who may reject food from pure ethical reasons. Uncertainties concerning food production that is perceived as artificial and delinked from natural processes are another reason for fear and rejection.

All countries and international communities must face and deal with these consequences of globalization and urbanization. The phenomenon of ethical rejection is today, first of all, existing in affluent countries, but it will certainly proliferate through vanguard segments to developing countries as well.

What does this development mean to FAO? With its "new agricultural model", FAO certainly is going to confront these issues and this must be commended. But the model does not go far enough and it is, in fact, in most respects, not new. It is indeed important that the model goes beyond primary production with more emphasis on post-harvest environments. In this context, FAO could pursue its analysis of the impact of post-harvest activities on small farming units in local communities, because post-harvest activities are also to the benefit of non-agricultural, rural people in all kinds of communities. However, reliable food control institutions and systems are indispensable elements in post-harvest environments, in particular if processed food is to achieve competitiveness. In this context, FAO's aim to promote enabling environments in rural areas is relevant, in particular if supplemented by empowering processes through development of human capital. Terms for rural financing and conditions for rural labour should be seen in this context.

Last but not least, enabling and empowering of consumer environments are necessary in order to prevent alienation from production. Improvements of nutritional levels, purchasing power and sustainable recycling of wastes are indeed strictly necessary elements, but not sufficient. Consumers in a globalized community need education, information and insight in order to make qualified and informed choices of food. This goes for poor urban and rural consumers and for affluent consumers as well.

Consumer confidence (or "political sustainability") and post-harvest environments, including reliable control systems, deserve a much higher priority from FAO. Within a nominal zero-growth framework, this could imply reduction of some primary sector-related activities.

This in no way reflects a neglect of primary sector and the need of an enhanced emphasis on sustainability in production. Nor does it disregard the need to respect local ecosystems. Actually, we may all of us be sending a wrong signal if natural resource management and sustainability are gathered in one single budget line, for instance, 2.5.1.5, in FAO's Programme of Work and Budget. Rather, it should go without saying that ecological sustainability must be an integrated element in almost all budget lines.

Being a "Centre of Excellence", FAO is committed to face all new technologies without prejudice, even those that may be controversial. While FAO should be very attentive to current political signals, it should nevertheless analyze and submit its views on the contributions to food security of all sustainable and appropriate new technologies. In these activities, cooperation with scientific

environments, in particular the CGIAR, should be enhanced. This gives our communities, i.e. governments, consumers and producers, better bases for making choices. However, we must face that, in spite of an apparently scientifically well-documented benefit to human health and natural environments, consumers may, for religious, historical or purely ethical reasons, abstain from buying food produced through certain methods they dislike. More such criteria of sovereign consumer choices will probably be added in future, regardless of the removal of non-tariff barriers by WTO and corresponding bodies. It only matters that the choices should be clear and conscious.

Labelling and certification may be a valuable tool for developing informed and conscious choices. However, this presupposes a reliable control system, a cooperating production environment and, last but not least, simple labels to the benefit of the poorest and least-educated consumers. Development of such information systems through labelling or certification could be an important task for international agencies. Ethics demand reliable control systems; thus normative support to countries who want to benefit from globalization implies support to quality systems.

If we look at the crystal ball, enablement and empowerment of women, respect of indigenous peoples, empowerment of civil society and active participation of farmers and their organizations in development of sustainable farming systems will be still more imperative demands to an organization like FAO. I am convinced that before 2003 still other imperatives will introduce themselves forcefully.

Finally I would say that, in general, we support the initiatives taken by FAO in the ISIS information techniques areas, although, of course, we could question the pace of the development in that area, but we consider that to be a strong area where FAO has comparative advantages.

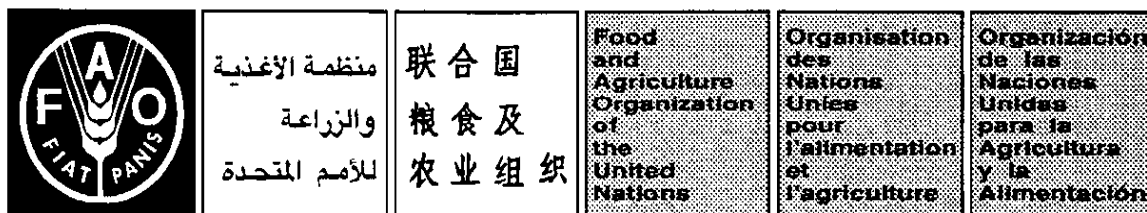
I may have been continuing a bit too long but finally I have to tell you that this statement has been prepared in cooperation with the Observers from Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

The meeting rose at 13.00 hours

La séance est levée à 13 h 00

Se levanta la sesión a las 13.00 horas

3 June 1997



COUNCIL

CONSEIL

CONSEJO

Hundred and Twelfth Session • Cent douzième session • 112° período de sesiones

FOURTH PLENARY MEETING
QUATRIEME SEANCE PLENTERE
CUARTA SESION PLENARIA

3 June 1997

The Fourth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.50 hours
Mr José Ramón López Portillo,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding

La quatrième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 50
sous la présidence de M José Ramón López Portillo,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la cuarta sesión plenaria a las 14.50 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. José Ramón López Portillo,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

EL PRESIDENTE: Buenas tardes distinguidos delegados. Se abre la cuarta sesión plenaria de nuestro Consejo. Tengo un anuncio que hacerles y luego una información que darles para su aprobación.

El primer anuncio se refiere a la reunión del Grupo Informal de trabajo sobre la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria. Les quiero informar que a las 12.00 horas del día de hoy, se habían inscrito para participar en dicho grupo 22 delegaciones. Quiero también informarles, que la reunión del Grupo tendrá lugar a las 13.00 horas de la tarde del día de mañana miércoles, 4 de junio en la Sala Líbano, que se encuentra en el Edificio D, Oficina 209, después que tengan lugar las consultas con las delegaciones y en virtud de la presencia, indispensable, de los expertos que vendrán para tal efecto. La reunión tendrá tres horas de interpretación, con lo cual podría concluir a las 16.00 horas para que, en la sesión de mañana, en donde como ustedes saben, está previsto tratar el Tema 11 de nuestra agenda, este grupo pueda reportar al Consejo sobre sus resultados. Obviamente, esperamos que quienes asistan a tal reunión lleguen a tiempo, para ello, el Consejo se suspenderá mañana un cuarto de hora antes. La razón de hacerlo así fue porque muchos países nos advirtieron que sus especialistas no estarían aquí para una sesión matutina que teníamos prevista de las 9.00 a las 12.00 horas, pero que no podíamos llevar a cabo en virtud de esta razón.

Por otra parte, yo se también que se han llevado a cabo ya una serie de consultas informales entre varios países interesados, en particular sobre las cuestiones que aún se encuentran entre corchetes. También quiero informarles que los especialistas del grupo africano se encuentran aún trabajando y que terminarán su reunión hoy en la tarde y podrán seguramente reportar al grupo e informar sobre sus resultados.

Fernando José MARRONI de ABREU (Brasil): Yo estoy de acuerdo con sus sugerencias pero temo que no vamos a tener tiempo suficiente para llegar a un acuerdo definitivo.

Hay algunos países, entre los cuales el mío, que tienen los técnicos aquí desde el lunes, y estoy seguro que no es el único. Me atrevería a sugerir que empezáramos, aunque tentativamente, mañana por la mañana, para discusiones iniciales y que continuáramos con el grupo integral por la tarde. Así ganaríamos tiempo, porque por mi experiencia en las dos reuniones previas, tal vez no será suficiente para llegar a un acuerdo. Entonces yo someto esta sugerencia a la consideración suya y de los demás miembros del plenario.

EL PRESIDENTE: Yo efectivamente preferiría también que se pudiera reunir el grupo en la mañana como lo teníamos previsto. Hay interpretación para una sesión a las 9.00 horas de la mañana y, entonces, le pregunto a esta sala si hay alguien que se oponga a que se reúna el Grupo Informal a las 9.00 horas de la mañana. ¿Habría algún problema con ello? Bastaría que levantaran su bandera; no tienen que darme explicaciones. Me parece que no hay problema que se reúna a esa hora. En este caso distinguidos delegados vamos a convocar, entonces, el Grupo como originalmente lo teníamos previsto a las 9.00 horas de la mañana en la Sala Líbano, Edificio D, Oficina 209.

Así queda decidido.

Me informa el señor Secretario General, que si es necesario, podrían tener otra reunión por la tarde de las 14.00 a las 16.00 horas. Los trabajos del Grupo, obviamente, no deberán obstaculizar los de este Consejo.

Distinguidos delegados, muchas gracias por su flexibilidad y espero que este grupo rinda los frutos que todos esperamos.

El segundo punto que deseaba informarles y sobre el cual se requiere el consentimiento del Consejo, se refiere al Comité de Redacción. Como ustedes saben, ya habíamos elegido por

aclamación al Presidente del Comité de Redacción, el señor Daniel Berthery, de Francia y, la composición del Comité de Redacción después de consultas, ha sido un poco modificada. Les voy a leer la nueva lista: Alemania, Australia, Cuba, China, Estados Unidos de América, Francia, Japón, Senegal, Siria, Uganda, Uruguay, Bangladesh y La República Islámica de Irán. Espero que todos coincidan conmigo en apoyar que esta sea la composición del Comité de Redacción. No veo a nadie que se oponga. Queda así integrado. El Comité de Redacción se reunirá hoy por la tarde conforme lo indica la Orden del Día a las 17.30 horas.

IV. PROGRAMME, BUDGETARY, FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (continued)

IV. QUESTIONS CONCERNANT LE PROGRAMME, LE BUDGET, LES FINANCES ET L'ADMINISTRATION (suite)

IV. ASUNTOS DEL PROGRAMA Y ASUNTOS PRESUPUESTARIOS, FINANCIEROS Y ADMINISTRATIVOS (continuación)

15. Medium-Term Plan 1998-2003 (continued)

15. Plan à moyen terme 1998-2003 (suite)

15. Plan a Plazo Medio 1998-2003 (continuación)

Luigi FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy): First of all let me associate with the European Union President's statement. I think that we are examining quite an ambitious document. Of course, there are ambitious objectives and a six year plan is not just a medium-term plan but is also starting to become a long-term plan.

Let me also express some appreciation for the efforts made by the FAO Secretariat in trying to make a concise and accessible document. Certainly, it is not an easy task for the many subjects of interest to so many countries but I think that in light of the observation made this morning, a more compact version of the document, could be helpful to all of us. I would just like to make a few points regarding the present text.

First of all, I would like to draw attention to the worrying figures on water on which the OECD delegate this morning made reference with quite eloquent figures. Paragraph 24 and the following paragraph are certainly of strategic importance. Of course, the support system of agricultural production in paragraph 91 is also important, referring to management of soil, plant and water, with regard to the waste water reused.

Second point, FAO is the unique Organization that can guarantee, in an integrated manner, the environmental, economic and social dimension of sustainable forest management on a global scale, as is written in paragraph 63. I would like to complement this paragraph adding, after economic, also "scientific", because, as a matter of fact, I think, that as far as forest management is concerned, it is not only environmental and economic but also scientific knowledge that FAO has to valorise, as I referred in the intervention of yesterday.

Its unique role is referred to, in paragraph 136 and in paragraph 138: the periodicity of forest assessment from ten to five maybe, why not, every three years, is an important point of reference. I already mentioned the fact that the panel in New York is finishing its mandate this year and I do hope that FAO will undertake this role which it is uniquely competent to do.

Third point, collaboration with other international organizations and I would add, and particularly with those in Rome. As a matter of fact, I found few references to World Food Programme and to IFAD and I found the same fact, and I raised the same objection, to the document of the World Food Programme prepared for the last board in which there was little or no reference to FAO. I think that a cross-fertilization could be helpful.

Fourth point, decentralization, paragraph 75. The others just speak of it as certainly a good formula. We supported it, as most delegations present here, but we have already experienced some difficulties in properly implementing and monitoring some of the projects, possibly because of their initial stage. But as a matter of fact, a decentralized office, unless it is provided with the means that the present situation of the budget does not seem to allow us, is just facing a very difficult job, a very difficult task because an experienced expert cannot be expert enough in aquaculture and farming or in just damming for a station and so on. So either he is a liaison officer, that contacts the delegations coming from Headquarters or from national capitals or he is just doing a representation job.

We would also like to study situations where there are some regional and sub-regional offices both of FAO and World Food Programme. I wonder if there is no possibility of integrating them, or even somehow merging them, to make savings. Having one office for two organizations is certainly cheaper than having two for two.

Fifth point, on paragraph 85, I think that the concept should be developed; or even a new paragraph should be dedicated to the need of increased collaboration and more integrated activities, as I said with World Food Programme and IFAD. I think either a new paragraph 86, or an integration with paragraphs 85, would be welcomed.

Point six, referring to high-quality expertise in paragraph 69 and the following paragraph. Would it not be possible to consider the Organization selling services and just making some new source of revenues? I think there are very highly qualified services that the Organization can provide and we had a national experience but also I think an international experience by which selling services abroad is a source of revenue, quite a legitimate one, with all the transparent and of course, external and internal auditing necessary but I think it is quite a helpful source of revenue. Why not explore this idea and venue?

Another point is just on the elements that have a real strategic dimension. There are others, for example, the one on agriculture, and we would also welcome the new model of agriculture which of course takes into account the need to go beyond primary production, linking vertically and horizontally activities to other economic activities. Of course, we would like to know a little more about this because certainly they are interesting and stimulating elements but which we could usefully develop in our discussions. However, we would like to see this new model of agriculture reviewed more in depth, in order to draw on the new model clear priorities for the Medium-Term Plan which would have a wider vision.

I said at the beginning that I would not like to repeat what already the European Union Presidency have already stated so eloquently but, I would like to stress one point which is particularly interesting to us, that is the synergy between the normative and guideline rules of the Organization and its operational activities. These are two dimensions which are very important to us and we would like to stress.

Therefore, we think that the document including the synoptic table which we of course appreciate even though it could be more articulately explained and maybe some blank points further developed and revised, in order to take into account the many comments made in this morning's session.

A. BEATTIE (United Kingdom): I should like to begin by associating the United Kingdom with the statement made by the European Union Presidency this morning.

A strategic plan is a vitally important document for any organization. Over the past two decades, most bodies which depend on public funds have come to realize the significance of this, and to devote resources to it accordingly. The language and concepts of strategic and corporate planning are now commonplace across the world. Electorates, owners and staff alike have come to expect

that the organizations and businesses, in which they have an interest, will have a clear strategic vision of where they are heading, based on a careful analysis of the operating environment and the choices open to the body, and an implementation strategy to carry it into effect. In the case of FAO, the Medium-Term Plan provides the essential context for the Programme of Work and Budget.

I will come back to the implications of this for the approach and structure of the document before us and for the medium-term planning process to which the Programme and Finance Committees invited the attention of Council.

Let me first offer some specific observations on activities. We commend FAO on its clear and compelling vision for forestry and for the role which FAO has played as task manager in the follow-up to UNCED. We would encourage FAO to extend its collaboration with other international organizations in defining roles of responsibilities and areas of joint work.

We can equally support the prominence accorded to the Fisheries Programme in the Plan and the three strategic goals set out on page 58. We should like to see a more realistic view of aquaculture potential, particularly in the light of increasing competition from other users of scarce fresh water resources. The closer integration of aquaculture into water management policies is something which deserves close attention over the period of the Plan.

We were disappointed and concerned to find that the detailed proposals for the forward programme include some of the activities which were singled out as low priority by the Technical Committees in their recent meetings. We reiterate the advice we have offered previously, that FAO must focus its resources on areas on which it has a clear comparative advantage.

The absence of quantification in the discussion of programme content is a source of concern. Is it not time that FAO set itself objectives and indicators of achievement against which it can be measured, and the impact of its work assessed? The point is exemplified by the proposal in paragraph 58 to use mass-media campaigns to explain successful work under FAO field projects. How will such success be accurately and responsibly measured if there are no criteria for success and no indicators of performance? What is needed is the transformation of the present list of activities into a set of quantified objectives in development and resource management.

Let me now return to the question of principles and approach. It is common ground among practitioners of strategic planning that an effective strategic or corporate planning system should do seven things:

It should identify those features in the environment which the organization needs to take into account in determining how it can best meet its main aims, including staff input, physical assets and the needs of its customers.

It should evaluate alternative strategies and the resources' requirements needed to implement them.

It should establish a strategic vision, a clear view of the long term direction of the organization.

It should enable the owners, in this the Membership of the Organization, to set challenging but realistic performance targets.

It should consider and plan the best use of human resources.

It should provide the basis for determining the financial resources needed to support the Organization. And lastly, it should provide the person in charge of each business unit within the Organization, with a clear understanding of the strategy which he or she can then implement within an agreed policy and resources framework.

Against this background, the United Kingdom Government believes that a strategic plan which reflects best practise should have the following broad structure. An executive summary, a review of immediate past performance against agreed targets, an analysis of prospects, a discussion of strategic options, a treatment of the proposed corporate strategy and associated performance targets, including quantified efficiency savings; and finally, an analysis of the financial implications of the Plan.

It is hard to escape the conclusion that FAO's Medium-Term Plan for period 1998-2003 falls somewhat short of these *desiderata*. We should like to see it recast into a document which addresses the points we have made. Until that is done, there is in our view, no sound basis on which the Membership of the Organization can make informed choices about the disposition of several billion dollars of public funds over a six-year period.

Putro SUMPENO (Indonesia): First and foremost, on behalf of the Indonesian delegation, allow me to extend my deep appreciation to the Secretariat for the efforts in preparing an excellent document, which is highly appreciated in practice to facilitate the speedy process of this Session.

Subsequently, the Indonesian delegation welcomed the proposed Medium-Term Plan submitted to the Council, which already reflects the outcome and commitments of the Plan of Action in the World Food Summit. In particular, we would like to emphasize the prominence and special attention to be given to the constraints linked to the pressures on natural resources as well as insufficient or inadequate human resources, particularly in the Low-Income, Food-Deficit countries. Therefore, FAO assistance is highly imperative.

In this connection, the prominence given to the Special Programme for Food Security and the need for TCP funding should enjoy high consideration.

We would like to associate ourselves with the statement of previous Delegates that addressed the need to prioritize the Work Plan in a more precise specification of timeframes.

The Indonesian delegation would like to express our appreciation also, in the Medium-Term Plan, of the work on nutrition and food quality as a high priority. Similarly, the emphasis on food control and consumer protection and the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

Regarding the Committee on Forestry for Medium-Term Perspectives, the Indonesian delegation is in agreement with the Committee on Forestry and would like to urge FAO to convene an early meeting of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests to agree on the inter-agency division of responsibilities with respect to IPF follow-up.

With regard to the Medium-Term Plan for Fisheries, we would like to emphasize the recognition of the growing number of major issues related to world fisheries and aquaculture and the Committee's endorsement of the three broad Fisheries Programme objectives for the medium term, especially the increased contribution to world food supplies and food security, sustainable and responsible management, and global monitoring and strategic analysis.

We would like also to re-emphasize that in setting priorities for the Fisheries Programmes, there should be balance between the needs of the developing and developed countries.

Finally, we would like to urge FAO to seek extra-budgetary support for operational activities, particularly improving R and D and training, which is particularly important for small-scale fisheries, and environmentally sound aquaculture development and their contribution to increased food security.

Roberto VILLEDA-TOLEDO (Honduras): En el Plan a Plazo Medio y en el plan de presupuesto de la FAO, cuando analizamos las modalidades de ejecución para intensificar la respuesta de FAO, encontramos que tal vez no se contengan propuestas más agresivas en busca de la mejor utilización de los limitados recursos frente a los problemas de aportes que se visualizan en estos organismos internacionales.

En el caso particular de las modalidades de ejecución que se contemplan en el documento en los numerales 64 y 65, consideramos que podría adicionarse una mayor decisión en cuanto a realizar estudios que nos permitan tocar aspectos de más fondo en la reestructuración institucional de FAO en algunas de las regiones. En particular, quisiera referirme a la de América, donde los Ministros de Agricultura, durante los últimos cuatro años, han adoptado resoluciones precisas, incitando a la FAO, para que por medio de la Junta Interamericana de Agricultura, realice a fondo un estudio junto con el IICA (Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación para la Agricultura), para lograr fusionar sus representaciones y su modo de actuación, especialmente en América Latina y el Caribe.

La última resolución fue adoptada el año pasado, pidiendo a la FAO la realización de estos estudios; las implicaciones que tiene es que la Organización Mundial de la Salud actúe a través de la Organización Panamericana de la Salud para las operaciones en América Latina y el Caribe, esto es significativamente importante para mejorar la capacidad de ejecución de estas organizaciones. Esto significaría un ahorro considerable que podría ser traducido en mayores operaciones de interés en los países de la región.

Por el contrario, en el Plan a Plazo Medio y en el presupuesto, observamos la creación de oficinas regionales de FAO en América Latina, cuando existen ya oficinas similares creadas por el IICA. Creemos que el estudio propuesto y adoptado por los Ministros de Agricultura debería ser seriamente tomado en consideración de alguna forma en este articulado de modalidades de ejecución, para que la FAO participe en el estudio que, reiteradamente se ha acordado por los Ministros de Agricultura de América y, a través de esto, podamos a corto plazo considerar esta modalidad de la Organización Mundial de la Salud, que por medio de un simple acuerdo de dos páginas, trasladó toda su capacidad ejecutiva a la Organización Panamericana de la Salud, con un ahorro considerable: tres funcionarios que trabajan en la oficina de Washington con capacidad para traducir políticas y programas de acción en el campo de salud para toda América Latina y el Caribe.

K.P. FABIAN (India): In the opinion of my delegation, the Medium-Term Plan 1998-2003 is a good document; we would even say that it is an excellent document. At the same time we should add that, obviously, it is not perfect. It can be improved upon and we are confident that it will be improved upon as a result of the discussions here.

We appreciate the linkages established between the programme categories in the Medium-Term Plan, on the one hand, and the specific Commitments in the World Food Summit Plan of Action on the other hand. Therefore, we believe that the Medium-Term Plan can serve as a good road-map for us.

Coming to the Special Programme for Food Security, we believe that it is a necessary consequence of the Summit and our support for this Programme remains undiminished.

Similarly, we attach high importance to the Technical Cooperation Programme which has assisted, in the past, many countries in adjusting themselves to the challenges of food security. This Programme should on no account be weakened or, I should say, further weakened, because it has already been weakened to an extent.

We believe that the Special Programme for Food Security and the Technical Cooperation Programme should both be adequately funded, preferably separately.

We have noted the proposals under the Investment Centre. This is an important activity because it leads to capacity building, which developing countries badly need, in plan-formulation and other matters. As we all know, all real levels are falling, have been falling for quite some time and therefore, FAO can play a very useful catalytic role.

Coming to policy analysis, as developing countries open up their economies, they certainly could do with FAO's assistance in terms of policy analysis.

So overall, we support the Medium-Term Plan but we also believe that it is possible to improve upon it.

Mohd. Khairuddin MD. TAHIR (Malaysia): With regard to document C 97/9 under discussion, my delegation has no difficulty in accepting the Medium-Term Plan as proposed. Given that it is a six-year rolling plan, it is subject to modifications and refinements as the situation changes. However, the Medium-Term Plan does reflect the mood and reality of the time. Now that the World Food Summit is just over six months behind us, it is important to maintain the momentum of our commitments to implementing the World Food Summit Plan of Action which the Medium-Term Plan attempts to capture.

My delegation also concurs with the challenges, and urge a need to put agriculture back on the map and on top of the development agenda, both at international and national levels. In this regard, the document could elaborate further how this could be achieved.

We also agree that the strategy commendation on implementation should focus on resource mobilization, decentralization of activities and expanding partnerships at international, national and local levels, realizing that resources at our disposal are diminishing.

As for the Programme priorities, my delegation is of the opinion that the options provided in the document are broad enough to reflect the comparative advantage and strengths of FAO, as well as the diverse needs of Member Nations which the Programme of Work and Budget can draw upon. These cover important areas such as sustainable management of land, water, fishery, forest and genetic resources; promoting good agriculture practices, such as integrated pest and plant nutrient management programmes; developing and harmonizing food standards and food safety necessary for international trade; and strengthening of FAO as a centre of excellence for agriculture data information, necessary for sound analysis and policy advice.

Finally, my delegation also has no difficulty in underscoring that these Programmes should contribute their objectives of income-generation and poverty-alleviation, as some previous speakers have already suggested.

Shahid RASHID (Pakistan): We have also examined the Medium-Term Plan for the period 1998-2003. We are pleased to note that it is not merely an update but has been entirely rewritten. If it were not so, in our opinion, it would have failed to taken into account the outcome of the World Food Summit, an event which is bound to have far-reaching implications for FAO.

Following the commitment of World Leaders at the Summit, this Organization has a greater responsibility, to face with renewed vigour the challenge of combatting food insecurity.

Of course the mandate of FAO has not changed following the Summit. Of course FAO is not the single actor, carrying the burden of the Plan of Action and we are under no illusions that FAO will provide the panacea for the hungry and the malnourished. We trust that FAO will reorientate its programme thrust with a view to addressing some of the many problems identified in the Summit Plan of Action.

It is in this context that we are pleased to see that the Medium-Term Plan has sought to incorporate the pertinent areas for its activities, the areas which are within its expertise, or to borrow from popular jargon, areas in which it has a comparative advantage.

We believe that the Medium-Term Plan provides the broad framework for FAO to pursue some of the goals and objectives identified at the Summit, in addition to continuing with its other mandated activities.

We would, in particular, like to endorse the three major clusters of activities identified in paragraph 54 for achieving sustainable food security, as well as the strategies listed in Chapter 2 for implementation, especially in regard to resource mobilization and capacity building.

Since this is a rolling plan, we also believe necessary adjustments will be made in due course. In this regard, we may also mention our preference for updating of subsequent editions of the Medium-Term Plan rather than resubmission of repetitive documents.

George APOSTOIU (Roumanie): La délégation de la Roumanie apporte son soutien au plan à moyen terme et félicite le Secrétariat pour la qualité du document présenté. Le document CL 97/9 confirme que la FAO restera un centre international d'excellence, le renforcement de ses dimensions est le principe sur lequel la délégation de la Roumanie croit discerner la plus grande unité entre les Etats Membres. De même, le plan à moyen terme repose sur le travail accompli par le Secrétariat, de prendre en considération les préoccupations des Etats Membres exprimées depuis la Conférence de 1995.

Il convient de souligner que la FAO, comme nous pouvons facilement le constater dans le document proposé à notre examen, accordera son assistance aux Etats Membres dans le plein respect de leur droit de décider de leur politique, de leur stratégie et de leur dualité. La délégation de la Roumanie considère important de relever ce principe fondamental qui s'applique à tous les aspects de l'assistance, les gouvernements ayant l'autorité et la responsabilité de leur programme de développement. Il est aussi fondamental que les programmes partent d'une analyse de la situation concrète, ce qui implique et n'exclut pas une capacité nationale effective, tant pour leur conception que pour leur exécution. Par ailleurs, les Bureaux régionaux de la FAO devraient constituer les points focaux naturels pour la mise en application des engagements du plan à moyen terme intervenant dans leur domaine de compétence.

Enfin Monsieur le Président, parce que les références sur l'Europe centrale et de l'Est sont rares, malheureusement, je voudrais évoquer la nécessité que cette région puisse bénéficier d'un traitement adéquat au plan. Je souhaiterais évoquer l'équilibre à trouver entre l'action de la FAO et celle d'autres organisations spécialisées, y compris les bailleurs de fonds dans différentes régions.

Les pays d'Europe centrale et de l'Est bénéficient de concours techniques et financiers de la Communauté européenne, ainsi que des grandes organisations financières comme par exemple la Banque mondiale et la BERD. C'est par ces canaux que transite l'essentiel de l'aide internationale et européenne. La FAO, elle aussi, a la possibilité d'intervenir dans certains de ces pays. Il serait souhaitable que la FAO se place sur les créneaux techniques essentiels pour aider ces pays à utiliser au mieux leurs ressources et leur potentiel. A cet égard, nos recommandations spécifiques pourraient être énumérées comme suit: apport dans le domaine de la législation, page 48; participation à l'amélioration de leur politique agricole, paragraphe 162; réflexion sur les questions de restructuration de certains secteurs de la production agricole et alimentaire, paragraphe 159; investissement et transfert de la technologie, paragraphe 170.

Aujourd'hui, nous sommes à un tournant de l'histoire de notre institution, c'est pour cela, Monsieur le Président, que nous avons besoin d'une perspective correctement jalonnée. La délégation de la

Roumanie considère que la rédaction finale du plan à moyen terme devrait également traduire ces options. Merci Monsieur le Président.

Kezimbira Lawrence MIYINGO (Uganda): Uganda endorses the Medium-Term Plan. The Plan has focused on nearly all the important issues that need to be considered if the World Food Summit goals are to be realized.

Water has been elaborated on as one of the factors that are going to play a role if agriculture is to be developed to sustain mankind. The harnessing of water in volumes sufficient to sustain livestock and also serve for irrigation cannot be over-emphasized. This is why the Special Programme on Food Security is very important and will play a great role in the struggle to attain food security especially in the LIFDCs.

The fisheries sector has also been focused on and has been well planned for. Uganda is one of the countries that earns foreign exchange from the sale of fish and also provides more than 50 percent of the protein requirement of its citizens through the fisheries sector.

We would like to thank FAO for having given assistance to the East African countries to set up the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization, which is serving to see that the resources of Lake Victoria are properly utilized. We urge that such assistance be extended to other areas where we have water bodies that serve humankind.

On the environment, I note that the forestry sector has been catered for satisfactorily and these plans, I think, will help especially the developing countries which are at present dependent on rain for their agriculture to have a more sustainable agriculture till irrigation becomes an important factor in their production.

Uganda hails the policy of decentralization which the Organization has adopted. Uganda is one of the countries which has developed decentralization as a system of administration and government. We have found it most beneficial in allowing the participation of the concerned people and there is more practical understanding of local issues and their appropriate resolution.

Problems of a local nature are best understood when one is on the ground and decentralization allows this to take place. For some people decentralization is sometimes referred to as a waste of resources, but I think this is because these people are used to the centralized type of administration and are not giving way to participatory administration. The Special Programme for Food Security would particularly benefit from such decentralization and so would the TCPs.

FAO should not just be an Organization for preparing documents and statistics of the world food situation and other programmes, but should be seen to reach the people of the world and be felt in the Member Nations. In this respect, we would like to commend the Director-General for being able to visit Member Nations and meet Heads of States who get moved by first-hand information and attention. Such visits should be continued, they are catalytic and cause development.

Uganda supports the Medium-Term Plan.

Juan NUIRY SANCHEZ (Cuba): Solo una breve aclaración, muy fraternalmente a la estimada delegación de Honduras. En la recién pasada Conferencia Regional de América Latina y el Caribe de la FAO celebrada en Asunción, Paraguay, el tema planteadado por Honduras fue ampliamente debatido, analizado y definido.

Por tanto, señor Presidente, no creemos necesario reabrir, otra vez aquí, una cuestión que fue aprobada por consenso en Paraguay.

Ms Elena SUETT-ASKERSTAM (Estonia): In support of the Medium-Term Plan, I should like to support the views expressed by Romania and, in view of the ever-growing development and rather rapid economic growth of the sizeable number of countries which now constitute Central and Eastern Europe, we also consider that greater stress might be laid by FAO on what is occurring in this area of potential donors.

We, as Romania, appreciate the assistance which we receive from other sources. We are naturally most interested in the development of the activities of the Sub-regional Office established under the Director-General's decentralization programme in this respect.

It is also important to note that the sub-area is making an active effort of collaboration among themselves through annual meetings of its Ministers of Agriculture. Four such meetings have taken place to date, the last one this last month of May. We might consider how the deliberations of such a concentration of agricultural expertise might be brought to the attention of the Council and into FAO programmes.

Nasreddine RIMOUCHE (Algérie) (Langue originale Arabe): Pour la question du Plan à moyen terme nous aimerions indiquer que nous avons soumis notre proposition et nos commentaires lorsque ce document a fait l'objet d'une discussion au Comité du programme. Donc nous serons brefs et nous ne répéterons pas ici ce que nous avons déjà dit, longuement d'ailleurs, et qui est rappelé dans le rapport du Comité du programme. Nous nous félicitons de ce document qui contient le Plan à moyen terme, plan qui a été amélioré par rapport au dernier plan. Ces améliorations reprennent les aspirations de la majorité des pays. Nous pouvons dire que ce Plan est une bonne base pour l'élaboration de programmes et de priorités, un Plan qui tient compte des propositions et des préoccupations des Etats Membres, puisqu'il est fondé sur les décisions adoptées par le Sommet mondial et ces décisions servent aussi de base pour la fixation de priorité.

Nous devons étudier de nombreux aspects mentionnés ici; je voudrais vous les passer rapidement en revue sans me lancer dans une étude détaillée puisque nous avons déjà exprimé notre point de vue détaillé au Comité du programme.

Quant au suivi de la Convention pour lutter contre la désertification et la sécheresse, c'est une des priorités absolues pour nous, ainsi que les questions portant sur l'eau et la gestion des ressources hydriques.

Troisièmement, toutes les questions portant sur le travail du Codex Alimentarius aussi sont importantes.

Parmi les priorités j'aimerais souligner la lutte contre les ravageurs comme les criquets pèlerins, et ensuite les activités portant sur le transfert des technologies vers les pays en développement pour les aider donc à utiliser au mieux ces technologies.

Ma cinquième remarque, c'est le renforcement de la décentralisation et le renforcement aussi des bureaux régionaux et de représentation ainsi que le renforcement des fonctionnaires nationaux pour aider à l'exécution des programmes de la FAO. Pour les pêches nous appuyons les pêcheries traditionnelles ou à petite échelle, artisanales, et nous devons fixer des priorités pour les programmes et surtout dans le secteur commercial nous devons accorder l'importance qui s'impose au suivi de l'Accord de Marrakech, ainsi qu'aux décisions ministérielles portant sur les pays les moins avancés et les pays qui sont importants comme producteurs de produits primaires. Elles sont là au centre des préoccupations de nos activités pour l'Organisation et nous les appuyons

E. Wayne DENNEY (United States of America): We merely wanted to take this opportunity to support the comments made earlier by our colleague from Honduras encouraging FAO to enhance cooperation with IICA. We would support a study to see how the two organizations might cooperate

more effectively to include the possibility of collocating or consolidating country offices, and we believe that the WHO PAHO model should be reviewed as input to this study.

Juan NUIRY SANCHEZ (Cuba): Nosotros creemos que fuimos muy claros en nuestra exposición. En la última reunión de la Conferencia Regional de la FAO, estaba también invitada la distinguida representación de Estados Unidos. Nosotros, países soberanos y libres, analizamos esto profundamente y acordamos por consenso una situación. Entonces, yo sinceramente como Presidente del GRULAC, no admito que esto pueda tratarse aquí. Una cuestión que fue discutida por nuestros países en nuestra región; no quisiera abrir otro debate más y creo que estas son unas consideraciones de mucho peso para no tenerse en cuenta.

Roberto VILLEDA-TOLEDO (Honduras): Lo hicimos traer al debate por la naturaleza de lo que es un Plan a Mediano Plazo que implica precisamente la visión de una reforma institucional que para América es importante.

En cuanto a la referencia que hace Cuba sobre el tema y a la mención del GRULAC, consideramos que el consenso logrado por los Ministros de América en tres o cuatro oportunidades en los últimos cuatro años, es tan importante y de más peso que el GRULAC, en materia de una política de mediano plazo para la FAO.

En la reunión de Paraguay a la cual Cuba hace alusión, de que el tema fue ampliamente discutido y resuelto, ni siquiera se quiso presentar la propuesta adoptada 15 días antes en la reunión del Consejo Ejecutivo de los Ministros de Agricultura de América, éstas son cosas importantes que se deben de tomar en cuenta. Consideramos que, en los párrafos a que se hace mención sobre la mejora operativa de la FAO para el futuro, en los numerales 64 y 65, debía de agregarse la conveniencia de efectuar un estudio particular, en el caso de América Latina en materia de operaciones de FAO y del IICA. No es posible, como afirma Cuba, de que se tome una resolución en este sentido sin considerar esta situación antes de haber hecho el estudio.

Lo que han propuesto los Ministros de Agricultura es que se realice el estudio, que se analicen las posibilidades de tener un ahorro sustantivo, en el caso de la Organización Panamericana de la Salud llega a casi 40 millones de dólares al año, al no duplicar sus oficinas de operación de servicios en el campo de salud, a través del sistema de Naciones Unidas con la Organización Mundial de la Salud. No vemos porqué no pueda hacerse el estudio, para después, tomar una decisión si es o no conveniente realizar este tipo de transformación en las operaciones en el caso de la FAO y del IICA en América Latina.

EL PRESIDENTE: En todo caso ese estudio no lo va a realizar nuestra Organización. Si estuviera listo, entonces se podría tomar en cuenta para los efectos del Plan a Plazo Medio; mientras tanto, la FAO solamente puede considerar lo que al respecto ha debatido en el pasado y ha acordado. Desde luego, se ha tomado nota del interés de varias delegaciones sobre este tema y estoy seguro que ustedes llevarán a buen término cualquiera nueva luz que se pueda ofrecer sobre esto que es algo que se ha venido tratando en la Organización desde hace ya muchos años.

Mohamed Said M.A. HARBI (Observer for Sudan)(Original language Arabic): In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate, thank you, Sir. Sudan is a member of the Finance Committee representing the Near East Group and its attendance in that meeting is proverbial, as you very well know, since you yourself have regularly participated in the meetings of the Finance and Programme Committees, as well as their joint session.

We support the Plan without reservations, I mean the Medium-Term Plan which responds to the aspirations of our countries, in particular, the TCP which gave a boost and momentum to agricultural performance in the developing countries. Once more, we support this Medium-Term

Plan and we express our heartfelt thanks to those who prepared that wonderfully elaborated document.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation): I can say it has been a very, very interesting debate. If we got good reviews for the PER I think we have to say we have got mixed reviews for the Medium-Term Plan.

I would like to address a number of issues and I think it is important that we go through them in a little bit of detail.

First of all, why did we rewrite the Plan? We have a rather circular problem here as we have to question where we are in this six-year cycle. In fact, for the benefit of the distinguished delegate of Canada, we are at the beginning of the cycle. This is the fourth plan that we have produced since the planning process was introduced in Resolution 10/89 and therefore, in a way, we are at the beginning of the process and this should have been a rewrite. Having said that, of course, I think we have always had a problem with this concept of a rolling Medium-Term Plan and exactly what it means. The original resolution does not define it in any way, at all, and we have tended to try and present a document which was able to stand on its own on each occasion. Generally speaking, your reaction has been to reduce it in size but not to feel badly about the fact that it was a stand alone document rather than a simple update of a previous version.

However, I think there was a much more important reason why we had to rewrite this document, and that was the Summit; and here maybe we are getting to the essence of part of the problem. Part of the problem is the structure and the nature of the document, but part of the problem is also what it is all about, what the content is.

I was actually surprised at some of the remarks being made, implying that the programme planning process should almost ignore the Summit Declaration and the Plan of Action. That just does not seem to be correct to me, I cannot see how this institution can carry out any planning process and ignore the World Food Summit, and I think that that is, in fact, the majority view even though not all countries spoke in this particular debate.

So it was very important for us to rewrite it, and we were faced with the dilemma, because the previous Plan had two major strategic objectives. The first was food security and nutrition, and the second was sustainable agriculture and rural development. We tried to see whether that continued to fit with what came out of the Summit and we initially tried to align FAO's activities to the seven commitments, to see what the relationship was between the seven commitments of Member Nations and what FAO's role was in supporting Member Nations in the implementation of those commitments.

The first thing that we came across immediately was that the distinction between food security and nutrition, and sustainable agriculture and rural development, became somewhat artificial. The whole Declaration is about food security for all; the business of nutrition is part of access to safe and nutritious food; and sustainable agriculture and rural development was in effect the outcome of Commitment No. 3. So, it was no longer valid to take all of our work and split it between these two strategic objectives.

The conclusion we came to, in fact, was that there is one strategic objective which is food security for all. That has an advantage in that everything had to be thought of in that context but it does have rather a disadvantage in that it makes Chapter 3 of the document a bit unmanageable. Chapter 3 of the document lists all of the priorities which fit in with that concept but in listing them, you get a long list, that is a little bit indigestible, if I can put it that way. Maybe we do have to re-look at that particular aspect.

What should the Medium-Term Plan be, if what we have now is not precisely what we want. Well we have had a lot of very, very useful ideas, I think they include the idea that it should have vision, that it should be a strategic planning document. Ireland gave some interesting suggestions about the classical textbook approach like going through a clear analysis of the environment and an analysis of the Organization's strengths and weaknesses, a statement of broad objectives and mission, a statement of time bound objectives and targets; and I think that the delegate of the United Kingdom was effectively expanding upon that approach.

Several people mentioned that it should include lessons learned, a number of delegates mentioned that it should distinguish between low and high priorities. There was the indication that there should be a performance report against the previous plan and there was also a fair degree of suggestion that it should be on a more thematical cross-sectoral basis. For example, Denmark raised the issue of ecological sustainability. The issue of women in development was also raised. These are all themes which cut across the classical programme structure.

It all points to the fact that there is some difficulty in stating clearly what the structure of the document should be and what service it provides. I noticed towards the end of the debate some of the interventions were tending to say that they expected the Medium-Term Plan to provide a broad statement of objectives and not quite perhaps the same quantified structure that other delegates were suggesting was appropriate. So, I think we need to look at this further.

There is an added element that comes into examination of this really quite complex and difficult problem. As you are aware, we are developing a new programme model which looks at structuring the Regular Programme work of the Organization over six-year periods. We will call them Regular Programme projects for the sake of convenience and in the case of natural resources programme, are attempting to provide a pilot run of that process in the Programme of Work and Budget for 1998-99 with a view to considering what should be done for the next period.

Of course that six-year time frame starts to become very significant, because if you say the time frame of the Medium-Term Plan should be six years, then how do you fit this series of projects in with the strategic objectives that you are trying to present in the Medium-Term Plan? So this is another issue which we have to look at.

Where should we go from here? The distinguished representative of The Netherlands, on behalf of the European Union, suggested a rewrite. I have to say, at this stage, we need to step back and rethink, rather than rewrite. We have to look at exactly what it is we want and we have to involve you in that process and try and get consensus on what it is this document is meant to be doing, what it should contain, how often it should be done and, if applicable, definition of terms like "rolling" etc. Most importantly, we have to see what its relationship is going to be with the Programme of Work and Budget, the Programme Evaluation Report and the Programme Implementation Report. Because as several delegates said, it is a set of programme documents which we are presenting.

I think that on this issue what I would like to propose is that we will be going back to the Programme Committee anyway. You probably have noticed in the report of the Programme and Finance Committees that they have asked that we come back to them in September on the programming process and that we should put a paper to the Committee looking at the options of what this Medium-Term Plan could contain and what it should be. We should try and get directions from the Committee and then work from there to determine a new plan for the future.

There are a couple of specific remarks coming from one or two delegates. The distinguished delegate of Italy raised several questions but there were two I would like to address. One in particular was his concern on the decentralization policy about the mix of skills available at the regional level and what one could do to ensure that the skills availability match requirements. You recognize the problem that the critical mass of the regional level is not sufficient to cover all of the

areas of technical expertise of FAO. I thought you would be interested in an exercise we are undertaking at the moment, which is to try and identify precisely what skills are available at the regional level, and where there are gaps, and then where we would fill those gaps when it comes to providing technical services, either to projects or technical advice to Member Nations. We are trying to address that problem specifically as we recognize it does exist.

In selling services you will see from the new format of the budget that we do show other sources of income and included in that are, for example, income from the provision of technical services and various other sorts of services. So we are becoming, I think, increasingly aware of the need to recognize that we may have to find other sources of income to keep things going at the same level.

I think that is all I wanted to say at this stage.

E. Wayne DENNEY (United States of America): Two brief points, the first is I did not appreciate or agree with Mr Wade's characterization of Members' comments regarding the results of the World Food Summit and Plan of Action as suggesting that FAO should be ignoring it. Clearly, our own and I thought others suggested that there was some need to redress the balance, that perhaps the Summit was over-emphasized, perhaps some other conferences and meetings and signals that FAO was getting through prior Councils and Conferences were not considered enough. To me it is quite stretching the point to suggest that there was a large number of countries who were suggesting FAO should be ignoring the Summit. So, we certainly cannot concur with that.

Regarding the judgement on the Medium-Term Plan, it is my sense, having listened to this debate, that the FAO Conference might not get any useful, might not have time well-spent by rehashing this again with presumably some of the same kind of feedback but on a broader scale, as what you just heard today. I am wondering what the process should be, to provide any guidance having the Programme and Finance Committees look at it again this fall is a very sensible solution. I agree that it probably would not be a good use of the Secretariat's time to rewrite it just based on our somewhat limited discussion here, that needs to be discussed in more detail. I would like some reaction as to whether, given the discussion and mixed views of Council, if this document still needs to be discussed at Conference or if there is some other option to that.

Moussa Bocar LY (Sénégal): Je crois que le Secrétariat a eu raison de revenir sur la question du centrage sur le Sommet mondial de l'alimentation. Je crois que il a été dit ici que ce Plan à moyen terme manquait de vision. Mais je crois que le Sommet en lui même constitue une vision de l'avenir; cette vision est concrétisée dans le Plan d'action et la Déclaration de politique. Je crois qu'il faut vraiment rendre justice à la justice. Comme l'a dit aussi le Représentant de l'Algérie, nous, les Représentants africains qui sommes dans les Comités financier et du programme avons déjà donné nos points de vue, ceci est contenu dans le rapport, et nous n'avons pas voulu encore retenir ce Conseil, mais nous espérons que cela sera pris en compte dans le cadre de la suite des événements.

EL PRESIDENTE: Como decíamos es difícil resumir un debate tan amplio, tan substancial, e inclusive tan controvertido alrededor de este tema. Una cosa es clara, la Organización tiene que contar con un Plan a Plazo Medio, Plan que ya tiene, que es válido, que está presente. El texto que se nos ha propuesto, que era en principio para que el Consejo lo recomendara a la Conferencia y la Conferencia lo aprobara puede ser, desde luego, modificado, o sus versiones sucesivas adaptadas conforme a los debates del día de hoy y a otras discusiones de los comités, del Consejo, de la Conferencia, puedan al respecto tener. Pero un Plan tiene que ser aprobado.

Por eso en este difícil ejercicio, permítanme concluir lo siguiente: en primer lugar el Consejo tomó nota de la cuarta versión del Plan a Plazo Medio que a la luz del Plan de Acción aprobado por la Cumbre buscaba constituir un marco general para definir la actuación de la FAO, en el período posterior a la Cumbre y prestar asistencia en la formulación de los Programas de Labores y

Presupuestos sucesivos, a fin de contribuir al objetivo de una seguridad alimentaria sostenible, dentro de los límites de la disponibilidad probable de recursos. Solo que en estos tiempos de ajuste, tras una Cumbre Mundial tan relevante y que necesariamente rediseña las prioridades y las actividades de la FAO, la estructura, la naturaleza y el contenido del Plan a Plazo Medio deberían revisarse.

Del debate de este Consejo, se desprende un grado de inconformidad general por el contenido y la naturaleza de este Plan a Plazo Medio, pero no hubo inconformidad desde luego con la importancia, la necesidad, la utilidad que debe tener el plan para guiar los trabajos del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto de la FAO y de sus acciones en el futuro.

Se manifestaron en consecuencia múltiples visiones y se hicieron diversas propuestas de lo que debía destacarse en el Plan a Plazo Medio. Se mencionaron temas inclusive que debían subrayarse y que son cruciales para toda la Organización, el desarrollo sostenible y la participación de la mujer en el desarrollo, entre otros. En particular, se insistió en que el Plan a Plazo Medio, ofrezca una óptica estratégica hacia el futuro, que tenga claridad y precisión respecto de los objetivos concretos y prioritarios que se buscan alcanzar y que sea útil para retroalimentar la elaboración de los Programas de Labores y Presupuestos en vez de ser meramente, a la inversa, una proyección de éstos. El Plan debería ser en consecuencia una referencia firme y útil para poder evaluar los pasos que da la FAO hacia la consecución de metas precisas, calificadas, conforme a prioridades reconocidas. Así Plan y Evaluación entrarían en una interacción constructiva.

El Plan debería además responder a la función de la FAO en la consecución de los objetivos establecidos en otras cumbres y conferencias internacionales, y a la forma en que ellas son relevantes al mandato de la Organización. También debería identificar fórmulas de coordinación estrecha y multidisciplinaria con el resto de Naciones Unidas, tomando en cuenta las ventajas comparativas de la FAO con miras a buscar sinergias y evitar duplicaciones.

Era pues necesaria, como se mencionó, una programación estratégica que estuviera contenida en un Plan a Plazo Medio. En general, se refrendaron aquí las prioridades programáticas propuestas, aunque determinados miembros han expresado su preferencia por el fortalecimiento de algunas, a veces, a expensas de otras. Por ejemplo, se destacó el papel de la FAO como centro de excelencia, la trascendencia de sociedades normativas no obstante era claro que debía haber un equilibrio estratégico entre lo normativo y lo operativo.

Lo importante del debate de hoy es lo que va el Consejo a recomendar a la Conferencia. Considero que el debate indica que no podemos recomendar a la Conferencia el Plan a Plazo Medio como se encuentra ahora y, que ha recibido objeciones y propuestas de cambio. Creo por tanto que deberíamos pedir al Director General que a la luz de los debates de hoy y, tomando en consideración el informe de los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas, se permita a éstos en su reunión de septiembre, conformar, alinear y establecer las prioridades para el diseño de un Plan a Plazo Medio que a todos satisfaga, dependiendo obviamente de la Secretaría, donde puede que haya objeciones estratégicas para ello. Quizá el próximo Consejo podría junto con el Plan que ustedes tienen presente por lo menos identificar el conjunto de recomendaciones concretas para que en su nueva versión, éste responda a las necesidades de los Estados Miembros y de lo que idealmente debe ser y significar un Plan a Plazo Medio.

El Consejo en su 113° período de sesiones, entonces, podría recomendar a la Conferencia el Plan a Plazo Medio que se revisará a la luz de esos lincamientos.

En lo que respecta al futuro del proceso del Plan a Plazo Medio, creo que se debe concluir en que se mantenga el proceso presente de revisión del Plan a Plazo Medio, pero con un documento de actualización breve entre los períodos de seis años, a fin de evitar repetición. Debería asimismo,

incluirse una evaluación sobre el avance efectivo en el cumplimiento de las prioridades, metas y criterios establecidos en el Plan.

Soy consciente, distinguidos delegados, que me he metido en un terreno muy pantanoso al resumir de esta manera los debates, pero les vuelvo a repetir, este Consejo tiene que hacer una recomendación y yo considero que la manera más sensata para hacerlo es pasarlo de nueva cuenta por el filtro de los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas que podrán organizar nuestros pensamientos aquí y hacer una propuesta más clara y concisa al próximo Consejo de la FAO en noviembre.

Veo que el señor Wade tiene alguna objeción y le voy a dar la palabra para que nos diga el motivo por el cual no es posible lo que he dicho.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation): First of all, there is a practical issue which concerns me. To address the fundamental areas that were raised by some delegates is not possible between now and the Conference. That means another re-write of the Medium-Term Plan. I have to advise you on a realistic basis that it will not be possible to do that. I think what we can do is take the issue up with the Programme Committee and we can consult the Chairman of the Programme Committee in this regard, and we can come up with sensible suggestions on how to handle the plan in the future and maybe even some specific suggestions with regard to the current Medium-Term Plan. But a re-write that meets the requests of many Member Nations here, today, just simply will not be done in time and you will have a late document, which you will then be very unhappy about and it will cause more problems than it is worth.

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias por esta aclaración pero considero que por lo menos organizar estos temas y aclarar la forma en que podría procederse, es algo que podría estar listo para la próxima reunión de los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas. No estoy diciendo, y creo que nadie puede sugerir que de aquí a septiembre se reescriba el Plan a Plazo Medio, pero que sí se acompañe de un conjunto de recomendaciones y de lineamientos para su reformulación. Pero quizá me pueden ayudar más los distinguidos delegados.

Ms Melinda L. KIMBLE (United States of America): First of all, I think Mr Wade's comments are very sensible. I think it is incumbent upon us to realize how time-consuming these efforts are and the time we have between now and the Conference is very short. Any effort must be devoted really to developing the Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium. That is where we need to put our efforts.

I do believe that this discussion reveals some very profound problems with the planning process as it now evolved and what we need to do is figure out a way, perhaps starting with the Programme and Finance Committees in the fall; to set in place a calendar of getting a new planning process in place for the next biennium that can put a foundation under this effort and solve some of the problems that were identified by many people here, who certainly support the idea, both of including a summit and the Summit Plan of Action as a key element of FAO's work, not just with the next planning cycle but through the point that we achieve our targets set for us in 2015 of reducing the number of undernourished people by at least half.

So, there is a lot to be done here but, rather than do it hastily and do it badly, let us set in place a process with the help of our restricted committees and all the members of FAO, and certainly the advice of the Conference, that will lead to a much stronger and better document in the next biennium.

Andrew PEARSON (Australia): I would also like to echo the comments of the United States and thank Mr Wade for, what I think was, a very realistic proposal in terms of this idea of looking at the process and, in fact, trying for the September meeting, not so much to rejig the current

document, but try and produce a planning piece of paper that could be put to the committees as part of the development of a revised planning process.

I think this is a reflection of a lot of the sentiment of today's discussion, not only on the Medium-Term Plan but also on the PERs, so we have discussions also coming out of the last Joint Committee about the timing of the cycle of the budget considerations. So, there is quite a lot being developed here and I think that we should be looking now to set the foundations for that in place. I do not think those foundations will be well developed from trying to rejig this document. Rather, we should continue perhaps to take note of it without actually recommending it. I think that can then pass through the process but not to sieve this document through the closed committees but in fact take up Mr Wade's offer, which I think is a very good one, of trying to expand and review on the process itself, and perhaps be bringing that to the Conference in parallel with the documents which have been noted, so that people can consider the existing documents and the possible improvements to them and the process.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México): A la luz del debate y de los comentarios recientes a su propuesta y los comentarios de Estados Unidos y Australia, habría un elemento que a nosotros nos preocupa. Este es un documento básico que marcaría las pautas de la Organización a mediano y largo plazo. El aspecto que queremos recomendar a la altura de este debate es, que haya la mayor participación de todos los Miembros posibles. En este sentido, consideramos importante los comentarios de Estados Unidos de que en la Conferencia se recogieran las opiniones de los países, así como las opiniones de los Miembros del Consejo señalados ahora y eventualmente, como se ha hecho también en otros ejercicios, comentarios por regiones. Yo creo que es un documento, vuelvo a reiterar, muy importante y el aporte más amplio reflejaría mejor los intereses y preocupaciones de todos los países.

EL PRESIDENTE: Como había mencionado al principio de mi resumen de los debates, esta Organización no puede quedarse sin un Plan a Plazo Medio. Se necesita contar con uno que guíe los Trabajos del Programa de Labores y Presupuestos para el próximo bienio, y que debería ser aprobado por la Conferencia.

Yo en ningún momento, y si se me interpretó así les pido disculpas, no sugerí que se reescribiera el Plan a Plazo Medio sino que se le acompañara de los lineamientos y criterios para rediseñarlo en el futuro. Creo que eso coincide además con lo que se ha mencionado; desde luego, los debates que ha tenido este Consejo pueden verse enriquecidos como se ha sugerido aquí con las aportaciones de todos los miembros de la FAO que sin duda se complementarán o culminarán durante la próxima Conferencia.

La sugerencia que tenemos que hacer es la siguiente: en principio recomendamos a la Conferencia el presente Plan a Plazo Medio, porque es el único que se ha escrito y no se puede reescribir. Pero que se acompañe esta recomendación con lineamientos, con criterios, con un documento de planificación para planes futuros que permita reelaborarlo de una forma más holgada.

La forma de proceder entonces sería que los puntos de vista del Consejo se transmitieran a los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas y que en su reunión de septiembre los tomaran en cuenta y a la vez, los resultados de ese debate que se expresarán en el informe, se pasaran al próximo Consejo de la FAO que los estudiará y hará en su 113° período de sesiones, su recomendación final a la Conferencia.

Distinguidos delegados, sus observaciones en la medida de lo posible serán tomadas en cuenta en el informe, pero espero que en lo fundamental estén de acuerdo con este procedimiento para seguir adelante. Si no hubiera ninguna otra observación me permitiría, entonces, cerrar este tema y pasar al aspecto más relevante de nuestras discusiones.

16. Summary Programme of Work and Budget 1998-99**16. Sommaire du Programme de travail et budget 1998-99****16. Resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto para 1998-99**

EL PRESIDENTE: Distinguidos delegados, como dijo el Director General en su introducción del lunes, este Resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuestos es poco usual. El documento principal contiene propuestas de crecimiento real cero en la presentación normal, es decir, a partir de la cuantía aprobada de 650 millones de dólares de los Estados Unidos para el presente bienio y añadiendo los aumentos de los costos previstos. En el suplemento se examinan otras dos hipótesis de crecimiento real y nominal cero. Esto está en consonancia con las recomendaciones de los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas en su período de sesiones de enero cuando examinaron el esbozo del Programa de Labores y Presupuestos.

Lamentablemente los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas no pudieron concluir o recomendar ni solo escenario presupuestario ni tampoco reducir el número de opciones que se presentan hoy al Consejo aunque sí propusieron los mecanismos y criterios para buscar eventualmente el consenso. Estos puntos en particular, se destacan en el párrafo 1.16 que espero este Consejo tenga muy en cuenta en sus debates. En todo caso el Consejo se encuentra en una situación particularmente delicada. Debemos recordar con gran preocupación, la concatenación de eventos que llevaron a discusiones de última hora durante la Conferencia de 1995, sobre nivel presupuestario y las negociaciones que allí se libraron y llevaron a un nivel el presupuesto que afectaba claramente y necesariamente el Programa de Labores preparado por la Organización sobre la base del crecimiento real cero.

Después de que la Conferencia de 1995 aprobara el nivel de presupuesto se le dio la investidura a los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas para determinar el Programa de Labores de la Organización. De esa manera la FAO se mantuvo durante varios meses sin un Programa de Labores aprobado.

Si este Consejo no logra al menos reducir el número de opciones para preparar el PLP, identifica los criterios para minimizar los costos y absorber otras obligaciones financieras que acerque los escenarios y que le permitan alcanzar eventualmente el consenso, corremos el riesgo de volver a enfrentar a la Conferencia de la FAO de 1997 con una situación parecida a la de 1995.

En este sentido vuelvo a reiterar, les recuerdo el contenido del informe de la reunión conjunta de los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas del pasado abril y también su recomendación de proteger las actividades económicas, técnicas y de políticas de la FAO y de reducir al mínimo el aumento de los costos, tomando en cuenta los efectos del tipo de cambio y logrando nuevas economías por eficacia y otros ajustes.

Asimismo, insisto por tanto, a que no solamente expresen sus preferencias por un nivel presupuestario sino que indiquen en consecuencia la forma de afectar los Programas de Labores y en particular los problemas técnicos de la Organización como lo han mencionado los delegados en ocasiones pasadas.

Creo que este Consejo debe proponerse por tanto tres objetivos: Primero eliminar la mayor cantidad de opciones a fin de quedar con uno, al máximo dos escenarios del Programa de Labores y Presupuestos. Segundo, hacer un esfuerzo para reducir la distancia entre las opciones que queden, gastos no técnicos como la cobertura del seguro médico post-servicio que deberían absorberse sin afectar el Programa de Labores; habría opciones para ello, por ejemplo cubrir los pagos de atrasos, absorberlos a lo largo de los próximos bienios y otras maneras de ahorros específicos. En fin, quizá deberíamos dejar al Director General y a la Secretaría con manos libres para encontrar fórmulas aceptables para absorber este tipo de costos.

En fin, debemos avanzar para encontrar medidas, para acercar las opciones de crecimiento nominal cero y de crecimiento real, en particular, para encontrar eventualmente fórmulas quizá intermedias. También se debe enfatizar la necesidad de minimizar costos, y considerar incluir los efectos del tipo de cambio afectando lo menos posible el Programa de Labores.

Finalmente, el Consejo quizá podría guiarse con los propios criterios que ya ha identificado en épocas pasadas y que podrían servir para identificar los elementos del programa o subprogramas en sus prioridades y en los efectos eventuales que podría tener.

En fin, el Consejo también observará dos características específicas de este resumen del Programa, en primer lugar la presentación integrada de los ingresos en el Programa de Trabajo Total, como recomendaron también los dos comités en enero y la nueva estructura de programación utilizada para el Programa 2.1.1. es decir, el de recursos naturales a modo de prueba. Sería útil también que este Consejo se manifestara respecto de estos cambios.

El Consejo observará también que el COAG, el COFI el COFO en particular y en menor medida también el CSA así como el CPPB mantuvieron debates sobre las prioridades relativas para el próximo bienio en los sectores respectivos habiendo quedado reflejadas sus opiniones en sus informes. Se que la Secretaría ha estado examinando este conjunto de orientaciones y confío en que trate de darle respuesta en el Programa de Labores y Presupuesto completo que el Consejo examinará brevemente en su próximo período de sesiones en noviembre.

El Consejo podrá también comprobar que los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas analizarán las propuestas para agilizar y racionalizar el proceso de presupuestación por programas en sus períodos de sesiones de septiembre.

Distinguidos delegados, es necesario que el Consejo adelante estas cuestiones. Reconozco que todos le dan un altísimo valor al logro del consenso, todos ya sabemos y reconocemos también que la Conferencia tiene los medios a través del voto para identificar el nivel presupuestario que por mayoría se desee establecer. Pero creo que debemos hacer también aquí un ejercicio realista basado en los principios e intereses que ustedes deseen manifestar, sin olvidar lo que es viable y conveniente para esta Organización.

Busquemos por tanto como primer ejercicio, como primer propósito, el consenso.

En esta fase creo que es oportuno escuchar al doctor Bommer que presidió la reunión conjunta de los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas y que seguramente nos orientará sobre la forma en que podríamos trabajar en aras de un eventual consenso.

D. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee): I think you overestimate my possibilities but, first of all, I would like to say that you have already said everything that I wanted to say, so it is really difficult to enter here because we have finished, after a long, long session, and very constructive session also, with what is contained in paragraph 1.16.

This is actually the recommendation which we have made, which is that we agree to ask the Director-General to prepare a Programme of Work and Budget on the zero real-growth level with US\$ 650 million, but, at the same time, taking into account the need for maximum savings, reconsideration of any cost increases including exchange rates and how to better scale it down to realities.

Then, certainly we have a third important cost factor, which is the After-Service Medical Insurance question that the Finance Committee dealt with.

At the same time now, and this is contained here, that he identifies within these Programme of Work and Budget preparations, areas which could be scaled down or eliminated in the case of a lower budget level. As is being said here, a zero nominal-growth budget would become available, which would certainly call for another close look at the prioritization to which we referred in this whole day, and also identify activities that would be eliminated if the budget were to be below the zero nominal-growth level.

You might say, okay, these are again three levels, but how could we offer to the Council and Conference the possibility to reach a consensus. This was our main point, that we should come up with a consensus at the Conference, with an agreed budget level on which the Director-General can implement the new Programme of Work and Budget, and not going in another round of rediscussing and revisiting, having in mind not only the uncertainties for the Organization as a whole, but also certainly the importance of the work the Organization has to do.

Certainly, the tremendous resources which have to be devoted to going back and re-writing and re-adjusting, I think are usually underestimated. I refer to the internal work we are asking the Secretariat and the Director-General to do, in accommodating the various points of our debate. I think I understood that the Secretariat was ready to say it could be done, and that this would be the recommendation to the Director-General.

If certainly we come even further down from this variation, which is still in this proposal, it would be very very helpful. But it goes beyond my gray hairs to give you, I think, a very close formula of how you can reach this level without having a debate and certainly making such an appeal to all the Members to come to that consensus.

This is all that I can give you at the moment. I think you referred to the various other aspects which we have to observe, how the Summary has been presented already in the new format, questions of priorities, etc. I do not want to dwell on them now. I think you repeated them already. It would be an unnecessary double statement.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation): The Director-General already gave a great deal of attention to the SPWB in his speech yesterday and therefore I will only take this opportunity to give the Council the latest information.

For the purpose of the zero real growth scenario and the real growth scenario, you need to be aware of the increases that would be needed to either maintain the purchasing power of the zero real growth scenario or fund the real growth scenario; in effect the current purchasing power of the US\$ 650 million plus the US\$ 11 million if you go for real growth. Conventional cost increases are provided in the document before you, that is, the Summary Programme of Work and Budget, at US\$ 39 million. We now anticipate a decrease in this provision due to the application of lower assumptions for inflation rates, particularly the Italian assumption, which we propose to take down from three-and-a-half percent to three percent, based on the latest information that is available to us. This, and other relatively minor adjustments, will result in a decrease in our cost-increase estimates by about US\$ 3 million, that is, down to a revised estimate of US\$ 36 million instead of US\$ 39 million.

Now there are two other factors, which technically speaking are adjustments, albeit extraordinary adjustments, to cost increases. The first is an increase in cost-increases, as mentioned by the Chairman, due to the revised methodology for providing for After-Service Medical Care which requires that we set aside sufficient funds for the accrued entitlement to such services, by retirees in particular. It is very difficult to provide a precise figure for this at the present time as we are actually still working with the actuaries to do precisely that. However, based on the data I have seen so far, my estimate is that about US\$ 17 million would need to be charged against the budget for 1998-99, though I have to say that some of my colleagues think that that is a conservative figure.

Offsetting this is the favourable impact of exchange rates which the Programme and Finance Committees have asked us to incorporate into the zero real growth proposal which is a change from past practice. The choice of rate is of course problematic because you are trying to anticipate what rate there will be on the day of the Conference in November when the budget is adopted. But if we use today's forward rate - I say today's, but I have to say the rate has changed quite dramatically over the last 24 hours but when I wrote this introduction today's forward rate was, for the 6-month period suggested at a budget rate of 1675. In fact, if you look at what happened yesterday, that would change and go somewhat higher.

This would result in a decrease in the provision - using my original figures if you do not mind -of about US\$ 11 million. Clearly it is a very difficult area to forecast; if we could do that we would be wealthy. The consequence of the three adjustments is that the provision for cost-increases is likely to increase overall by about US\$ 3 million to US\$ 42 million. Where do I get that from? That is the increase in After-Service Medical Care of US\$ 17 million offset by the reduction of US\$ 3 million to the original provision for cost-increases and the reduction of US\$ 11 million due to favourable rates of exchange. Of course it is all very approximate since several of the factors involved are still potentially subject to wide variation.

If you took that figure of US\$ 42 million, you are talking about a net increase of 6.1 percent in the budget or, if we turn that into a zero nominal growth budget, a 6.1 percent programme reduction, which is more than we are showing in this supplement to Council document CL 112/3.

Now, on the other hand, you will recall from both what the Chairman just said and from what the Director-General said in his address to the Council, that any move to adopt the accepted accounting standards and fund the actuarial deficit that has been accumulating for close to 30 years, cannot be at the expense of the Organization's technical programmes. Therefore, while under zero real growth the adjustment for cost-increases would include the provision, under zero nominal growth, the budget cannot be assumed to fund the accumulated deficit on After-Service Medical Care and instead other solutions will have to be explored.

Mr Chairman, you have covered the other point I wanted to make which is that the SPWB does not include the impact of the recommendations of COFI, COFA and COAG and the other Committees of the Council. These will of course be given full attention and brought into the full PWB. We are at your disposal.

Moussa Bocar LY (Sénégal): Je vous demande, en vertu de la pratique, de donner la parole aux Philippines, Président du Groupe des 77.

Noel D. DE LUNA (Observer for the Philippines): On behalf of the Group of 77, I would like to express our support for the real growth scenario for the Programme of Work and Budget of FAO for the biennium 1998-99. We believe that, given the mandate by the World Food Summit to the FAO to see that the number of hungry and malnourished is reduced by half by the year 2015, the Programme of Work and Budget, as a matter of principle, should in fact be expanded and increased. The hungry and malnourished will never understand why, after a successful Summit, where Heads of State and Government committed themselves to poverty eradication, FAO, which they consider to have a critical role, would have its programme of work curtailed and its budget reduced. From our point of view, we are concerned that the Summit's goal of hunger reduction will simply become lip-service as FAO is not given the resources necessary to fulfil the task given to it by the Summit. It will indeed be a sad day to realize that as FAO has its Programme of Work and Budget cut and cut further, the World Food Summit which has been billed as the last hope of the hungry and malnourished, will simply become another meaningless Summit.

Reducing its budget, and therefore decreasing its programme of activities, will force FAO to be more creative in its fund-raising activities if it wants to play the role entrusted to it by the Summit.

We believe that, while there are merits in developing synergies and networking among various players in solving the intractable problems of hunger and malnutrition, it does not look good that such activities be funded by extra-budgetary activities most of time. We would like to emphasize that if Member Nations themselves would not finance the activities of the Organization to fund activities to implement this goal of reducing hunger and malnutrition, then the Organization should not be faulted for extra-budgetary fund-raising activities. Otherwise, for lack of funding to fulfil its fundamental mandate, the credibility of this Organization to deliver what it is meant to do will be questioned.

Finally, coming on the heels of the World Food Summit, programme and budget reductions will send the wrong signals, not only to governments but more importantly, to the poor and hungry which this Centre of Excellence is trying to help.

Ms Melinda L. KIMBLE (United States of America): The United States delegation welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Director-General's 1998-99 Summary Programme of Work and Budget. Our intervention under this Agenda item will focus on the following five areas: budget structure; programme priorities; the Special Programme for Food Security; the Technical Cooperation Programme; and an affordable, sustainable and fully-funded budget level that has the unqualified support of all Member Nations.

FAO's new budget format, that integrates regular and extra-budgetary resources or other income into the programme elements of the SPWB, is an important and useful innovation that, with some improvements, should continue. In the future, resources should be linked to programme objectives so that we can better assess the results of our expenditures. FAO should also provide information on the amount of other income generated at the sub-programme level in addition to the major programme level and expand the table on page 44 to reflect this. Justifying how effectively all contributions are utilized is essential to building long-term support for funding international organizations, including FAO. As FAO expands field operations, Member Nations will need more information to assess their impact and sustainability, but such assessments can only be made if we have measurable targets for established timeframes against which to judge performance. If programmes focus on quantity rather than quality, or fundamental questions about the effectiveness of FAO's role in over a hundred countries are not addressed, FAO may find itself spread too thinly among its nearly 140 programmes and sub-programmes as resources contract. Only through effective impact evaluations can we identify what we are doing well and what is unsuccessful.

The United States has consistently identified standard-setting activities such as Codex Alimentarius and the International Plant Protection Convention as FAO's highest priorities and a *sine qua non* of the Organization. No other organization has either the mandate or the capacity to perform these functions. Similarly, FAO is uniquely positioned to develop and expand global databases such as the Global Information and Early Warning System, the World Agricultural Information Centre (WAICENT) and the new databases on genetic resources, such as DATAS. Effective maintenance and expansion of these information systems are critical elements in providing support to Member Nations' efforts to meet the Food Summit target of reducing the number of undernourished by half by 2015 and fulfilling other Summit Commitments, including the one on disaster preparedness.

Immediate action should be undertaken to complete the revision of the IPPC, extend the work with UNEP on pesticides, expand information efforts on forest, fish and genetic resources, and ensure gender is fully integrated into all levels of programme activity. Moreover FAO should continue to assist developing countries in implementing the GATT Agreement. FAO's unique capabilities in these normative areas can make the most immediate contribution to developing countries' prosperity, the global achievement of sustainable development, and 21st century food security.

Under-investment in these areas will undermine our ability to achieve these objectives and compromise FAO's capacity for technical cooperation. In the wake of the World Food Summit and

the International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources at Leipzig, we believe an opportunity exists to make the TCP a critical component of our efforts to catalyse the Member Nation-driven processes called for in the World Food Summit and the Leipzig Global Plan of Action. We should rethink, reshape and prioritize TCP to ensure its full integration into FAO's budget and planning processes. A total of US\$ 85 million, or 13 percent of the SPWB's resources, are allocated to TCP, a figure that is US\$ 17 million higher than the resources devoted to the fisheries and forestry programmes combined. An allocation of perhaps 20 percent of TCP should be set aside for emergencies and we should phase out the five-year carry-over by the year 2000.

UNDP, in an innovative break from the past, has undertaken new three-year arrangements for resource allocations that we believe could be applied in FAO to make TCP a more dynamic contributor to our overall programme objectives. With the fully-funded budget and targeted technical cooperation, delivered in three rather than five years, FAO would be delivering more programmes in less time.

We have similar questions and concerns about the amount of regular budgetary resources allocated in the 1998-99 SPWB for the Special Programme on Food Security as those that were raised by the United Kingdom in its statement on follow-up to the WFS. Many questions have yet to be answered. Moreover, given the Director-General's efforts to push Summit goals and objectives, we believe critical analysis and review of the programme is essential to justify further resource allocations. Such criteria should be applied, among them sustainability and replicability of these efforts by farmers as these are critical factors. There is little specificity in the documents provided to give the reader sufficient knowledge about the Special Programme on Food Security to enable us to become effective advocates of the Programme.

FAO could usefully produce a work plan that sets out measurable objectives and identifies the forecast of these activities as well as all sources of funding. Independent evaluation of the longest-running programme activities should be prepared for the next biennium and we would welcome the views of other Council Members on this programme.

We applaud the Director-General's efforts in presenting various budget scenarios, taking into account the divergent views of many Member Nations. At this same time we do not believe the proposals go far enough to meet the challenges that lie ahead. We believe FAO should plan for the current climate of fiscal restraint and adopt a budget level in the range of US\$ 610 million to US\$ 615 million. Paradoxically, the higher the budget level the less likelihood the budget will be fully funded. For this reason we are advocating a level that is most likely to maximize resources available to FAO.

The discussions in the Programme and Finance Committees suggest that a number of Member Nations now support a level of zero nominal growth or lower. Bearing this in mind, and consistent with the report of these Committees, we believe three alternatives should be reviewed at the fall sessions of the Programme and Finance Committees and these should include options above, at, and below, zero nominal growth. These options should be forwarded to the Conference for consideration.

The US Government has just reached agreement on a formula for achieving budget balance in 2002. This is a difficult agreement and it will require difficult choices. Other governments are dealing with similar choices. The goal in all these exercises is more fiscally responsible and sound government. As the United Nations system is a network of publically-funded institutions similar constraints and choices must be made by UN agencies, including FAO. Much has been said about FAO being more fiscally responsible than other agencies, and FAO has made important strides in this effort but comparisons are neither valid nor useful. Some agencies are reducing costs to Member Nations faster than FAO; others have changed financing mechanisms. Until we have

Standard accounting and budgeting practices system-wide, however, comparisons of budget will be only marginally relevant.

In previous FAO fora, we suggested where cuts could be made. Costs related to the World Food Summit, for example, are non-recurring expenditures and should provide for reductions in the overall budget level. FAO's new Sub-regional and expanded Regional Offices, as well as the possible integration of IICA offices in Latin America, should sharply reduce the need for country Representatives, a programme that costs as much as the technical cooperation activity.

The regional units also offer the opportunity to develop multi-disciplinary responses to regional demands, focused on exploiting the synergies inherent in interaction between normative and operational activities. Though professional staffing strength in Regional and Sub-regional Offices has risen by 10 percent, corresponding reductions in country offices have not occurred. Decentralization has yet to result in managerial empowerment or a more streamlined and cost-effective operation. FAO documents reflect a reduction of 456 posts but there is no indication of which posts were vacant nor how they were funded. Numerous Management Support Units have been created in programme offices with no corresponding reductions in administrative costs. Delegation of administrative and financial functions may weaken internal controls while increasing those costs.

While FAO Representatives and Project Managers have increasing responsibility for financial management, accounting and cost control, they are not trained in financial or administrative matters. Is there a formal financial training for field staff? Is there coordination between divisions and staff on the selection of the field staff or their training? Do information management systems in infrastructure needs meet the fine goals of decision-makers and users in the field? Is information accurate and reliable? There must be access to timely, complete, accurate and analytical reports on FAO field activities beyond bank reconciliation statements and the control of petty cash. Enormous investment expenses must yield tangible and measurable results.

The Finance Committee made good progress in identifying efficiencies and economies in the budget formulation process by fostering an earlier dialogue on the programme priorities so the SPWB could be eliminated. We support this initiative and we think it is consistent with our earlier comments in regard to the planning process. This arrangement would lend itself to more strategic discussion of the Organization's focus and priorities at the Council Session as well as result in significant savings by eliminating an unnecessary step in the programme budget process.

We also agree that a critical analysis of the purpose, relevance and efficiency of 132 bodies and panels is imperative to improve FAO's performance, and we are pleased that positive steps are being taken in this regard. We note that major innovations are underway elsewhere in the UN system. At the UN, non-programme costs will be reduced by a third and expanded use of information technology and strengthened accountability and responsibility of programme managers will exist. Some 1000 posts are being eliminated along with the consolidation of the Economic and Social Departments. Streamlining at country level and the completion of the UN staff Code of Conduct, spreading these best practices across the Organization, engaging staff members on an on going basis, in any change process, strengthening technical skills and empowering managers, while realizing economies and telecommunications, are all imperatives through the UN system.

We believe significant savings can still be achieved. We want FAO to have more predictable resources, a sophisticated information structure, regionally integrated programmes and activities that can be regularly and effectively evaluated by their results. A fiscally responsible, fully-funded and sustainable budget level we can all support, will go far to achieve these results.

EL PRESIDENTE: Distinguida delegada de los Estados Unidos, el Consejo ha tomado debida nota de sus comentarios y de la postura de su país respecto a este tema. También conocemos la situación

de otros organismos de Naciones Unidas y la forma en que han evolucionado sus programas y sus presupuestos; en particular, somos conscientes que Naciones Unidas ha empezado un proceso de recorte y de reducción de personal, que en la FAO lleva ya varios años aplicándose.

En fin, los distinguidos delegados han tomado nota de esta importante declaración.

O. ALLOUSH (Syria) (Original language Arabic): During this 112th Session of the Council, which is the first during which we are called upon to review a Programme of Work and Budget after the World Food Summit that created so much optimism, and we still have fresh in our memories the conclusions of this Conference, nonetheless we have seen a decline in the level of aid. Some ask that the budget of this Organization be cut and this is detrimental to its programmes.

Governments and local communities urge that all or most of the Commitments adopted by the World Food Summit be met.

Very much has been said yesterday and today about the right to food which is considered one of the fundamental rights of man. Very much was said about sustainable development, of the need to increase food production, food availability, and this will certainly have an impact on the Programme of Work and Budget. This calls for an increase in this Budget.

What we note is that there is a constant decline and reduction in the resources allocated to this Organization. What we need is to strengthen programmes and technical activities in this Organization, especially the Technical Cooperation Programme and the Food Security Programme, but some want to turn this Organization into a research centre that provides data and information. All of the decisions adopted during the World Food Summit -- on the activities of the Organization and the needs of low-income, food-deficit countries, the important objectives which were singled out by the World Food Summit, and the priority role given to this Organization -- all these elements called for real growth in the budget. However, zero real growth could be a compromise, a situation that we would have to adopt.

The current situation with the Programme of Work and Budget of this Organization reminds me of a proverb we have in my country that says, "If bread is untouched, do not touch it; if it is untouched, do not eat it." You can eat but do not touch that bread.

The duties of governments and civil society and the expectations of these governments and societies, in terms of social development, involvement of women in development and food production, are all elements which are costly to achieve and low-income, food-deficit countries and poor countries require assistance. Our Organization should provide aid to these States and so should all the other partners involved in the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit. The burden of these duties and Commitments adopted at the World Food Summit cannot be shouldered only by governments, as would appear to be the outcome of this discussion.

We do not deny the fact that governments and the private sector have a role to play at this particular level and can contribute to the fulfilment of these Commitments, but this role cannot be played by governments and the private sector unless there is a joining of efforts at a regional and international level and unless all parties accept their full responsibility in this area. This would help reaching and attaining the objectives which were set.

Tang ZHENGPING (China) (Original language Chinese): Concerning the proposed budget for the next biennium, Delegates have had extensive discussions. Now the Chinese delegation wishes to take this opportunity to express the following two viewpoints: firstly, under proposed details of the budget, as is known to all, one of the important tasks carried out by FAO in the past biennium was the successful holding of the World Food Summit, which aimed at requesting all governments to attach great importance to food security and, with international and multi-lateral coordination and

concerted efforts, help the 800 million malnourished and food-deficit people in the world to get out of their ordeal, so as to fundamentally improve the world food security as a whole. Therefore, we shall continue to make efforts and maintain this momentum in implementing the Rome Declaration and the Plan of Action in a practical way.

To fulfil this task, both FAO and its Member Nations need adequate resources in order to assure that the above-mentioned programmes can be translated into action. However, we noted that zero growth, and even negative growth, are suggested in considering the PWB for the next biennium. This is obviously not appropriate and not practical either. If we do so, how can zero, or even negative growth, reflect and convince people of the Summit's achievements? How can this ensure the implementation of the Summit's follow-up activities? Therefore, our delegation would like to suggest that the budget for the next biennium should be, at least, maintained at the level of the current biennium.

Secondly, on the Programme of Work and Budget. We are in favour of the three principles put forward by FAO in promoting global agricultural development: firstly, promoting investment in agriculture and intensive management of agricultural production and protecting environment; secondly, in harnessing the efficiency in all the linkages from food production to consumption and increasing the integrated output profitability; and thirdly, strengthening institution and capacity building, increasing new production means, and speeding up the process of development and poverty-alleviation.

Therefore, we believe that all of these principles should be duly reflected in the Programme of Work and Budget and the limited resources should be used more in the field work. We mean that FAO should further its streamlining exercise and the decentralization effort, improve its work efficiency, cut down general publications, unnecessary travels, appropriately reduce the number of internationally recruited experts, strengthen TCDC, recruit more national experts, strengthen the work of its country offices and expand appropriately the scope of its delegation of authority.

In conclusion, we hope that FAO will play an active, leading role in coordinating with all Member Nations with a view to carrying out to the letter the various programmes and Commitments of the World Food Summit.

Mohammad Ali Yazdani KHORSGANI (Iran, Islamic Republic of): To be very brief and not to repeat the points raised by speakers before me, I would like to emphasize that in this post-World Food Summit era, which is characterized by heavier duties and mandates for FAO towards implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action and after several years of budget reduction, any further budget decrease would certainly lead to low quantity and quality of goods and services provided by FAO to developing countries, which in turn would cause reduced agricultural development and food security.

At the outset I would like to support what was stated by the distinguished Chairman of G77. Let me limit myself to only one paragraph as an example. That is paragraph 58 of CL 112/3-Sup. 1, which is related to a decrease in several livestock programmes. The livestock sector is of tremendous potential, contributing to FAO's goal in poverty-alleviation, food security, nutrition of children and rural woman, and sustainable agricultural development. In many developing countries the major constraint to livestock development is access to markets for livestock products. Experience of India is an outstanding example of a success story. The livestock sector also has a big role in job-creation in rural areas. We have tangibly experienced this role in our country in activities related to milk collection, processing and marketing.

In many developing countries with mixed farming systems and also in nomadic systems, the task of milking and marketing of livestock products is the responsibility of women. Providing some training

and transfer of simple technical knowhow by FAO can help them to obtain additional income and enable them to continue their key role in the food security of rural households.

On the other hand, livestock products are perishable and can easily transfer diseases such as Malter fever from cattle and sheep to humans. Brucellosis contamination is a case which jeopardizes both producers' and consumers' health. In addition, milk is a traditional favourable food for vulnerable groups, like children, the aged, pregnant and lactating women. Its appropriate processing and distribution are critical to food security and the health of these disadvantaged groups.

In spite of this important role, to the best of my knowledge there is practically no other United Nations Body which provides assistance in meat or dairy activities, and the only livestock officer in the FAO Regional and Sub-regional Offices, in meat and dairy development, belongs to the Regional Office of Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok. Therefore, there is no doubt that the proposed changes in the document under consideration are in clear contrast to many FAO responsibilities in general and to Commitments of the World Food Summit Plan of Action in particular.

The same line of argument can be followed through most of the proposed resource reductions in the Plan of Work and Budget, with reduced resources.

This brings me to the conclusion that the maximum reduction in the budget of this Organization for 1998-99, which does not seriously damage the level of FAO activities, is the one of the zero real growth level. Therefore, my delegation fully supports this scenario as the minimum acceptable budget alternative for 1998-99.

Juan NUIRY SANCHEZ (Cuba): Permítame unas breves reflexiones, porque después de oír al doctor Bommer, al cual admiramos por su profesionalidad y paciencia, de oírlo a usted, señor Presidente, en esa tierra movediza tratando de sintetizar una situación y después de oír los planteamientos del Presidente del Grupo de los 77, creo que sí es necesario hacer algunas consideraciones porque lo que no podemos es rehuir ni al debate ni a nuestro criterio.

Respecto a algunos importantes aspectos relacionados con el marco financiero de la FAO, que muchos tienden a olvidar, es oportuno recordar que el bienio 1994-95 terminó con el déficit acumulado más alto de la historia de la Organización y, a este propósito, hay que subrayar que dicho momento se debió a factores que no dependieron en absoluto de la FAO. Ese momento de déficit fue el resultado de la falta de pago de las cuotas corrientes como el hecho de no haber recibido el pago previsto por concepto de las cuotas atrasadas. Cuotas importantes, señor Presidente. Allí está la cuestión. Todo el mundo las conoce, cuotas que mantienen a la Organización en esta situación. Prácticamente la mitad del pago de la FAO, señor Presidente, todo lo demás es mero comentario. Sólo imponiendo deliberadamente una disminución de gastos de casi 30 millones de dólares, en comparación con el nivel autorizado, la FAO pudo impedir que la situación se agravara. Esto es un hecho que hay que resaltar y reconocer.

Paradójicamente, sin embargo, es oportuno evidenciar que este déficit está cubierto por los retrasos en los pagos de las cuotas atrasadas, lo cual nos indica claramente que si estas cuotas se pagaran, repito, que si estas cuotas se pagaran, la Organización tendría una sólida situación financiera.

En este contexto se hace imprescindible recalcar que, las cuotas atrasadas deben ser consideradas como un activo, por lo tanto, sin perjuicio de la situación económica de los estados más débiles; deben buscarse mecanismos legales, hacer apelos a los ineludibles compromisos morales y a la voluntad política, y esto, vuelvo a repetirlo otra vez, señor Presidente, a la voluntad política, de algunos, para que el pago de las cuotas atrasadas sea una realidad.

Como consecuencia de esto, la Secretaría tal vez podría realizar un ejercicio presupuestario con una opción que contemple esta posibilidad. Creo que podría, independientemente del costo de la

elaboración que no tendría porqué ser elevado, resultar un ejercicio muy interesante. Hay otro aspecto que, aunque es ampliamente conocido, poco hablan de él. Es el relacionado con el notable esfuerzo realizado por la FAO durante la ejecución del ejercicio presupuestario 1996-97, que permitió determinar una cantidad de ahorros por eficiencia de nada menos que 22 millones de dólares al fin de adaptarse al presupuesto ajustado, aprobado para el bienio en curso.

Es fácil prever entonces, señor Presidente, que el notable esfuerzo que permitió determinar, para un breve período de tiempo, esa notable cantidad de ahorro por eficiencia, no se podrá repetir, a menos que se posean poderes mágicos, pero sinceramente señor Presidente, no creemos que nadie los tenga.

Por otra parte, es impensable, peligrosa, provocatoria, y hasta tendencialmente destructiva, la práctica utilizada por algunos de querer establecer de manera permanente, diferentes tipos de deducción automática del presupuesto del período anterior y la absorción parcial o completa de los aumentos de los costos previstos.

En nuestra opinión, señor Presidente, es fundamental que en los debates sobre el presupuesto que se han de celebrar a lo largo de todo el período que nos separa de la Conferencia, sea necesario insistir de manera clara y vibrante sobre la necesidad de una acción vigorosa en la lucha contra el hambre y la malnutrición, tal como fueron expresados por muchos dirigentes durante la Cumbre. Esto implica que hay que cumplir los compromisos y, que no debe negarse a la FAO los recursos que necesita para cumplir su función, sobre todo después del largo período de estancamiento presupuestario y, en especial después de la importante reducción de más de 57 millones de dólares hecha en el presupuesto para el bienio 1996-97.

Mme Diane VINCENT (Canada): Le Canada aimerait remercier le Directeur général pour les deux documents du sommaire de programme de travail et de budget qui reflète les recommandations faites par les Comités de programme et de finance. Ces documents fournissent maintenant plus de clarté et de précision sur les objectifs, les programmes et les ressources financières qui y sont associés. Nous encourageons la FAO à continuer le travail dans cette direction et à renforcer le processus de planification, d'abord en l'axant sur des résultats, en mettant l'accent sur un nombre plus restreint d'objectifs, en y intégrant des indicateurs de performance. Ceci permettrait dans l'avenir, une discussion plus stratégique entre les pays membres et la FAO, dans le processus de planification budgétaire.

A plus court terme, il faut travailler au critère de sélection des programmes auxquels le Canada souscri en novembre 1995. Ces critères ont permis au Directeur général de faire des choix et de présenter un programme valable à partir d'un budget à la baisse. Le Directeur général a toutefois souligné au document complémentaire quelques difficultés lors de l'application de ces critères qui sont encore trop généraux. Le temps est peut-être venu de redéfinir ces critères de façon à les faire concorder plus étroitement avec le mandat essentiel de la FAO et en accroître l'efficacité opérationnelle.

En terme d'approche budgétaire, il faut tous prendre conscience que nous évoluons dans un contexte général de restriction budgétaire. De façon générale, le Canada a comme politique budgétaire pour les agences des Nations Unies une politique de croissance nominale zéro. Ceci dit, nous collaborerons avec la FAO à regarder des options budgétaires acceptables selon les objectifs stratégiques que la FAO devrait poursuivre dans les prochaines années.

A cet égard, nous croyons que l'Organisation devrait continuer à identifier les possibilités d'économie dans les chapitres administratifs afin d'investir le plus possible dans la réalisation des programmes.

Nous comprenons, suite à vos interventions de début de séance, que les priorités énoncées lors des récents comités de l'agriculture, des pêches et des forêts, seront reflétées dans le programme final de travail et de budget, puisque ces priorités seront les axes d'intervention sur lesquelles la FAO aura à se concentrer au prochain biennium.

Nous aimerions en particulier vous signaler les trois volets auxquels le Canada et les comités techniques accordent une grande importance. Tout d'abord le programme des forêts. Nous supportons une proportion plus grande de budget accordée à ce programme pour donner suite aux engagements de la Conférence des Nations Unies sur l'environnement et le développement. Deuxièmement, le Canada attache une grande importance à ce que soient prévues les ressources budgétaires nécessaires pour un organisme tel qu'une commission de la mise en oeuvre de la Convention internationale pour la protection des végétaux. La révision en cours de cette convention permettra l'harmonisation des standards à l'importation et facilitera encore plus les échanges entre les pays, un aspect fondamental des engagements que nous avons pris au Sommet. Troisièmement, le Canada tient à dire qu'il souscrit à la tenue de négociations internationales dans le domaine de la gestion des produits chimiques, et demande que les experts de la FAO supportent ces négociations, dans les domaines relevant de son mandat, comme notamment les dossiers sur les polluants organiques rémanants.

Enfin Monsieur le Président, nous aimerions formuler quelques observations sur la présentation même du budget. Nous apprécions la nouvelle présentation proposée par la FAO pour le programme des ressources naturelles parce qu'il y a un lien clair entre les objectifs du programme, ses résultats, ses moyens financiers au niveau des sous-programmes. Cette nouvelle présentation est plus concise. Nous suggérons que le document inclut à nouveau les éléments descriptifs essentiels qui ont été omis dans la nouvelle version.

Monsieur le Président, ceci termine notre intervention et le Canada aimerait vous remercier pour l'excellence de votre travail à la présidence de ce Conseil.

K. RAJAN (India): I will be very brief. First of all we have a very detailed paper that the Secretariat has laid before us which indicates the various scenarios that we need to look at. We support the distinguished delegate of the Philippines, who presented the view of the G77, regarding the need for a zero real growth. Even if there are constraints, I think it will be necessary to see that the structuring of the allocations is such, that for some of the more important programmes like the Technical Cooperation Programme, we need to retain the levels for zero real growth, and we feel that the TCP should not suffer from dilution.

It may also be necessary to have a fresh look at the proposals which have been made in CL 112/3. Those programmes, which are directly connected with capacity building in terms of the objectives with which we are working, at least need to be protected.

Ibnu SAID (Indonesia): The Indonesian delegation wishes to extend its appreciation to the Secretariat for preparing the most important document before us. I should also like to commend the joint meeting of the Programme and Finance Committee for its recommendation to facilitate our deliberations.

We recognize the noble task of FAO is to eradicate hunger, malnutrition and poverty. It was clearly stated during the Summit that FAO should continue to play a significant role and implement the Plan of Action of the Water Food Summit. We acknowledge the difficulties faced by the Secretariat in carrying out the activities due to the cutting of the budget. The Indonesian delegation would like to share the statement made by the Chairman of the G77 that the zero real growth scenario is the minimum required and the best compromise that be endorsed by the Conference.

Ms Melinda L. KIMBLE (United States of America): I apologize to the Council for losing my voice during my statement.

I would like to say that I believe that the distinguished delegate of Cuba has made a very important point. The first point of course relating to arrears by the United States, we will plan to address under Agenda Item 18 and when we discuss the report of the Finance Committee.

I think it would be useful, in looking at the budget preparations that the Secretariat will undertake for the Programme and Finance Committees, if the Secretariat made an estimate of various revenue streams, including a revenue stream that incorporated the payments of most or all of the arrears during the next biennium. That way we might be able to see if, indeed, we adopt a higher budget and continue the average revenue stream where a lot of countries remain at some level of arrears, or if we adopt a lower budget and collect substantial arrears if we are no better off. This was my point in saying we should seek a level, a consensus budget level, which maximizes available resources to FAO. I believe that could be usefully discussed in the Programme and Finance Committees as well as in the context of our preparations for the Conference.

EL PRESIDENTE: Deseo recordarles lo que acordamos hoy al principio de nuestra sesión, en el sentido de que el Grupo Informal de Trabajo de composición abierta para la revisión del texto de la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria, se va a reunir el día de mañana a las 9.00 horas, en la Sala del Líbano, edificio D, 209. El Comité de Redacción se reunirá inmediatamente, en la Sala México, en donde el equipo de interpretación está ya esperándoles.

Muchas gracias distinguidos delegados. Se levanta esta cuarta sesión de nuestros trabajos. Los convoco mañana a las 9.30 horas.

The meeting rose at 17.50 hours

La séance est levée à 17 h 50

Se levanta la sesión a las 17.50 horas

4 June 1997



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations

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

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

COUNCIL

CONSEIL

CONSEJO

Hundred and Twelfth Session • Cent douzième session • 112° período de sesiones

FIFTH PLENARY MEETING
CINQUIEME SEANCE PLENIERE
QUINTA SESION PLENARIA

4 June 1997

The Fifth Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.50 hours
Mr José Ramón López Portillo,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding

La cinquième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 50
sous la présidence de M. José Ramón López Portillo,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la quinta sesión plenaria a las 9.50 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. José Ramón López Portillo,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

- IV. PROGRAMME, BUDGETARY, FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS** (continued)
- IV. QUESTIONS CONCERNANT LE PROGRAMME, LE BUDGET, LES FINANCES ET L'ADMINISTRATION** (suite)
- IV. ASUNTOS DEL PROGRAMA Y ASUNTOS PRESUPUESTARIOS, FINANCIEROS Y ADMINISTRATIVOS** (continuación)
- 16. Summary Programme of Work and Budget 1998-99** (continued)
- 16. Sommaire du Programme de travail et budget 1998-99** (suite)
- 16. Resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto para 1998-99** (continuación)

Aidan O'DRISCOLL (Ireland): I would ask that you give the floor to the Netherlands to make a statement on behalf of the European Community and its Member States. I would then also like to make a national statement if you could return to me at some point.

J.B. PIETERS (Observer for the Netherlands): On behalf of the European Community and its Member States, which together contribute 38 percent of the FAO budget, I would like to give our views on the *Summary Programme of Work and Budget* which sets out three scenarios for the budget level.

The imperative of budgetary discipline is high on the Agenda in all of the EU countries. This calls, first and foremost, for the maximum possible improvement in efficiency and for a critical assessment of FAO programmes. We hope and expect that consensus can be built with regard to the prioritization of activities and budgetary framework for implementation.

The orientation of the Programme of Work and Budget must be based on the revised plan, as outlined in our statement under Agenda Item 15. The European Union has already stressed the need for clearer priorities of activities and for a clear delimitation between high and low priorities. In view of budgetary discipline we want to stress this point again.

With respect to the policy context, the approach in the document reflects the need to re-orientate activities. Operating within the framework of a fully integrated programme requires a well-struck balance and a great deal of synergy between normative and operational activities. The need for this has become even more apparent since several hundreds of Headquarters posts have been cut and posts in the Regional and Sub-regional Offices substantially increased in order to have the expertise of the Organization near the end-users. We emphasize the increasing need to plan and conduct normative and operational activities in an integrated and balanced way.

According to the document, the Special Programme for Food Security is funded not only from its own programme, but also from several other programmes. The latter does not contribute to the clarity of the structure and the transparency of the PWB. Moreover, since the European Union and several other countries, as expressed during the recent Session of the CFS, have considerable doubts regarding the approach and content of the Special Programme on Food Security we are opposed to such an unclear financing structure. If it has to receive contributions from other programmes, this Special Programme should have a wider scope and get broader support from FAO Members, as we have outlined on earlier occasions.

We concur with the special attention being paid to assisting in capacity building. It is indeed a cross-sectoral priority area for FAO and it allows for a synergy between normative and operational activities. Describing major cross-sectoral themes in this way contributes to the transparency of the Programme of Work and Budget, and we suggest it being extended to other themes in future.

We appreciate the revised approach used in Programme 2.1.1., Natural Resources, which is more orientated towards results within specified time horizons and an inter-disciplinary approach. Since it

groups planned activities in terms of major technical projects, it should also provide a basis for arriving at adequate priorities. As stated earlier, the European Union and its Member States call for a clearer and more in-depth process of priority setting, resulting in a smaller number of priorities. We favour extending this approach to other activities.

We welcome the fact that three scenarios for the budget level are presented in the main document and its supplement. However, we find it difficult to really compare the outcome of the zero real and zero nominal growth scenarios at the levels of major programmes and programmes, mainly because the outcome of the zero real growth scenario does not appear in the tables outlining the zero nominal growth scenario, at least not in comparable figures. We request the Secretariat to improve the presentation to the Conference in November on this point.

In reviewing the zero nominal growth scenario we have observed that most of the cuts have been made across-the-board. We do not agree to this approach. We would like to see clearer choices in favour of the high priority activities, rather than across-the-board cuts. The EU indicated priority areas of activity in the debate on the Medium-Term Plan. We also want to draw attention to the priority areas indicated by us in the technical committees during the Sessions of the committees during this semester.

We feel the scope for savings should be explored further. One of the areas we have identified is the possibility of reducing the number and cost of country offices now that the network of Regional and Sub-regional Offices has been established. Those offices should be integrated into the UN country and regional representations, as activities have to be fully in line with UN operational activities overall, within the Resident Coordinator system. This would be in line with the on-going reform of the UN system at the field level.

Another example is organizational change at FAO Headquarters to increase linkages between and within Divisions. This, we believe, could lead both to greater efficiency and to valuable savings.

Finally, on the budget format, we thank the FAO Secretariat for presenting us with a format that includes information on extra-budgetary resources. We believe that this contributes to the coherence of the activities funded by the different types of resources.

To conclude, I have outlined some of our thinking on the Summary Programme of Work and Budget. We believe further work needs to be done in establishing priorities and seeking savings before we can take a final position on the budget level.

H. YASUI (Japan): I would like to make a brief comment on the budget issue.

The streamlining of the FAO budget, or FAO activities, has a vital importance under the present severe fiscal circumstances of many countries, including Japan. The streamlining, or necessary saving, could be realized with the efforts to pursue efficiency through strengthening the functions of FAO. In this relation, we must remind you that other UN organizations also have made tremendous efforts to streamline their activities. Therefore, the Government of Japan would like to support the options of the zero nominal growth, for the 1998-99 budget.

However, as many countries emphasized the importance of the noble goals of the World Food Summit, food security-related activities could be regarded as one of the higher priority fields and FAO can utilize high expertise and ability for food security, in particular the eradication of hunger and malnutrition in the world.

Japan thinks that the contents of the Programme of Work and Budget 1998-99 need more prioritization. We are concerned with the balance between the normative activities and the operational ones. Therefore, setting clearer priorities among each activity or programme is

necessary under the budget constraints and expenses to be sought. In addition to the priority, we also put importance on the avoidance of duplication of activities as well as the special attention to the least developed countries, particularly in the field of food security.

Before closing my comments, I would like to refer minor cooperation to FAO activities. At the 22nd meeting of the Committee on Fisheries, we announced that Japan would host the FAO Expert Meeting on Sea Birds in early 1998 and also host the FAO Expert Meeting on Sharks in mid-1998. We would like to keep cooperation with FAO through such expert meetings in order to get more useful results.

Mario MOYA PALENCIA (México): Señor Presidente, la propuesta programática que nos presenta el Director General de la FAO para el próximo bienio reviste singular importancia. El hecho de que los Comités del Programa y Finanzas no hayan alcanzado un acuerdo en su reciente reunión sobre una de las opciones planteadas, pone de manifiesto las diferentes percepciones sobre algunos aspectos; tal vez el más destacado de ellos sea el concepto de organización que se desea.

Como hemos afirmado ya en este Foro, resultaría paradójico a todas luces que a pocos meses de haberse celebrado el máximo evento auspiciado por la FAO, esta Organización adoptara un presupuesto menor del que exigen sus requerimientos. La Cumbre evidenció el gran reto y, a la vez, la gran oportunidad que tiene la FAO de contribuir de una manera activa a la solución de lo que constituye el más acuciante problema de la humanidad: el hambre.

Sin duda alguna, la alternativa de crecimiento positivo es la más conveniente para la Organización. Además de ser la mejor sustentada, es racional y políticamente la más aceptable, porque conduciría no sólo a fortalecer a la Organización sino también a que ésta alcance su cometido. Por ella nos pronunciamos.

Permítame, señor Presidente, hacer algunas observaciones de carácter más detallado sobre los documentos objeto de este debate. Primero, deseáramos que en la versión definitiva del texto que adopte la Conferencia, se reflejen cabalmente los planteamientos formulados por los Comités de Agricultura, Pesca, Montes y Seguridad Alimentaria, durante sus reuniones de este año, en particular aquellos subprogramas relativos al análisis de la seguridad alimentaria que se vinculen con el cumplimiento de la Cumbre Mundial.

Por otra parte, deseamos expresar nuestro apoyo a lo señalado en el párrafo 42 del documento principal, en el que se destaca la necesidad de que se mantengan las prioridades ya establecidas por la Organización, como es el caso de los recursos genéticos, la sanidad, la normalización, las estadísticas y la asistencia para la aplicación, entre otros, del Acuerdo de Procedimiento de Información y Consentimiento Previos así como de la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria.

En relación a la sección 4 del documento, llama nuestra atención particularmente lo que se plantea sobre la evolución de los recursos extrapresupuestarios en el párrafo 70, en el que se señala que a partir de 1997 se prevé una recuperación gradual de fondos provenientes tanto de la FAO/PNUD como de Fondos Fiduciarios. Si bien esta evolución resulta alentadora para las actividades de la FAO, nos gustaría que la contabilización de dichos recursos mantuviera su naturaleza complementaria, de tal manera que con el Presupuesto Ordinario se financiaran las actividades centrales de la Organización.

A continuación quisiera enumerar algunas actividades o programas que representan para mi país un interés fundamental. En tal sentido deseo poner de relieve las acciones en el campo del desarrollo productivo de la agricultura y la ganadería y el desarrollo agroindustrial, a través de la adaptación de tecnologías adecuadas a diversos tipos de productores, incluyendo la micro y la pequeña industria. Otra área de gran interés la constituyen las formas de organización de las comunidades

rurales y los sistemas de extensión para la producción agropecuaria. El desarrollo de sistemas de datos estadísticos, la sanidad vegetal y la capacitación de recursos humanos son también esferas en las que a México le gustaría ver fortalecidas las acciones de la FAO.

En relación al Programa Principal 3.4, concerniente a las Representaciones de la FAO, consideramos que se deben mejorar la operatividad y normatividad de estas oficinas, tanto a nivel nacional como regional. Entendemos la importancia que las mismas tienen para el cumplimiento de los programas de la FAO, en especial de las acciones relativas al seguimiento de la Cumbre. Al proceso de reestructuración de la FAO debe corresponder un reforzamiento en la calidad de su vinculación con los países miembros así como la configuración de instrumentos programáticos y presupuestarios de las Representaciones a nivel de cada país.

Señor Presidente, no sería conveniente para esta Organización que se reeditase el debate ni las circunstancias de hace dos años, cuando prácticamente se dejó sin un programa a la FAO, cuando se aprobó un presupuesto inferior al que exigían sus actividades. Queremos que sean la razón y la voluntad política las que imperen en esta ocasión para alcanzar un acuerdo tendiente a que la FAO cumpla con el mandato que nosotros mismos le hemos encomendado y que la Cumbre revigorizó, sentando un compromiso político, que nadie debe olvidar en esta hora.

Mohammad MEJBAHUDDIN (Bangladesh): The World Food Summit had agreed unanimously to reduce the current number of undernourished people, currently estimated to be 840 million, to half by the year 2015. It naturally requires more active intervention by FAO in those poor countries to realize the Summit's objectives. In other words, it would require a positive growth of the budget level for the 1998-99 biennium. However, respecting the sentiments expressed by some member countries, our delegation would like to join most others in supporting at the minimum, a zero real growth option for the biennium. We believe that the level of operation, the budget level will not adversely affect the major programmes currently undertaken by FAO.

Our delegation would like to draw the attention of all the members to consider, seriously, the implications which the negative or zero nominal growth budget level will have for FAO's capacity to implement the recommendations of the various technical committees and the decisions of the World Food Summit.

We would like to say a few words on two programmes of FAO, TCP and the SPFS. TCP has been very useful in responding to the emergency needs of Member Nations. SPFS, currently at the experimental stage, has also shown some prospects. We urge that in the next biennia these two programmes will get the support and assistance as before. For the SPFS, before expanding two factors must be kept in mind: one is the prospects of replicability and two, the issues of access.

However, we also urge that continuous efforts should be made to explore further efficiency gains and also, explore areas of operation where joint efforts with other UN organizations can be undertaken by FAO.

Julio C. GOMES dos SANTOS (Brasil): Hace algunos años el Presidente Fidel Castro recomendaba a los países deudores del entonces Tercer Mundo, que no pagaran sus obligaciones con la banca internacional. La reacción fue tan grande que mereció una rueda de prensa en La Habana, cuando un periodista norteamericano le preguntó cual sería su reacción si siendo presidente de uno de estos bancos supiera que no le iban a pagar la deuda. A lo que él contestó: empezaría por tomar dos aspirinas. Yo pienso que en este momento, la FAO está propensa a tomar un frasco de aspirinas porque hay países que no pagan, países que no pagan y quieren cortar su presupuesto, países que quieren cortar su presupuesto y países que no pagan y además, quieren cortar su presupuesto.

Nuestra intención ahora no es comentar el documento presentado por la Dirección General, sino lo que está por detrás de todo eso, principalmente después de haber escuchado las declaraciones de fondo de delegados que ayer empezaron a hablar sobre el tema. No cabe la menor duda de que la razón misma de existir de este organismo, determina un consenso ineludible de que el hambre debe ser erradicada del mundo. El 50, el 70, el 20 por ciento en el 2015 no importa, lo que importa verdaderamente es el 100 por ciento, desde que el mundo es mundo.

El día en que llegemos al 100 por ciento, la FAO quizá podrá dejar de existir y aquellos países miembros tan preocupados con el costo de su mantenimiento, podrán respirar aliviados con el ahorro que por cierto harán.

Exageración aparte, debemos, sin embargo, cuidar con mucha atención la manera con que de ahora en adelante el tema del hambre debe ser tratado en Naciones Unidas. Ante el riesgo de que podamos ser condenados por las generaciones futuras por nuestras acciones en este especial momento de transición en que vive el mundo.

La Organización, por cierto, pasa por transformaciones y, por lo que parece, refleja un estado de espíritu post-guerra fría que aflige principalmente las potencias que la han protagonizado. Entre las principales, una se dedica a la reorganización y restructuración de su propio estado; la otra a la reorganización y restructuración del orden mundial. Aparte otros cinco o nueve, restan cerca de un centenar de verdaderos huérfanos de la bipolarización.

A ese cuadro busca adaptarse Naciones Unidas sin, quizás, darse cuenta de que el camino sería el retorno al espíritu de Dumbarton Oaks, Bretton Woods y San Francisco, anteriores a la guerra fría. En el proceso de reordenamiento del orden mundial, con intereses identificables, no parece quedar duda de que el combate al hambre es un deber prioritario de todos los países miembros de la Organización. Y si es así, cabe a este organismo, foro supremo de discusiones sobre el tema, mantenerse activo y financieramente bien apoyado para seguir con eficiencia su noble tarea.

Cuesta creer, por lo tanto, que en el contexto del reordenamiento mundial de la post-guerra fría se piense cortar el presupuesto de FAO o mantenerlo, eufemísticamente, a nivel cero de crecimiento concreto o nominal, cuando en plena paz del deshielo, los que ahora defienden esas medidas restrictivas al combate del hambre y por consecuencia a la miseria, a la desesperación y al caos -para usar las contundentes palabras de George Marshall cuando presentó hace cincuenta años su Plan de Reconstrucción Europea- aumentan su presupuesto para la financiación, por ejemplo, de la expansión de la Organización del Tratado del Atlántico Norte.

Brasil es un país que padece aún de bolsones de miseria, pero el problema del hambre en su territorio es obra del gobierno que se arma con sus propios medios para garantizar a todos el acceso a la alimentación y debo decir que actualmente, con bastante éxito. Lo que sí más nos interesa son los temas aquí abordados para llegar al mismo objetivo, es decir biodiversidad, floresta, fito y zoogenética y desarrollo sostenible.

Sin embargo, siendo el séptimo mayor contribuyente financiero de la Organización, al día con sus obligaciones y como protagonista de asistencia técnica a países de bajos ingresos y deficiencia alimentaria, trabajará siempre para que FAO sea prestigiada y fortalecida. Su eventual erosión significaría el inicio de la erosión moral de Naciones Unidas y lo que tiene de constructivo, que es la sobrevivencia del hombre a través de la garantía del acceso a la alimentación en regiones donde la gente es menos favorecida.

Shahid RASHID (Pakistan): Even at the cost of repetition, we would like to recall the context in which we are required to consider the proposals for the Programme of Work and Budget for 1998-99.

The World Food Summit, in one respect, was the culmination of a long process, resulting in the consensus approval of a policy declaration and a plan of action for realizing the ultimate goal of universal food security. The World Food Summit, in another respect, is the beginning of a process. A process of imparting tangible shape to the vision of world leaders expressed, so clearly and unambiguously in favour of the hungry and the malnourished. FAO, as the host of the Summit, and as the leading agency for food and agriculture has a special responsibility to ensure that the solemn Commitments of the Summit do not fall by the wayside.

It is from this perspective that we would urge this Council to approach the proposals for FAO's Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium. The fundamental question that we face is that of the budget level. Before even considering the budget level for the next biennium, let us remind ourselves that we had started the current biennium with a reduced budget level. In the normal course we would have expected, at least, a restoration of the level of the previous 1994-95 biennium. But, these have not been normal times, an extraordinary event occurred during this period which gave hope and promise to 800 million hungry and malnourished people. Therefore, it is only logical for us to expect that the budget for the next biennium should not only be restored at the level of the previous biennium but a sincere effort should be made to seek additional resources.

In other words, our expectation was that members, inspired and motivated by the Summit spirit, would agree to redress the situation arising from the cuts imposed while adjusting the current budget. We, therefore, fervently hope and urge that serious consideration be given to the adoption of the real growth scenario for the next biennium. Any signal to the contrary will only add to the cynicism of the hopeless millions.

The Chairman of the Group of 77 yesterday stated the position favouring the real growth option. We express support for this position which has the support of the majority of the membership. We are therefore happy to see the presentation of the real growth scenario for the consideration of the membership.

At the same time, we have noted that the Director-General, in all earnestness, has presented the main proposals in the Summary Programme of Work and Budget based on the zero real growth option. We appreciate the motivation behind these proposals and recognize that it is important for the membership to build consensus around an acceptable approach, so that the Organization can implement its programmes in a smooth manner. It is in this spirit that we are willing to consider, the zero real growth option as the minimum acceptable level for the budget of the next biennium.

As regards to provisions for cost increases, we are of the view that enough has been done already and we must be careful lest we erode the capacity of this Organization. However, we have full trust that the Secretariat will make the maximum efforts to contain the cost increases and absorb them to the extent possible, effect further savings and derive full benefit from favourable exchange rate fluctuations. A combination of these efforts should go a long way in limiting the additional burden, if any, on assessments of Member Nations.

As regards to the Programme of Work, we are content to observe that the Programme priorities not only reflect the mandated functions of the Organization but are also inspired by the commitments entered into at the Summit. The focus of the proposals for intensification of production and increasing investment in agriculture and rural areas, along with building institutional and human capacities is one which we support. The strengthening of the Special Programme for Food Security is a significant feature of the programme and we extend our full support for this initiative. The proposed budgetary allocation for SPFS of less than US\$ 10 million is very meagre but we are reassured to note that the Director-General has taken serious initiatives to seek extra-budgetary support for this programme. We are certain that the mobilization of resources for the SPFS will allow an increasing number of eligible LIFDCs, in all regions, to benefit from these targeted interventions.

We are also happy to see that the resources of the TCP will be protected to the extent possible, and will be able to complement and support specific interventions in developing countries, according to the prescribed criteria. The SPFS and TCP, while remaining separate programmes, can be mutually supportive, operating in tandem and conjunction with each other to give the efforts of LIFDCs the boost necessary to seek solutions to the problems of food insecurity.

We also support and recognize the important role FAO plays in its normative activities in a variety of fields. In particular, we welcome its assistance to countries in the implementation and follow-up to the Uruguay Round Agreements. Normative activities which have a direct bearing on food security should be maintained and strengthened, so as to provide support and synergy to the operational activities. In this regard, we support a balanced approach while stressing that the guiding light should remain the goal of universal food security. We may add that, if due to any shortfall of resources, the balance between normative and operational activities is likely to be disturbed, the tilt should be in favour of and not away from operational activities.

I would conclude by, once again, appealing to the members to rise to the occasion to build the necessary momentum for not only creating an enabling environment, but also conditions for translating into concrete actions the commitments entered into by the world leadership quite recently here in Rome. Anything less will make a mockery of our pledges and will be an inexcusable breach of faith.

Adel Mahmoud ABOUL-NAGA (Egypt) (Original language Arabic): Mr Chairman, in the name of God, most merciful and passionate, I would like to begin by saying that I entirely agree with you, when you introduced this item and, in particular, with respect to the context in which this debate must take place.

In other words, we must reach a consensus on the budget figure for the next biennium, basing ourselves on the recommendations received from the Finance and Programme Committees. However, after having heard previous speakers, I see that we are going back to previous phases of the discussion at this time. We have begun to insist on certain positions which we, perhaps ingenuously, thought had been left behind.

Secondly, many of the statements made are centred upon - and this is only normal - the actual budget level, the actual amount, leaving to one side the Programme of Work and this could bring us into a similar situation to the one we had to live through in the last biennium. This is not something that we would like to repeat. We would like to reach an agreement on a specific budget level which will be enough to provide a proper budget, and not the contrary.

After this introduction, I would like to explain what the position of my country is in the matter. As you can imagine, we support the position explained by the Chairman of the Group of 77. In other words, we support the zero real-growth scenario, for several reasons. We feel, like many countries, that we must respect the recommendations made by various committees to the effect that we protect the financial resources for programmes like livestock, natural resources, forestry, fisheries, and technology and research.

The Programme of Work and Budget based on a zero nominal-growth scenario would entail a very significant cutback in several programmes. This would be awful because these are programmes that are very important for my country and for developing countries in general. So that is not an option.

We are speaking, as you can see, of the link between the budget level and the programmes that are financed by the budget. This is something that we must all bear in mind when debating the matter.

Moreover, I would like to say that I echo what was said by speakers who said that this was the first Programme of Work and Budget of the Organization after the holding of the World Food Summit.

Consequently, it is most important that the message that we send out from this hall to our populations and to poor communities be clear. Their hopes have been raised as a result of the Commitments subscribed to at the World Food Summit. There is no doubt that we need to be consistent with what we said and promised to these people then.

If I may, I would now like to refer more specifically to the Programme of Work and Budget. First of all, I would like to see reflected the recommendations of the Forestry, Fisheries and Agricultural Committees, and also the Committee on Commodity Problems, when drawing up the Programme of Work and Budget. Nor should resources for the Water Development Programme be reduced so that, as it is entering its first phase, a correct evaluation of this activity can be carried out.

Thirdly, because of the importance of the livestock programme for developing countries, in particular for the Near East and African Regions, we emphasize how important it is to have integration between the livestock production programme, animal health and animal genetic resources.

Fourthly, we want to stress the importance of the agricultural policy programmes for developing countries, particularly in order to be able to implement them under the World Trade Organization Agreement. Obviously, food production is terribly important and food security is important for developing countries. US\$ 10 million have been set aside in the budget for this. I think it is the very least the Organization can offer these countries. Consequently, we are satisfied with the agreements signed by the Director-General with a number of international financial institutions in order to support this programme.

Fifthly, we are decidedly in favour of strengthening the special agricultural research programmes. We also insist on the important role played by the regional, sub-regional and country offices in our countries. We feel that these are the veins through which ties are established between the Organization's programmes and the beneficiaries thereof.

Finally, I would like to stress what a number of my colleagues have already said, to the effect that Member Nations must meet their obligations to pay their contributions. Furthermore, I am in favour of the programme for financing the medical services for staff and I do hope that this all will help us reach a consensus on the budget level at the end of this debate.

EL PRESIDENTE: Su intervención me permite recordarle al Consejo el propósito del ejercicio que estamos realizando aquí, que no puede ser el de reiterar sin más, las posiciones de principio que todos sabemos mantienen sus respectivas delegaciones.

Ya sabemos cuál es la conformación, es más, podría yo contar ahora de que manera se van a pronunciar ustedes por uno o por otro nivel presupuestario. El propósito de este ejercicio tiene que ser intentar acercarnos a un consenso, porque si no hacemos este ejercicio ahora, o en la Conferencia se repite algo parecido a lo de 1995 o, como yo creo que es más probable, muchos países no estarán dispuestos en esta ocasión a verse forzados a un consenso que no va a satisfacer a nadie. En ese caso, se tomará una decisión por la vía del voto mayoritario que no puede hacer otra cosa que hacerle daño a esta Organización.

Por eso yo creo que debemos acercar nuestras posiciones. Hemos tomado nota y todos sabemos la importancia de recomendar al Director General, de minimizar costos, encontrar más ahorros en caso de que esto sea factible. Seguramente hay áreas en donde se pueden realizar algunos ahorros, buscar sinergias, evitar duplicaciones, etc., pero también, hay cosas muy concretas sobre las cuales podemos nosotros pronunciarnos, como por ejemplo el efecto del tipo de cambio sobre el presupuesto, la necesidad de que el Director General proponga fórmulas para absorber el costo del Servicio Médico Post-Servicio que es muy abultado; estamos hablando quizá de una cifra intermedia entre 15 y 20 millones.

En fin, otras fórmulas que puedan permitir a la Organización y al Director General acercar los niveles presupuestarios en torno a los cuales la mayoría de ustedes se está pronunciando, es decir, el nivel de crecimiento real cero y el nivel de crecimiento nominal y, asimismo, identificar o reconfirmar, los criterios para el ejercicio de preparación del Programa de Labores conforme a las prioridades que se han establecido o si quieren ustedes a una repriorización de las prioridades.

Es importante confirmar estos criterios, que ustedes se pronuncien especialmente en torno a la recomendación de la reunión conjunta del Comité del Programa y de Finanzas, párrafo 1.16, si consideran que esta es la forma de proceder. Yo he escuchado aquí algunos delegados que lo han hecho, pero no todos y, creo que sí es importante que demos un paso adelante en ese sentido. Creo que todos ustedes están convencidos que, repetir las posiciones de principio aquí no va a llevar a nada y menos aún a facilitar el trabajo al Comité del Programa y de Finanzas en su reunión de septiembre.

Voy a continuar con la lista de oradores. Espero que ustedes nos ayuden en esta tendencia convergente hacia el consenso como primer ejercicio. Si no es posible el consenso hay otros mecanismos: el voto mayoritario en la Conferencia para resolver estas diferencias. Es lo menos deseable pero, es la última instancia y, desde luego, si alguna delegación desea hacer uso de la palabra de nuevo, se la concederé.

Andrew PEARSON (Australia): Australia was pleased with the progress in moving towards a decision on a budget level, which was made by the Programme and Finance Committees at a joint meeting in April. As noted in paragraph 1.16 of document CL 112/14, this involved three elements: development of a zero real-growth proposal, which we have heard from the Secretariat is likely to amount to US\$ 692 million; secondly, continuing the search for further efficiency in other savings; and thirdly, developing clear options for zero nominal-growth and below, based on sound prioritization of FAO activities.

Australia feels that this framework provides the basis for Council further progressing discussion towards a consensus outcome. For Australia, a zero nominal-growth budget level would seem to encourage such a consensus. This budget level should be achievable without reducing FAO's capacity to deliver on key objectives. However, it will require rationalization of activities and programmes with the focus firmly on those of direct relevance to FAO's core areas. Australia would suggest that these core areas would include: one, support of sustainable development of natural resources; two, facilitation of agricultural trade, particularly through the setting of international standards; three, responsible management of fisheries and forestry; four, monitoring of progress on the implementation of World Food Summit outcomes; and five, continuing FAO's catalytic role in supporting Summit follow-up with all agencies in the UN system.

Australia recognizes that the establishment of priorities involves hard choices, but, as already highlighted by the Director-General in his opening statement to this Council, FAO is pursuing innovative approaches to its current challenges. A more radical rationalization of the FAO country representatives could be one such option, particularly given the decentralization to regional and sub-regional offices of FAO expertise and capacity-building.

On this point, Australia would note that the proposals in the current supplement to the Summary PWB fall short of such an innovative approach. The 110th Council session's criteria may well be insufficiently sensitive for such an exercise. However, the imposition of apparent across-the-board cuts succeeds only in impeding FAO's capability to effectively deliver across a broad front of activities.

Australia would suggest that this is far worse than developing an Organization which may be more narrowly focused but is able to continue to deliver on its core functions, including reduction of food insecurity, and enhance its reputation as a centre of international excellence.

A zero nominal-growth budget level will also certainly require close attention by the Secretariat on the search for further efficiency and other savings, including through greater administrative streamlining, governance reforms and operational improvements. The widely-proposed alternative to zero nominal-growth, that is the option of a budget level of zero real-growth - which is some US\$42 million above the current level - seems not to reflect the financial realities faced by many Members. This Council has already witnessed the unfortunate withdrawal of Members for whom the burden of meeting set contributions has become too onerous. While an increased budget level for the 1998-99 biennium may theoretically provide more resources, its practical result is to increase financial pressures on all Members. Growing arrears will not help FAO to deliver satisfactory outcomes.

Also, uncertain levels of Member contributions are more likely to promote a financially prudent approach by FAO, with underspending on even its core functions.

Australia would, therefore, urge agreement by Members to a zero nominal-growth budget level. Secretariat identification and quantification of further efficiency and process savings, and an innovative approach to prioritization of FAO activities and programmes, should be provided to support this.

M.B. MOLOPE (South Africa): The South African delegation has the following comments to make about the Summary of Work and Budget for 1998-99, dealt with in the six related documents ably prepared by the Secretariat.

The new budget format and the new programme model used on a trial basis are welcomed. We look forward to benefitting from their wider applications in the full Programme of Work and Budget.

As far as the Summary Programme of Work and Budget is concerned, our delegation has examined the various options presented by the Director-General and wishes to align ourselves with the *Gil* and Africa in supporting the real-growth option outlined in the document CL 112/3-Sup. 1.

This option has been chosen for a number of reasons, including the following:

We consider that the programme and activities included in the real-growth scenario have been thoroughly examined during the course of the programming and budgeting process, and represent the minimum that FAO should be doing to fulfil its mandate which was reconfirmed and refocused by the World Food Summit. Reductions in the FAO budget, particularly during the last two biennia, have been largely absorbed by efficiency savings. Further reductions now will cut into major programmes, thereby negatively affecting output, to the detriment of developing countries.

To illustrate this point, we wish to join Iran in pointing out how reductions have already seriously impaired FAO's capacity to deal with livestock and related issues, which are of fundamental importance to economic development and food security in Africa.

Progressive budget reductions, without an indication of when these may end, are likely to worsen the already low morale and hence output of FAO staff. Excessive fiscal pressure at this stage is likely to have more negative than positive effects on the Organization. As pointed out by others, budgetary reductions would send the wrong signals to the public and private investors in agricultural and rural development. It is time to provide a positive message to FAO's staff, developing countries, governments and the international agricultural community.

In the same way as it may be inappropriate to compare FAO's financial position with that of other UN agencies, it is also unrealistic to equate FAO with national ministries when arguing for budget reductions. National ministries are easier to change and manage than international development

agencies such as FAO. They also perform different, less complicated functions than international organizations.

Our delegation believes that FAO needs time to consolidate and rebuild momentum after the on going reforms and reductions it has experienced over the past years. Time is needed for the anticipated benefits of decentralization and other reforms to materialize.

This call to enable FAO to remarshal itself does not exclude the need to continue searching for on going savings through improved effectiveness and efficiency. Indeed, yesterday's debate on the Programme Evaluation Report and Medium-Term Plan indicated the need to re-examine FAO's process of strategic planning, programming and budgeting.

Possible new directions, new coalitions, greater synergy and savings born out of such a well thought through process would surely be more rational and durable than relatively arbitrary and hasty amputation of resources now. We should be better equipped in one or two years' time to objectively identify if and how FAO can do more with less; we believe this is the goal of all Members.

Lastly, and perhaps most important of all, the latest wisdom provided by development experts teaches us that development strategies based on participatory processes, economic openness and market liberalization yield the best results, but this approach presupposes the existence from the beginning of a level playing field for all stakeholders, including weaker nations. By empowering poorer nations to compete in the market place, FAO can help redress imbalances and restrain the discriminatory use of market forces by entrenched interests. Increased liberalization of global economy thus makes the role of development aid, and of FAO, more important, not less.

Those who subscribe to market liberalization should thus not be contemplating a reduction in FAO's budget at precisely the time when change in developing countries provides an unprecedented opportunity for effective assistance.

Jorgen Skovgaard NIELSEN (Denmark): First of all, I would like to refer to the intervention already made on this item by the EU Presidency. The World Food Summit helped to draw global attention to the immense challenges that food security for all poses to the international community. At the Summit, we agreed that the follow-up of the Plan of Action, first of all, is the responsibility of the Governments themselves. Still the multi-lateral organizations would have to play a major role in assisting the governments in their aspirations to reach the goals of the Summit.

FAO is important in the work carried out by the UN system in sustainable development, food, nutrition, agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development. The proposed Summary Programme of Work and Budget for 1998-99 is submitted partly as a response to the Plan of Action from the Summit. The Plan compels FAO, within the framework of the ad hoc interagency task forces on the follow-up of the UN Conferences, to focus on the follow-up of those activities that falls within this mandate. While studying the Programme of Work and Budget we have, especially, been eager to learn how FAO will cooperate and coordinate with other organizations.

Regarding the proposed Programme of Work and Budget itself, I would like to start by thanking the Secretariat for a clear introduction. We welcome the integration of support cost resources and other income in the budget. It is high time that these important posts are included and better reflect the real administrative costs in the Organization. We would, however, also have appreciated a clear explanation of the inter-relationship between the regular budget and extra-budgetary funded activities. This is an important issue, because there needs to be synergy between normative and operational activities.

As stated by the EU Presidency, we do not agree with the view of the Secretariat that the normative work should primarily support operational activities. Rather, we believe operational activities should strengthen the normative work by giving precision and content to the normative activities. This means that operational activities should serve to develop methodologies, as well as vanguard and model activities. It should be ensured that operational activities include those funded by extra-budgetary means, support and strengthen the normative work.

Another general point I would like to raise, is the need for clearer priorities and feedback on the listed activities. We would welcome some comments on lessons learnt for programme evaluation. Thus, we would better understand reorientation and priorities in the document. There will, no doubt, be some variation in the success of the different activities.

We also believe, as pointed out by other delegates, that when we are to make priorities, it is imperative to have access to the current expenditure on the different activities.

I would like to call for realism from all on the budget level. FAO as other UN bodies, has for several years been facing a difficult financial situation. The Member Nations of FAO have the responsibility to reach consensus on the budget. It is the responsibility of the Secretariat to assist the Members in this task through clear priorities in the workplan.

Regarding priorities, we also examined the document CL 112/3-Sup. 1, with alternative scenarios to the PWB. We were surprised to find in reviewing the zero nominal growth scenario, that it is proposed to make the most severe cuts in the substantive work of the Technical and Economic Programmes and in the bodies where Member Nations can influence the decision-making process.

We are aware of the problems in the food and agriculture sector. Still, the severe budget restrictions, in many countries, make it obvious that there is a lack of ability and will to maintain or increase the budget level. Priorities must be made, and a main criteria for setting priorities should be the agreements reached by the international community through conventions, conferences and summits from UNCED to the WFS.

It is regrettable that many Member Nations are not respecting their obligations to pay their assessed contributions. We should not forget our speeches at the World Food Summit.

We agree on the rationale of the process of decentralization, but it should be remembered that decentralization also has its costs. There is a danger of creating units that do not have the necessary minimum-mass expertise to carry out the normative and operational tasks, as well as a risk that the Headquarters no longer can fulfil its role as a global centre of excellence in the FAO mandated area. We also need to look more at the relationship between invested resources and impact. Substantive and competent regional and sub-regional multidisciplinary teams make up the vehicle of the decentralization of FAO. The many country representatives do not.

Decentralization to the region has further reduced the need for expensive units at country level. If the critical mass is too small, you could either add resources, as suggested yesterday by Mr Wade, or you could close down the activity. Savings from reductions in representation could be used for operational activities in the field in support of FAO's normative work.

Turning to the details, and our priorities in the work programme and budget, I would like to comment on the important tasks FAO has so far undertaken in relation to biodiversity and plant genetic resources. This is a core, normative activity for FAO. Last year, we had the Technical Conference in Leipzig. The Global Plan of Action was adopted, and may become an extremely important instrument in maintaining the diversity of plant genetic resources.

We therefore believe that much higher priority should be given to the further work of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

We strongly recommend that an Extraordinary Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture should be held, as soon as possible, and preferable this autumn, to rapidly progress negotiations on the International Undertaking. The activities in the field of genetic resources should be financed from the regular budget.

We also strongly recommend that sessions be held in 1998, of technical groups on animal genetic resources to develop a global plan of action in this important area. FAO should also actively promote the implementation of the Leipzig Global Plan of Action.

We appreciate the new approach to Programme 2.1.1 on Natural Resources. We believe that the new format makes it easier to identify outputs and evaluate results. This approach should be extended. We believe that FAO must continue to fully integrate environmental concerns in all the activities of the Organization. A strengthening of this work is necessary, in order to follow-up the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

The Medium-Term Plan recognizes the crucial role of water, but this is not reflected in the PWB. We must develop cooperation among all governments to establish a better understanding of the nature and value of scarce water resources. We trust FAO will assist the international community when this issue is taken up, as scheduled in the Committee for Sustainable Development next year.

We find it difficult to understand why gender issues are only mentioned in relation to contributions to sustainable development and in combination with population issues. In many societies, women are the main producers of food and the main providers of meals and nutritional information. Any strategy for improvement in food security will, therefore, have to take women's needs as a point of departure. This is an aspect that could be strengthened and integrated into all FAO activities. We will follow, with interest, the reallocation of the sub-programme on Peoples' Participation.

We do not find that a decreased support to nutrition is in line with the Plan of Action from the World Food Summit.

Some funds seem to have been transferred to FIVIMS for which the Plan of Action encourages relevant agencies, within the UN System to initiate consultations on the further elaboration and definition of a food insecurity and vulnerability information and mapping system to be developed in a coordinated manner and to cover all factors relevant to the basic causes of food insecurity. The Plan further states that FAO should play a catalytic role in this effort, within the framework of the *ad hoc* interagency task forces on the follow-up of the UN conferences. We hope the Secretariat of FAO understands the necessity to act as a catalyst in this process and not as an executor. It is clear that FIVIMS should start by building on existing data and work already done. FIVIMS must be seen as an analytic tool, not as a goal. There must be a clear idea about the end-use of FIVIMS and it must be demand-driven. We would like to receive more information on the collaboration with other institutions and agencies on this work.

Concerning fisheries, we strongly support the priority on the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and Aquaculture. We find the Code important in setting out principles for globally acceptable practices.

To facilitate for a report on the follow-up of the Code of Conduct, which must be finalized for the first CSD Ocean Session scheduled for 1999, FAO should prepare a reporting format. The regional fisheries organizations are the cornerstones of the new multilateral system for fisheries management and the FAO has a central role to play in order to enhance their ability to perform the tasks given by the Code and the UN Straddling Stocks agreement.

We endorse the shift in approach given to forestry as a follow-up of the Summit and UNCED, and in support of the intergovernmental panel on forests established by the CSD. The overall budget is the same, but we believe FAO has managed the task of giving priority to what is central to the organizations mandate.

Further, we agree on the priority given to normative activities related to the World Trade Organization. FAO should continue to monitor effects of international trade liberalization.

We do not however, understand the emphasis made on high potential areas in Sub-programme 2.1.2.5. The Plan of Action from the Summit, clearly states that it is important to also concentrate on low potential areas. The question of marginal areas must be seen in this context of the need of food security at household level. Food security at household and local levels, must be stressed as much as food security at national and global levels.

Regarding the follow-up to the Summit, we miss emphasis, first and foremost, on the basic causes of poverty which is the main reason for food insecurity. We also miss emphasis on other themes at the Summit, for example, low potential areas, nutrition, gender equality, redistribution and land reform, we would like to see the need for land reform, as well as equal and equitable access to resources, reflected in the priorities.

If we are to implement the programme of action of the World Food Summit, it is imperative to focus on improved cooperation and coordination between multilateral organizations. We would, therefore, welcome information on how the proposed programme of work will increase the coordination and how the activities proposed in the PWB relate to other organizations' work. I would like to point out that consultation is only the first step to real cooperation and coordination.

The United Nations, as a whole, is facing new challenges and is entrusted with an enlarged range of activities, while at the same time experiencing a deep financial crisis. In response to this situation a number of proposals to reform the UN system are being discussed. These discussions cannot pass Rome unnoticed, since reforms will influence the whole UN system including the Specialised Agencies.

By finalizing, I would say that this statement has been prepared in consultation with like-minded countries around, or across the Nordic border of the EU, that is Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

EL PRESIDENTE: Hemos tomado nota que usted ha hablado en nombre de un grupo de países. Distinguidos delegados, nos faltan todavía 19 oradores: al ritmo que vamos no va a ser ni siquiera suficiente la interpretación que tenemos hasta las 20.00 horas. Yo les pido que recorten en la medida de lo posible su intervención, podrían entregar el texto completo de la misma a la Secretaría, el cual se reproducirá en las Actas de Verbatim, y que desde luego la Secretaría lo consultará y lo tomará en cuenta para la preparación del Informe de este Consejo.

Entonces les pido que la parte detallada de sus intervenciones la presenten por escrito a la Secretaría. De esta manera podríamos agilizar el debate.

J.C. MACHIN (United Kingdom): I will try and follow your guidance as always. The United Kingdom now has a new Government. This Government is fully committed to international development and to poverty elimination including the goal of halving poverty, hunger and malnutrition by the year 2015.

Let me also underline, my Government's clear wish to see more effective UN institutions contributing to the goal of poverty elimination. This is our objective in FAO, and throughout the United Nations system. We also attach the highest priority to building new alliances for change in

the UN. In particular, my Government wants to work closely with all our developing country partners in order to secure change, which enables us to reach the ultimate goal of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

Perhaps I can just say that we believe that the UN process of change should not simply be about cost cutting or reform for reform's sake, it is essentially about a shared partnership to enable the United Nations agencies to focus on what they do best in the fight against poverty.

In FAO, as elsewhere, this means ensuring the concentration on some key operational principles. There are a number of these but let me summarize as I go along.

Greater prioritization in areas of comparative advantage. Much has been done on this in FAO but we believe more is required: a concentration on normative functions in key services to developing countries.

FAO's leadership in these areas could be further exploited. Further reducing Headquarters and administrative costs: there is always scope in any organization for doing more and enhancing the drive for greater efficiency.

Reducing FAO's representational infrastructure, which at US\$ 65 million, is of the same order of magnitude as the estimated cost of FAO's combined fisheries and forestry regular programme allocations.

Wider UN reform, as others have mentioned, offers an important cost-saving opportunity for the use of common premises and shared support service in country. FAO could exploit this opportunity. And this, incidentally, raises an important point, my delegation reiterates throughout our interventions about the importance of choices and the opportunity-costs of FAO's resources, a final operational principle which we believe should be instituted as a continuing efficiency programme which has measurable and time-bound targets.

Of course, the key issue on which you have sought our guidance is budgetary policy and management and in the current financial climate budgeting discipline, prioritization and better focus are crucial, as The Netherlands, on behalf of the EU and its Member States said in its intervention earlier this morning.

The trends internationally are clear. The voluntary-funded UN agencies, for example, are reprioritizing, exercising budgetary discipline and, as the US noted in its statement yesterday, UNDP has introduced an innovative planning cycle which could be usefully adopted in other agencies.

In the specialized agencies, we have also had the recent example of the budgetary discussion in the World Health Organization: the WHO, a package, comprising a ZNG budget policy. A 3 percent efficiency-savings target and importantly a resource shift from administration to programme delivery was agreed. And agreed, of course, by many of the governments sitting in this Council.

FAO's Summary Programme of Work and Budget sets out, as we know, three budgetary options. We will continue to look at these options very carefully in the months ahead. However, it now seems to be becoming increasingly clear, as others have said, that if FAO were to refocus its priorities, secure further efficiency-savings, and concentrate on the quality as opposed to the quantity of its programme, it would be possible in our view to manage resources effectively within a ZNG scenario and without cutting support for its programme countries. We would be grateful if the Secretariat could elaborate that scenario between now and September, taking into account some of the concerns I will mention briefly in this intervention.

I would first appreciate from the Secretariat clarification on the issue of cost increases. Mr Wade, yesterday, helpfully outlined some proposed adjustments to inflation and exchange rate projections to bring them into line with current forecasts. The figure on page 33 of the Summary Programme of Work and Budget provides, in our view, a very useful overview of the effect of exchange rate on the budget. It would be very helpful if he could produce a similar figure or table, whatever is convenient, showing the effect of different inflation rates on the budget. It is, of course, obvious but needs saying, that FAO cannot do everything. It must further reprioritize and refocus its resources within its mandate and areas of key comparative advantage, in order to meet the key goal of the top priority needs of its programme countries. As the UN Secretary-General himself has emphasized, reduction in administrative costs and the elimination of waste and duplication, can only benefit programmes for the recipients.

Let me now offer some comments, as we see them, on how the ZNG proposals might impact on the main areas of FAO's Programme of Work. In the proposed modifications to the programme of work of ZNG, the technical and economic programmes carry the greatest burden of cuts. The administrative programmes, on the other hand, are relatively protected. The justification in paragraphs 44 and 45 of the paper, in our view, is unconvincing and we do raise the question as to why the reductions required by a ZNG budget should fall on the technical and economic programmes which generate the major outputs of FAO's work but already attract significantly less than half of its budget.

Secondly, the benefits of leaner and more efficient work programmes are becoming evident and we welcome this. The forestry and fishery programmes, for example, have prioritized their activities toward most significant and demand-led problems. As I say, we very much appreciate these trends. We also endorse the intention to protect in relative terms the budgets of these, the smallest but, by no means the least important, technical programmes of FAO. We do so in recognition of the increasing demands on those departments from the international policy processes currently under way, at the CSD and elsewhere. Perhaps, I could just add here that, following the very valuable discussion we had yesterday on the Medium-Term Plan and the further important work that Council agreed is required on the Plan. It seems to us that very serious consideration should be given to some strengthening of that function in FAO.

As said, the working paper proposes reductions in programme activities. However, these proposals do not reflect the low priority activities which are identified at COFI and COFO. The cuts in our view seem to be institutionally-driven rather than demand-led. The recommendations of the membership made in these technical committees should be more explicitly addressed in the Secretariats proposals for reordering priorities.

I have to say here, that we do have some rather serious concerns over the proposed reductions in support to information management in Programme 2.2. Information Management is an essential function of FAO and strengthened national systems, a crucial part of this. Work linking information management, on the one hand and policy development on the other, is at the core of FAO's comparative advantage and we feel should be fully protected in all technical and economic programmes.

FAO must also relegate to lower priority those activities, be they operational or administrative. This will require greater attention to the all important area noted of evaluation of successes and failures and greater focus on reporting achievements and impact, rather than simply on activities and intentions. The reduction in allocation to Programme 1.2.2 which supports evaluations among other things, is not the most encouraging signal that FAO has actually recognized the need for a more analytical approach to priority setting.

I attempted to set out our main concerns in this foreshortened intervention but I must mention the wider issue that the UN is at a crossroads with major changes being proposed by the Secretary-

General. His so-called track-one reform proposals, already, go a long way toward the introduction of a more effective UN organizational structure practices and procedures. His major track-two reforms, due this summer, are likely to recommend further important and broader changes to the way the UN is organized, particularly at field level. Whether it is rationalizing, revitalizing or restructuring, we believe that Mr Annan's ideas are timely and should be embraced. Not to do so would miss a crucial opportunity.

Indeed the Secretary-General himself is a very powerful advocate of the search for efficiencies for budget restraint and for employment of best practice, in order to maximize the value and the effectiveness of scarce resources. It is relevant to recall here that the Secretary-General sent a letter, dated the 17th March, to all Heads of Agencies, in which he made the following statement on the UN's 1998-99 budget, and I quote: "Assuming the continuation of present inflation and exchange rates, my goal is for the United Nations to achieve a negative nominal growth budget for the biennium 1998-99".

Change always creates some concern but we all share the goal of ending poverty and malnutrition. We should not fail to respond to the Secretary-General's agenda. We trust that FAO will follow Mr Annan's example.

Let me conclude, briefly, by saying, that in our view, Council's deliberations on the Programme of Work and Budget have taken us further along the road to a final decision at Conference. As always it will require FAO to make choices and, as I have said, we believe that with a new approach, it should be possible for FAO to reorient its operations and the way it manages its resources within existing levels. Between now and the general Conference, we would like to see the Secretariat, include options for implementing such an approach in the further proposals it will be submitting to the Membership for our consideration in September. We can then take a final decision in a way which we fervently hope will secure a solution reached at Conference by consensus.

EL PRESIDENTE: Distinguido Representante del Reino Unido, desde luego yo creo que este Consejo y toda la FAO debe dar la bienvenida al tipo de cambios, de reformas, de reestructuración que están ocurriendo en Naciones Unidas y en otras de sus agencias, entre otras razones, porque la FAO ha venido dando pasos antes que éstas en este sentido y, nos encontramos en una etapa muy avanzada de esas reformas y de esos recortes, de manera que el que nos alcancen en este proceso creo que es digno de elogio y, desde luego, habiendo puesto el ejemplo, no podemos hacer otra cosa sino mantenerlo.

Nasreddine RIMOUCHE (Algérie): D'abord, je voudrais dire que nous adhérons à la Déclaration du Président du Groupe des 77 et nous allons nous abstenir de répéter le contenu de sa déclaration. Donc, mon propos porte sur deux termes: le sommaire du Programme et le niveau du budget proposé d'une part et sur les priorités requises dans ce Programme de travail de l'autre.

La Délégation algérienne appuie le contenu du sommaire du Programme de travail et budget ainsi qu'un niveau de budget se situant au minimum à une croissance réelle zéro. Le Directeur général a fait un exercice appréciable pour contenir les exigences contradictoires. Cependant, nous rappelons aujourd'hui la position des pays en développement exprimée lors de la dernière Conférence sur la réduction opérée au niveau du budget qui ne doit pas pour autant constituer un précédent à répéter et ne doit pas être considérée comme une coutume. Quant à la réduction du niveau du budget soutenue par certains pays développés qui font valoir que cette attitude est le reflet de leur politique interne et qui a été exprimée au cours de plusieurs réunions, elle mérite une réponse très brève en deux points: d'abord, beaucoup de pays en développement ont en effet engagé des réformes de structure qui n'ont pas, malgré tout, débouché sur une évolution négative de leur attitude envers les organisations internationales. Ensuite, si ces politiques d'austérité sont perçues comme une sorte de fatalité de la conjoncture internationale actuelle, il faut faire observer que si la reprise est en cours dans certains pays développés, elle demeure inexistante dans la majorité des pays en développement.

Beaucoup de ces pays subissent de surcroît, dans des conditions très dures, le poids des ajustements imposés par les créanciers, par les voies bilatérales ou multilatérales. Malgré cela aussi, l'attitude des pays en développement demeure très positive. C'est pourquoi ma délégation refuse une réduction d'entrée en jeu et prend un niveau de budget réaliste qui permettrait à l'Organisation de remplir sa mission et d'exécuter tous les programmes nécessaires et faire face à de graves problèmes de faim, de malnutrition et de développement d'un secteur vital pour les pays en développement qui requiert pourtant des moyens importants notamment pour concrétiser les engagements du Sommet.

Concernant le deuxième thème, à savoir les priorités et le choix du Programme de travail et budget, celui-ci rencontre dans l'ensemble notre adhésion telle que contenue dans le sommaire et nous nous associons à ceux qui ont rappelé l'importance des recommandations du COFO, du COFI et du COAG sur les programmes prioritaires. Nous partageons aussi l'avis exprimé par le Directeur général dans son introduction au paragraphe 2 quant à la nécessité d'éviter que ne se répète l'erreur commise lors de la dernière Conférence où un montant budgétaire avait été approuvé sans préciser son contenu. Nous approuvons aussi la proposition visant à regrouper plusieurs activités dans le Programme 2.5.1 élargi et traitant de la recherche, gestion des ressources naturelles et transfert de technologies et qui vise à renforcer les capacités dans les Etats Membres.

Concernant le Chapitre PCT, ma délégation apprécie le maintien d'un même niveau et souhaite qu'il ne faudrait pas hésiter à agir afin de renforcer ce Programme. Nous avons relevé avec satisfaction les efforts faits par le Secrétariat en vue de faire des économies, en réduisant les allocations afférentes au domaine de la politique, direction et planification ainsi qu'aux charges communes et, d'autre part, son souci de privilégier les programmes économique et technique, et nous nous associons à la proposition faite par le délégué de l'Egypte visant à couvrir les soins de santé des retraités après cessation d'un paiement par les arriérés de contribution.

Il est également nécessaire d'engager une révision à la hausse des allocations en direction du Codex Alimentarius. Nous relevons aussi que les activités de lutte contre les ravageurs notamment du criquet pèlerin dans le cadre d'EMPRES sont un parent pauvre dans cette liste et qu'elles ont bénéficié d'une allocation très faible puisque le Sous-Programme 2.1.2.4 - Protection des cultures -a fait l'objet de réduction sachant qu'EMPRES qui est également un programme spécial n'a pas connu de renforcement et nous demandons au Secrétariat de prendre en compte cet aspect là lors de l'élaboration du Programme de travail et budget.

S'agissant des propositions de réduction des coûts, les représentations et le membre de représentation dans les pays ne sont pas disposés à l'accepter car elle constitue pour nous une contradiction avec les politiques de décentralisation engagées par la FAO.

Enfin, je tiens à exprimer mon appréciation à M. Bommer et à vous-même Monsieur le Président, pour les précieux apports que vous avez engagés afin de permettre l'examen de ce point de l'ordre du jour.

Aidan O'DRISCOLL (Ireland): Firstly, I would like to associate Ireland with the statement made by The Netherlands, on behalf of the European Community and its Member States. I have tried to reduce the length of our intervention in line with your remarks. I hope I remain coherent.

In considering the Programme of Work and Budget the key issue with which we should be concerned is "value for money." "Value for money" depends crucially on two key elements: firstly, on the intrinsic usefulness and relevance of the work undertaken; and secondly, on the efficiency with which the work is done.

Taking the second point first, we believe that there is considerable scope in the Organization for further efficiency savings. The EU Presidency has already instanced the issue of reducing the

number of FAO Representative Offices and other delegates have also referred to this. We believe that scope also exists for the reduction for internal bureaucracy in the Organization which would deliver double benefits by reducing costs and freeing staff resources for more productive work. A route and branch review of work processes and procedures is required to achieve these benefits.

Another area where savings should be made, is through the reduction in the number and length of meetings. And here, we accept that it is we, the delegates, who must lead the way.

Turning, however, to the main item of my intervention, which is the first element of "value for money" that I mentioned; that is the usefulness and relevance of the work undertaken. We believe that the general principles identified by the 110th Council session and set out in paragraph 35 of the Programme of Work and Budget, provide a very useful guide on this issue. These principles suggest that the work of the Organization should, firstly, seek synergies between its primary normative role and its operational activities; secondly, should be useful to a broad segment of members; thirdly, should avoid duplication internally and externally; and fourthly, should have clear objectives and evaluated performance.

These are sound principles on which, I hope, we can all agree. Unfortunately, we do not detect any such focus in the Programme of Work and Budget or in the supplementary document.

The question we need to address, perhaps, is how these principles can be implemented and practised. In this regard, I would like to recall our statement on the Medium-Term Plan yesterday, when we called for a strategic approach to the management of FAO's work.

The principles identified by the 110th Council session will only be implemented if a process is put in place in which: firstly, the Organization's objectives and priorities are clearly identified; secondly, each and every activity is appraised against those objectives; and thirdly, subsequent performance is evaluated.

We would wish to see a situation in which a "value for money" culture is created in FAO, so that every activity is questioned in terms of the usefulness of its outputs. In this regard we welcome the initiative in relation to Programme 2.1.1, where the first steps in this direction are being taken through the specification of objectives and intended outputs.

There is a danger that in process of seeking savings, where objectives are unclear or unspecified, unnecessary damage will be done to the capacity of the Organization to undertake its core functions. For example, we have previously expressed, our concern about the running down of expertise in meat and dairy work. Other delegates have already referred to this issue.

We are obviously, therefore, very concerned at the proposals to effectively eliminate this area of expertise in the context of the zero-nominal growth scenario. We do not believe such a reduction is justified or necessary, even in the context of severe budget restraint. If it is implemented, it will effectively destroy FAO's capacity to undertake normative work and livestock development, which integrates production issues with upstream and downstream issues. This integration was identified as a basic element in the new agricultural model outlined in the Medium-Term Plan.

Chairman, we are aware that this is simply one example of the way in which the proposed cuts concentrate wrongly, in our view, on the technical and economic programmes of the Organization.

I would like to just summarize the three main points I am trying to make here, in order to shorten my intervention: firstly, we believe that further significant efficiency savings are possible and that this is where cost reduction should be concentrated; secondly, we believe that the activities of the Organization, both within and across programmes, should be carefully assessed to identify how their outputs contribute to the objectives of the Organization, but first, those objectives have to be

articulated; thirdly, we believe that FAO should carefully consider the core skills it requires, in order to fulfil those objectives and it should protect those skills in the budget restraint process.

Finally, with regard to the decision on the budget level, we believe, for the reasons we have just stated, that further work on the various budget options is required, especially with regard to the identification of efficiency savings. We, therefore, support the recommendation of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees in April of this year, as set out in paragraph 116 of their Report.

Gerd MASSMANN (Germany): My delegation's position is fully in line with what has been said by The Netherlands in their capacity as EU Council Presidency.

I am taking the floor to stress some points that are of particular importance to my delegation.

Having listened to some other delegations, who advocated the relative or absolute increase of funds for FAO's Technical Cooperation activities, I am wondering whether those delegations really do consider FAO a development assistance organization. The answer, from my Government's point of view, is clearly "no."

There are a number of other organizations in the UN system that have been set up for development assistance. This is why, we insist on limiting FAO's expenditure, for technical cooperation, to activities necessary for ensuring FAO's role as a centre of excellence and to areas where there is no relevant expertise at some other places in the UN system.

A number of delegation are requesting an increase of FAO's budget on the grounds that the World Food Summit has set certain goals to be achieved by 2015. Frankly, I fail to see the logical link between those two points. I may remind you that the EU is, by far, the biggest donor of development assistance, including a sizeable share of funds for food security related projects. I am not sure as to whether an increase in FAO's budget would automatically serve the same purpose. Those who request an increase of funds for combatting poverty and hunger should feel free to augment their contribution. They should, however, be careful when asking for a budgetary increase at the expense of others.

Another point, is the format of the documents. One remark in this respect, the format of document CL 112/3 and CL 112/3-Sup. 1 is, in general, clear and user friendly. However, in document CL 122/3 there is often a repetition in describing Sub-programmes. First, in the introductory part of the respective Programme, where the Programme, itself, should only be briefly presented and then under the Sub-programme. This practice is confusing and should be omitted in future.

Mr Chairman, let me now make a few specific remarks regarding the Summary Programme of Work. I will follow the sequence of paragraphs. Paragraph 81 to 85; the measures underway to attain additional efficiency savings by improving work processes and procedures should be continued; quantifiable effects could be reached by streamlining the hitherto, rather lengthy staff recruitment procedures.

Paragraph 110; the ongoing efforts to save resources by improved programming of meetings, for example, number, duration and more rational techniques are welcomed.

Has the Secretariat, already, concrete plans about video conferences? In view of the varying conditions in Member Nations the combination of conventional and video arrangements might be appropriate, also the use of facilities in regional, sub-regional and large country offices.

Paragraph 118, Sub-programme 1.3.1.1; FAO coordination and cooperation with other organizations of the UN system is to be reinforced. More details regarding the work of the Special

Advisor to the DG and the work unit under him are necessary for an appropriate assessment of the need for such a unit.

As to Sub-programme 2.1.2.4, crop protection. Provision must be made for the follow-up to the revised International Plant Protection Convention, as this activity constitutes a major normative task of the Organization.

Paragraph 165; the move towards a more inter-disciplinary and coherent production systems approach for the livestock sub-programmes, can be supported. Important aspects, such as stability of water supplies, forest conservation, herd management and reproductive health should be taken into due account.

Paragraph 171, Sub-programme 2.1.3.5; concerning domestic animal genetic diversity, will have to rely, mainly, on the Member Nations own contributions with FAO coordinating them.

The concept of effective utilization of farm animal breeds conserved should be applied to maximum extent, however, this will not be feasible for all the breeds identified because of economic constraints.

Paragraph 218 and 226, there might be duplications under Sub-programmes 2.2.2.5: Food Information and Earlier Warning Systems and, 2.2.2.7: Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Mapping Systems. Due to evidence, synergies between both, resources could be saved under these activities.

Finally, paragraph 284; the close relationship established between programme 241: Forest Resources, and the WFS objectives, does not appear to be appropriate. The effects of sustainable forest resources management have to be seen in a much wider context than food security alone.

Ms Kajonwan ITHARATTANA (Thailand): The Summary Report of the Programme of Work and Budget for 1998-99 has been deliberated by the previous speakers in great detail. A number of reasons have also been given with regard to the budget level for 1998-99 by a group of countries and individual Members of the Council, therefore I will limit my comments.

Thailand supports the zero real-growth option for the FAO budget level in the next biennium. At the same time we urge FAO to continue the search for further efficiency and other savings. In this connection, FAO may need to review the roles of FAO country representatives in relation to the ^ decentralized policy to the FAO Regional and Sub-regional Offices.

Various scenarios on the FAO budget level for 1998-99 have been suggested. I do not think that we can reach consensus on a particular scenario, therefore it might be wise if we could eliminate some scenarios. The remaining ones will be appended for further negotiation.

In closing, whatever option we all agree, it is very necessary for all Member Nations to pay their contribution to FAO on time in order to keep the Organization moving forward.

B. SAND AMU (Zimbabwe): I will try to be brief. A lot has already been said by delegations before me and they have done this very adequately and eloquately. However, my delegation would like to support the statement made by the Chairman of the G77, the distinguished delegate from the Philippines, by reiterating that the FAO Programme of Work and Budget should be sufficiently funded to enable FAO to fulfil its role in promoting world food security.

We are in agreement with the Director-General that the zero real-growth proposals would at least ensure the continuation of priority activities. Our position remains as it was in the last biennium that

any reduction in the Programme of Work and Budget should not be at the expense of programmes which are generally targeted to benefit the poor.

The World Food Summit brought together Heads and Representatives of governments, as well as various other institutions from around the world, to make a commitment to eradicate hunger and to reduce the number of undernourished people to less than half the present level by 2015. Most of these people live in developing countries and the lack resources to improve their lot. The flow of external technical agricultural assistance in which FAO, amongst other institutions and countries, participates is critical in the fight against hunger. If these levels of external technical support can be sustained, we could go a long way in addressing the continuing problem of hunger in the world.

Let me conclude by saying that all Member Nations of this Organization should demonstrate their commitment to the Organization by timely payment of contributions due.

ByungHA CHUNG (Korea, Republic of): My delegation would first like to express appreciation for the useful and informative documents on the budget and its programme.

I would like to make a few short comments on the next biennium budget and programme considering that FAO's various assistance to the developing countries, especially LIFD countries, is an indispensable means for pursuing the noble aim of FAO, achieving food security. My Government believes that these efforts should be consistently pursued in the framework of this Organization's activities.

At the same time, my Government is also confident that every effort should be further exerted for the effective reduction of FAO budget through the continuous reform process.

At a first glance, reducing the budget and maintaining FAO's programme are seen as a contradiction, but I believe that such a problem can be solved by efficient reallocation of the Organization's available resources and setting a clearcut priority. In this regard, my delegation thinks it is desirable that the next biennium budget level be set below zero real-growth. Also, such a reduction of budget can be supplemented by the effective relocation of personnel and downsizing of unnecessary costs through consistent restructuring. In this process, we also cannot ignore enhancing the quality of FAO's Special Programmes through accurate evaluation and analysis.

Finally, my Government will support FAO's every effort in this respect.

Luigi FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy): Some comments in line with the European Union Presidency. We particularly share the view of a request for better definition of priorities, which could help to have a clearer profile and indication of where FAO is aiming, what main objectives it is pursuing. As a matter of fact it is not easy, listening to all the interventions this morning. I listened for example to a few delegations saying that they supported programme 2.1.1 on Natural Resources. Of course we also support this programme but we have to realize that this programme is reduced by US\$1 million, from US\$17.5 million to US\$16.5 million. You cannot just indicate support for a programme and ask for a reduction of it, and reduction is by the Secretariat even before requests from delegations.

We think also that FAO has a major role to play and that role has been enhanced by the World Food Summit.

Referring to Chapter 3 of document CL 112/3, we take note that, as stated in paragraph 62, it is expected that income from current assessment and receipts of arrears will exceed expenditures in the biennium 1996-97 and that, consequently, it is expected that the accumulated deficit of the Organization will decrease. Moreover, I would like to express a position for the new format of the Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium, presented in document CL 112/3, section

IV, which gives an overview of total estimated resources available for the Organization, including the extra-budgetary resources provided in accordance with Article VI.7 of the Financial Regulations. Of course we appreciate there is an explanation of those financed by the Regular Programme and those financed by extra-budgetary resources, which is certainly an improvement.

We would like to refrain from entering at this stage into figures or options. Of course budgetary economies are still possible, even if FAO was the first organization to start reforming and streamlining its finances, as you rightly record, Mr Chairman.

We believe also that better synergies between normative and operational activities and among the food and agriculture organizations in Rome, as well as Regional Offices in the field - and as you will recall, yesterday I spoke on this subject - could help to save money; but I am sure that FAO has a central role to play to fight hunger and malnutrition.

FAO's operational activities - and that is what the Director-General said yesterday regarding this kind of special relief -- has a long tradition. It started its action of intervention in the fight against hunger in 1951 with the UN Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, sending missions of experts from all parts of the world to all parts of the world, to introduce new technologies and methods to improve the quality and the quantity of production in agriculture, forests and fishing. In 1965 there were 1,300 FAO experts in 90 countries. Maybe such a long and noble tradition has brought some unelasticity and lack of flexibility that could have been lost, and maybe some excess in bureaucracy that has just been lamented has hampered some period of FAO engagements, but in such a long history a *patrimoine* of knowledge and experience has been accumulated that it would be unwise to frustrate or dissipate.

After the World Food Summit, FAO has the right to look for a new identify and sense of mission. We can act to improve it but without losing its connotations and values, enhancing the position and the chances of this unique forum where all regions of the world discuss common issues on the research of common solutions.

If you will allow me, I would like to make a quotation which is not very traditional. I am quoting neither the Secretary-General of the United Nations nor the President of the Italian Republic; I am quoting a Roman writer, Cicero, and I hope that for the benefit of the audience here, the interpreters will help you to translate it. This phrase could just relax the atmosphere here and I think that it is a worthy one for our Organization: "*Omnium autem rerum ex quibus aliquid acquiritur, nihil est agricultura melius, nihil uberius, nihil dulcius, nihil homine libero dignius*". That I can try and translate as follows: "Of all things from which we can benefit, nothing is better than agriculture, nothing more fruitful, more sweet, more worthy of a free man."

If we did not have FAO we should invent it. Let us try to improve it, not to reduce its potentiality and sense of purpose.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias distinguido Representante de Italia, sus citas y la altura de su declaración nos inspira y, desde luego, espero que la Organización lo recoja y en alguna parte quede constancia de ella. Gracias distinguido Representante.

Dato Ahmad Zabri IBRAHIM (Malaysia): It is heartening to hear, from the interventions of Member Nations for the last two days and this morning, on the demands made to and expectations of this now 51-year-old intergovernmental body. This shows the continuing relevance of FAO as a multilateral and collective mechanism in solving international problems related to agricultural

development and global food security. For the last 50 years, Member Nations have benefitted from technological backstopping and the catalytic role of FAO in moving agriculture in our own countries. Some countries are now emerging and some have achieved industrialized economies. They are successful because they have gone through a successful agricultural development phase in their economic development, which created the needed capital and investment to diversify and to subsidize the second phase of their economic development. This multifunctional role of agriculture in income generation, foreign exchange earning and employment generation are well documented.

Many more countries in the developing world are still developing their agricultural sector and are hoping to go through the same phase of socio-economic development, where agriculture would play the catalytic role as the engine of economic growth, and in getting out of poverty and malnutrition. FAO, as a multilateral body, still has a role and responsibility in this area, as much as we like to see FAO take up new roles in addressing issues relating to ethical aspects of agriculture, biotechnology, trade-related matters within the context of sustainable development of resources. In some countries, however, development must start first before one can venture into international trade of commodities.

My delegation believes this brief introduction is necessary to put into perspective the urgent concern of developing countries of the vision and mission of FAO that we alluded to yesterday when discussing the Medium-Term Plan. My delegation agrees that FAO should be forward-looking and relevant to the needs of the time. This is the reality of the time, as we discovered during the World Food Summit: a planet with 800 million malnourished and hungry people including children and women, and the need for international and national commitments to address this issue. With this daunting task ahead of us, shall we give more or less resources than before to FAO, so that the international community, through FAO, could play an effective role?

FAO, in my delegation's assessment, has already undergone an exercise in restructuring and administrative reform during the last few years and we have witnessed cost-savings being made. FAO, in our opinion, is now a much leaner body and ready to deliver the quality services expected out of her. Although reform is a continuing process, we must be wary of not taking the exercise too far and strip FAO further to its bones, an exercise which may affect the delivery capability of FAO and the morale of its dedicated and talented staff. My delegation believes what we need is to concentrate our energies and resources as to how the wealth of knowledge, expertise and information residing within the FAO system, and through networking with other partners in development, be utilized to give positive impacts to Member Countries, especially the low-income, food-deficit countries in all regions.

It is time that we implement all the Plans of Action, Codes of Conduct, Agreements and Conventions that we have collectively agreed upon and let FAO play a pivotal and catalytic role in their implementation, whether through policy advice, human resource development, capacity building or technology transfer. The developing countries of the Asia Region have meticulously considered the Programme of Work and Budget for the 1998-99 biennium and have reached a consensus of supporting at minimum the zero real-growth option, a budget resource level we believe is required at this critical point in the history of FAO.

This position will send the right signal to all our partners in agricultural development, including national governments, that we are faithful and committed to the aspirations of the Declaration of Rome and successful implementation of the World Food Summit Global Plan of Action. Specifically, my delegation supports an adequate budget being given to programmes, either normative or operational, that would directly contribute to global and household food security. The Special Programme on Food Security and the Technical Cooperation Programme are two such programmes. These programmes should be expanded to cover more countries, in particular the populous region of Asia.

Daniel BERTHERY (France): Les Pays-Bas ont prononcé une déclaration au nom de la Communauté européenne et de ses Etats Membres, et ma délégation y souscrit entièrement et cela me permettra d'être bref.

Cette déclaration indiquait en conclusion qu'un travail devait être poursuivi pour sérier les priorités de l'Organisation afin de pouvoir élaborer son budget. Ma délégation pense que la méthode suivie dans le document CL 112/3-Sup.1 n'est pas adéquate. Si vous me permettez d'illustrer mon propos par une image, avec les propositions contenues dans ce document c'est comme si vous me le demandiez, Monsieur le Président, de vous indiquer lequel de mes deux bras je devrais sacrifier. Je me refuse, pour ma part, à me laisser enfermer dans cette problématique. Sans une revue de détail, systématique, par le Comité du programme de chacune des activités élémentaires qui constitue la base du programme, en toute hypothèse de budget, ma délégation est convaincue qu'il ne sera pas possible de débusquer celles qui ne sont plus essentielles et sur lesquelles les uns et les autres pourraient convenir ensemble de leur suppression.

EL PRESIDENTE: Esto me lleva de nuevo a lo que muchos delegados ahora y antes habían comentado, inclusive en el Comité del Programa y de Finanzas que, el ejercicio de partir de un nivel presupuestario para luego identificar el Programa de Labores era actuar a la inversa e ilógicamente. Lo lógico era identificar lo que queremos de la Organización, los programas que queremos que se financien y, a partir de ello, identificar lo que cuesta llevarlos a cabo. Porque finalmente, si un programa es bueno, si un programa es útil, cuesta quizá más no llevarlo a cabo que pagar por él. En este contexto, yo creo que una de las recomendaciones que podría hacer este Consejo es partir lógicamente, identificar lo que queremos que haga la Organización, en función de sus ventajas comparativas, de sus prioridades, como ustedes lo han dicho, pero partir lógicamente de ello y luego identificar lo que cuesta hacerlo. Es una forma de actuar, mucho más difícil. El Comité del Programa se vería abrumado; propuesta que ya hemos visto que en sus discusiones los miembros mencionan uno y otro su programa y elemento, a ser considerado, a ser incluido por muchas razones. Eliminarlos es un procedimiento muy duro, tanto para los miembros del Comité del Programa, para este Consejo, para la Conferencia y, claro está, para el Director General. Pero en fin, quizá valdría la pena considerar lo que usted ha dicho, distinguido delegado, y lo que se ha mencionado en otras ocasiones en el sentido de partir con lo que queremos y luego identificar lo que cuesta.

Kezimbira Lawrence MIYINGO (Uganda): I contribute we are in full agreement with the statement given by the G77. Let me begin by congratulating the Committee that has worked out the document that is under discussion now. They have done a commendable job.

Uganda would like to recognize the good work done by FAO based on the 1996-97 budget, which also hosted the World Food Summit. We now gather that the budget of 1996-97 was US\$ 650 million. I find it extremely logical to accept the zero real-growth budget option, which accepts the 1996-97 budget as a basis upon which increments have to be focused to meet well-known and internationally-recognized monetary changes. Uganda finds a budget figure of US\$ 689 million as the very minimum projection that will allow FAO to execute its previous mandate plus the added activities, especially emanating from the World Food Summit commitments, and yet also absorb inflationary monetary implications.

Having said that, Uganda would like to see a very efficient way of resource handling, so that money is concentrated on real issues rather than on academic excursions, studies and some non-rewarding and yet money-consuming meetings and conferences.

Some of us who are from needy countries, especially the developing ones, are more interested in seeing results from the contributions that we make and the donation that the Organization gets. In my own country, we have had to review the entire range of projects contracted out from different borrowed monies and grants to ensure that we meet priorities.

Many TCPs which are meant to benefit developing countries end up with all the funds consumed by experts and leaving no impact on the ground. Take, for example, the cassava problem that is threatening to cause food insecurity in many African countries. Money does exist under a programme, the site has identified the tolerant varieties which would be propagated, so that enough planting materials are available for planting after compulsory uprooting of all infected stems. This money continues to be used for protracted studies, meetings, and soon it may be exhausted, leaving the problem unsolved.

Let the design of TCPs obey local needs. The saying that FAO TCPs are only for technical support should be abandoned. I have hundreds of projects that can be realized out of US\$ 200 000 or even less and which can make an impact on rural persons, rather than get an expert to come and sit in one of the institutions and learn about local problems that we already know. I must, however, here pause to thank the Director-General, for he has started to change the tradition and I see a better future. I say this because of the insight he has shown by drawing up the Special Programme on Food Security. This is the correct approach to utilization of the resources of the Organization. An impact will be left on the ground of each of the participating countries of the SPFS. Water harnessing and utilization will be focused on and the development of fisheries and afforestation will also be handled under this project.

I have noted over time that there is an imbalance in the development of the genetic resource sector. A lot is being done on plant genetic resources but less attention has been paid to animal genetic resources. Today this appears to be a global mistake. I would also wish to appeal to FAO to speed up its efforts to get a sponsor for the genetic resource programme for East Africa and other Comesa countries. Whereas the Sadeca countries have already a programme running, Uganda, Kenya and other neighbouring Great Lakes nations continue to lag behind in this very important area of development of our indigenous resource. Uganda would even appreciate a TCP to start on this work because we have capable local scientists in the field who could do a lot of work, even with US\$ 300 000.

Turning to emergency funds, I should like these emergency funds to obey the meaning of the word "emergency", especially in the issues of animal diseases. The present red tape should be removed so that the efforts of Member Nations that require these emergency funds can be realized.

I would like to end by referring to two issues: namely, the raising of extra funds by the Director-General through the Telefood programme, and the other innovations; and the decentralization system of administration as contributions to the budget.

TeleFood is a voluntary exercise intended to raise money for the Organization so that it can meet its budget. I find it strange to note that some Members want to reduce the budget because of constraints and yet do not support the fund-raising exercise. The fund-raising will remove undue pressure on individual countries' budgets and should therefore be supported. It has to raise the money and plan how to use it best. The Deputy Director-General clearly spelled out the issue yesterday, saying that the money would be subject to international auditors, so why discourage such a wonderful innovation?

Finally, I want, once again, to congratulate the Director-General and his Cabinet for having decided to decentralize administration. This is the best way to ensure that the Organization does not remain an ivory tower distant from the countries it serves. Local or regional issues are best handled by officers who see them locally. Decentralization reduces travel expenses which would necessitate Headquarters staff visiting regions more often but for a time too short to appreciate local issues and offer amicable solutions. It is, of course, important that the regional offices be closely monitored to ensure that they adhere to the set goals and utilization of funds allocated properly.

We, in East Africa, are happy with the Sub-regional Office for Southern and East Africa which serves us. We now receive regular advice pertinent to our issues without having to refer all the time to Rome. Uganda endorses the Summary Programme of Work and Budget of 1998-99.

Ruve SANK (Estonia): The opinions expressed on the budget vary depending on whether a country is a project recipient country, in other words benefitting also from the operational activities of FAO, or whether it is benefitting only from normative work of FAO. Putting here a priority, we clearly support the opinion that FAO should first of all be a normative body, but we do not see this as an area of conflict with the operational work of FAO. However, there should be a clearer relationship between operational work and the contributions made by the countries.

Estonia is a newcomer and had difficulties with the contributions but, because of efficient projects made in Estonia, it was easier to convince the Government to delete their debt and Estonia is at the moment out of arrears.

We very much appreciate the principle stated that the money available should be used efficiently. We also support the idea expressed by many European Union countries on very clear prioritization. Our priorities, depending on their status of benefitting from operational projects, are technical cooperation programmes and policy assistance and intensive need for projects in the region (CEE) will be during the next few years. Therefore, Estonia, like some other countries of the region, might become Members of the EU and, therefore, no longer subject for TCPs.

We also think that regional activities should be encouraged and these also need some resources. That is because we do not think it is possible to reduce the budget and we think that further discussion, anyhow on the clear priorities, will continue in connection with further programme of work. We think also that, in the nominal zero-growth option, to a certain extent prioritization has been made and in favour of those priorities we have stressed.

Suresh Chundre SEEBALLUCK (Mauritius): My delegation wishes to bring its support for a real-growth scenario for the next biennium. The World Food Summit has entrusted FAO with a mandate to reduce hunger and malnutrition up to a given level within a given timeframe. The year 2015 is not very far away. How can we expect FAO to attain this objective within that time frame if it is not provided with the means to do so, and having to face, during that period, the prospect of budget cuts each time its budget proposals are considered?

In his statement to the Council on Monday last, the Director-General advised us of the efforts that have already been made by FAO to reduce costs and steps that have been taken to obtain funds from non-traditional sources. We should also extend our deep appreciation to the Director-General for the various agreements he has signed with financial institutions for the benefit of developing countries.

It is a real paradox defying all logic that FAO is being asked to make cuts in its budget when it has been entrusted with wider responsibilities. The activities of FAO are crucial to developing countries, especially in view of the reform process in the field of agriculture which the Uruguay Round has ushered in. A cutback in the budget of FAO will seriously jeopardize the efforts that these countries have undertaken to cope with the exigencies of the new trade environment.

The proponents of free trade today expect even small island countries like Mauritius to come and play on the level field without the shield of trade preferences. How can they really expect us to do so if we are not provided with the necessary assistance, through Technical Cooperation Programmes, to stand up to the challenges of trade liberalization?

The real growth option, as the Director-General indicated, implies an increase of US\$ 11 million and, if only part of the outstanding contributions were received, FAO should be in a position to tidy

up the proposed work programme. Let us send the appropriate signal to the international agricultural community.

Marne BALLA SY (Sénégal): Pour répondre à votre appel, je vais devoir essayer de présenter brièvement l'intéressante déclaration que mon adjoint m'a préparée en espérant qu'il ne m'en voudra pas trop de sacrifier sa belle déclaration.

Permettez-moi d'abord de dire combien je suis heureux de vous retrouver puisque c'est la première fois que j'interviens dans ce débat. Je vous connais de longue date, au moment où, très jeunes, nous défendions les intérêts de nos pays dans cette Organisation. Voilà qu'aujourd'hui vous avez la tâche de guider nos débats dans un contexte plein de paradoxes parce que nous vivons dans un monde où les dépenses d'armement pour une journée suffiraient à sauver 40 000 enfants, où des dépenses consenties, dit-on, pour des chiens pendant une semaine sauveraient des vies humaines qui aujourd'hui sont confrontées à la mort du fait de manque d'alimentation; paradoxes parce que les disponibilités alimentaires dont dispose le monde suffiraient à préserver toute l'humanité de cette honte du siècle; paradoxes aussi parce que la FAO, nous le savons, a consenti depuis 1994 des efforts pour faire des gains significatifs d'efficacité; paradoxes enfin parce que le Sommet mondial de l'alimentation au niveau le plus élevé a eu lieu ici même à Rome dans cette ville pleine de signification, comme l'a rappelé le Représentant de l'Italie en allant puiser dans la sagesse de Cicerón ce qui mérite toute notre attention et qui démontre la générosité intellectuelle de ce Représentant.

Ce Sommet donc nous disait de faire tout pour que d'ici 2015 nous puissions réduire de moitié- ce qui est même déjà un pas très modeste- ceux qui sont sous-alimentés. Peut-on, à notre avis, corriger ces paradoxes qui sont contraires à la morale en essayant de suivre une politique constante de réduction d'une Organisation comme la FAO qui, comme l'ont dit justement Cicerón et le Représentant de son illustre pays, aurait dû être inventée parce qu'en réalité une Organisation qui s'occupe de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture ? Je m'étonne qu'on puisse dire qu'elle ne doit pas servir à aider pour le développement. J'espère que autant on doit retenir la citation de Cicerón autant on doit effacer de nos esprits ceux qui pensent que la FAO ne doit pas aider au développement.

Cela dit, nous, Groupe africain, dont j'assume la présidence, nous nous associons pleinement aux déclarations faites par les Etats Membres de l'Afrique et surtout par le Président du Groupe des 77. Nous sommes d'accord pour une croissance réelle proposée qui en réalité n'est, pour nous, même pas l'idéal, compte tenu des objectifs assignés à la FAO, encore moins maintenant où toutes les populations affamées et en difficulté du monde nous écoutent.

Mais nous nous voyons devoir accepter, malheureusement dans un ultime effort la croissance réelle zéro. Je crois qu'il s'agit ici de s'entendre sur ce que nous voulons: est-ce-que nous voulons placer la FAO dans une situation d'incertitude, ou bien voulons-nous faire de cette Organisation qui, au demeurant, est la seule presque isolée dans cette situation dans le système onusien, et cela nous étonne qu'une Organisation qui a donné ses preuves soit placée dans cette condition ? Nous, pays bénéficiaires, en général parce que pays les plus confrontés avec les difficultés, nous refusons cette démarche parce que cela nous ôte la possibilité de nous affranchir des conditionnements et de nous prendre en charge nous-mêmes avec l'assistance bien sûr très appréciable, d'organisations telles que la FAO, et d'actions de développement qui répondent aux aspirations profondes de nos populations. Je pense que nous ne pouvons pas transiger sur ce point.

Je sais que le document CL 112/3 dérange parce que pour certains c'est demander à quelqu'un de se couper un bras, je le comprends, mais nous, c'est peut-être même nous montrer qu'en nous acheminant dans certaines démarches, il faut nous couper la tête, parce qu'en fait la croissance nominale zéro que nous rejetons clairement, ne serait-ce qu'en prenant un exemple qui nous ramène aux priorités qui pour nous sont clairement définies dans les paragraphes 40 à 46 du document

CL 112/3 qui sont clairs et que nous approuvons, je pense que, le Secrétariat par le supplément 1 nous a montré les conséquences d'un choix que nous aurons à faire, nous refusons donc le choix non seulement qui nous couperait un bras, mais même la tête, parce que en fait, l'option croissance réelle comme l'option croissance réelle zéro nous couperait un bras, mais nous pensons toujours pouvoir lutter avec un bras, par contre la tête nous n'accepterons pas qu'elle nous soit coupée.

Cela dit, c'est tellement vrai que si vous prenez le paragraphe 60 vous verrez que pour un secteur qui est particulièrement important pour nous dans le supplément 1, la réduction du secteur de la viande et du lait, qui a été souligné comme un secteur très contributif pour la sécurité alimentaire, la croissance nominale zéro nous amènerait à réduire la division qui s'occupe de ce secteur important dans une ampleur telle qu'elle ne pourrait pas accomplir convenablement sa mission. Cela est un exemple parmi tant d'autres qui nous intéressent, mais c'est pour dire qu'il faut que nous soyons réalistes, que nous annonçons les choses telles qu'elles sont: vouloir faire de la FAO un simple organisme d'analyse au moment où son action sur le terrain nous a montré les effets bénéfiques.

Cela me permet de contester ceux qui veulent qu'on réduise les représentations des bureaux sur le terrain, car en réalité, jusqu'ici nous avons assisté à quoi ? Tout se décidait à partir du Siègre au moment où sur le terrain où il y a la contingence locale et les nécessités d'agir, nous n'avions pas droit à la parole. Maintenant, c'est la situation inverse: on permet aux populations elles-mêmes avec l'aide des représentations de la FAO de cerner leurs difficultés à la lumière des contingences particulières et de faire remonter vers le Siègre pour décisions des choses que nous pensons pouvoir redresser. Je pense donc que vouloir affirmer une tendance contraire pour nous devra être effacé de nos esprits et que nous rejetons totalement, et le rapport devra en prendre compte, de telles démarches qui ne s'inscrivent pas dans le multilatéralisme qui pour nous est l'esprit de partenariat et de respect de l'autre, et ensuite une réelle volonté politique d'aider ceux qui ont des difficultés à se relever de celles-ci.

Cela dit, nous ne voulons pas nous étendre longtemps sur cette question mais j'insiste encore une fois pour dire que si nous acceptons même la croissance réelle zéro à la lumière de tout ce que j'ai dit, nous acceptons de nous faire couper un bras; mais là nous pensons qu'avec les difficultés nous devons lutter avec le minimum et avec la persévérance et la compétence de la FAO qui nous ont été démontrées, mais nous ne pouvons pas accepter d'aller en dessous de ce minimum qui pour nous est déjà très très regrettable et devrait être revu par ceux qui ont tendance à vouloir adopter une attitude qui ne s'inscrit pas dans l'intérêt de la solidarité internationale.

EL PRESIDENTE: Querido amigo Bally Sy, desde hace mucho tiempo que nos conocemos y, desde luego, estoy de acuerdo con usted en que conservemos la cabeza para no dejárnosla cortar.

También, con usted, recuerdo aquellos días en donde quizás las declaraciones o los discursos estaban llenos de posiciones ideológicas, pero también de magia.

Pero, también reconozco las ventajas, los méritos de la eficiencia, de la rapidez, de la ejecutividad que, a veces, es fría pero también quizás, lleva a la Organización a tomar decisiones de una forma más rápida y clara. En fin, extraño aquellos tiempos como usted dice, y estoy seguro que esta Organización en este proceso de transición está moviéndose hacia algo mucho mejor.

Pedro Alfonso MEDRANO ROJAS (Chile): Les ruego, en primer lugar, excusar mi inexistencia en la primera parte de esta reunión cuando se trató el Informe del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria. Mi atraso se debió a que lamentablemente el avión se retrasó. Venía de Santiago de Chile donde habíamos estado con el Director General inaugurando la nueva sede de la Oficina Regional de la FAO en Santiago y otros compromisos impidieron mi llegada en hora. Quisiera agradecerle a nuestro distinguido colega David Sands Smith por haber introducido este tema, el Informe del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria.

Señor Presidente, usted nos ha señalado la limitación de tiempo y entiendo también que la mayor parte de las cosas ya se han dicho y, nos pide usted, que nos concentremos en propuestas muy concretas. Quisiera, entonces, en forma muy telegráfica señalar, ajuicio de nuestra delegación, los elementos centrales en este debate.

En primer lugar quisiera expresar nuestro pleno respaldo a lo señalado por el Representante del Grupo de los 77 y, por supuesto, por el Representante de América Latina en cuanto a la opción de crecimiento real cero. No quisiera distraer la atención de este distinguido Consejo refiriéndome a cuestiones de principio, a lo que ya se ha manifestado en tantas otras oportunidades pero creo que a la luz de lo que se ha señalado recientemente por parte de algunas delegaciones, sí creemos importante, al menos, reafirmar algunos criterios.

En primer lugar, creo que es un acuerdo unánime que va, incluso, por encima de nuestra propia capacidad de competencia el que tengamos que darle fiel cumplimiento a los acuerdos de la Cumbre. En tal sentido nos complace que el Programa, el Documento de Labores y de Presupuesto se haya estructurado para atender, justamente, a las prioridades establecidas por la Cumbre Mundial.

Queremos, igualmente, reafirmar el rol de la FAO en su doble capacidad: su aspecto normativo y, por supuesto, en sus operaciones de campo. Creemos que a la FAO sí le compete un rol fundamental en el proceso de desarrollo o de asistencia a los países en materia de desarrollo agrícola, pecuario, forestal y pesquero. Están los textos básicos, no lo voy a repetir, no creo que estemos cambiando los textos básicos. Estamos, simplemente, estudiando un presupuesto que nos permita cumplir con los objetivos de la Organización y, muy particularmente, con lo acordado en la Cumbre.

Pero es indiscutible el rol de la FAO en lo que se refiere a la lucha para erradicar el hambre y la malnutrición como expresión de la pobreza, las cuales se combaten, justamente, con el desarrollo y la competencia, repito, de la FAO en este campo.

En la actividad normativa, obviamente la FAO muestra un historial exitoso y, a mi juicio, de enorme trascendencia para los países, no me voy a referir a ello que es de todos conocido. Creo que en el área de las prioridades establecidas para la asistencia a los países es importante, al menos a juicio de nuestra delegación, señalar algunas que sí son prioritarias y como usted nos ha indicado, señor Presidente, una forma correcta de estructurar un presupuesto, es justamente empezar por las prioridades. Para nosotros, las prioridades están representadas fielmente en el Plan de Acción de la Cumbre. Dentro de esas, nosotros le asignamos una importancia especial al desarrollo rural, creemos que el documento del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto recoge la prioridad que se le debe asignar al desarrollo rural aun cuando la consideremos insuficiente en términos de cuantía.

Señalo y recalco ésto, señor Presidente, porque como lo hemos señalado en la Cumbre, estamos enfrentando justamente en las áreas rurales el nivel más alto de concentración de pobreza, es ahí, a nuestro juicio, donde se pueden originar las mayores amenazas a la paz. La migración masiva que está teniendo lugar hoy en día desde el campo a la ciudad y, de los países en desarrollo a los países desarrollados, creo que es una buena muestra de ello. Si a esto agregamos el proceso creciente de urbanización que hará que en los próximos 20 años, el número de habitantes de las ciudades de los países en desarrollo aumente de 1.500 a 4.000 millones de personas, creo que eso nos da la dimensión de la importancia que tiene el fortalecimiento del desarrollo rural.

En segundo lugar, señor Presidente, estimamos igualmente de la mayor importancia, la asistencia en materia de políticas. En este campo, nos parece que debería revisarse la asignación que se hace, al menos para la región de América Latina, en lo referente a asistencia en materia de políticas. La estructura presupuestaria que se nos presenta registra una fuerte disminución en materia de política a la región de América Latina. Al mismo tiempo constatamos que los aumentos en este capítulo están

básicamente referidos a la administración del programa y nosotros sí creemos que es un área fundamental que debe ser fortalecida.

Lo decimos, señor Presidente, porque tal vez el mayor desafío que enfrenta la agricultura de nuestros países es cómo se van a insertar en este proceso de globalización de la economía, en esta creciente financiación de la economía, donde ciertamente la agricultura tiene que competir a veces en situaciones de desventaja muy clara. Sobre todo cuando contiene o concentra altos niveles de población en situación de pobreza. En consecuencia, la asistencia en materia de políticas, representa para nosotros una prioridad muy clara. De la misma forma y a partir de los acuerdos del GATT, consideramos que la asistencia de la FAO en todo aquello que se refiere a asesorar a los países, a la mejor inserción en el comercio mundial es de extraordinaria importancia. Lamentamos muy sinceramente que las partidas presupuestarias para el Codex Alimentarius se vean disminuidas.

Consideramos que éste, es quizás uno de los programas de mayor importancia de la Organización. Quisiera repetir lo acordado por la Comisión del Codex Latinoamericana, reunida en Asunción, que pide expresamente un aumento de los recursos para fortalecer los programas de asistencia a los países, en un mundo en donde los aranceles tienen cada vez menos importancia. Ciertamente las normas sanitarias y fitosanitarias requieren la atención prioritaria por parte de los gobiernos, y quisiera en tal sentido, así como se ha hecho referencia para otros programas, la necesidad de beneficiarse con programas de asistencia o con programas de financiamiento existentes, quisiéramos y lo reiteramos que se revise esta partida, que se incrementen los recursos y que por supuesto, se pueda beneficiar de otros programas de la Organización, particularmente los proyectos de Cooperación Técnica con el objeto de proporcionar a los países una asistencia urgente en este campo.

La mayor parte de nuestro comercio va a depender de la forma en que nosotros podamos adecuarnos a las normas establecidas en los acuerdos de la Ronda Uruguay. En otro orden de cosas, señor Presidente, quisiéramos sí expresar nuestro respaldo al Programa PESA, nuestro país lo comparte. Le he expresado por boca del Presidente de la República al Director General nuestro apoyo a este Programa. Quisiéramos igualmente expresar nuestro apoyo al Programa de Recursos Genéticos, que a nuestro juicio es otra área fundamental para el futuro de la Organización y, por supuesto, para el futuro de nuestros países. Creemos, igualmente, que en este campo se deben explorar todos los mecanismos posibles para proporcionar a los países asistencia técnica, con el fin de poder proteger, salvaguardar, conservar y utilizar debidamente nuestro patrimonio genético. Asistimos, muchas veces, a foros internacionales en donde tenemos que tomar posición respecto a una serie de temas y, la verdad, es que muy pocos de nuestros países han definido posiciones sustantivas en relación a las negociaciones internacionales. Creemos, en consecuencia, que este es un programa que debe ser fuertemente apoyado.

En otro orden de cosas, señor Presidente, quisiéramos, expresar nuestro pleno respaldo al proceso de descentralización; creemos que la Organización está haciendo un gran esfuerzo. Esta es una forma de ahorrar recursos y de ser más eficientes. Por nuestra parte estamos complacidos de que, a nivel regional, podamos apoyar fuertemente este proceso a través de la Oficina Regional de Santiago y, por supuesto, de las oficinas subregionales.

Quisiéramos llamar la atención que en una oportunidad anterior, igualmente solicitamos que se pudiera considerar el establecimiento de una oficina para la subregión de América Central. Creemos que esa región sí merece una atención prioritaria y que debería estudiarse la forma en que esos países que han atravesado situaciones de guerra civil y que han sido, de alguna forma, superados gracias al decisivo aporte de la comunidad internacional, merezcan por parte de la FAO una atención prioritaria, ya que es en la mayor parte de su población, donde se concentran justamente, las actividades agrícolas y rurales. Junto con reafirmar el proceso de descentralización, quisiéramos, igualmente por si hubiera alguna duda, reafirmar nuestra decisión en cuanto a mantener la periodicidad de las conferencias regionales, que se ejecuten cada dos años. Podemos discutir sobre

la mejor forma en que se puedan realizar, pero sí creemos que nuestros ministros deberían reunirse con esta periodicidad, ya que políticamente es el más alto foro, a nuestro juicio, a nivel agrícola, forestal, pecuario y pesquero, que se pueda reunir en nuestra región y, por supuesto, una de las prioridades tal como fue acordada por la última Conferencia Regional será examinar los avances que se están produciendo en materia de seguridad alimentaria.

Perdone señor Presidente si he quitado mucho tiempo con mi intervención. He tratado de ser lo más telegráficamente posible. En otra oportunidad trataremos de ser más precisos con nuestros aportes.

George APOSTOIU (Roumanie): La délégation de la Roumanie apprécie les efforts du Directeur général en vue de rationaliser les coûts et de nous présenter trois scénarios de Programme de travail correspondant à trois formules possibles de croissance de budget telles qu'elles sont énumérées dans le sommaire du Programme de travail et budget pour 1998-99. Le triptyque nous oblige à élargir l'horizon de nos réflexions. La délégation de la Roumanie prend la liberté d'apprécier que les contraintes budgétaires ne doivent pas porter atteinte aux domaines du programme qui relève de la sécurité alimentaire et des ressources nécessaires pour les activités de notre Organisation conformes à ses buts statutaires. L'analyse du sommaire relève que, dans les programmes techniques et économiques, une part très importante vise la sécurité alimentaire et une autre part aussi importante vise les programmes de coopération technique et d'assistance aux politiques dans différentes régions. La délégation de la Roumanie a écouté avec beaucoup d'intérêt et d'attention les options exprimées par les honorables représentants des Etats Membres en matière de budget. La délégation roumaine note avec satisfaction qu'il s'agit d'une préoccupation qui correspond à des priorités réelles des Etats Membres. Pour toutes ces raisons la délégation de la Roumanie plaide pour un niveau de ressources budgétaires de notre Organisation conforme à la poursuite de son action au bénéfice de ceux qui ont besoin de son assistance.

Maxwell TIEISO KHALEMA (Observer for Lesotho): Mr Chairman, let me take this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation for the way in which you have conducted these important deliberations.

My delegation would also like to thank Dr Bommer and Mr Wade for the very clear presentation of the work done by the Joint Committee. We are aware of the very painful efforts you and your committee have gone through to finalize the documents now under consideration. My delegation has profound confidence in you and your Committee and we are sure that you have not left any stone unturned.

Coming back to our boat, my delegation would like to articulate its entire support to the statement made by the distinguished delegate of the Philippines, in his capacity as the Chairman of the G77, and also support the statement of the Chairman of Africa Group. My delegation also echoes the options presented by the delegations of South Africa, Uganda, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Pakistan and others who support the zero real growth option.

Heads of State and Government in November 1996 pledged their political will to achieve food security for all and reduce by half the present number of undernourished people no later than 2015. This is a challenge that needs our combined efforts and determination.

This is an opportune moment for Members of the Council and Member Nations of FAO to extend a helping hand to the 800 million people throughout the world who do not have adequate food, by considering a realistic budget level that will make it possible to attain the set target. This budget should also make it possible for the Food and Agriculture Organization to do all the things that we asked it to do in all the past Committees since the beginning of the year.¹

¹ Statement inserted in the verbatim records on request.

Russell MULELE (Observer for Zambia): Mr Chairman, my delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement made by the distinguished delegate of the Philippines on behalf of the Group of 77.

We strongly believe that the zero real growth option in the Programme of Work and Budget is the better way of enabling FAO to meet the challenges set by the World Food Summit and fulfil its mandate.

Posterity, Mr Chairman, will judge us harshly if we do not meet the set target of reducing food insecurity by half before the year 2015. We should thus be positive in our approach in supporting the work of FAO.

Finally, we endorse the PWB based on the zero real-growth for the biennium 1998-99.2

EL PRESIDENTE: Con esto concluye la lista de oradores de los miembros del Consejo. Tenemos aún varios observadores, Perú, Cabo Verde, Sudán, Panamá y Suiza. Les quiero informar que la delegación de Lesotho y de Zambia han enviado por escrito sus declaraciones respecto a este tema, las cuales serán incluidas en el Verbatim de este período de sesiones. Señores delegados, voy a levantar esta quinta sesión plenaria y los convoco para las 14.45 horas. Muchas gracias, se levanta la sesión.

The meeting rose at 13.00 hours

La séance est levée à 13 h 00

Se levanta la sesión a las 13.00 horas

4 June 1997



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations

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

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

COUNCIL

CONSEIL

CONSEJO

Hundred and Twelfth Session • Cent douzième session • 112° período de sesiones

SIXTH PLENARY MEETING
SIXIEME SEANCE PLENTERE
SEXTA SESION PLENARIA

4 June 1997

The Sixth Plenary Meeting was opened at 15.10 hours
Mr José Ramón López Portillo,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding

La sixième séance plénière est ouverte à 15 h 10
sous la présidence de M José Ramón López Portillo,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la sexta sesión plenaria a las 15.10 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. José Ramón López Portillo,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

- IV PROGRAMME, BUDGETARY, FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS** (continued)
- IV QUESTIONS CONCERNANT LE PROGRAMME, LE BUDGET, LES FINANCES ET L'ADMINISTRATION** (suite)
- IV ASUNTOS DEL PROGRAMA Y ASUNTOS PRESUPUESTARIOS, FINANCIEROS Y ADMINISTRATIVOS** (continuación)
- 16 Summary Programme of Work and Budget 1998-99** (continued)
- 16 Sommaire du Programme de travail et budget 1998-99** (suite)
- 16 Resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto para 1998-99** (continuación)

EL PRESIDENTE: Se abre la sexta Sesión Plenaria del Consejo. Estamos todavía con una lista importante de oradores, en particular tengo aquí a cinco observadores que desean hacer uso de la palabra, pero antes de otorgársela pregunto a los miembros del Consejo si hay alguna delegación que desea agregarse a la lista.

Paul PAREDES PORTELLA (Observador de Perú): En relación al Tema 16 de la agenda, relativo al Resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto para 1998-99, nuestra intervención se centrará en demostrar la necesidad de aprobar un presupuesto con crecimiento real positivo.

En primer término, en cuanto a las prioridades, debemos señalar que ajuicio de mi delegación, los programas principales y los programas en sí en ningún caso deben ser afectados cualquiera que sea la decisión respecto del presupuesto. En este marco de análisis, mi delegación coincide con lo señalado por la Representante de los Estados Unidos, en el sentido que en toda formulación de presupuestos, los recursos deben estar vinculados a los objetivos programáticos, de forma tal que se puedan verificar mejor los resultados de los gastos, gastos que nosotros consideramos deben estar orientados más bien a promover el desarrollo socio-económico de los países beneficiarios.

Al igual que la Delegación de Estados Unidos, nosotros entendemos que el PCT podría muy bien acoger proyectos vinculados con la Cumbre así como con el Plan de Acción de Leipzig; en cuanto al PESA, los países son libres de involucrarse en él.

Finalmente, dejamos constancia que para nosotros es fundamental el fortalecimiento de las oficinas regionales, lo que está en la línea de la descentralización de la FAO, de la optimización del uso de los recursos y del reforzamiento de los programas operacionales.

En segundo término, creemos que se debe dar prioridad a las actividades operacionales, sobre todo aquéllas que tienen un carácter normativo. Esto, no obstante la interacción que existe entre ellas y el vínculo dinámico que deben guardar entre sí.

La razón, señor Presidente, para esta afirmación, es que se deben favorecer las actividades en el terreno y el real impacto de los proyectos de la FAO en los niveles socio-económicos de las poblaciones, que son las beneficiarías finales.

Dentro de este enfoque es crucial destacar la validez de los programas PCT, del TCO y del TCI, vertientes de la cooperación de la FAO y que están llamados a asegurar su vigencia en tanto que centros internacionales de excelencia en la conducción de proyectos de cooperación destinados a promover el desarrollo agrícola de los países receptores.

Señor Presidente, al definir el tipo de presupuesto que debemos asumir, dejamos constancia de nuestro apoyo a lo expresado por las delegaciones de Cuba, Brasil, México, Chile, así como por la de Filipinas, delegación que intervino en nombre del Grupo de los 77.

En este contexto, nosotros creemos que la única propuesta de presupuesto que absuelve los requerimientos mínimos de la FAO para el cumplimiento de sus objetivos es el crecimiento real positivo; las otras dos opciones, crecimiento nominal cero y crecimiento real cero, en realidad significan decrecimiento, la reducción una vez más del presupuesto.

Consideramos que al presupuesto de base de 650 millones de dólares habría que incorporar factores tales como los aumentos de los costos de acuerdo con las tasas de inflación, a lo que necesariamente se debe añadir el riesgo del tipo de cambio, en un sistema volátil de paridad de monedas. A esto hay que sumar un crecimiento mínimo de las más importantes actividades de la FAO, en general las de carácter operacional, además del mínimo que se requiere para que el seguimiento del Plan de Acción de la Cumbre tenga visos de credibilidad.

En este marco, sólo un presupuesto con crecimiento real positivo para el bienio 1998-99, de por lo menos 700 millones o más, podrá atender, y decimos bien a un nivel mínimo, los requerimientos de base de la FAO.

Tenemos al respecto tres argumentos que consideramos de peso: el primero, que todos los programas de la FAO deben mantenerse al menos al nivel actual. A este efecto hay que retener dos elementos que muestran a la FAO como organismo internacional eficiente en la asignación de recursos y que viene sufriendo una seria reducción en su presupuesto. Nos referimos a los ahorros de eficiencia de 22 millones de dólares del bienio 1996-97 en el marco de la reducción presupuestaria de 57 millones de dólares para ese mismo bienio.

El segundo, que la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación debe ser ejecutada plenamente en su Plan de Acción, si no queremos que la Cumbre y su seguimiento periódico se constituya solamente en meros ejercicios retóricos, llenos de bellas palabras, buenas intenciones, pero ausentes de acciones y efectos en la realidad.

Por último y más determinante aún, desde nuestra perspectiva, resulta necesario un presupuesto tal para que la FAO mantenga su credibilidad, en cuanto a su mandato en el marco del sistema multilateral a largo plazo, así también como para asegurar su vigencia como órgano internacional competitivo y solvente en cooperación internacional, con vistas al próximo siglo.

Todo enfoque restrictivo, como el de las propuestas de decrecimiento que ya hemos enunciado, no hará más que presentar, como bien dijo el día de ayer el Presidente del Grupo de los 77, señales equivocadas acerca de lo que es la FAO y su razón de ser, tanto al nivel de sistema multilateral y de los gobiernos, cuanto al de los pueblos necesitados de la tierra que demandan el mantenimiento de los programas de cooperación de la FAO. Todo ello, sin contar a los 840 millones de seres humanos que padecen hambre que ahora pueblan el orbe y que, a la culminación de la Cumbre, soñaron con un mundo mejor ya no para ellos - la vida humana es efímera - pero sí al menos para sus hijos o los hijos de aquéllos.

Quiero decir también, señor Presidente, que dejamos claro en este punto que sólo a efectos de conciliación y en el último de los casos podríamos contemplar un presupuesto de crecimiento real cero de 689 millones de dólares para el bienio, a efectos de cubrir aumentos de costos por 39 millones de dólares, como lo informó el Director General en su intervención inicial.

Dicho esto, creemos que nuestros fundamentos, llenos de buena voluntad y sentido común, deberían traer consigo impulsos de una nueva voluntad política de los Estados Miembros, destinada a revitalizar la FAO y a reafirmar su rol en el mundo en cuanto cooperación multilateral.

Un punto de partida inicial en la dirección correcta será cuando los países cumplan con el pago de sus cuotas. Y es que en realidad la falta de pago de las cuotas a tiempo ha traído consigo la difícil situación financiera presupuestaria actual que vive la Organización. En este contexto, el Perú es

muy sensible a este tema y, en la medida de sus posibilidades, acaba de hacer un nuevo pago parcial de sus cuotas. Sobre este punto cabría, señor Presidente, encontrar fórmulas de solución que absuelvan el entrampamiento presente, como por ejemplo prever un doble cálculo presupuestal, teniendo en cuenta en uno de ellos los pagos efectivos del presupuesto y en otro la inclusión de los adeudos a la FAO, estando a que éstos, de toda forma, son recursos exigibles. De esta manera, podrían mantener su curso los programas de base, mientras que otros se activarían en función del pago de los adeudos.

Señor Presidente, va nuestra invocación a todos los participantes en este 112º período de sesiones del Consejo, para que este debate nos conduzca a encontrar soluciones responsables por la vía de lo razonable y de lo necesario a fin que la aprobación del presupuesto, en un marco de consenso, se efectúe bajo la forma de un crecimiento real positivo, que, como hemos mostrado, es el único que recoge los requerimientos mínimos para un funcionamiento normal de la Organización.

Horacio SO ARES (Observateur du Cap-Vert): Permettez-moi tout d'abord de vous exprimer notre satisfaction. En effet, nous sommes devant un ensemble de documents préparés par le Secrétariat qui nous apportent certainement des informations et qui sont vraiment très bien préparés. Deuxièmement, je voudrais commencer par vous dire que nous soutenons entièrement toutes les informations du Président du Groupe des 77 dans la mesure où elles constituent les préoccupations du Cap-Vert. Troisièmement, je voudrais vous dire que, pour ce qui est du budget, nous sommes prêts à soutenir un budget à croissance réelle zéro dans la mesure où nous considérons ce budget comme un budget établi par une organisation qui vient de faire un certain nombre de changements assez importants pour se rendre plus efficace, pour mieux servir tous les pays. Nous l'acceptons ainsi dans la mesure où, avec ces changements, il faudrait sans doute un an pour consolider tous ces acquis et apporter les changements complémentaires qui s'avèrent nécessaires. Néanmoins, je voudrais faire certains commentaires. Depuis un certain nombre d'années, le Cap-Vert a participé activement dans un certain nombre d'événements des Nations Unies, entre autres: la Conférence de Rio pour le développement et l'environnement, la Conférence de Copenhague, les négociations des conventions sur la diversité biologique, sur la lutte contre la désertification, et sur les changements politiques.

L'an dernier, avec la réalisation du Sommet, les engagements qui ont été pris nous ont semblé comme un chapeau à tous les engagements qui ont été pris auparavant au cours des événements dont je viens de parler. Cela a comme conséquence que le Programme spécial pour la sécurité alimentaire essaie de faire une coordination de tous les efforts de développement de nos pays parce qu'il n'y a pas de développement sans éradication définitive de la pauvreté et de la malnutrition.

J'ai essayé de faire fonctionner la FAO, disons, en tenant compte de cela. Le Cap-Vert, et je pense la plupart des pays, a fait un certain nombre de changements: changements structurels, changements dans les politiques de développement y compris tout ce qui est rattaché aux problèmes de l'ouverture pour la démocratie. Nos populations attendent que l'on puisse travailler dans le sens de la construction d'un avenir meilleur où la justice sociale serait une action fondamentale. Nous pensons qu'un renforcement du budget de la FAO, qui nous espérons sera fait dans les prochaines années, pourra jouer un rôle très important dans ce sens. Nous espérons que la FAO puisse devenir une organisation équilibrée qui puisse utiliser rationnellement ses avantages comparatifs, et nous défendons l'équilibre entre une action normative, une action sur le terrain, condition *sine qua non* pour beaucoup de pays, parmi lesquels le Cap-Vert, pour faire face aux effets d'une production alimentaire structurellement déficitaire. Dans ce sens, ma délégation voudrait dire qu'elle fait des efforts pour assumer ses responsabilités par rapport à sa contribution à la FAO, pour apporter des changements nécessaires pour recevoir un soutien de l'extérieur, dont celui de la FAO, pour mieux s'organiser dans tout son processus de développement. Mais, dans ce contexte là, il est absolument nécessaire que dans l'avenir nos partenaires puissent comprendre qu'il y a des actions qui, faites seulement au niveau bilatéral, n'apportent pas les résultats qu'on pourrait escompter. Il faut faire

des actions au niveau multilatéral dans l'ensemble des problèmes à considérer aux niveaux régional et même sous-régional afin d'obtenir un meilleur résultat.

Ceci dit, je voudrais terminer par vous dire que le Cap-Vert continue à espérer que tout cela sera fait dans la mesure où ses priorités pour le développement dans le sens agricole en général vont à la lutte contre la désertification, la gestion des ressources hydriques et la pêche qui sont des domaines essentiels et fondamentaux pour la sécurité alimentaire.

EL PRESIDENTE: Antes de dar la palabra al siguiente Observador, deseo informarles que el delegado de Camerún, igual que los observadores por Suecia y Gambia han entregado a la Secretaría, por escrito sus declaraciones, las cuales se incorporarán en las Actas del Verbatim.

Mohamed Said M. ALI HARBI (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic): In the name of God, the merciful and compassionate, thank you, Mr Chairman.

Being an Observer, and since you have been kind enough to give me this opportunity, I will try to be very concise.

My delegation, supports a real zero-growth budget as recommended by the Chairman of the Group of 77, and which is also supported without any reserve by the developing countries. This is our goal, in this Organization, to concretize the recommendations of the World Food Summit, namely, to alleviate hunger and poverty in developing countries, and eliminate them from the world.

We believe that the TCP is a top priority for this Organization and it is very important for agricultural development in our countries. However, I do support the distinguished delegate from the United States when he referred to the Codex Alimentarius, International Plant Protection Convention, the Global Information and Early Warning System, and the Waste Centre. I do support these priorities, since these activities have a positive impact on agriculture and, therefore, adequate allocation of resources should be given to these activities.

In my intervention two days ago, I spoke in support of the Special Programme for Food Security and I congratulated the 15 countries which benefitted from this Programme. Then, we expressed our hope that we would benefit from this Programme as well. However, unfortunately, we see that some countries not suffering from food security problems, and not giving specific food aid to this Programme, despite this, they do object to this Programme very clearly.

Sudan is a country based on agriculture and animal resources. We have a very important animal resource, which is a source for food and hard currency gains and, therefore, we would like to express our regret when we see proposals aiming at cancelling some posts in the Services dealing with meat and dairy products, which are beneficial to developing countries.

In order to live up to the Commitments of the World Food Summit, and to the Commitments of our leaders, and in order to rescue millions of people from the clutches of poverty by the year 2000, we should establish a budget which would enable FAO to meet its obligations. This could only be achieved through the proposal of the Group of 77, namely, through the real zero-growth budget.

I do apologize, I did not previously pay tribute to what has been stated by my colleague from Uganda, namely, when he supported the Telefood initiative. Such a programme would have a positive impact at the national levels, since it would raise the awareness of these countries concerning the importance of food. We do hope that adequate resources would be given to this programme, starting from this year.

Finally, I should like to congratulate you, once again, for your sound leadership of this Council, which is characterized by wisdom and transparency.

Horacio MALTEZ (Observador de Panamá): Al referirnos al nivel del presupuesto, mi delegación desea en primer lugar apoyar las declaraciones del Presidente del Grupo de los 77 así como lo manifestado por el Presidente del GRULAC y otros distinguidos miembros de los países en desarrollo, tanto de mi región como de otras regiones.

Señor Presidente, nuestra delegación considera de suma importancia resaltar algunos aspectos que ya fueron tratados durante el día de ayer por el distinguido Representante de Cuba, hablando a nombre del Grupo Latinoamericano y del Caribe. Me refiero, entre otras cosas, al extraordinario esfuerzo realizado por la FAO durante la ejecución del ejercicio presupuestario actual que permitió determinar una cantidad de ahorros por eficiencia de poco más de 22 millones de dólares a fin de adaptarse al presupuesto ajustado. Estos ahorros por eficiencia, y cabe señalarlo y evidenciarlo, no se efectuaron sin grandes sacrificios y se tuvo que pagar un costo social y de nivel programático. En este contexto hay que recordar cuántos importantes programas tuvieron que ser eliminados o reducidos o que corren aún el riesgo de ser reducidos todavía más. En mi tierra se dice que para muestra basta un botón y es por ello que deseo hacer mío un ejemplo planteado por el Grupo Asiático y por otros, que se refiere al caso del importante programa de la carne y la leche.

En este orden de ideas, mi delegación considera necesario que se efectúen todos aquellos ahorros por eficiencia que sean posibles y necesarios, sin embargo, estimamos imprescindible llamar la atención sobre el hecho de que para todo hay un límite, un límite físico más allá del cual los ahorros por eficiencia se traducen sencillamente en una reducción inaceptable del nivel de calidad o en una inanición, artificialmente forzada de los fondos operacionales o medios normales de acción. En nuestra opinión debemos tener mucho cuidado al hacer estos ahorros por eficiencia de no superar ese límite.

Deseo también recordar, como lo hiciera el Presidente de nuestro Grupo Regional, que nosotros apoyamos firmemente el Programa Especial de Seguridad Alimentaria (PESA), programa que muchos de los países de nuestro grupo están apoyando materialmente en forma de cooperación entre países en desarrollo o en otra forma.

En nuestra opinión y respetando la opinión de los otros, como es nuestra costumbre, el PESA es un programa de suma importancia para los países más necesitados, en especial para los países PBIDA, así como para muchas áreas particulares de los países en desarrollo por lo que consideramos que el mismo no debe ser obstaculizado en ninguna forma y apelamos a los países que tengan inconvenientes a que comprendan la importancia que le concedemos a este programa.

En este contexto, yo quisiera también hacer mía y apoyar aquellas declaraciones hechas por el distinguido Representante de Uganda y recientemente la de mi colega de Sudán para apoyar lo referente al ALIMENTEL que consideramos una actividad de gran importancia para obtener recursos para este programa. Esto no es una cosa nueva, las otras organizaciones tales como la UNESCO y la UNICEF lo vienen haciendo.

Mi delegación considera además de suma importancia resaltar la acción catalizadora del PCT que en todas las áreas pertinentes de la cooperación técnica incluyendo los recursos genéticos entre otros, apoya decididamente este programa.

Por último señor Presidente, deseamos manifestar nuestro apoyo al establecimiento de nuevas oficinas subregionales, en especial, como lo dijese el distinguido Representante de Chile, de la Oficina Subregional para América Central. Asimismo, consideramos que es importante reforzar las oficinas regionales de la FAO y la instalación de nuevas oficinas en los países donde sean necesarias para el mejor desempeño de las labores de la Organización y la debida coordinación con los países que las necesitan, sobre todo en el marco de la descentralización.

Martin KENFACK (Cameroun): Monsieur le Président, je vous remercie, au nom de toute ma délégation, de votre élection comme Président indépendant ainsi que tout votre bureau.

Notre pays a, à plusieurs reprises, bénéficié du Programme de coopération technique (PCT). Nous pouvons à juste titre dire à tout le Conseil que ce Programme (PCT) qui a des règles propres est une bonne chose pour nos pays en développement. Mon pays souhaite que ce Programme continue à recevoir des ressources suffisantes car il est là pour tous les pays qui en font la demande dans le respect des règles. J'appuie l'intervention de l'Ambassadeur du Sénégal ainsi que celle du Président du Groupe des 77. Je suis convaincu que le projet de budget proposé par le Directeur général est une limite inférieure au-delà de laquelle nous risquons de ne voir aucun programme se réaliser. Le PSSA, qui est bien différent du PCT, demeure un programme prioritaire et nécessaire pour nos pays. Ce programme devrait bénéficier d'importantes ressources pour être efficace. Mon pays, le Cameroun, compte beaucoup sur ce programme (PSSA) dont la première mission vient de séjourner dans notre pays il y a quelques semaines. Mon pays est donc très engagé pour ce programme. Mon pays souhaite être parmi les premiers pays par où démarre le programme après les quinze premiers.

Nous voudrions que les pays les plus nantis se sentent concernés par ce programme (PSSA) et lui accordent des moyens suffisants. Nos pays voudraient aussi disposer des denrées alimentaires en quantité et en qualité suffisantes. Nous devons faire des efforts pour ne plus recourir à chaque instant à l'aide alimentaire extérieure.

La sécurité alimentaire devrait être une réalité chez tous. Le Sommet mondial de l'alimentation a montré l'importance de la sécurité alimentaire pour tous.

La FAO est l'Organisation la plus prestigieuse du secteur agricole dans le monde. Mon pays pense qu'il faudrait lui donner les moyens de répondre à ce prestige. Le budget de la FAO devra être toujours vu à la hausse. Je pense que le budget à croissance réelle semble répondre à cette préoccupation. Nous devons tout faire pour avoir le consensus sur ce problème du budget et éviter que la Conférence de 1997 ne soit comme la précédente.

Je remercie le Directeur général pour la qualité du document présenté au Conseil. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président, pour votre doigté dans la conduite des travaux de cette réunion dont l'importance n'échappe à personne.

Encore une fois, j'invite au nom de mon pays les membres du Conseil à approuver par consensus le budget 1998-99 de notre Organisation (la FAO)¹

Rolf AKESSON (Observer for Sweden): We wish to endorse the statement made by the European Union, as well as the statement by Denmark, and our delegation would like to put forward the following additional points.

The Swedish delegation's emphasis on programme of work rather than budget means that our final position on budget level will be taken when the contents of the definitive draft PWB is available.

The primary function of all specialized UN agencies concerns the normative tasks as spelled out in the Nordic UN project on reform in the economic and social fields and included in the EU proposals for UN reform: we find few signs in the draft PWB for a long-term overall change towards a strengthening and vitalization of the normative tasks and some signs in the opposite direction.

1 Texte reçu avec demande d'insertion dans le procès verbal.

Regarding transparency and governance, progress is mixed: the new format of the PWB is a significant step in the direction of an open and clear presentation of all activities' total costs. On the other hand the Member Nations' influence on the PWB process in the substantive committees during spring 1997 was constrained by the late arrival of crucial documentation, lack of necessary information, insufficient time for discussion.

Implementation of Agenda 21 and WFS is the main general objective: while we see several encouraging signs that more emphasis is placed on sustainability, it is not evident that all that can be expected from the Secretariat has been done in that respect. We are disappointed by the narrow, production-oriented interpretation of global food security that is apparent in the follow-up so far of the WFS.

The implied change in the allocation of resources between agriculture, fisheries and forestry is contrary to what could be expected in view of the several substantive and high politics problem within FAO's mandate in fisheries and forestry.

Taking for granted that normally cost increases will be absorbed by efficiency gains, any budget increase - national as well as international - nowadays requires convincing and forceful reasons: the above arguments present no such case for a budget increase.

The FAO Secretariat's proposal for zero-nominal growth does not meet our approval in its present form since it involves a significant decrease in the already unfavourable ratio between substantive work in the technical and economic programmes and non-substantive work (i.e. management, administration, policy direction and planning), as well as a further reduction of Member Nations' possibilities to express their views and influence the decision-making process by severe and systematic reductions in costs for meetings of the Programme and Finance Committees (30 percent), of substantive committees (20 percent) and of Permanent Representative, (27 percent).

We find it possible and desirable to achieve the crucial objectives of the Organization by stricter prioritization of activities and an even better utilization of the available competence and resources that we are proud to have at our disposal.²

Ismaila B. CEESAY (Observer for the Gambia): My delegation wishes to register its disappointment over the numerous acclaims by previous speakers that pinpoint to supporting a zero real growth and/or zero nominal growth in the Programme of Work Budget of the FAO for 1998-99.

At the last November World Food Summit members have agreed to improve the pertinence and significance of FAO in helping towards ensuring that by the year 2015 there can be food for all mankind. Against this background it is inconceivable that this objective can be capable of achievement with a zero nominal growth in the Organization's budget. The least we should ask for is a real growth consistent with inflationary norms - using the current year as the benchmark for such an assessment.

My delegation is worried that in our drive to instil efficiency in resource utilization we are, in tandem, forcing FAO to scale down its project interventions in order to be seen to be spending less. The strategic involvement of FAO as foreseen by the output of the World Food Summit is amplified; the need to attack programmes, aimed at alleviating poverty, with the requisite drive and financial base, is a *sine qua non* to the success of the current world drive to providing food security for all.

² Statement inserted in the verbatim record on request

My delegation would lend unqualified support to FAO's submission which is, in general, consistent with the overall general mandate set for the Organization by the declarations of the World Food Summit.³

Aidan O'DRISCOLL (Ireland): I would ask if you could give the floor to the Netherlands, to make a second intervention on this item on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.

EL PRESIDENTE: Con mucho gusto señor Representante y conforme a lo que hemos acordado en este Consejo le voy a dar la palabra al Observador por los Países Bajos quien hablará a nombre de la Comunidad Europea y sus Países Miembros.

J.B. PIETERS (Observer for the Netherlands): I can be very brief now. You invited us to be more specific on how we think the FAO Secretariat should proceed in order to enable Members to reach a consensus on the Programme of Work at Budget at the Conference.

We are preparing comments on your invitation and I would like to come back on this issue during our statement on agenda item 18.

Igor MARINCEK (Observer for Switzerland): It is a matter of fact that actions pursued in collaboration, in a well-coordinated manner, and with a network approach, yield more and give better results than the same actions would if they were carried out in an isolated way. Synergies are at work when one plus one results in more than two. The winners of tomorrow will be the ones who know how to work in a synergetic way. This holds true both for private companies and public organizations.

In times of limited resources, we have to look at all possibilities of improving the output-input ratio. My delegation supports the calls for further savings and efficiency increases; for concentration of activities on priorities and on comparative advantages; for better synergies between the different programmes and divisions of FAO; and between the normative and operational activities of our Organization.

When looking for synergies, we must, however, not limit our focus on this Organization alone. We must also look beyond FAO. My delegation, therefore, invites the Secretariat to provide us, in the full Programme of Work and Budget, with information on proposed cooperation with other international organizations, in particular, with the UN family, the World Bank, and the CGIAR group, and to tell us about the expected synergies from this cooperation. We would like to have this information programme by programme.

In line with this proposal, my delegation would like to underline that cooperation and networking with other Organizations should not be the responsibility of a special unit, as proposed in Major Programme 1.3, but should be part of the responsibilities of each division and programme, since this is a cross-cutting issue.

Synergies are obtained at the working level and they can only be obtained by doing the business in a changed way. This way is characterized by networking, both within and beyond FAO.

Carlos di MOTTOLA (Observador de Costa Rica): Me permito de hacer una referencia al pasado. En el pasado cuando se discutía sobre el Programa de Labores y de Presupuesto nunca se hablaba de disminuciones ni de aumento, ni tampoco de situación estática. Se adoptó siempre el concepto de aumento simbólico, ya sea debido a que las necesidades del mundo crecen y crecen las

³ Statement inserted in the verbatim record on request

necesidades de asesoramiento. Por el momento las previsiones y las estadísticas dan un gran aumento de población normal durante los próximos decenios. Está previsto que la FAO deba tener mayor actividad, la disminución es absolutamente un absurdo. Me opongo también al concepto de crecimiento real cero, porque el crecimiento real cero no corresponde con lo que son las necesidades del mundo.

Después de la Cumbre, salir con un presupuesto que fuera menor del presupuesto precedente, es una contradicción que desprestigia totalmente la FAO.

Me permito apoyar también lo que dijo el Representante Observador de Panamá respecto al aumento del PCT.

Me permito concluir que yo soy completamente favorable a que de esa Asamblea surgan una, dos o tres opciones para presentar a la Conferencia y que a la Conferencia se indique únicamente la posibilidad de un aumento aunque mínimo. Por eso la FAO no puede transformarse en un centro de referencia. La FAO ha surgido un día o dos antes de las Naciones Unidas. La FAO es la coordinación de todas las actividades del mundo. Yo creo que la FAO tiene que seguir adelante. No hubo ningún cambio de Estatuto. El Estatuto es el mismo que se adoptó hace 50 años. También ha mejorado

Now you may not agree with the priorities that were selected, but that was the net effect of the whole exercise of applying the criteria. There were no across-the-board cuts.

Regarding the question on methodology by France, I hope my response has relieved you somewhat that we did look at it seriously. I think, however, that the suggestion that the Programme Committee go through every element may be a little burdensome. I do not know if the Chairman will want to comment on it, but there are a full 560 programme elements at the lowest level of detail in our system. I do not know how many minutes you would allow for each one, but it is really not very practical to delegate that to the Programme Committee. You have to leave some things to the Secretariat.

On specific priorities there were several valuable comments. I would like to assure the distinguished delegate of Denmark that gender issues are indeed receiving the highest possible priority and the greatest attention. FAO has, before and after the Beijing Conference, taken major initiatives to mainstream gender and women in development issues in the work of all Divisions in the Organization. This was done in a consultative, participatory process to ensure accountability and to have achievable targets and instruments for implementation. As I mentioned yesterday, in fact we will demonstrate this in the full PWB, because there were requests from both the Programme and Finance Committees that we show exactly what is being done. This is one of those examples of a cross-sectoral activity where you will see the women's group in Programme 2.5 under Sustainable Development, who are responsible for coordination but not carrying out the actual mainstreaming themselves. That is done in every Division. So we hope to be able to demonstrate that in the full PWB. Incidentally, there will be a full report on the progress being made in the whole implementation of the Plan of Action for the Conference.

The Special Programme for Food Security also attracted some attention. I think I already mentioned yesterday that there will be a similar table about the Special Programme, where the resources are. Of course, the resources for the exploratory missions and the pilot projects are identified as a particular line in the budget under Programme 2.5.6.

As you also saw, we have identified throughout the document where Technical Programmes are contributing to the Special Programme. The Special Programme has a cross-sectoral element to it as well and, therefore, there are contributions elsewhere, and we will identify those for you as requested. I must say that the comment that was made that the data were being hidden was not really appropriate. This is not a question of a lack of transparency. What we have to do is to find a way to present the budget to you. We have a programme structure which you have approved and we present it in those terms. Cross-sectoral or thematic subjects always present us with some problem but, of course, if you want information on a particular cross-sectoral theme you will be provided with it.

With regard to the question from the distinguished delegate from Germany concerning the relationship between the Global Information and Early Warning System and FIVIMS, the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System, I should say first of all that there is full cooperation between these two programmes. The databases, software, and the mapping tools were developed by the Global Information and Early Warning System and they will be used by FIVIMS as much as possible. The resource allocations to the new sub-programme for the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System already take into account that, and the transfers have occurred appropriately between the relevant units. I am reminded now that someone was concerned about the move of resources out of nutrition. It was exactly the same thing. It was taking the data that relate to FIVIMS out of that programme and putting them under a new sub-programme for FIVIMS.

The distinguished delegate of Denmark, on the same subject, expressed concern about whether we were fully involving other agencies, whether this was a cooperative effort instead of FAO going on

its own. The report of the Committee of Food Security, which is given to you in CL 112/15, actually refers to this. For your information the technical consultation that is referred to there was attended by IFAD, UNICEF, WHO, UNCHR, the World Bank, WFP, UNEP, UNDP and ourselves. In addition, GTZ, CIDA, the Canadian CIDA that is, INRA, Save the Children Fund and the Helen Keller International Foundation attended. So we are not going on our own on this particular exercise.

TeleFood was mentioned a number of times, although it is not an item in the budget, I should say, and I would like to emphasize that. This is not in the current biennium's budget. It is not in the next biennium's budget as a proposal. The only relationship to the budget is that there is an element in the budget for World Food Day activities and there have always been activities for World Food Day. It has often involved the Director-General appearing on television, it even involved a musical show last year. But there is no incremental cost of TeleFood itself in our budget.

There was a question from the distinguished delegate of Chile, who was a bit concerned about the increase in programme management under Policy Assistance, that is Programme 3.1.9. I should clarify that that is a technical adjustment. There was a problem in that, with the decentralization to the regional offices of the policy assistance groups, we happily transferred the cost of those groups to those offices but we did not reattribute the programme management cost in those offices across the programmes being managed. This we have corrected in the current budget. In fact that is also part of the reason why Programme Management goes down in Chapter 2.

Several delegates commented on, well two delegates actually, commented on the increase in Programme 1.3.1.3, which is Coordination. This is entirely due to the appointment of Ms Killingsworth as the Senior Adviser to the Director-General on Follow-up to the Summit. A point of coordination was felt necessary at the highest levels of the Organization, so as to ensure that this is given the priority it requires. That level of resources covers her costs and that of a secretary. So this is not opening up the whole question of a central point coordination for every subject - it is really just to do with the World Food Summit.

A minor correction, and I would be happy to discuss it with the UK representative outside the meeting, and it regards what he said that only 50 percent of our Programme is technical. My calculation would be 77 percent, but I can see how we can calculate it many different ways. I would be delighted to agree to a definition with you on that.

There was a lot of discussion on normative versus operational activities. I am not sure it is useful to explore it in any depth because it really reflects the great divide of interest in the Organization. We do try to integrate them. We do try to make sure that the normative work benefits from the operational, and that the operational work benefits from the normative. It is not something that requires great effort. It is very natural to the whole process of the Organization and we get concerned when any of the programmes go out of balance.

I think the greatest criticism on priorities, however, was that the technical programmes got damaged in the zero nominal-growth proposal more than the non-technical programmes: the administrative programmes. I can only say that the Director-General regrets even more than you do that he has to present a proposal along those lines. It is simply that, given the time we have had available, we have not been able to make further efficiency savings of the type that you believe are possible. I feel I ought to explore it a little bit because it is important that you have some confidence in the Secretariat's efforts to continue to make efficiency savings.

Starting with some of the facts, the distinguished delegate from the United States of America made a couple of comments concerning what had been achieved, or rather what they felt may not have been achieved. In particular, there was a reference to the 465 posts which we have reported as having been reduced. Can I say that those 465 posts are fully reconcilable against the number of

posts that appeared in the budget on 1 January 1994, and represent the improvements made between that date and the date we published the information, I think probably in the document "Reforming FAO". You will see a larger number for net change when you examine the full Programme of Work and Budget which has the tables of posts. When I say the net change, a larger number for net change, I mean between 1 January 1994 and what is proposed for 1998-99. Were some of the posts vacant? Yes, they certainly were vacant. We made every effort to ensure that as many were vacant as possible, because if they were not vacant, we would have been paying large separation costs, we would have been damaging individuals' lives. The Director-General's policy, from the day he got in, from 1 January 1994, was to cease all recruitment of General Service staff and to become selective on recruitment for Professional staff. Subsequently, recruitment of Professional staff has been accelerated with the receipt of arrears-payments from the United States of America but no recruitment, with the exception of one or two very specialist categories, such as nurses and one or two technicians in the General Service category, has been made from external sources since 1 January 1994. I do not think there is anything wrong with those posts being vacant. That money is still a saving against the budget that you support.

In the case of Management Support Units, there was the suggestion that they had been created without savings and without transfers from the Central Administrative Departments. I have here an internal note from myself to Mr Hjort, dated 3 November 1995, because he insisted on my identifying precisely how much he had saved by being thoroughly unpleasant to various people around the Organization, and the savings were US\$ 6.3 million. I would add that you can see the transfers out of the AF Department by looking at the adjustments to the 1996-97 Programme of Work and Budget, where you see enormous amounts of money coming out of administration, US\$ 4.6 million out of US\$ 43 million, part of which was due to the transfers to the MSUs.

Mr Hjort will comment on the policy aspect of FAORs. I would like to remind you, however, that we have not been slow to insist on savings in the FAORs. The Director-General's policy was not to cut down coverage, because he felt coverage was important, but to achieve the whole process of providing that coverage, preferably even more coverage by country, at reduced cost. And in the previous budget we managed to take out US\$ 7.6 million, which is about 10.6 percent of that programme while maintaining the coverage. You will recall that that involved the replacement of international experts with National Professional Officers. That saved about US\$ 8 million. You will recall we eliminated 67 General Service posts in the offices, that was another US\$ 1.6 million, and various other adjustments, including the downgrading of Professional posts, FAOR posts, that remained in those offices. Within the current budget, there is another 3.9 percent reduction. So I think what I want to be able to convince you of, is yes, this is an expensive programme which provides a lot of services to Member Nations, but what we are trying to do is to make it more efficient and not reduce the services. If I may quote one of the delegates "more output for less input".

There was a comment concerning whether the Regional Offices and the Sub-regional Offices were effectively empowered, whether they were in fact able to operate and therefore whether it was an efficient operation. This was a concern internally, I might add, because there were some misunderstandings about what authority a Regional Representative or a Sub-regional Representative had. Recently the Director-General had to clarify that in a memorandum to all of those offices, making it perfectly clear that they have the flexibility to respond to requests for short-term policy advisory services and for technical support and for travel in the region. In fact, in summary, to respond to Member Nations' requests within their own region. So I would like to assure you that they do not come back here for approval for that sort of response.

I think the distinguished delegate of Germany commented on video-conferencing. I am pleased to say that we are in there with the World Bank at the front of it. I have to thank the distinguished delegate of the Netherlands and the Government of Netherlands because they very kindly refurbished the Queen Juliana Room - I do not know if you have seen it - with complete and up

to-date facilities for video-conferencing which we have been using. We are now doing a trial to see whether we can afford to implement it efficiently in Regional offices and Sub-regional offices, and that trial is currently underway.

Regarding the revisions of procedures, Ireland suggested that we should have a root and branch review of procedures. Can I say that that review has been completed? The implementation is a bit slow because much of it depends on us improving our financial and administrative systems which, as you are probably aware, are currently being rebuilt, but this is a project which takes several years so unfortunately some of the procedures have to remain in place until the systems are there to support the necessary changes. However, we take your point and it is being given attention.

Finally, on the question of efficiency, I'd like to say that we are still working towards efficiency savings as we indicated in the document. Last time, in the adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget for 1996-97, and the Director-General mentioned this in his speech on Monday, he commented on the fact that we had managed to make 70 percent of the total US\$57 million out of savings which were either pure efficiency savings or were through reductions to our administrative departments. We will not be able to do it again this time. I am not saying we cannot make more efficiency savings, we can, and we are still working towards it, but we do need time and I would take the point South Africa made. South Africa said in their intervention that - if I can just find it -- they made a point which I think is very important to us all because we risk damaging the capacity of the institution. They said that progressive reductions with no end, that is excessive fiscal pressure at this stage, may do more harm than good. FAO needs time to rebuild and consolidate for the benefits of decentralization and efficiency gains to be realized - and it is so true, you really do have to give us a bit of time.

That is why you will see cuts in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 when you would really like to see them in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, but I am afraid that we will not be able to change that a great deal between now and the full Programme of Work and Budget if you require us to propose a zero nominal-growth scenario.

I am sorry I am taking so long. On the question of format, first of all, thank you for the comments about the improved format with regard to the inclusion of Other Income and also for the model that we have been presenting on Programme 2.1.1. It is appreciated. A lot of effort has gone into those changes, in particular to the new programme model. I do not know if you realize what that sort of change this means, but it means implementation or introduction of cross-sectoral projects within a division. That means that territory within the division has to be reassessed and reassigned. It is a very difficult process. Those people have worked extremely hard to try and come up with concrete ideas which will work, and I have to say that I fear the total implementation a little bit because there is just so much work involved in it. On the other hand we are determined to make it work and we will continue to pursue it with your approval.

There were a couple of concerns mentioned with regard to the format. One delegate commented that there was a lack of focus on results. Another, I think it was the distinguished delegate from Ireland, who asked whether we could give a clearer picture of what outputs we had produced and how they would contribute to the achievement of objectives. I would like to say the full Programme of Work and Budget will address that very fully. We will list all the main outputs. We are, as I mentioned yesterday, trying to do this analysis of cause and effect between outputs and objectives. We are trying to better define the objectives for each element. So I hope you will be at least better satisfied with what you receive there.

The question was also raised as to whether we could show extra-budgetary data at the sub-programme level. We will do that in the full Programme of Work and Budget. That was planned. We were not intending to show Other Income at the sub-programme level. That was discussed in some detail with the Finance Committee and they were worried that it would clutter the tables up

too much and that it was not very useful. If Council would like to have it, we have no problem providing it but it does make the tables a bit more complicated. My recommendation would be not to put it in the main tables, because I think you will find it confuses them. If you want it you may have it, it is not for any reason other than simplicity of presentation.

The distinguished Observer of Switzerland brought in a reference to, or the need for references to, coordination and cooperation and was hoping to see this in the Programme of Work and Budget. We have in fact discussed this on a number of occasions and I share his concern that we ought to be able to show how we are working with partners in the implementation of our Programme. We have not resolved how we will show it. We are bringing it into the project documents in support of the new programme model, so I will leave the question open about how we present it but we are not ignoring the question.

I am now moving on to a couple of peripheral issues, issues that do not fit into the previous three categories. The first is the question of arrears which was raised by the United States of America. If I recall the suggestion, it was that the Secretariat look at the flow of resources that might arise if a budget was approved at the level whereby everybody paid their arrears. I will not comment on what I think that budget level would have to be but let me just give you the arithmetic so that you know where we would stand. I have to use the figures at the beginning of this biennium because it is only in the biennial accounts that you truly calculate the deficit and you can see the whole picture.

The deficit at the beginning of this biennium was US\$ 113.6 million. By the way you will find these figures in paragraph 59 of the Summary Programme of Work and Budget. The arrears at that time were US\$ 213 million. If you received all the arrears then you would US\$ 100.6 million surplus. So this is the net possible one-time benefit of getting all the arrears paid. If zero real-growth was approved we would get US\$ 690 million. If the US figure of US\$ 610 million was approved that would be an US\$ 80 million difference. You can see from the figures that what worries me about it is that this is a one-time gain of US\$ 100 million versus a permanent biennial loss in the base of US\$ 80 million. So I am not sure it is all that inviting a proposition. Add to the possibility that we may wish to use arrears to fund After-Service Medical Coverage liabilities which have accrued, and noting that they total US\$ 154 million for the Regular Programme and support costs, you then start to see that the room for movement is not that enormous.

Several delegates raised the question of UN reform and Mr Annan's letter to the Director-General of 17 March. If you do not mind, I think the Deputy Director-General is best placed to handle that.

I would just conclude that zero nominal-growth means substantial cuts to the substantive programmes of this institution. We cannot avoid it. We do not want it. This is the last thing we want to propose to you but we cannot avoid it. I cannot give you illusions that we can cover it all up and make it fine. We cannot. So I have to conclude on that slightly pessimistic note.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: I will try to be brief. I would like to go on at some length and talk about some of the topics that I have talked about before but I am convinced that it probably would make no difference. In this context, I refer to the fact that we took an abnormally heavy reduction in the current biennium, the fact that inflation rates are different, significantly different, from country to country, and the fact that currency ratios change and differ by location, by currency. Therefore, a policy of zero nominal-growth is not, by any means, an equitable policy. It discriminates against certain organizations and of all in the UN system, taking those factors into account, it is so that a zero nominal budget would penalize us to a greater degree than the others in the UN system.

As I said, I am not going to dwell on that because these points have been made before and I see no evidence that those who propose a zero nominal budget are willing to take those fundamental and basic facts into account in coming to their conclusions on budget level.

I want to speak very briefly in response to the comments that were made about reform within the UN, simply to note, as the Chairman has already reminded you, that we have, in the public arena, a document that tells what this Organization has done in the name of reform. We also, of course, have the strategic compact of the World Bank. We are fully familiar with the work of the Executive Board of WFP. We have the letter that the Secretary-General sent to the President of the General Assembly.

The important thing to note about these other documents is that they are proposing what they intend to do or are doing. We have already reported to you, and this Council has complimented the Director-General on the reform initiatives he has taken. In your not recognizing this in your proposals for the next biennium, you of course are running the serious risk of penalizing the Director-General for being out in front on reform.

I have noted that you are quite pleased to report the actions that are being taken now by the others, after leadership has been shown by the Director-General.

Related to this is a puzzle, because those who have mentioned reform have, in the next paragraph, or so, spoken of a reduction in the country offices. They have linked that to our increase in the Sub-regional and Regional Offices. Certainly, the Members of this Council are aware that the functions of the technical specialists at the Sub-regional and Regional Offices differ very substantially from the functions of an FAO Representative.

I would note that there is a common theme in the reform proposals within the UN system, World Bank and so-forth. For example, I quote from the World Bank's Statement: "to move forward with further efforts during 1997 and beyond, to decentralize the Bank's operations in order to improve the quality of our services and responsiveness to our clients. This would include consideration of placing a significant number of Country Directors and staff in local offices and putting in place the necessary enabling processes at Headquarters."

You recall, those of you who have reminded us of it, that the Secretary-General's letter, the only time he speaks about the country level, he speaks about strengthening the offices at the country level. That is part of his reform process. Decentralization, I can assure you, is a very common topic throughout the System, and it means strengthening, not weakening country offices.

Finally, a footnote in connection with the cooperation and collaboration that is always a topic. The Director-General asked, and we finally have distributed, but somewhat late, an information document, C 97/INF/20, that gives, in a very summary way obviously, FAO's cooperation with UN System Organizations, Bretton Woods Institutions, Regional Banks, the CGI AR and in emergency and humanitarian assistance. That document, I understand, has been distributed to you. It does not answer the questions that were being raised by the Representative in Switzerland but I do believe that it has useful information for you, to see the scope of the cooperation and collaboration that we are engaged in with our partners.

J.C. MACHIN (United Kingdom): I have just three comments.

Can I take it that although Mr Wade, in his very helpful response, did not mention my request for a table dealing with the impact of inflation he has taken that request on board.

Secondly, and I certainly do not want to debate the question of UN reform in this forum, I have just looked very quickly at what the Secretary-General did say about the UN at the country level. It is certainly true that he talked about strengthening the UN at the country level but that does not mean providing additional resources. He talked about integration and sharing common premises.

Thirdly, the European Group and the North American Group had a very interesting meeting with the Director-General at 2 o'clock. After it, some of us were talking to the Director-General about this whole question of the FAOR and activity at the country level. He made some extremely interesting comments which found a great deal of synergies, certainly with the approach of my authorities to UN reform, in the sense that the approach is a differentiated one, that there is not a template which will fit into all countries. Country requirements are different and, therefore, the representational approach is different. The Director-General was talking about the implant of FAO's specialists in Ministries of Agriculture to help Ministers of Agriculture on policy, direction and formulation, very much in FAO's normative area.

I think what the Director-General said was very welcomed by those of us who were talking informally. Some of the information was actually relatively new to even those of us who have been associated with FAO for some years.

What I was going to ask was whether it would be possible for the Secretariat or the Director-General to produce a short paper, actually setting out that policy because I think it would clarify a lot of the questions that were raised in the debate today about FAO's approach to its representational infrastructure. It might dispel some of the perceived misconceptions and I think it would also help us, if it could be included, to clarify exactly how these costs fall, because they will be different from country to country.

The synergy between what the Director-General was saying and what we were saying was that the approach is a case-by-case one. If it is case-by-case, which I believe it is, then self-evidently the cost will vary. I think some kind of elaboration of that approach might actually help the Secretariat in its search for re-prioritization, efficiency savings where changing priorities and requirements are in FAO's Member Nations.

I would very much welcome a response to those three points.

Jorgen Skowgaard NIELSEN (Denmark): Thank you very much to Mr Wade and Mr Hjort for a very exhaustive explanation.

However, on one point in my statement I do miss a reaction. I cannot recall if I got an answer concerning genetic resources. I do recognize that this is, to some extent, dealt with in another Agenda item, but the reason why I pursue it here is that here we are dealing with what I called a "core normative activity" where FAO is supposed to deliver to the UNCED follow-up process, to the Convention for Bio-diversity, to the CSD system, to the UNCTAD which is going to take place in a couple of months.

If FAO does not give sufficient attention to this duty to deliver to these processes, even though it is well-fitted to do it, then it will get out of business and somebody else will take over. Therefore, I think it is important to get a reaction on these questions.

EL PRESIDENTE: Antes de darle la palabra al Secretariado, deseo informales que también el Observador de Camerún y de Gambia nos han mandado por escrito sus comentarios que van a ser incluidos en las Actas del Verbatim.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: With respect to the comment about the country offices. I assume that what was being referred to is what we call National Correspondents. Let me go back. You will recall that we have an authorized complement of 78 FAO Representatives. They are accredited, at the present time, to 111, maybe now 112 countries. In other words, there is multiple accreditation.

We replaced the internationally-recruited Programme Officers with National Professional Officers. The authorization was 65, we have 8 of those posts in reserve. In a good number of countries where we have not had a representation, to use as an example, Central and Eastern European countries, a National Correspondent is selected where, at a very low cost, the government nominates a person to handle the communications and the liaison, if you will, with that government.

We have had communications with all these countries. Some of them have responded, I do not have with me at the present time how many have actually been established. It is still in process. This is a way to get coverage at minimum cost, if you will.

I trust it helps on those points. Did you ask a question too about the premises, the Country Office premises?

J.C. MACHIN (United Kingdom): Thank you for that response, Mr Hjort.

It is interesting to know that and, obviously, it is a low-cost option. We were actually talking about FAO's presence overall in a particular country and how it differed in some countries. Where there is a lot of programme activity there will be a FAO Representation, which is doing things like backstopping and supporting projects. In some countries, where that kind of activity is not taking place, there is an FAO expert actually in the Ministry of Agriculture, working with senior officials and the Minister of Agriculture on that country's agricultural problems and dealing with whatever advice the government looks to FAO for.

It was not simply the National Correspondent which, as I understand it, is a link between the country and FAO. It was about a much more substantive level that we were talking and it was that differentiation between the role of FAO in different countries that really encouraged our debate and prompted some questions, including the differentiation of costs and how one might, if one is prioritizing in one's programme approach to countries and as their needs change over time - and they clearly do change over time - then if you take an in-depth look at the arrangements, the relationship, that FAO has with that country, there may be scope for re-assessing the whole operational approach to particular countries and perhaps deciding whether you no longer need to do business in one way, but rather in another or, indeed, whether you need to do business at all because many of us in this room would like to have diplomatic representation in every single country, but we cannot afford it. Therefore we have to concentrate and focus our activities on priority requirements. That was the shape of the debate we were having.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: I gather from that then, that you are speaking not only about national correspondents but also about project staff that happen to be in the country. At the present time we have about 600 of those, in the various countries around the world. I mean, many many more project staff, of course, than we do have FAORs. They are working within the country, usually they are out in the field, somewhere, on a project but they do provide the opportunity to respond to technical issues that the government might have, on short notice. They are, therefore, an alternative and as a matter of fact, the Director-General has said, let them be the first port of call for the FAOR when there is a problem or an issue to be addressed, to look first within the country to see what experts are there and then, go to the Sub-regional Office or the Regional Office or Headquarters or consultants.

Kezimbira Lawrence MYINGO (Uganda): I just wanted some clarification on the issue that has been raised by the United Kingdom. I would like to know which of the countries would be the ones to qualify for the country representative if we had that option. The one that has a very poor agriculture and is developing or the developed country that is well off, would qualify for that office?

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation): I think the last question was probably hypothetical.

I wish to respond to two questions which I missed and apologize. To the distinguished delegate of the United Kingdom, I heard your question and I actually wrote it down to answer, and then I skipped it.

The problem is that the inflation rate is not one rate, whereas the exchange rate is, as we only adjust the Lira, but the inflation rates are a whole series of complex rates that are built into the cost increase calculations - there is no one rate. So, for example, the rate for Professional salaries is different from the rate for General Service salaries. The General Service one matches the expected rate of wage increases in Italy but it does not obviously apply to everything we have. We use for goods and services the US inflator. For equipment purchases we use 50 percent of the US inflator because we believe, that through international competition, we get better than average prices and benefit from that. So, actually it would be quite complicated to come up with a simple rate. What one can do, of course, is work backwards and say, well if the net annual percentage increase was 3 percent, the cost increases would be this and if it was 3.5 percent it would be this much more, at 2.5 percent this much less but I cannot easily relate that average rate to all the individual rates that are in there. I do not know if I have responded to that question adequately but that was the hesitation in raising it.

On the other point from the distinguished delegate of Denmark, yes, there is no question about the priority that genetic resources deserves. In the case of plant genetic resources, I am not sure whether you were talking about the negotiation for the Undertaking but we are meeting with the Secretariat of the Convention of Biodiversity next week to try and work out what the next step should be there, so I cannot give you a straight answer for 1997. The budget does include, for animal genetic resources, resources for the Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources in 1998. So, I hope that responds, at least in part, to what you were asking.

EL PRESIDENTE: Si no hubiera ninguna otra observación, creo que debemos cerrar este punto. No quisiera dar la impresión, y yo esperé que del debate no resultara, que aquí se trata de una especie de football de relevo donde la pelota nos la vamos pasando del Comité del Programa y Finanzas al Comité del Programa y Finanzas, de ahí al Consejo, del Consejo al Comité del Programa y Finanzas, de ahí otra vez al Consejo y de ahí a la Conferencia, para que ésta luego, incapaz de resolver el programa de labores, la vuelva a mandar al Comité del Programa y Finanzas. Creo que este partido, así jugado no tiene sentido.

Por eso yo espero que puedan ustedes concordar conmigo en llegar a ciertas conclusiones muy firmes, para permitirles a los Comités del Programa en su próxima reunión, dar un paso adelante efectivo para facilitar el consenso.

Bien, al recordar la importancia y la trascendencia de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación y las graves y, en muchos casos crecientes, carencias alimentarias y el alto grado de pobreza que abate a una parte muy importante de la humanidad, la mayoría de los miembros del Consejo manifestó el papel crucial que debe jugar la FAO en este contexto y la necesidad de reforzar, y no de debilitar, sus capacidades y sus acciones. Se recordó que la FAO había sido una pionera en el proceso de reforma que ahora lleva a cabo las Naciones Unidas y, también, en la reestructuración y en la afinación de sus programas.

Ello, se recordó también, había llevado a la FAO a ofrecer un producto mayor con base en insumos menores. En ese contexto, se hizo la reflexión de que los ahorros en la dimensión llevada a cabo en el pasado, serían difíciles de lograr en el futuro.

En sus intervenciones, los miembros del Consejo se manifestaron por una o por otra de las opciones del nivel de programas de labores y presupuestos para 1998-99, mientras que una delegación subrayó su posición de buscar un nivel presupuestario inferior al nominal cero.

Teniendo en cuenta todo esto, el Consejo no pudo llegar a un acuerdo por consenso sobre un único nivel presupuestario para el próximo bienio, aunque sí, la mayor parte de sus miembros se pronunció en torno al crecimiento real cero. Se recordó qué tan indeseable sería repetir los eventos que llevaron a la Conferencia del 95 a no poder aprobar el Programa de Labores para la Organización, el mismo que quedó suspendido por varios meses y negociaciones de última hora tomaron lugar allí.

En la búsqueda por acercar las diversas posiciones, el Consejo reiteró su petición al Director General de continuar identificando formas de minimizar costos y también de lograr más ahorros y eficiencia en los trabajos de la Organización, mantener la disciplina presupuestaria y tomar en cuenta el efecto del ajuste monetario derivado de los efectos del tipo de cambio sobre el PLP; espero que ustedes puedan estar de acuerdo con esto.

Asimismo, les pregunto a ustedes distinguidos miembros del Consejo, si pueden estar de acuerdo con esta conclusión, es decir, si podemos acordar que se pidió al Director General proponer, en la formulación futura del proyecto de labores y presupuesto, formas para absorber el costo del Seguro Médico Post-Servicio sin afectar el Programa de Labores y Presupuesto o en todo caso minimizando su impacto. Yo espero, sinceramente, que podamos estar de acuerdo en principio con estas cuestiones. De esta manera podríamos entonces decir: se coincidió en la importancia de aproximar las opciones en torno a las cuales la gran mayoría de los miembros del Consejo se pronunciaron. Me refiero, muy en particular a la del crecimiento cero y la del crecimiento nominal cero.

El fundamento para una recomendación de compromiso para la preparación del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto completo, podría buscarse mediante la aceptación de la recomendación formulada al Consejo por los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas en su reunión conjunta de abril próximo pasado, y como creo que del debate se desprende, podríamos entonces decir, que el Consejo hizo suyas las recomendaciones contenidas en el párrafo 1.16 de dicho informe conjunto de los Comités de Programa y de Finanzas. Esto permitiría entonces a la próxima reunión conjunta de los Comités de Programa y de Finanzas, trabajar sobre los escenarios del Programa de Labores y Presupuestos y presentar sus conclusiones al 113° período de sesiones del Consejo, el cual se esperaba podrá hacer una recomendación definitiva o más aproximada al consenso a la Conferencia de noviembre.

Tras apreciarse el nuevo formato y también el modelo de presentación de su programa 2.1.1. en este Resumen de Programas Labores y Presupuesto, los miembros del Consejo expresaron diversas preferencias por actividades que consideraban prioritarias en un sentido o en el otro. Se acordó que se reflejara en el proyecto de programa de labores final, las conclusiones a las que llegaron COAG, COFI, COFO, CPPB y CSA. En sus intervenciones, los miembros del Consejo señalaron expresamente los sectores que según ellos requerían fortalecimiento; me voy a referir simplemente a unos cuantos de manera muy general. Obviamente el debate fue mucho más rico que esto que voy a decir, pero se mencionó por ejemplo el sector forestal, el pesquero, recursos genéticos, diversas actividades normativas, el papel de la mujer en el desarrollo, el PESA, EMPRES, el PCT.

A la luz de los resultados de la Cumbre y de la Guía sobre Prioridades que se derivan del Plan de Acción, la mayoría de los miembros concluyó que la importancia de esos programas merecía expandir las actividades de la FAO en vez de contraerlas y que ya se había llevado a cabo también, en el pasado, una sustancial reducción. Entre otras se había tenido que mantener una reducción en los puestos de la Organización y también en la categoría de los mismos.

Estas delegaciones concordaron en términos generales con la forma en que las prioridades habían sido traducidas o aplicadas a este Resumen de Programa de Labores y Presupuesto 1998-99, aunque enfatizaron sus preferencias y en particular el necesario equilibrio entre los aspectos operativos y normativos de la Organización. Argumentaron que si bien la FAO no es un agencia de desarrollo, sus actividades de campo y operacionales tienen efectos muy significativos, que llevan a ser multiplicados y expandidos por otras instancias y por gobiernos nacionales, entre otros, haciendo aquellas actividades fundamentales para el desarrollo agroalimentario de los países en desarrollo. Ello obligaba, desde luego y en consecuencia, a un necesario equilibrio entre los aspectos normativos y operacionales de la FAO.

Al recordar los objetivos establecidos en el 110° período de sesiones del Consejo para fincar prioridades, varias delegaciones señalaron la necesidad de afinarlos más y de identificar un número menor de prioridades de tal suerte que, en función de ellas, se identifique qué partes del Programa de Labores podrían ser sacrificadas sin afectar lo importante; en particular, para responder a las ventajas comparativas auténticas de la FAO en la lucha contra la pobreza y la inseguridad alimentaria, el logro de un desarrollo sostenible, el impulso a la cooperación internacional, el papel catalítico de la FAO en la coordinación y cooperación con otras agencias, tanto de Naciones Unidas como de la sociedad civil y, en fin su papel como centro de excelencia.

Lamentaron, entre otras cosas, que en la propuesta de crecimiento nominal cero se afectaron más a los programas técnicos que a los no técnicos y se pidió que se revisara esta situación. Las prioridades así revisadas deberían no solamente ser menores y más precisas a partir de una programación estratégica, sino responder también al papel de la FAO en el contexto de otras conferencias internacionales que atañen al sector agrícola y alimentario, de la seguridad alimentaria, así como en la búsqueda de una mayor sinergia dentro del sistema de Naciones Unidas. Una mayor sinergia también entre los aspectos normativos y operativos de la FAO.

A partir de estas prioridades y sinergias recomendaron que deberían identificarse los recortes al programa que fueran necesarios, en vez de aplicarlos en toda la línea a modo de porcentaje. Esto conduciría a identificar metas en el tiempo cuya consecución sea evaluable en el contexto de una programación estratégica.

Asimismo, hubo varias declaraciones entorno a aquellas esferas en las que podrían efectuarse ahorros, en particular se mencionaron las Oficinas de Representación de la FAO, a la luz del proceso de integración y cooperación de Naciones Unidas, así como lograr ahorros ulteriores derivados de una mayor sinergia dentro de los sectores y subsectores, de evitar la duplicación de actividades con otras organizaciones y de lograr mayores eficiencias en la entrega del programa.

Distinguidos delegados, se hicieron muchos otros comentarios, unos ya han sido respondidos por la Secretaría y yo no me voy a referir a ellos. Estoy seguro que su informe los va a incluir. Simplemente permítanme terminar diciendo que a la luz del conjunto de los comentarios expresados por los miembros del Consejo y en particular atendiendo a la recomendación 1.16 del informe de los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas, se pidió a la Secretaría preparar la base para la discusión de la próxima reunión de los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas y de su reunión conjunta, con la finalidad de acercar las posiciones y de aplicar los criterios y prioridades de manera más transparente.

Dichas conclusiones, o las conclusiones a las que lleguen los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas, serán transmitidas entonces al Consejo en su 113° período de sesiones, que esperemos pueda contribuir aún más a la búsqueda de un consenso en torno a esta cuestión tan relevante para el futuro de la FAO.

De nuevo, sé que me encuentro en una situación difícil, pantanosa, no he reflejado todos los puntos de vista y, quizás no lo he hecho de manera equilibrada, lo reconozco. Pero al menos he intentado

llegar a algunos puntos de acuerdo que permitan dar pasos hacia adelante. Yo espero que tengan un poco de paciencia y, que además, estos comentarios que he hecho y que posiblemente ayudarán a preparar el informe serán revisados por todos ustedes a la hora de su aprobación. Si no hubiera entonces, ninguna otra observación de parte de ustedes, distinguidos delegados, después de ello concluiré este Tema 16.

D. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee): Actually, I think after this very comprehensive reply by Mr Wade and Mr Hjort, it remains for me to say that the Members of the Programme Committee have certainly very carefully listened to a rich debate which gave us some impression on the type of discussion expected for September.

The question was actually made by Mr Wade to me. I should support his views, if we are not going to discuss elements within sub-programme and programme levels. I think it is certainly true, that there would not be enough time in those few days in which we need to go to each element. The elements are certainly being considered when you look to the sub-programme to which they belong and their interrelationships. I think the answer is partly yes and partly no.

Actually, the reply was considerably whole and we are very happy to see that they are following our past recommendations. I think that the programme planning and presentation are moved towards better timing, activities, indicators and targets. It is facilitated to discuss elements and even to have an opinion of relative importance, or relative priority, should one have to consider any adjustments. Thus, I wanted to mention here, and certainly, in relation to the Special Programme on Food Security, as many members of this debate have pointed out to this office, the Summary comes up so often that we become confused.

As Mr Wade confirmed, we requested to have this effort put forward. We were ensured that it will be the full Programme of Work and Budget where full information of the contributions from various parts within the Programme of Work and Budget to the Special Programme are being identified. What is very important is that you have been absolutely assured that the services provided by various services and units within the Organization are being compensated, and in their turn, provide inputs in missions, inputs in reviewing, etc.

Therefore, it is being handled in the same way as services provided to TCP and services provided to any UNDP project, when funds from extra-budgetary nature come into the Organization. I think this is something very important to keep in mind. The impression was that it was slipping away, but it is, I think, a compensation in which certainly the respective programmes should be in a position to carry on their agreed programmes, in addition to the services they provide to the Special Programme on Food Security.

These, I think are the major points I heard today and tried to give an opinion on. However, Mr Chairman, I have the feeling that the debate very much scales to the points in which we summed up our debate. I know now, and this is very important, if you have clear guidance, that we might even further improve the formulation of the priorities which have been rightly referred to by Mr Wade, as those established by the Council. They looked into this again and found it more innovative in the priorities. So you will look to us for advice on the final development, or the final judgement and advice we have to give to Council on the full Programme of Work and Budget in September.

Ronald ROSE (Canada): Thank you very much, Mr Chairman, and please express my congratulations for the excellent job that you did do in summing up what was, in fact, a very long and rich debate. You have done an excellent job in fact in covering the views in a balanced way.

My point relates to only a minor part of your summary in which you had noted that there was an agreement on aspects of the After-Service Medical Costs, particularly that they not be used in a certain way, and it is my delegation's intention to address the After-Service Medical Costs as we get

to the report of the Finance Committee. So, I am hoping that you will permit further debate on that particular point.

19 Review of FAO Statutory Bodies and Panels of Experts

19 Examen des organes statutaires et des groupes d'experts de la FAO

19 Examen de los Organos Estatutarios y Cuadros de Expertos de la FAO

EL PRESIDENTE: Distinguidos delegados si no hay otra observación daría por concluido el Tema 16 y pasamos ahora al Tema 19, Examen de los Organos Estatutarios y Cuadros de Expertos de la FAO.

Lamentamos que el señor Hjort tenga que dejarnos porque es tarde, pero estoy seguro que el señor Wade hará la parte que le corresponde a la Secretaría al introducir este tema.

Bien distinguidos delegados, como ustedes recordarán, el Consejo encomendó a los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas el mandato de examinar las posibilidades de economías y eficacia en el ejercicio del gobierno, aspecto que se estudia ahora en este tema.

Tenemos ante nosotros dos documentos, el CL 112/14 y el CL 112/20. Estos documentos son, considero yo, muy informativos y útiles. Tienen mucho material analítico, en particular se solicita la opinión del Consejo sobre el párrafo 26 por lo que sugiero, que ustedes en sus intervenciones hagan referencia a este punto. Además, es oportuno señalar que los comités examinaron diversas opciones para mejorar el calendario de los períodos de sesiones de los Comités Técnicos del Consejo, con objeto de evitar el problema de la acumulación extrema registrada este año y que muchos de ustedes recordarán. Estoy seguro que no tendrán dificultades para refrendar estas propuestas, en virtud de que ellas derivarían en una organización más racional y una mejor aplicación de la orientación de estos comités sobre las prioridades en los respectivos sectores.

Deseo también llamar su atención al hecho que ciertas medidas examinadas por los comités, tales como la eliminación de la Sesión Conjunta en enero en los años en que se celebra la Conferencia, requieren enmiendas en los textos básicos que deberían por tanto ser examinados por el Comité de Asuntos Jurídicos y Constitucionales.

Como recordarán, el Consejo ha tomado varias iniciativas para reducir el costo de las sesiones de los Organos Rectores, la duración de las mismas y el volumen de documentación. Los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas, siguiendo las orientaciones del Consejo, elaboraron directrices designadas a economizar recursos y a mejorar la eficacia de nuestras reuniones.

Deseo también llamar su atención al documento de información CL 112/INF/12 en donde estas metas se han alcanzado ampliamente. El documento informa, en particular, sobre el Consejo y la Conferencia, pero yo sé que la Secretaría tiene a la mano información detallada respecto de los otros Organos Estatutarios de la Organización.

El Consejo debería manifestar su aprecio, su reconocimiento a la Secretaría por los resultados obtenidos y valdría quizá la pena, mencionar dos o tres cosas al respecto. Me refiero a la recomendación hecha por el Consejo, en el sentido de que la búsqueda de mayores economías no debería en ningún modo perjudicar la calidad de nuestros debates ni poner en peligro el proceso de reflexión, de intercambio de ideas, que es fundamental para la toma de decisiones o para afinar la toma de decisiones en la Conferencia sobre temas tan importantes como los que trata el Consejo.

Tengo la impresión, y quizás ustedes coincidan conmigo después de ver esta información, de que hemos llegado a un punto límite en hacer reducciones que podemos introducir en nuestros instrumentos y métodos de trabajo como los documentos, los informes, el tiempo a disposición para nuestros debates, etc. y, por lo menos en algunos casos, ir más allá en ese camino, podría conducir

a tener sesiones inconclusas o a tomar decisiones apresuradas o inclusive a la falta de claridad y objetividad que son fundamentales para la buena marcha de la Organización.

Les invito por tanto a que a la luz de este tema, y de las cifras que nos proporciona la Secretaría que son de por sí elocuentes, ustedes se pronuncien. Solamente para mencionar algo, creo que ustedes deberían tomar nota del hecho de que esta reunión del Consejo comparada con la reunión que se celebró hace dos años, le ha costado a la Organización 51 por ciento menos; menos de la mitad. Creo que esto es un logro importante, pero estoy seguro que coincidirán conmigo en que no podemos lograr otro 51 por ciento porque tendríamos que desaparecer como Consejo. Estamos por tanto en una situación limítrofe.

El Presidente del Comité del Programa tiene muchas observaciones que hacernos, él presidió este difícil punto y le voy a dar la palabra para que introduzca plenamente el tema.

D. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee): I do not want to make many comments, actually I only wanted to draw your attention to the recommendations which we have made.

First of all, I wish to define paragraph 26 regarding recommendations, decisions and so on. I am advising you that we have established a Contact Group and Belgium has taken on her to coordinate this group, to advise us for the next meeting in September, on the proposals contained in Annex 2, related to the Commission and Committees, that is Groups C and D, the Expert Committees and Panels. I think this needs careful checking with regional representations and you might ask, maybe, a resident representative you know to inform the Council where we stand on this issue. We felt that it is important not to rush, but to look carefully at those bodies as much as we could to promote savings, and to have unnecessary and dead bodies cut out. Dead bodies do not cost money you know! I just wanted to clarify this. This was my point to add to your introduction.

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias, doctor Bommer y creo que además el Consejo debe reconocerle a usted y desde luego agradecer a los miembros del Comité de Programa y de Finanzas por el trabajo realizado en torno a este asunto tan delicado.

Le corresponde, entonces, al señor Wade presentarnos por parte de la Secretaría este tema.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation): In fact the Director-General, in his introduction, made reference to the progress achieved in increasing savings and efficiencies in governance under the guidance of yourself and the Council. As you, Mr Chairman, and Dr Bommer have really covered most of the elements of it I will just refer briefly to the paper CL 112/20 which is the one on the Review of Statutory Bodies and Panels of Experts.

We would emphasize this is a review of the bodies by the Governing Bodies themselves so, the analysis is being conducted using a methodology which was endorsed by the Council. The views expressed by individual Members and the Regional Groups have been taken into account and are summarized in Annex I to this report.

We would comment that the timeframe for the implementation of changes is likely to be rather long. At least two biennia, when you think about it, because it probably would be most productive if Council and Conference have, before they take final decisions, the views of the Committees of Council, COFI, CCP, whoever, and where appropriate, the Regional Conferences and the Codex Alimentarius Commission. It is not that this is necessarily legally required but you would want to consult the Commissions themselves, if you are to eliminate their subsidiary bodies.

We believe that this should not be allowed to dilute the process. The Committees will need clear guidance and should then, in turn, consult the bodies under study for their views. In addition, a

number of bodies could be eliminated or modified by the Council and the Conference at its forthcoming sessions, where there is general agreement on the course of action.

The thrust of the paper is to suggest that more use should be made of *ad hoc* task groups or interim bodies with a limited life, rather than creating statutory bodies. Recommendations include the following: First of all, to eliminate the formal statutory status of many subsidiary bodies and encourage their work to be carried out through *ad hoc*, task or interrelated groups with greater networking; then, to encourage an increase in bodies operating with autonomous budgets and a substantial proportion of member funding; and then, to simplify the statutes, the terms of reference, etcetera, so as to decrease formality and increase efficiency. Now, these bodies are primarily in Annex 2, and those are the bodies that are subject to the Contact Group that has been set up by the Programme and Finance Committees.

Mr Chairman, you have already drawn attention to the recommendations in paragraph 26, so I do not think it would be fruitful to repeat those. We look forward to receiving the Council's instructions.

EL PRESIDENTE: Creo que sería útil también para el Consejo conocer algunas cifras adicionales que se exponen en el documento CL 112/INF/12, sobre los otros Organos Estatutarios, y le voy a pedir al Secretario General, señor Pérez de Vega, que haga uso de la palabra para presentarlo de manera resumida.

SECRETARY-GENERAL: The Council has already been provided today with a number of figures and percentages and I certainly do not want to add to the burden of the distinguished delegates.

As you have requested, Mr Chairman, the Council may note from the information document CL 112/INF/12 that we also make reference to the savings achieved in running the Conference, which are considerable. Between 1993 and 1995 the total cost of the Conference went down from 5.2 million to 3.6 million, about a 30 percent decrease, accompanied by a corresponding decrease in the duration, from 20 days to 14 days, of which twelve were effective meeting days. We expect, it is a bit too early to say, but we expect that this year, within the same duration, we will be able to bring the costs down a little bit more through efficiency savings, particularly in documentation.

If you permit, Mr Chairman, the Council might perhaps be interested in some data related to the Council Committees, the Programme Committee, Finance Committee, CCLM and the Technical Committees. I am referring to three years which are comparable because the three of them are Conference years in which the agendas of these Committees are more or less similar.

The combined duration of the Committees in 1993 was 72 days, in 1995, 63 and in 1997, 54. The corresponding costs decreased by 10.5 percent in 1995 over 1993, and in 1997 we expect a further saving of 10 percent over 1995. It should be pointed out that this also absorbs a considerable increase in one of the Committees, the CFS, for obvious reasons, having been both the main preparatory body to the Summit and the body in charge of its follow-up. The savings in the nontechnical committees are slightly higher than those in the technical committees. In 1995 there was 14 percent savings in the Programme and Finance Committee sessions. With reference to 1993, and in 1997, a further 12 percent savings is estimated.

If I may just give you a general overview considering Conference, Council and all the Council Committees together, in other words what you would call governance as a whole, in 1993 the total number of meeting days were 108, in 1995 this figure went down to 91 and the corresponding decrease in cost was 18 percent. In 1997, the 1995 figure which was 91, will come down to 76 by the time we finish the year, with a further decrease in cost of 13 percent over 1995. I am sorry if the figures may sound a bit confusing, but I thought you might be interested at least in the order of magnitude.

Régine DE CLERCQ (Observateur de la Belgique): Vous voyez que nous nous entendons très bien dans la Réunion conjointe du Comité du programme et du Comité financier. En effet, Monsieur le Président, les Comités de programme et financier ont bien voulu me désigner comme coordonnateur d'un petit groupe de contact qui examinera les propositions contenues dans le document qui est présenté au Conseil (document CL 112/20) et notamment celles qui se réfèrent aux groupes C et D de l'annexe II de ce document.

Le Comité a estimé qu'il était nécessaire d'établir un tel groupe de contact parce que, en effet, cette annexe qui se réfère notamment à ces deux groupes contient une très riche information; au fond, j'ai compté le nombre de recommandations et de constatations, elles sont à peu près 700 au total; il aurait été sans doute très difficile pour le Conseil d'examiner tout cela un par un, et le groupe de contact s'est chargé de faire ce travail qui est un travail de moine, Monsieur le Président, j'espère que tout le monde s'en rend compte. Le petit groupe de contact a déjà eu une première réunion, qui était une réunion procédurale, où nous avons établi la composition du groupe, ainsi que notre méthode de travail et notre calendrier. Bien que tout le monde ait été très chargé nous sommes parvenus à nous rencontrer et à établir cela. Nous allons tout de suite prendre la vache par les cornes après le Conseil et nous aurons déjà notre première réunion le 12, c'est-à-dire la semaine prochaine, pour en avoir une deuxième au mois de juillet, ceci parce que nous voulons associer à notre travail le Secrétariat et notamment M. Markie de la Division de l'évaluation qui a préparé le document. Nous pensons que nous pourrions bénéficier largement de son "input" dans notre travail mais il sera absent du 15 juin au 15 juillet.

Nous espérons pouvoir terminer notre travail à temps pour pouvoir faire un rapport aux prochains Comité de programme et Comité financier et ainsi de faire également bénéficier le Conseil du travail que nous aurons fait. Je vous remercie beaucoup de m'avoir donné la possibilité d'expliquer ce que nous entendons faire.

EL PRESIDENTE: El Consejo ha tomado nota de los trabajos de dicho grupo de contacto, de su intención de reunirse en dos ocasiones y reportar ulteriormente a los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas. Esta información que usted nos ha dado seguramente aparecerá también en el Informe del Consejo y es útil porque sabemos entonces que en el próximo Consejo dichos comités reportarán al Consejo sobre los resultados de su trabajo.

Adel Mahmoud ABOUL-NAGA (Egypt) (Original language Arabic): I would like simply to reaffirm that the Finance and Programme Committees have dealt with this Agenda item in a crystal-clear manner, and we did have an agreement on these issues in order to achieve the best possible efficiency.

I have a number of observations concerning the main bodies, namely, the Council, the General Conference and the Finance and Programme Committees. I believe that, as some have said, we have reached the maximum limits of savings and efficiency and, therefore, if we go beyond that level, we would affect the work itself. As for the main committees and bodies, I believe that there might be room for saving and we would listen to the recommendations of the Secretariat in this connection.

As for item 1.13, concerning regional conferences and the idea of holding these meetings once every three years, we believe that this is a very long period indeed, and we do hope that the present timetable will be upheld, that means once every two years.

David BEEHAN (Ireland): I would ask if you could give the opportunity to the Netherlands to make a statement on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.

J.B.PIETERS (Observer for the Netherlands): The fact that, at the request of two Council Members, you have given the floor to two observers at the beginning of this debate shows the relevancy of the discussion on statutory bodies.

On behalf of the European Community and its Member States, I would like to thank the Secretariat for its efforts to compile the information on statutory bodies and panels of experts, and present it in an easily accessible way in document CL 112/20.

We welcome the opportunity to review the structure of FAO bodies, in view of the changing internal and external conditions, on the basis of this document, which contains a great deal of useful information.

The approach taken in this review has some drawbacks which we should be aware of, when drawing conclusions or making recommendations for further action.

Firstly, insufficient evaluation of the functioning of the bodies has been carried out, in terms of work undertaken and its relevance to the mandate of the Organization.

Secondly, the ratings given by the Secretariat's technical staff on the usefulness of the various bodies in the tables of Annex II are helpful in so far as they reflect the FAO Secretariat's views. In our view, it is essential, however, that Member Nations of the statutory bodies express their views, and make their own assessment of the usefulness of these bodies.

We welcome the setting-up of a Contact Group of the Joint Programme and Finance Committees to that effect. We find a number of interesting and good ideas in the document, which will contribute to a more flexible and efficient Organization and a better governance. I would like to make a few comments.

With regard to the technical committees of the Council, such as COAG, COFO, COFI, CCP and CFS, significant steps have indeed been taken to obtain cost reductions and other economies. This process can still be continued. The bodies should indeed meet earlier in Conference years.

The Secretariat proposes that these committees become less involved in Programme of Work and Budget issues, which should, in the Secretariat's view, be left to the Programme and Finance Committees.

We are strongly opposed to this idea, because these technical committees are the only bodies with open-ended membership which can review the proposals for the PWB, before being submitted to the Conference. These committees have, besides other duties, the important task to comment in depth on the subject matter of the PWB proposals in their respective areas, and this should be maintained. In reviewing the activities of the Organization, they should address normative as well as operational activities. They have to meet once in a biennium, have an agenda that covers the full range of their mandate, and have documentation that is concise and to the point. The sessions of the committees should continue to be of interest to experts and other representatives of Member Nations, by allowing them to discuss substantive items.

The document does not address the work of the Programme and Finance Committees in relation to that of the Council. If, as we propose, the technical committees maintain their important task with regard to the Summary PWB, there may well arise a need for reconsidering the task and functions of the Programme and Finance Committees. Such an exercise needs to be linked to the functions and composition of the Council. We fully agree that increased flexibility and dynamism should be sought for subsidiary bodies and expert groups by increased task orientation and sunset clauses.

Concerning funding, we find that the general principle should be that they receive funding from the Regular Programme. In particular, we support efforts to facilitate and encourage an arrangement for some statutory bodies to move to autonomous, self-funded budgets. Regular Programme funding should include a certain flexibility with respect to priority subjects, such as the necessary Extraordinary Meeting of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, proposed to be held before the Conference in November this year and, in any case, before the next CBD session in May 1998.

Greater participation by civil society in the statutory bodies of FAO is recommended in paragraph 23.5 of the working paper. Although this is often to be welcomed and encouraged, it is a matter which the membership of each statutory body should consider on a case-by-case basis.

The benefits of further change can best be captured if the action is initiated from within the statutory bodies themselves, in accordance with existing criteria. This is, in particular, important if incremental costs are increased by such arrangements.

We recommend that the Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions be merged with the European Forestry Commission or, as an alternative, that it be fully funded by its Members.

Secondly, that the funding of the European Commission on Agriculture should be reviewed, and that there be a redefinition of the future role of the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission before accepting the strong endorsement of the technical staff assessment, as expressed in the working paper.

The European Group expressed the view, as contained in Annex I of the document, that the Commission on Fertilizers and the FAO Fertilizer Advisory Committee of Experts addressed an important subject matter area, and FIAC provided a repeatable example of private sector cooperation. The Secretariat proposes, in Annex II, to merge the two bodies as a new Commission on Plant Nutrients with mixed government, private sector and NGO membership. Whereas we concur fully with both memberships proposed, we have doubts whether the subject warrants the setting-up of a new commission. In our opinion, plant nutrients is typically a subject that falls within the mandate of the Committee on Agriculture. This will make the work of this technical committee more substantive, the need for which I indicated earlier in my statement.

If necessary, plant nutrient issues could be discussed in a sub-committee of COAG. After all, the Commission on Fertilizers has not met since 1990, despite the highest ratings by FAO technical staff on the usefulness of that body.

Provided that the above-mentioned remarks are taken into account, the European Union can generally accept the procedures proposed in the document on actions to be taken by the Secretariat, in considering and submitting proposals to the Conference.

Ms Lynnett M. WAGNER (United States of America): The United States commends the Secretariat for undertaking this extremely valuable review. It gives us an excellent overview of the wide range of bodies that has gradually evolved over the years. Clearly, it is opportune for the Council and Conference to carefully deliberate and see how we can make this array of machinery more effective and efficient in our decision-making process. We also welcome the formation of the Contact Group.

This process reinforces the important principle of instituting sunset provisions when bodies are established. We appreciate the efforts which have already been made to reduce the length and frequency of many meetings, and to sharpen the focus of meetings by curtailing documentation and reducing the number of agenda items. We agree with the suggestion in paragraph 7 that more can be done in this area, including the posting of supplementary annexes on the WAICENT website.

However, Member Nations should be notified when this is done.

The United States has a number of general comments to offer, but let me first turn to the specific actions that are being requested of the Council in paragraph 26. We generally support all of the proposals listed, although we do have a few concerns and questions. Sub-paragraph (b) of 26.5, which refers to the relationship of FAO's technical committees to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, is somewhat unclear to us. Before we can agree to reassert the role of the technical committees, we need to clarify what that role is.

It is also somewhat unclear what the Secretariat's message is regarding having standing items at meetings. Paragraph 9 indicates that items covered by regional statutory bodies could be standing agenda items at regional conferences, but paragraph 23.4 informs us of the resulting inefficiencies of forcing standing agenda items on meetings. We tend to support the latter view. Standing agenda items reduce the flexibility of bodies and should normally be avoided. We would also like to know what FAO's plans are with respect to integrating food security discussions into the regional conferences.

We agree that efficiency measures should not damage the substantive value of meetings. The United States believes that expert groups and technical consultations are essential to a science-based organization such as FAO. Nevertheless, we should continue to seek ways of utilizing them more efficiently without detracting from their fundamental substantive role.

This Council needs to be very careful about pre-judging the outcome of the revised International Plant Protection Convention. We believe that one of the results will be a greater role for Regional Plant Protection Organizations in developing and reviewing plant quarantine standards, but it will be some time before the revised IPPC goes into effect, so we suggest that no action be taken regarding the RPPOs at this time.

The proposal to formally abolish most Codex committees, which have adjourned *sine die*, appears to have merit. We believe that the Council should encourage the Codex Alimentarius Commission to take such action.

We are very supportive of the actions taken by the Committee on Commodity Problems during its last two sessions to rationalize and strengthen the functions of the Inter-Governmental Commodity Groups.

COFI and COFO agreed on a number of proposals to strengthen the regional structures; we also support this, as well as the approach outlined in paragraph 23 of moving more to task-oriented networks as a less formal mechanism of backstopping major bodies, and we believe that no body should be referred to as "permanent".

Obtaining the views of civil society partners is essential for much of FAO's work, as recognized in paragraph 26.5. Better ways need to be found to provide civil society with the opportunity for a meaningful input. They frequently have technical insights beyond what government officials can contribute at meetings. On the other hand, we fully understand that FAO, as a UN Specialized Agency, requires decisions that only governments can render.

With respect to paragraph 14, which would require combination of the plant nutrient and fertilizer bodies, we are raising the question that there may be problems combining an inter-governmental group with an industry advisory group. We would also like to know how the other sectors of civil society involved with resource conservation and stewardship aspects of fertilizer use and plant nutrients will be addressed by FAO.

Several Member Countries had given financial support to the conduct of both statutory and non-statutory bodies and we trust that this practice will continue. However, we must assure funding of those meetings that are most essential to the decision-making processes.

Finally, we realize that most of the details of the document before us are contained in the annexes. Like most Council Members, we are familiar with some of the meetings referred to, but clearly not all. We look forward to continuing work by the Contact Group in following up on these recommendations.

Shahid RASHID (Pakistan): We are pleased to note that the review of statutory bodies and panels of experts has been initiated with the desired seriousness of purpose. We trust that this review will be conducted with due thoroughness so as, at least, to meet the twin objectives of increasing not only the savings, but also the efficiency of the statutory bodies.

As was stated earlier in our intervention on the previous item, we also believe that there is a limit to the extent of savings that can be effected without compromising the capacity of this Organization to perform its mandated functions.

We have also noted that a Contact Group has been established by the Programme and Finance Committees to have an in-depth look at the various recommendations contained in the document CL 112/20. We have just heard a preliminary report from the representative of Belgium and shall be eagerly looking forward to the result of the work of the Contact Group. Therefore, at this stage, we would not like to go into the details of the different proposals but would just like to make a couple of submissions.

First, we believe that there is considerable scope for reducing the repetitive debates, particularly on the Programme of Work and Budget, in the Committees of the Council: the Programme Committee, the Finance Committee, the Council, and Commission II of the Conference. This is an area which must be examined in detail with a view to reduce duplication and repetition and to streamline the process so as to seek efficiency and savings.

Secondly, regarding the regional conferences. We believe that this is a useful forum where the regional orientations are explicitly brought to the front. This is a beneficial arrangement which helps the Organization to develop its strategic orientation, keeping in view the regional considerations. So it is important to maintain the current frequency of the regional conferences of meeting once a biennium, and any longer duration would be detrimental to this process.

The recommendations contained in paragraph 26 of this document are ones on which we can generally agree, and we endorse the proposed scheme and the measures that are envisaged.

With these brief comments, we would just like to state that we shall be submitting our comments on the detailed proposals through our representatives in the Contact Group.

Alan AMEY (Canada): Canada wishes to compliment FAO on the initiative shown in the review of statutory bodies and document CL 112/20. Canada supports the general conclusions in paragraph 26, concerning the elimination, modification, mergers, etc. for bodies which are moribund or recommended for change. We also support the legal framework and existing rules for setting or eliminating bodies in paragraph 26.

Like the EU, I would like to support the observations of the Programme and Finance Committees, to spread out further the budget process so that the observations of one stage in the process can be reflected in the next.

Canada appreciates the efforts of FAO to make the meetings shorter, have less lengthy documents and provide a presentation which is action-oriented by focusing on recommendations. As can be seen in the supporting documentation the savings are substantial.

At the same time, Canada also has some observations about some of the provisions indicated in paragraph 26. In paragraph 26, point 3(d) for example, we support the inclusion of civil society organizations in as wide a scope of FAO bodies as possible. We view them as valuable partners who can contribute to and enrich our discussions. Concerning regional bodies, Canada supports the recommendations of COFI and COFO that these regional bodies take more responsibility for their support and funding. However, Canada recommends that the implementation of these decisions be referred to the regional fisheries and forestry commissions involved.

On Codex-related bodies, Canada would like to refer the recommendations of the study to the forthcoming Codex Executive Meeting so that they may consider these recommendations in more depth.

With regard to the specific bodies to be altered and changed by the recommendations, Canada would like to support the more detailed work of the Working Group of the joint Programme and Finance Committees which is being chaired by Belgium.

Finally, I would like to support the suggestions made by the EU and USA, that sunset clauses be built into any new bodies created.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México): Durante los últimos años, nuestra Organización ha sido objeto de un proceso continuo de reforma. Hemos apoyado estas medidas en cuanto han contribuido a incrementar su eficiencia.

En relación al ejercicio actual, deseamos reiterar el acatamiento a los principios básicos que se deben considerar plenamente. En primer lugar, el respeto de la estructura establecida por los documentos básicos de nuestra Organización; asimismo deseamos que la parte del ejercicio subsiguiente se realice con la mayor participación de los Estados Miembros.

Por lo que respecta a las instancias estatutarias, Conferencia, Consejo y sus Comités Técnicos, consideramos que se ha llegado a una situación en la que, como han señalado los distinguidos Delegados de Pakistán y de Egipto, cualquier situación de reducción adicional podría poner en juego su eficiencia, por lo que consideramos que no se debe adoptar ninguna medida adicional en cuanto a extensión y frecuencia de sus reuniones y de la documentación.

Nasreddine RIMOUCHE (Algérie): Dans le cadre de la recherche de plus de gains et d'efficacité et des économies, il est proposé dans le document CL 112/20 la suppression ou le fusionnement de certains organes au Comité ou Commissions au groupe. Mais nous rappelons ici la recommandation de la Session conjointe au mois d'avril, du Comité du programme et du Comité financier contenue dans le rapport quant à la prudence et à l'examen approfondi vis-à-vis de la prise de décisions au sujet de certains fusionnements et certaines abolitions. Nous recommandons également qu'il faudrait solliciter l'avis de ces Commissions, notamment régionales ou sous-régionales avant toute décision qui soit prise dans ce sens.

Moussa BOCAR LY (Sénégal): Les Nations Unies à New York ont entamé depuis longtemps un processus de réforme intergouvernementale qui a encore à faire son chemin. Il se trouve que la FAO, après que son Directeur général ait engagé un processus de réforme du Secrétariat, s'engage maintenant dans cette voie de restructuration intergouvernementale. Je crois que c'est le Représentant du Brésil, qui n'est plus aujourd'hui parmi nous, qui avait lancé la première fois cette idée, il y a un an de cela. Voilà donc que nous nous trouvons dans le cadre même de ce processus.

Nous l'accueillons avec intérêt dans la mesure où cela peut conduire à l'efficacité. Mais avant d'engager le vif du sujet, laissez-moi avec les Représentants de l'Égypte, du Pakistan et du Mexique souligner que nous sommes arrivés, nous semble-t-il, à un seuil en ce qui concerne les économies en matière de réunions, et nous devons faire attention car nous devons être efficaces. Ceci dit, laissez-nous au niveau des remarques préliminaires nous concentrer un instant sur une question qui nous importe dans la sous-région d'où nous venons, la lutte contre le criquet pèlerin et nous sommes un peu inquiets du paragraphe 15 qui propose que les pays desservis par l'OCLALAV puissent participer aux travaux de la Commission FAO de lutte contre le criquet pèlerin en Afrique du Nord-Ouest. A priori, nous ne voyons pas de problèmes à une participation des pays de l'OCLALAV aux travaux de la Commission FAO en Afrique du Nord-Ouest, mais nous pensons également que la FAO doit aider l'Oclalav car, si ses Etats Membres ne participent pas on connaît toutes les raisons -qui sont des raisons financières- qui font que ses Membres, bien qu'intéressés ne puissent pas y participer. Est-ce-que la situation changerait si les Etats Membres de l'Oclalav étaient invités à participer à la Commission FAO de lutte contre le criquet pèlerin en Afrique du Nord-Ouest ? Je crois que c'est une question fondamentale qu'il suffit de poser.

C'est bien beau de faire des propositions, mais il suffit de voir encore les possibilités de réalisation de celles-ci. Nous pensons d'ailleurs que compte tenu de la gravité des problèmes dans la région de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, il faudrait même qu'on se demande pourquoi la FAO ne constituerait pas une "Commission FAO de lutte contre le criquet pèlerin" en Afrique de l'Ouest car, depuis ces dernières années, la situation ne cesse de s'aggraver.

Ceci dit, de même au paragraphe 17, on nous parle de la Commission de trypanosomiase animale africaine qu'il est proposé d'abolir. Nous voudrions connaître les raisons. Toujours est-il que nous pensons que les pays africains les plus concernés, surtout dans la partie équatoriale de notre continent, devraient être consultés pour que l'on puisse prendre une décision motivée. Cela m'amène d'ailleurs à souligner après d'autres délégations, l'importance que le Groupe africain que le Sénégal préside, accorde au respect de la périodicité de la tenue des conférences régionales, car elles ont montré leur importance en ce qui concerne la coordination des politiques dans la région, et je crois que cela a été amplement démontré du reste lors de la tenue du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation. Nous pensons que c'était un forum de haute importance qu'il ne saurait être question de réduire dans sa périodicité.

Ceci dit, laissez-moi en venir au paragraphe 26. D'une manière générale, nous trouvons que les recommandations sont intéressantes et pourraient être appuyées; nous voudrions toutefois nous joindre aux interrogations posées par la Représentante des Etats-Unis au petit b) du paragraphe 26.5 où l'on parle de réaffirmer le rôle des comités techniques dans le débat sur les politiques internationales en tenant compte de la répartition du travail qui se profile avec la Commission du développement durable et ses Groupes d'experts. Est-ce-qu'on pourrait être plus explicite car nous avons nous-mêmes la même interrogation que l'éminente Représentante des Etats-Unis.

Nous voudrions fortement appuyer le paragraphe 26.5 (c) qui vise à amender les fonctions du Comité de l'agriculture, des pêches et des forêts pour réaffirmer le rôle dans l'examen des priorités sectorielles et grandes orientations et de la FAO tout en évitant, et nous soulignons cela, de s'engager dans un débat approfondi du Programme de travail et budget qui a lieu au sein du Comité du programme, du Comité financier et du Conseil. En effet, nous avons regretté et déploré, Monsieur le Président, que ces comités techniques, lors de leur dernière session, aient passé une majeure partie de leur temps à s'intéresser au Programme de travail et budget d'ensemble de notre Organisation. Nous pensons que ce n'est pas là le lieu et que cela a été un débordement de leur mandat, et nous voudrions mettre un terme à cette tendance qui est tout sauf souhaitable. Voilà en résumé, les affirmations que je tenais à faire au nom du Groupe africain.

Juan NUIRY SANCHEZ (Cuba): La region de América Latina y el Caribe estima que cualquier ejercicio relativo a la economía y eficacia en el ejercicio de gobierno debe estar orientado

fundamentalmente a aspectos que no contradigan el mandato de la Organización, que respeten su estructura básica de gobierno y que deberán ser decididos por los órganos intergubernamentales correspondientes.

Resulta importante, señor Presidente, la aplicación de los acuerdos de la reciente Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación y consideramos que las agendas actividades y presupuestos de las diferentes instancias de la Organización deberán adecuarse a los acuerdos alcanzados en este relevante evento.

Particular importancia para nuestra región revisten las actividades operacionales de cooperación que realiza la FAO. Consideramos que se debe efectuar un estudio analítico de las mismas, incluyendo una evaluación del proceso de descentralización y someterlo a consideración de los gobiernos con objeto de mejorar cualitativamente y cuantitativamente dichas acciones que para los países en desarrollo significan un aspecto medular en su relación con la FAO.

Entendemos, señor Presidente, que toda reforma debe significar ante todo una evolución, que se debe traducir en una mayor eficiencia, cualquier ejercicio de esta naturaleza además de que debe tener en cuenta las medidas previamente aprobadas deberán ser concluidas al respecto. La región de América Latina y el Caribe ha participado con sus criterios en estos procesos que la Organización ha impulsado durante los últimos años.

Estimamos que cualquier tipo de medida que se acuerde sobre el particular deberá ser debatida en el marco de las competencias respectivas de los diferentes órganos de la FAO, aquéllas que corresponden al Consejo y/o la Conferencia, deberán ser discutidas plenamente en las mismas. No consideramos adecuado que se adopten decisiones con órganos que no estén facultados para ello.

De igual manera estimamos que los temas y el alcance de los mismos deberán orientarse según las decisiones y el marco establecido a tal efecto por los órganos competentes. Esto fue analizado y elevado a la Secretaría de la FAO, manifestando nuestras consideraciones como región. Además, a la luz del debate, queremos manifestar que sobre las conferencias regionales entendemos apoyar su reforzamiento, mantenimiento y periodicidad cada dos años como ejercicio necesario para nuestra región. Esto es una oportunidad que calificamos como única, muy particular y, repito, muy necesaria.

Finalmente, señor Presidente, nos unimos a lo que han planteado anteriormente Egipto, Pakistán, México y Senegal, que hay que observar con mucho cuidado que las economías no pueden ser un obstáculo para el desarrollo normal y eficaz de la FAO, fundamentalmente en aspectos que se han señalado muy concretamente.

Roberto O. VILLAMBROSA (Argentina): Mi delegación concuerda y apoya firmemente lo decidido por el Grupo Regional de América Latina y el Caribe que fue expresado hace un momento por el señor Embajador de Cuba.

Mi delegación ha apoyado el examen de los Organos Estatutarios y Cuadros de Expertos de la FAO y la revisión de su marco jurídico con vistas a mejorar el ahorro y la eficiencia, sin perder de vista los objetivos de esta Organización.

Creemos que un debate en los órganos que corresponden en el Consejo y en la Conferencia para mejorar la transparencia sobre las medidas que se tomen, debe ser fundamental para que todos los gobiernos tengamos presente cuales son los elementos que estamos tomando en cuenta en nuestras acciones futuras.

Quiero referirme a dos puntos. Uno al de las conferencias regionales que fue ratificado por algunos miembros. La región, mi región, América Latina y el Caribe considera importante que las conferencias regionales se realicen tal y como está previsto cada dos años y es consciente también

de la necesidad de las actividades operacionales como herramienta fundamental de la Organización para la cooperación internacional.

Quiero referirme ahora, señor Presidente, al párrafo 26 que nosotros, en general, concordamos con los lineamientos generales del párrafo, en particular con el punto de la necesidad de crear un marco jurídico para darle una mayor flexibilidad a la creación o eliminación de órganos que puedan llegar a proporcionar una creación de grupos *ad hoc* para favorecer las actividades de la Organización.

Una rápida lectura del documento al cual damos la bienvenida y que nos presentó la Secretaría, nos hace ver que en algunos casos, hay órganos que hace algo más de 20 años que no tienen reuniones y, que creemos que no ocupando específicamente el presupuesto, si en más de 20 años no se han reunido, debe haber alguna razón para ello y en consecuencia el grupo de trabajo y la Conferencia tendrá que tomar nota para sacar las conclusiones que correspondan.

El párrafo 26.13 sobre la flexibilidad para el funcionamiento de los órganos, también es un elemento importante para el análisis del grupo de expertos para tener la transparencia necesaria en los órganos correspondientes.

Creo que como elemento importante para el análisis podríamos ver que la experiencia de las reuniones de este año fue la siguiente. Voy a tomar algunas al azar, en las que mi delegación y, en particular, yo estuve en condiciones de participar. En el COFI nosotros establecimos, le dimos mandato a la Secretaría para que comenzara a elaborar dos estrategias, tres planes de acción y varias actividades. Todo esto, si yo no me equivoco, el sector pesca tiene seis o siete funcionarios. ¿Cómo van a hacer con este presupuesto? No lo sé señor Presidente. Es deber de todos nosotros responder.

La Comisión de Recursos Genéticos que acaba de terminar, examinó el compromiso intergubernamental al cual todos le dimos una gran prioridad, estableció dos grupos fitogenéticos y zoogenéticos. Si yo no me equivoco, señor Presidente, seguramente la Secretaría estará en condiciones de corregirme. Luego de esta prioridad que le establecimos todos los gobiernos para el próximo programa y presupuesto del bienio que viene, esta comisión tiene menor presupuesto que lo que tuvo hasta ahora. ¿Cómo va a hacer señor Presidente? No lo sé, pero creo que un documento de presentación de cuáles son las prioridades que nosotros mismos hemos establecido y cuáles son las necesidades presupuestarias, es algo que nos debe llevar a reflexionar. Le fijamos prioridades a la Secretaría pero al mismo tiempo estamos retaciándole los fondos necesarios para que la Secretaría opere las prioridades que nosotros mismos le estamos estableciendo.

Quiero con esto hacer un llamado a la reflexión señor Presidente, que es para todos y, una última cosa menor, que es evitar la duplicación de actividades con otros órganos y agencias del sistema. Me parece que este es un tema menor en relación a lo que acabo de expresar, pero es un tema también a tener en cuenta para mejorar la eficacia de nuestra Organización.

Ralph BOYCE (Barbados): Let me associate myself with all the Caribbean countries which ours represent, with the comments from our colleagues from Cuba and Argentina about the need to review and carefully analyse the functions and rules of various bodies of FAO but, at the same time, bearing in mind the key objectives of the Organization. I do not think we should simply cut and reduce for the sake of cutting and reducing and, in this regard, I must mention that we need to bear in mind the needs of the particular regions of FAO. Again I refer to the Caribbean and Latin America and in cutting we hope you will not reduce, if anything you should try and increase, the support to these particular regions. So in terms of the reductions of the meetings, we would definitely not be in favour of a reduction of meetings. At least once in two years would be adequate. Indeed often that is not often enough, but I do not think we should cut beyond that.

As to the question of groups which are existing, as the Report said, only on paper. These should really be disbanded almost immediately. This comment has implications for the monitoring of these groups, and I would suggest that in future groups should be required to report. There should be a careful monitoring of the work of these groups because where a group can be out of existence for 20 years, that has serious implications for the role of the FAO central executive, central bodies in monitoring the work of these particular committees.

It seems to me that in our countries the suggestions about *ad hoc* groups is also a very good one. I think very often groups can be set up to do a particular job, within a particular time.

I like the phrase "sunset provisions", but sometimes sunset does not come at all, there are clouds and you cannot see it, it has extended further than it should really be. I think a group should be given a very careful, clear time limit within which the work, and at that time they should, if they want an extension then they get an extension and request it. I do not think it should be set up as we call it "open-ended". I agree that no group should be regarded as permanent, except in the context of the use of the word permanent in our region. In Barbados the Permanent Secretary is, in fact, not permanent and is rotated and moved quite a bit, as a hangover from the British terminology. So that is the only way we would agree to permanent in the context of moveable. But in the normal English use of the word we should not have any group that is permanent, that is it should not have an existence that is open-ended, it should be given a deadline in which to do its work and to report.

To get back to my original point, there should be very careful monitoring because, if a group can exist outside of its usefulness - as we say in English -- if it can outlive its usefulness, then something is wrong with the persons who have actually been supposedly monitoring these groups.

Again let me close as I started to support the views of Cuba and Argentina in the need for careful review of the bodies but bearing in mind the objectives and the *raison d'être* of FAO so we do not -- as we say in English - "throw the baby out with the bath water". We need to only throw out those things which have outlived their usefulness, which are no longer functional.

Indeed we may well set up new bodies by looking at the rules and functions of existing bodies very carefully and seeing where we could collapse or combine the roles of two or three in one and after that use *ad hoc* groups to do particular tasks within specific stated deadlines.

Ibnu SAID (Indonesia): First of all, on behalf of the Indonesian delegation, I would like capitalize a statement by our colleagues from Pakistan and Mexico.

Secondly, the Indonesian delegation would like to extend its appreciation of the Secretariat's review on FAO Statutory Bodies and Panel of Experts contained in the document CL 112/20.

We would like, also to make a brief statement in particular to the conclusion in the document contained in paragraph 26. In general we agree with the conclusion to amend the function of the technical committees COAG, COFI and COFO to reassert the role examining the mandate of CFS to monitor the follow-up of the World Food Summit.

Kezimbira Lawrence MIYINGO (Uganda): I will be quite brief. All along we have been talking about the process of decentralization and the new system that the Organization is developing. In the system of decentralization decision-making becomes the responsibility of the small units that are involved in the solutions that are being evolved. I think if we are decentralizing and making Regional Offices more responsible to decide on issues that concern them, then we need these Regional Offices to have regional meetings at the frequency that I think right today is not too much.

The Statutory Bodies that exist in most of the Member Nations and which fall within the regional areas, I think are arms that are going to help these Regional Offices in order for them to be able to measure up to the tasks that they face within their Regions.

Therefore, I would like to propose and support the idea that before these bodies are scrapped or are removed, there should be a bottom-up discussion within the regions and the countries concerned as to the rationale of removing some of the bodies, if at all necessary before we summarily remove some of the bodies.

Unless we do this, I think we might end up with the desire to strengthen our decentralization but at the same time weaken it if we remove some of these bodies which are intervening for the weak developing countries.

EL PRESIDENTE: No hay ningún comentario que desea hacer la Secretaría y por tanto podemos de inmediato resumir esta parte del debate. Tenemos que decir en primer lugar que el Consejo tomó nota con satisfacción de los documentos presentados para este tema del debate, en particular el informe de los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas así como del documento de la Secretaría que contenía información muy rica en datos y análisis respecto del examen de los Organos Estatutarios y Cuadros de Expertos de la FAO. Asimismo, el Consejo tomó nota con agrado del hecho de que en su reunión conjunta los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas crearon un grupo de contacto para revisar lo correspondiente al Anexo 2 del documento CL 112/20.

El Consejo reconoció asimismo, que la parte substantiva del examen de los Organos Estatutarios y Cuadros de Expertos había sido ya realizada, así como de sus métodos de trabajo y de la documentación e información pertinente. Señaló no obstante, que habría algunos otros ahorros que llevar a cabo y que éste debía ser un proceso de evaluación y de revisión permanente, que debía asegurar la transparencia, la pertinencia, en fin, la utilidad de estos órganos y de esas reuniones para contribuir a los cometidos de la Organización. Era necesario en este sentido que los Estados Miembros jugaran un papel activo en dicho proceso de examen en donde parte del afán debería ser evitar duplicaciones, no sólo dentro de la FAO, sino también en el contexto de otros organismos de Naciones Unidas, entre órganos afines.

El Consejo en su conjunto coincidió en que se debería llegar a un justo medio donde no sólo se busquen ahorros sino que se garantice la máxima eficacia para los fines de la FAO.

Se indicó también la importancia de que la Secretaría cuente con el personal y con los recursos necesarios para contribuir y para apoyar los trabajos de estos órganos y de sus reuniones, de la documentación y la preparación de sus informes.

Los Miembros del Consejo en sus participaciones hicieron múltiples recomendaciones sobre la reducción o eliminación de reuniones, la revisión de temas para debate en órganos técnicos, así como la fusión o eliminación de órganos. A la luz de esas consideraciones, el Consejo aprobó el contenido y las recomendaciones del párrafo 26 e instruyó al Grupo de Trabajo creado por los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas a que revise a la luz de los comentarios aquí expresados los temas correspondientes.

Bien, distinguidos delegados, creo que esto es lo que respecto al debate podemos decir y, si no hay ninguna otra observación, damos por concluido el Tema 19.

- 17 Reports of the 76th (Rome, 28-29 January 1997) and 77th (Rome, 21-29 April 1997) Sessions of the Programme Committee**
- 17 Rapports des soixante-seizième et soixante-dixseptième sessions du Comité du Programme (Rome, 28-29 janvier 1997 et 21-29 avril 1997)**
- 17 Informes del 76° (Roma, 28-29 de enero de 1997) y 77° (Roma, 21-29 de abril de 1997) períodos de sesiones del Comité del Programa**

D. BOMMER (Chairman, Programme Committee): As you have noted, from the debate you had, there is no need for me to introduce this document at great length.

Both reports on both meetings were included in your discussions on the Programme of Work and Budget, besides the Summary. Certainly, the attempts to find a way of accommodating our joint meeting culminated in decisions in the joint meeting with the Finance Committee on the Programme of Work and Budget.

I can only say that our debate, related to the Programme Evaluation Report and related to the Medium-Term Programme, have been fully reflected, I think, in the debate you had, and I have noted what you discussed here. Again, this is not the Programme Committee alone, it was a joint meeting with the Finance Committee and the statutory bodies.

Finally, I wish to call the attention of the Council to the brief note on a number of JIU Reports. We had made some remarks on this issue at the time. It has not been available for very long in order to discuss those Reports, but we have heard that we can find support for most of them in the time to come.

May I ask, Mr Chairman, if you would just ask the Council to adopt, if there is not any major controversial view, the two reports from the Programme Committee.

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias Dr Bommer. Creo que antes de hacerlo el Consejo debería agradecerle a usted y a los Miembros del Comité del Programa por el esfuerzo que llevaron a cabo en presentarnos este Informe que tanto ha nutrido nuestros debates de los Temas 14, 15, 16 y 19 y, desde luego, ahora, sobre los otros puntos que usted ha mencionado y que están contenidos en el Informe. Someto a la consideración del Consejo la aprobación del Informe de las dos sesiones del Comité del Programa. ¿Hay algún Miembro que desea hacer uso de la palabra? No habiendo ninguno, el Consejo aprueba el Informe del 76° y 77° período de sesiones del Comité del Programa.

- 18 Reports of the 86th (Rome, 28-29 January 1997) and 87th (Rome, 21-29 April 1997) Sessions of the Finance Committee**
- 18 Rapports des quatre-vingt-sixième et quatre-vingt-septième sessions du Comité financier (Rome, 28-29 janvier 1997 et 21-29 avril 1997)**
- 18 Informes del 86° (Roma, 28-29 de enero de 1997) y 87° (Roma, 21-29 de abril de 1997) períodos de sesiones del Comité del Finanzas**
- 18.1 Status of Contributions**
- 18.1 Situation des contributions**
- 18.1 Estado de las cuotas**
- 18.2 Budgetary Performance 1996**
- 18.2 Exécution du budget, 1996**
- 18.2 Ejecución des presupuesto de 1996**

18.3 Scale of Contributions 1998-99**18.3 Barème des contributions 1998-99****18.3 Escala de cuotas para 1998-99****18.4 Other Matters Arising out of the Reports****18.4 Autres questions soulevées dans les rapports****18.4 Otros asuntos planteados en los informes**

EL PRESIDENTE: Pasamos ahora al Tema 18 de nuestra agenda, los informes del 86° y 87° período de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas que tiene 4 puntos: el estado de las cuotas, ejecución del presupuesto 1996, la escala de las cuotas para 1998-99 y otros asuntos planteados en los informes.

Como ustedes saben, el Comité de Finanzas examinó y comentó temas que han sido ya tratados en nuestros debates sobre el Tema 16, el 19, el 14, el 15, pues ustedes los tienen a la mano y creo que ya han sido discutidos con suficiencia. Sobre los cuatro puntos de este tema yo creo que sería conveniente que el señor Forbord, en representación del Presidente del Comité de Finanzas, los presentara y los aclarara. Son temas importantes. Ya hemos escuchado que algún grupo de países va a hacer aportaciones adicionales para facilitar el consenso entorno al Programa de Labores y Presupuesto y estamos desde luego esperando esos y otros comentarios.

Le paso la palabra al señor Forbord para que presente el informe, en el entendido de que en su tratamiento los vamos a tomar todos en conjunto, es decir todos los puntos 18.1, 18.2, 18.3 y 18.4.

Thomas Austin FORBORD (Chairman, Finance Committee): The Report of the Finance Committee provides both considerable information to the Council, on FAO's financial position, on its personnel matters and on other administrative issues. It also presents a number of issues on which the Council will need to make decisions or to provide guidance to either the Secretariat or the Conference.

The information items you can read, you have already. Let me, in introduction, simply highlight the decision issues that the Council now faces.

You are asked to review a Draft Conference Resolution on FAO's Scale of Contributions for 1998-99. In keeping with established practice, the proposed FAO scale is derived from the UN Scale of Assessments, taking into account the slight differences in membership. The draft scale that you have in the Report is based on the UN Scale adopted in 1994.

A major issue discussed by the Finance Committee was whether to use the 1994 scale or, instead, to use the UN scale which will be adopted by the UN General Assembly this year. The Council, in its examination of this issue, may also want to look at that question.

Secondly, the Council needs to express its views on the Director-General's proposal to abolish the Incentive Scheme on Payment of Contributions, which was begun in 1993 on an experimental basis.

The Finance Committee, in its Report, notes that the impact of the Incentive Scheme on the cash-flow of FAO has not been significant and that the cost in terms of reduced income, reduced miscellaneous income and, therefore, higher assessments for Member Nations has been considerable, reaching more than US\$2 million this year.

Some Members of the Finance Committee supported the Director-General's proposal to abolish the Incentive Scheme while other Members did not.

Council should provide guidance on the Director-General's proposal and may wish to prepare a Draft Resolution for Conference's approval in November.

A third issue, one with even greater budgetary implications, on which Council should focus, is the financing of the after-service benefit plans of FAO employees, and more specifically, the financing of accrued liabilities of FAO for the After-Service Medical Coverage Plan. The Finance Committee made a number of recommendations on ways of dealing with this problem. They are contained in paragraph 3.77 of the Committees' Report.

For Council to consider those recommendations it will, however, need further information from the Secretariat on the cost of implementing the recommendations.

In his introduction to the budget debate yesterday, Mr Wade indicated that a "set-aside" for After-Service Medical Care would cost US\$17 million in the next biennium, but he did not indicate whether that was the implementation of the Finance Committee recommendations or some other method of dealing with the problem. Before deciding whether you want to pay US\$ 17 million per biennium, you will want to find out what you are buying.

Finally, I want to refer to a remark that Chairman López Portillo made in his summary of the debate on the PWB. He said he felt the Council wanted the cost of dealing with the accumulated After-Service Medical Cost Liabilities to be absorbed without impact on FAO Programmes. I suggest to you that US\$ 17 million in additional costs per biennium cannot be absorbed without impact on FAO Programmes. You need to keep that in mind as you consider this issue.

EL PRESIDENTE: Gracias por su introducción, distinguido señor Forbord, que seguramente va a ser útil para los debates. El Tema 16 está cerrado y los comentarios que hice, quizá usted los haya mal interpretado al hacer esta observación; yo lo que he hecho fue preguntarle al Consejo, en ese momento, si estaba de acuerdo en recomendar al Director General que estudiara opciones para absorber el costo del seguro médico post-servicio sin afectar el PLP o buscando minimizar el impacto sobre el PLP. Ahora usted viene a plantear un asunto, a abrir un asunto en este Consejo, que está ya tratado y que es una recomendación del Consejo que no voy a permitir que se reabra. Esa recomendación está hecha. Pueden hacerse aquí otras, pero ese debate está concluido. Yo creo que el Director General puede, y esa es la manera de facilitarnos el debate, puede hacer recomendaciones que sean útiles, que puedan considerar ustedes para acercar las diferencias entre las posiciones sobre el PLP que se han planteado. Yo reconozco que como parte del Informe del Comité de Finanzas hay un tratamiento de este tema, que se trata además en el 1.16 del Informe Conjunto, pero yo creo que ese aspecto en particular no es útil volverlo a debatir en esta ocasión y menos bajo la consideración de que no será posible no absorberlo sin afectar el PLP.

Tengo que hacer estas observaciones porque, repito, la forma en que procedemos tiene que ser ordenada y debemos darle al Programa la validez que merece y en el tratamiento de los temas tenemos que remitirnos solamente a lo que estamos estudiando, en el mismo momento en que lo hacemos.

En todo caso, distinguidos delegados, está abierta a la consideración de ustedes los puntos 18.1, 18.2, 18.3 y 18.4 sobre Estado de las Cuotas, Ejecución del Presupuesto 1996, Escala de Cuotas 1998-99, y Otros Asuntos planteados en los informes salvo, desde luego, volver a abrir el debate sobre temas concluidos.

Les quiero advertir también que tengo planeado interrumpir el debate sobre este punto a las 19.00 horas para permitirle al Coordinador del Grupo Oficioso de Trabajo de Composición Abierta, que celebró una reunión hoy en la mañana de 9.00 a 12.00 horas y que concluyó sus trabajos, que presente a este Consejo las conclusiones a las que llegaron. Es indispensable que lo hagamos a esa hora porque, conforme me han informado muchas delegaciones, los expertos que estuvieron

presentes en el día de hoy y, entre otros, el propio Coordinador de ese Grupo de Trabajo, tendrán que partir hoy en la noche y no podrán estar con nosotros mañana por la mañana. Es por eso que tendremos que dar la entrada al Tema 11 de nuestra agenda hoy a las 19.00 horas y si no concluimos los trabajos sobre este Tema los continuaremos el día de mañana a las 9.30 horas.

Bien, distinguidos delegados, pregunto al señor Mehboob si tiene alguna otra observación que hacer, en ese caso ofrezco la palabra en el entendido, repito, de que este tema se tomará en conjunto.

David BEEHAN (Ireland): I would like to ask again, Mr Chairman, if you could give the opportunity to The Netherlands to make a statement on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.

J.B. PIETERS (Observer for the Netherlands): Mr Chairman, you had just made mention of the fact that we should not re-open the debate on Agenda Item 16. However, I announced that I would like to deliver an additional statement on that Agenda Item, but, it is very relevant for this Agenda Item as well. It is very brief so I am asking you whether I am entitled to deliver it.

EL PRESIDENTE: Desde luego la idea que usted nos ofreció en ese momento fue que contribuiría a afinar el propósito de lograr el consenso de manera que es bienvenida su intervención.

J.B. PIETERS (Observer for the Netherlands): As you invited this, on behalf of the European Community and its Member States, I would like to return briefly to your question with a few ideas on how we think the FAO Secretariat should proceed in order to enable Members to reach, at Conference, a consensus on the PWB.

We are of the opinion that we must try to avoid a repetition of the situation we were in two years ago. We should leave Conference later this year with a budget and a programme for the next biennium. The European Community and its Member States would like to contribute to this.

We want to stress, again, the necessity for the FAO Secretariat to seek, in the first place, efficiency gains and fully support, in this connection, the suggestions made in the joint meeting of Programme and Finance Committees with respect to synergies, identification of duplication and process-related efficiencies.

At the same time, in our opinion, it is necessary to pursue the systematic review of every basic activity of the Programme and thoroughly prioritize those activities on the basis of the criteria identified by the 110th Session of the Council. Those criteria should be strictly applied and updated, if necessary. The results of the Review should be presented to the Programme Committee and to the Council.

We already paid attention to the Country Offices. As far as these Country Offices are concerned, we recommend that the FAO Secretariat proposes objective criteria, in order to decide which Offices have to be maintained or not.

As far as after-service medical coverage is concerned, we would want further information on the implications of the recommendations made by the Finance Committee, in particular regarding: firstly, the way arrears which should be paid could be used for liabilities incurred in the past; and secondly, the way personnel could participate in the sharing of surface costs.

Finally, on how to proceed further, we support the recommendations contained in the conclusions of the joint meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees, but only insofar as they respect the parameters set out in our earlier statement, focusing on efficiency, savings and possible cuts in non-substantive activities.

May I now turn, to the Report of the Finance Committee as such. Only some brief comments.

Firstly, the budgetary performance. We note with concern the projected transfer of resources from the technical programmes to general policies and direction support and common services, and share the Finance Committee's concern that this trend should be reversed. These transfers have been exercised without prior consultation of Member Nations and are not always in line with the priority setting which should remain the guideline.

Secondly on the Scale of Contributions. I have already pointed out that the European Community and its Member Nations contribute 38 percent of the total Regular Budget. Discussions are underway in New York on the revision of the Scales of Contribution, which involve a number of political questions. In our opinion it would be premature to anticipate, in FAO, on the outcome of those negotiations.

Thirdly, and to conclude, the incentive scheme for early payment. We recognize the impact of this Scheme on the cash-flow of the Organization, but cannot accept that it would be withdrawn and that no distinction would be made between early and late payers. Arrears cost money. We, therefore, regret to see that a total of US\$ 134 million, which represent as much as 41 percent of the budget for one year, is in arrears. Late payers create additional costs for the Organization and, therefore, for all of us, as well as delays in programme execution.

EL PRESIDENTE: Hemos tomado nota de su declaración sobre todo de la parte pertinente para el debate del Tema 16. Pero desde luego no voy a reabrir de nuevo el foro para tratar esos temas en esta ocasión. Además habíamos ya advertido en el Tema 16 que usted haría comentarios adicionales al respecto.

Ronald ROSE (Canada): Let me assure that it is not my intention to reopen debate on Agenda Item 16 and risk your ire.

My delegation wants to respond to two of the points raised in the report of the Finance Committee. The first point deals with the Incentive Scheme to encourage early payments, mentioned in paragraph 3, point 66. The Incentive Scheme was put in place to deal with a particular problem, Mr Chairman, that of regulating the cash flow of the FAO and encouraging Members to pay their assessments early. We are somewhat surprised, therefore, by the conclusions which the Finance Committee drew from the evidence which was provided to it. We note that a table was provided to the Committee, that table which is reproduced in paragraph 3, point 66, showing that the number of countries making their payments, within the first three months of the FAO year, has increased from 22 to 41, that is, by an annual rate of increase of some 17 percent, since the Scheme was introduced. That seems to be a rather successful performance. We also note that the funds provided have grown from \$79 million to \$102.6 million, an annual rate of increase of 8.4 percent; and, in fact, increased to \$150.4 million in the current year. A figure which represents a full 46.9 percent of assessed contributions.

These figures sound quite positive, yet the Finance Committee concluded that the impact had quote "not been significant since its inception in 1993". My delegation cannot agree. On this point, Mr Chairman, we would like to ask a simple question of the Secretariat. Has the need for the Scheme, that is, the need for countries to make early payment, disappeared? Is the Organization not still running short of cash in the first couple of months of the year? In this regard, I recall Mr Wade's comments yesterday morning, in responding to questions concerning staffing, that: "we did not have the money coming in fast enough, it is a problem of ensuring that contributions come through in time". Before the Council can give guidance on this issue it would be helpful to know whether the requirement for early payment still exists, if it does not exist, I am sure that a number of countries would be quite happy to revert to the previous practice of keeping the funds in their own treasuries and earning the interest rather than providing those funds to FAO.

My second point deals with paragraph 3.70 to 3.77, dealing with the After Service Medical Costs. Canada recognizes that the External Auditor has recommended that the FAO adopt policies for "a more balanced funding of such liabilities". However, after reviewing the documents made available to us, we are not convinced of the need for funding these long-term liabilities at the moment. Currently, the United Nations does not fund its After Service Medical Liabilities and we believe the same approach could be examined for the FAO. We would like to remind delegates that accounting for a liability and funding a liability are not the same, and they relate to two different objectives. Funding decisions, are management decisions, which must be made in the context of the current financial situation. Accounting decisions are based on recommended practice to provide information to the users of financial statements of organizations to help them better understand the financial picture of an organization.

In the case of FAO, this financial picture could include, among other things, information on the long-term liabilities relating to the After-Service Medical Plan. Although we can agree with improved accounting practices, we do not believe that Member Nations should bear the costs of setting aside funds now to cover future payments.

One, last, further point on this issue, Mr Chairman, we are concerned with the recommendation contained in paragraph 3.77(a), to the effect that FAO, and that means the individual Members, all of us, assume the responsibility for the accumulated liability of individual Trust Fund donors. As a Member which does not impose additional costs on the Organization, through Trust Funds, and one which is already called upon to subsidize Trust Fund activities, we very much disagree with this proposal.

We urge the Finance Committee to revisit this issue, to find a method such as perhaps a surcharge on the administrative fee, currently charged to Trust Fund donors, which would properly allocate the accumulated costs to these countries responsible for the existence of a portion of this charge.

We are also, extremely, concerned by the suggestion in paragraph 3.77 (g), to use the arrears to fund the After-Service Medical Costs and we would like some clarification from the Secretariat about the regulations which apply to the use of arrears and whether this is, in fact, consistent with that.

Kezimbira Lawrence MIYINGO (Uganda): I will be very brief, I just wanted to refer to the question of incentives for all payments. Whereas this is a very good thing to reward anybody who comes early and pays, but I see that it is eating deep into the resources of the Organization. This morning we have spent time trying to argue on a budget that was not to be reduced and now, if we are going to eat into the budget through these incentives, I see this as counterproductive.

Since this is an Organization where we render support to each other, we really appreciate the Members that sometimes pay much earlier than others, but I think it is support to the others when these others pay, if they do not abscond from their duty, the money still does the same work that it is meant for. On this note, I would like to refer to 18.1, document CL 112/LIM/1 and point out that, on the list of contributions, Uganda appears to have an outstanding of US\$30 822. May I inform that as of yesterday, we have paid.

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias distinguido delegado de Uganda. El Consejo aprecia mucho el hecho de que su país se haya puesto al corriente.

Ms Melinda L. KIMBLE (United States of America): In connection with the April Report of the Finance Committee, we would like to make several comments regarding the following five issues: the status of our payments to the UN System; the text of the draft enabling resolution on the Scale of Contributions in paragraph 3.63 of CL 112/14; FAO's Incentive Scheme; proposals related to the After-Service Medical Coverage Plan; and the work of the Internal Auditor.

The Administration's fiscal 1998 budget request reflects the firm commitment of the United States to meet its financial obligations to the United Nations System including FAO. The fiscal 1998 funding package for assessed contributions to international organizations, now under consideration in the Congress, totals over US\$2 billion. This figure includes: annual assessments of US\$ 1.023 billion to 49 international organizations and US\$1,021 billion for arrears to international organizations and United Nations peacekeeping.

With respect to the arrears, we are requesting these funds to be paid over a two-year period. US\$100 million in 1998, fiscal year 1998 that is, which begins in October 1997; and US\$921 million in fiscal year 1999. For FAO, our arrears package includes US\$105 million.

Based on a congressional calendar, action on this package could take place as early as July or as late as September. We would hope to have a clear indication of how much would be available by the time we reach the Conference this November. In addition, for fiscal year 1998, for international affairs, we are requesting another US\$2 billion in voluntary contributions to international organizations and programmes, including: UNDP, UNICEF, the World Food Programme, IFAD and UNHCR. Our funding request of US\$100 million for UNDP represents an increase of nearly 25 percent over 1997, and will reinforce its central funding and coordinating role in United Nations operational activities.

For the multilateral development banks, our fiscal year 1998 request totals US\$1.5 billion including funds to clear our arrears, as evidence of our firm and renewed commitment towards development assistance, particularly in Africa and the least developed countries.

Bilaterally, the United States is proposing a new trade and investment initiative for Africa, and our follow-up process for the World Food Summit is aimed at examining new international partnerships, that can be developed in support of the Summit commitments. Our budget is designed to restore an important measure of US assistance in support of global efforts for sustainable development.

We are working closely with the Congress to reach agreement on our arrears package for international organizations. This is among our highest priority. Discussions are at a critical stage, we hope to have the main outlines agreed on and be in a position to pay soon. This important effort can be achieved, only if fiscally sound and sustainable budgets are adopted throughout the multilateral system, and the responsibility for payments is spread in a more rational manner.

Regarding the latter point, the UN Committee on Contributions is meeting in New York, at the present time, to discuss a total of eight proposals for the 1998-2000 Scale of Assessments. On 3 March the United States tabled one of the eight proposals at the high-level Working Group on Finance, concerned with revising the United Nations Scales of Assessment, to simplify and make more equitable the current UN Scales methodology. In our view, the United Nations Scales of Assessment must be adjusted to increase Member Nations' participation in the international system, and reduce excessive dependence on one contributor. Our proposal calls for a reduction in the ceiling rate, from 25 to 20 percent.

In light of the work underway in New York, we believe that it is premature for this Council to recommend that the Conference adopt a Draft Resolution based on the UN Scale adopted in 1994, found in paragraph 3.63 of document CL 112/14. In fact, as a final decision on revision of the Scale could occur anytime after September, it would be appropriate that FAO should plan to prepare the Scale of Contributions for the years 1998 and 1999 to reflect the new Scale of Assessments for those years, fixed by the United Nations General Assembly, this year at its 52nd Session, in accordance with established principles for adjusting the Scale at FAO to take into account differences in membership.

Turning to the Incentive Scheme to encourage prompt payment of contributions, we support the Director-General's efforts to end the Scheme, given its impact in reducing Miscellaneous Income. While we recognized the percentage of contributions paid as of 31 March, increased significantly compared to previous years, the reason for this increase appears to be unrelated to the existence of the Scheme.

With respect to the After-Service Medical Coverage Plan, we appreciate the information which has been provided by the Secretariat, but we will need more questions answered, before we can make any decision to fund the amortization of accrued liabilities in the 1998-99 biennium, since a decision will have significant implications for the entire UN System and we believe a common policy is essential. For example, we would like to know how other UN agencies are treating these costs. We would also appreciate knowing how much of the total liability will be FAO's share, and whether discussions with UNDP and IBRD have been initiated to determine their willingness to provide funds for posts paid from their resources. Have IFAD and ICCROM accepted any liability for their share of the cost? How much funding is included in the current budget for medical costs, and how are these expenses apportioned among budget chapters?

With respect to Trust Funds, like Canada, we believe that FAO should weigh carefully, before assuming responsibility for the accumulated liabilities of Trust Fund donors and, given a substantial accrued deficit of US\$ 29.8 million that the Organization is proposing to absorb on behalf of these donors.

We can support the Committee's recommendations to combine all separation plans into one fund, for management purposes, but we would expect separate accounts to be maintained and reported on separately, should the need arise.

Finally, regarding paragraph 3.92 of CL 112/14, we are pleased to learn that the Director-General has agreed to make available to Members of the Finance Committee, a copy of the Internal Auditors 1996 Annual Report. Given the increased significance of FAO's work and its decentralized operations, a strong, effective and independent oversight mechanism is essential.

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchísimas gracias distinguida delegada de los Estados Unidos por su declaración que es muy útil para los miembros del Consejo. Desde luego no hay que repetirlo, Estados Unidos de América es el mayor contribuyente y también el país que tiene más atrasos en el pago de sus cuotas. Nosotros nos unimos a usted en la esperanza de que el pago de atrasos pueda acelerarse lo más pronto posible, aunque sabemos las dificultades por las que atraviesa su país.

Son las 19.00 horas y creo que tenemos que asegurar que el Tema 11, para lo cual varios expertos vinieron y estuvieron presentes, se pueda concluir en el día de hoy.

Por tanto les pido su comprensión para suspender el debate respecto de este importantísimo punto de nuestra agenda para permitir al coordinador del Grupo de Trabajo Oficioso de Composición Abierta, que se reunió hoy, nos presente las conclusiones a las que llegaron. Inmediatamente después entraremos de pleno al tratamiento del Tema 11 de nuestra agenda para lo cual se hará una introducción por mi parte y por parte de la Secretaría.

Distinguidos delegados, suspendemos el tratamiento de este Tema 18 y pasamos al Tema 11 de nuestra agenda.

III ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP**III ACTIVITES DE LA FAO ET DU PAM****III ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y DEL PMA**

11 Report of the 14th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (Rome, 7-11 April 1997)

11 Rapport de la quatorzième session du Comité de l'agriculture (Rome, 7-11 avril)

11 Informe del 14° período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura (Roma, 7-11 de abril de 1997)

EL PRESIDENTE: Vamos a abrir de inmediato el Tema 11 que es el Informe del 14° período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura, documento CL 112/9 y al presentar este informe creo que es necesario que el Consejo centre su atención en los temas que requieren una decisión o una recomendación, así como los formuló el COAG. Me refiero, en particular, a tres puntos: el examen de las normas para la armonización de la cuarentena de las plantas, las recomendaciones del Grupo Especial de Expertos sobre los Recursos Zoogenéticos y, desde luego, el tema principal, por el cual hemos suspendido el tratamiento del Tema 18 y es la revisión de la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria.

Sobre el examen de las normas para la armonización de la cuarentena de las plantas, principalmente lo que el Consejo tiene que hacer es aprobar las normas tal como han sido enmendadas, ustedes verán en el informe del COAG las partes relevantes.

Respecto a la recomendación del grupo especial de expertos sobre recursos zoogenéticos, la tarea del Consejo es, desde luego, informarle a la Conferencia sobre este tema, aunque quizá es difícil delinear en este momento una fórmula definitiva respecto a la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos para la Alimentación y la Agricultura y, sobre todo, antes de que concluya la reunión de la Comisión. Pero en fin, el tema fundamental que ha sido tratado en la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos, está a la vista de todos. Sabemos que este es un esfuerzo que está comenzando y que muchos de ustedes han querido apoyar de manera prioritaria.

Finalmente, en lo que se refiere a la revisión de la CIPF, así como lo determinaron ustedes al principio de nuestros debates, se creó un grupo informal, abierto a todos los miembros para que trabajara sobre el texto de la Convención; esto con miras a que la Conferencia esté en una posición para aprobar este texto y ponerlo en práctica a la brevedad posible.

M.A. HOLTZHAUSEN (Chairman, Working Group on the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)): The informal open-ended Working Group met this morning. Twenty-eight countries and the European Community participated in the discussions and our deliberation. We considered document CL 112/9-Sup. 1, and the following agreements were reached.

If we look at the Preamble and the first indent, we insert the word "international" between "their" and "spread" in the second sentence, and we deleted the bracketed text. If I may just read the second sentence: "... products and in preventing their international spread and especially their introduction into endangered areas".

We also decided to insert a sixth indent in the Preamble, to read "Noting the agreements concluded as a result of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, including the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures".

In Article II, where we have the "Use of Terms", the term "Protective area" was then deleted from the text, as it is not necessary any more.

The change in Article III, para. 1, the second sentence, the words "functions and" are to be deleted.

I will read the second sentence: "plant protection organization with the following main responsibilities set out in this Article".

The change in para 2(c) is the deletion of the square bracketed text.

In Article VI, para. 5, in the last sentence, a comma was added after the word "use".

I will read the last sentence: "or other specific use, of plant and plant products and other regulated articles, and of plant pests".

The next changes were made to Article X, in para. 2(a). The first line, the word "international" was inserted between the words "their" and "spread" and the words in square brackets were deleted.

In Article XIV, regarding "Territorial Application", the square brackets were deleted, and in the first sentence of both paras. 1 and 2, the words "state, or" and "that is a member of FAO" were deleted. Para. 1 will read: "Any contracting party may at the time of ratification ..." and para. 2 will read: "Any contracting party which has communicated to the Director-General of FAO ...".

The last changes were made to the Model Phytosanitary Certificate. Under I. "Description of consignment", in the third sentence of the paragraph, the words "are considered" were deleted and that sentence reads, from the third line: "importing contracting parties and to conform with the current phytosanitary requirements of the contracting party include those for regulated non-quarantine pests".

The Model Certificate for Re-Export, again, in the second to last line of the paragraph, the words "importing countries" are replaced by "contracting party" to have consistency in the text.

With these changes, we were able to provide a revised text for the International Plant Protection Convention, without any square brackets, for the Council to consider for approval.

EL PRESIDENTE: Yo creo que el Consejo debe en primer lugar manifestarle a usted y a los participantes en el Grupo Informal, su agradecimiento por este importante paso hacia la afinación de un texto final que puede eventualmente ser aprobado por la Conferencia. Deseo informarles que el texto estará disponible con las correcciones el día de mañana, para que ustedes puedan tomar nota y eventualmente enviarlo a sus capitales.

También, como ustedes saben, el procedimiento a seguir es que este texto se envíe al Comité de Asuntos Jurídicos y Constitucionales de la FAO para que este lo revise. Este comité, una vez hecho su trabajo, lo enviará al Consejo en su 113° período de sesiones y el Consejo lo enviará a la Conferencia.

El señor Asesor Legal me ha pedido también hacer uso de la palabra para introducir un cambio en el texto revisado.

LEGAL COUNSEL: Since the discussions this morning, there have been further informal consultations on one issue, on which I have been asked to report. The issue concerns the relationship of the revised Convention with other international agreements including, in particular, the SPS Agreement.

Following these informal consultations, and on the basis of these informal consultations, I would now like to put forward to Council the following new wording, which could be included as a new Article III of the revised Convention, or elsewhere in an appropriate place in the Convention, if Council should so decide.

The wording would be as follows:

"Article III - Relationship with other international agreements.

Nothing in this Convention shall affect the rights and obligations of the contracting parties under existing applicable international agreements."

I appreciate that it may be difficult for delegates to pronounce themselves formally and finally on the proposed new wording. We would therefore suggest that, if Council is, in principle, in favour of the inclusion of such a clause, the attention of the CCLM should be drawn to the new clause, with the request that it advise on the legal implications of the clause, and that it review the precise wording from a legal point of view, as well as its most appropriate location in the text of the revised Convention.

To reiterate, we would propose that this new clause be included in the draft text of the revised Convention, not in square brackets, but as a full Article in the revised text; that it be sent to the CCLM; that the attention of the CCLM will be drawn to the clause; and that it be asked to respond to the questions that I have just indicated.

EL PRESIDENTE: Distinguidos delegados está a su consideración el Tema 11 en su totalidad y, desde luego, son bienvenidos sus comentarios, no solamente respecto a la revisión del texto de la Convención, sino también sobre los otros aspectos del Informe del COAG. Lo que tiene que hacer el Consejo está claro y espero que ustedes nos den sus instrucciones al respecto.

POINT OF ORDER

POINT D'ORDRE

PUNTO DE ORDEN

Adel Mahmoud ABOUL-NAGA (Egypt): Let us finish with the revised IPPC, because it is related to COAG, and it is important to us. Therefore, rather than handling the whole item of COAG, let us finish with that, and conclude it, so that we can open the rest of the items on COAG.

This is my proposal for Council.

EL PRESIDENTE: Quizás tiene usted razón y es la manera más eficaz y ordenada para proceder. La acojo, por tanto, y les pido que se pronuncien en torno a los resultados de este grupo informal y del texto revisado y desde luego del procedimiento, que ya les he anunciado, de mandarlo al CACJ y luego al Consejo de la FAO. Tiene usted la palabra respecto a los resultados del grupo de trabajo informal y del texto revisado.

David SANDS SMITH (United Kingdom): This is somewhat unconventional, but is an example of Anglo-Irish cooperation. David Beehan, my Irish colleague, has had to leave. May I therefore, on his behalf, ask, as we have been doing throughout the day, that you should give the floor to The Netherlands as the European Union Presidency.

J.B. PIETERS (Observer for the Netherlands): Thank you, United Kingdom, for the floor in this new procedure, in the absence of Ireland.

First of all, we welcome the agreement reached on the IPPC.

Secondly, we can agree on the proposed handling of the text on a new Article III, as proposed by the Legal Counsel, Mr Moore, and certainly we would like to make a short statement on behalf of the EU and its Member States, for the records.

With reference to Article VII, para 2(a), regarding the reporting of the occurrence, outbreak or spread of pests, the EC and its Member States understand that the reports will have to be supplied as under the current IPPC to FAO or, more precisely, to the Secretary. They attach, and that is the EC and its Member States, great importance to the establishment of relevant procedures applicable to this reporting, as referred to in these provisions, and hope that high priority is given to this work.

Yoshihide ENDO (Japan): The Japanese delegation also would like to express its appreciation of the efforts made by the Secretariat and the experts who took part in this very elaborative work, in order to reach a consensus of the revised text of IPPC. Japan is also very happy to see a revised text and also welcomes the newly proposed article, I would like to refer to that newly proposed article.

Japan is one of the countries who proposed this article and, reading through the revised text, we realize that we have to keep a consistency, maintain a consistency, with relevant international agreements, including SPS. This proposal is quite appropriate and I fully support the procedure proposed by Mr Moore.

We are very flexible to the wording, to the procedure through which this article is being discussed. I would like to reiterate that the main content is very important and this is not going to incorporate new ideas or new institutions, but this article is trying to explicitly stipulate hidden ideas or ideas which are written between the lines. Therefore the intention of this article is not going to raise a new issue for the concern with other Member Countries, I sincerely hope.

Moussa Bocar LY (Sénégal): Monsieur le Président, au nom du Groupe africain, nous nous félicitons de l'esprit de collaboration et de coopération de tous qui a permis à nos experts de pouvoir se réunir ici même à Rome pour examiner cette Convention importante pour l'avenir de nos pays et nous voudrions solennellement marquer notre accord à cette Convention dans la mesure d'ailleurs où elle favorise le commerce international des produits agricoles qui sont d'une importance capitale pour notre continent, et dans la mesure où elle vise à protéger la production agricole africaine des dommages que provoque l'introduction de nouveaux organismes nuisibles. Nous voudrions également, par votre intermédiaire, remercier les Pays-Bas qui ont rendu cette consultation possible et également remercier le Secrétariat de la FAO pour les services de qualité fournis à cette réunion.

Monsieur le Président, nous voudrions cependant nous référer à l'Article XIX sur l'assistance technique pour prier le Conseil de recommander des mesures dans ce sens. En effet, notre continent est préoccupé quant à la capacité des pays qui le composent à remplir les conditions indiquées dans la Convention. En effet, celle-ci nous demanderait d'améliorer nos infrastructures nationales et de mieux faire comprendre, au plan des infrastructures nationales, au niveau de l'élaboration des politiques, l'intérêt de faciliter le commerce international tout en protégeant l'agriculture nationale de nouvelles introductions qui imposeraient des interventions coûteuses. Nous restons convaincus en tant que pays africains que la coopération aux niveaux à la fois sous-régional et régional devrait être renforcée afin de respecter les dispositions commerciales aux plans intra- et inter-régional. Nous savons que des mesures doivent être prises pour mieux faire comprendre, au niveau national, les risques en matière de quarantaine dans le commerce et les échanges internationaux. Mais pour ce faire, nous avons besoin de l'assistance internationale et nous pensons que, pour que cette Convention ait vraiment un sens, il faut que l'on puisse aider les pays africains, sinon nous aurions à participer à l'élaboration de cette convention sans qu'au niveau de la participation pratique nous puissions répondre à l'appel. Aussi nous sommes sûrs que le Comité international qui a permis l'émergence de cette Convention retiendra cette nécessité, aussi bien au niveau de la FAO qu'au plan de la coopération internationale, d'apporter toute l'assistance nécessaire aux pays en développement régional et aux pays africains en particulier dans la mise en oeuvre des différentes dispositions pertinentes de cette Convention.

Dans le même ordre d'idées, Monsieur le Président, nous envisageons avec intérêt mais également préoccupation la période intérimaire avant l'entrée en vigueur de la Convention: c'est-à-dire la période qui couvre l'adoption, par la Conférence, de la Convention révisée et l'entrée en vigueur des révisions elles-mêmes. Cette période pourrait en effet s'étendre sur plusieurs années. C'est pourquoi nous voudrions souligner la nécessité de l'adoption de mesures intérimaires pour commencer à mettre en oeuvre la nouvelle procédure d'élaboration des normes, permettre l'emploi de nouveaux certificats phytosanitaires et entreprendre l'élaboration de normes pour les organismes nuisibles réglementés non soumis à quarantaine. Il faudrait dans ce cadre, nous semble-t-il, prévoir la mise en place d'une commission intérimaire sur les mesures phytosanitaires par la Conférence de la FAO. Voilà, nous semble-t-il, en nous félicitant encore une fois de l'aboutissement de ce processus qui aura été long, complexe mais utile pour l'avenir de nos pays et de la coopération internationale, les informations que nous voulions soumettre en espérant que celles-ci pourront être traduites en recommandations pour la Conférence qui va adopter cette importante contribution à l'élaboration du droit international.

Peut-être un petit mot concernant la proposition qui nous a été lue par le Conseiller juridique et qui figure à l'Article III, en anglais d'ailleurs, "Relations avec d'autres accords internationaux". Peut-être le contenu de ce projet pourrait venir après l'Article XX parce qu'il nous semble qu'au niveau de l'Article III c'est peut-être trop tôt déjà d'engager ce point de la relation avec d'autres accords internationaux; de même, nous nous posons la question de la pertinence de l'utilisation du terme "existing" dans la mesure à notre sens, sous réserve de ce qu'en pensera le Conseiller juridique M. Moore, où nous pensons que "existing" est superflu dans la mesure où l'on se réfère déjà à "applicable". Cela m'étonnerait que quelque chose d'"applicable" n'existe pas et au plan juridique d'ailleurs je ne vois pas la pertinence de ce mot "existing". Après l'Article XXI, m'a dit mon collègue, plutôt que l'Article XX c'est l'Article XXI qui parle d'entrée en vigueur. Donc nous voudrions poser la question au Conseiller juridique de la pertinence de ce terme "existing" dans la mesure où il semble déjà couvert par le mot "applicable". Enfin, peut-être qu'il a une autre interprétation juridique sur ce plan-là.

EL PRESIDENTE: El Consejo desea transmitirle como Presidente del Grupo Africano, su agradecimiento por el trabajo del grupo de expertos de la región africana sobre este tema y la colaboración positiva para afinar el texto. Le agradecemos también el apoyo al texto revisado como ha sido presentado y, desde luego, también sobre la enmienda que ha planteado el Asesor Legal. Usted recibirá una respuesta respecto al uso de esa expresión, "existentes" en vez de aplicables pero lo importante de su declaración es el apoyo al texto y, desde luego se toma nota de la relevancia de la Cooperación Técnica y de que esta sea una recomendación para que se pueda instrumentar el texto del convenio.

Veo que hay un Punto de Orden por parte del distinguido representante de Egipto.

POINT OF ORDER

POINT D'ORDRE

PUNTO DE ORDEN

Adel Mahmoud ABOUL-NAGA (Egypt): All these interventions are just comments. I am proposing that we clear the IPPC by acclamation. If we do that, then, we can open the floor for any comments. This is a result of a long, long procedure and we are all happy to achieve it. Let us agree it and if we have any comments, anything to be recorded, let us have it afterwards. This is my proposal for the Council.

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias por su propuesta. Lo que puedo hacer es pedir a los distinguidos delegados que hagan uso de la palabra en la medida en que sea relevante para la aprobación de este texto por parte del Consejo a fin de que sea enviado al CACJ.

Si no tienen nada substancial que agregar o que enmendar, les pido que no hagan uso de la palabra para poder terminar en tiempo nuestra reunión.

John GRIEFER (United States of America): I will be very brief. I just want to affirm basically the movement forward on this. The United States views at the final revised draft text is a success and as such, we support the recommendation made in the COAG Report that the final revised IPPC draft be submitted to Conference.

David SANDS SMITH (United Kingdom): Can you please pass the word to The Netherlands European Union Presidency.

J.B. PIETERS (Observer for the Netherlands): The statement for the record. I made a mistake. I was saying Article VII, paragraph 2 (a), but it has to be 1 (a), and because it is the statement for the record, we have to be very precise.

Secondly, it was explained to me that the proposed text by the Legal Counsellor is a standard clause, common to many environmental agreements and it is under this understanding, that we agree with the proposed handling of this subject. Furthermore, the location and the wording of the new Article 3 has to be dealt with in the Commission on Legal Matters, therefore, for the record, I have liked to have assurance from the Legal Counsellor that what I am saying is correct.

Kezimbira Lawrence MIYINGO (Uganda): I am in agreement with the text of this document but I wondered whether there could be an improvement in the certificate. I see, under the certificate, the mode for sanitary certificate, Annex 1.14, the words -- if you go to below the area to be filled in - "...this is to certify". I see that, for example, there is "..this is to certify that the plants and plant products, as stated herein, have been inspected and all tested according to appropriate official procedure and are considered..". I wonder whether the word should be "considered" or "have been found".

"Considered", is as if one is guessing, rather than "have been found", because it would be a technical person examining this who, I think, should be able to say for certain, rather than "consider". At least this is the way we do it in veterinary practice and I thought a practitioner should be able to say "I have found" and stand by his word over that, rather than "are considered", which is speculation. This is what I wanted to point out. I do not know whether it is pertinent.

EL PRESIDENTE: Yo no se si esta propuesta es tan relevante que nos lleve a abrir el debate de nuevo sobre el texto. Yo preferiría que la dejáramos a un lado y que nos concentremos en lo importante del texto y esto es, que ha sido acordado por consenso y hasta ahora sin corchetes. Yo espero que usted entienda el compromiso delicadísimo en el que estamos.

Voy a pasar la palabra al señor Asesor Legal antes de proceder, como había dicho el delegado de Egipto, de adoptar este texto por aclamación para ser enviado al CACJ.

LEGAL COUNSEL: Yes, I would just like to confirm that, in fact, the wording of the new Article III, or wherever it is to be located, is in fact a fairly standard clause that is to be found in most, if not all, of the new multi-lateral agreements, including particularly those relating to environmental matters, and I refer to agreements such as the new Desertification Convention and a whole host of others.

In fact, just last week, I was in Geneva, and we were dealing with the proposed new international legally-binding instrument for the application of the prior-informed consent procedure and there the Legal Drafting Committee was involved in drawing up a draft on relationship with other agreements which reads very similarly to this: "The provisions of this conventual shall not affect the rights and obligations of any party deriving from any [existing] international agreement, etcetera".

There are, of course, differences in the wording of the various clauses. Always, there are some differences in the wording. The concept, I think, is the most important thing. But I think the distinguished delegate of Senegal was very right to query whether it is necessary to have the word "existing" as well as "applicable". I think the word "applicable" refers to the requirement that the agreement is pertinent to the subject matter and "applicable" as among the parties. The word "existing" refers to whether the other agreements are already in force and very many of the agreements do, in fact, use both of these criteria. However, I think this is a matter that perhaps you should refer, as has been suggested, to the CCLM, to look at the precise wording, and whether it is necessary to have the word "existing", or whether that should be taken out. This is really a legal matter which the CCLM can decide, together with the location and the other legal implications of this provision.

EL PRESIDENTE: Distinguidos delegados, yo espero que con esta aclaración y en virtud de que este texto va a ser revisado por el CACJ - en donde esta cuestión en particular presentada por Senegal va a ser estudiada - este Consejo pueda acoger por aclamación el texto revisado para someterlo al CACJ y de allí enviarlo al Consejo. ¿Están de acuerdo?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

EL PRESIDENTE: Bien, distinguidos delegados, cerramos esta parte del Tema 11 que queda concluida. Le debemos agradecer al señor Holtzhausen por sus esfuerzos así como al Grupo de Trabajo que se reunió el día de hoy en la mañana y felicitarnos, congratulamos, como lo expresaron ustedes por este avance importante hacia la adopción final de la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria. Muchas gracias a usted, muchas gracias al Asesor Legal y vamos a pasar ahora a los otros temas del Informe del COAG, en particular, como les había dicho, el examen de las Normas para la Armonización de la Cuarentena de las Plantas y las Recomendaciones del Grupo Especial de Expertos sobre Recursos Zoogenéticos. ¿Hay alguna Delegación que desea hacer uso de la palabra al respecto? ¿No? El Consejo entonces toma nota del Informe del COAG y lo adopta.

Applause

Applaudissements

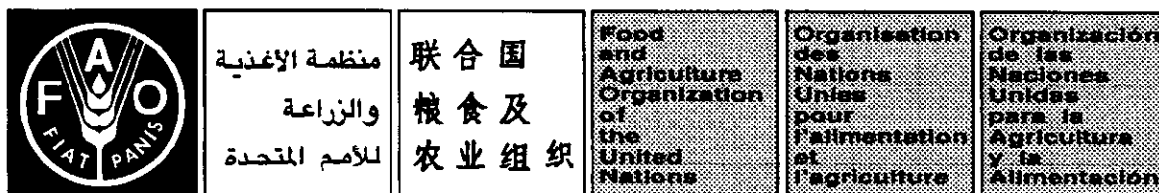
Aplausos

The meeting rose at 19.50 hours

La séance est levée à 19 h 50

Se levanta la sesión a las 19.50 horas

6 June 1997



COUNCIL

CONSEIL

CONSEJO

Hundred and Twelfth Session • Cent douzième session • 112° período de sesiones

SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING
SEPTIEME SEANCE PLENTERE
SÉPTIMA SESIÓN PLENARIA

6 June 1997

The Seventh Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.50 hours
Mr José Ramón López Portillo,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding

La septième sous la présidence de M. José Ramón López Portillo,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la séptima sesión plenaria a las 9.50 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. José Ramón López Portillo,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

- IV PROGRAMME, BUDGETARY, FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS** (continued)
- IV QUESTIONS CONCERNANT LE PROGRAMME, LE BUDGET, LES FINANCES ET L' ADMINISTRATION** (suite)
- IV ASUNTOS DEL PROGRAMA Y ASUNTOS PRESUPUESTARIOS, FINANCIEROS Y ADMINISTRATIVOS** (continuación)
- 18 Reports of the 86th (Rome, 28-29 January 1997) and 87th (Rome, 21-29 April 1997) Sessions of the Finance Committee** (continued)
- 18 Rapports des quatre-vingt-sixième et quatre-vingt-septième sessions du Comité financier (Rome, 28-29 janvier 1997 et 21-29 avril 1997)** (suite)
- 18 Informes del 86° (Roma, 28-29 de enero de 1997) y 87° (Roma, 21-29 de abril de 1997) períodos de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas** (continuación)
- 18.1 Status of Contributions**
- 18.1 Situation des contributions**
- 18.1 Estado de las cuotas**
- 18.2 Budgetary Performance 1996**
- 18.2 Exécution du budget, 1996**
- 18.2 Ejecución del presupuesto de 1996**
- 18.3 Scale of Contributions 1998-99**
- 18.3 Barème des contributions 1998-99**
- 18.3 Escala de cuotas para 1998-99**
- 18.4 Other Matters Arising out of the Reports**
- 18.4 Autres questions soulevées dans les rapports**
- 18.4 Otros asuntos planteados en los informes**

EL PRESIDENTE: Se abre la séptima sesión plenaria del Consejo. Recordarán ustedes, distinguidos delegados, que ayer no concluimos el Tema 18 de nuestra agenda, lo tuvimos que suspender para dar entrada al Tema 11 y en particular, al tratamiento del texto de la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria.

José ROBLES AGUILAR (México): Dos comentarios breves y una pregunta: primero queremos apoyar su decisión de que no se reabra en este punto lo acordado en el marco del Tema 16. En relación con el estado de las cuotas, reiteramos la posición de que es muy importante que se cubran los atrasos, muy en especial por parte de aquellos países que están en capacidad de hacerlo. En este sentido damos la bienvenida a lo señalado por la distinguida delegación de Estados Unidos respecto al anuncio del pago de sus atrasos.

Finalmente, señor Presidente, nos gustaría preguntar sobre la propuesta que están sometiendo los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas; en concreto, la propuesta del proyecto de resolución sobre Escalas de Cuotas para 1998-99: nos gustaría saber cuál sería la situación a la luz de que la quinta Comisión en la Asamblea General no llegara a un acuerdo sobre el particular y el cual será objeto de discusión en el marco del 52° período del AGONU que comienza en septiembre próximo. Nos gustaría saber cuál sería esta situación.

Ralph BOYCE (Barbados): I wanted to speak very briefly on the Incentive Scheme. I notice that there is a proposal from the Director-General to abolish the Scheme which was deemed not appropriate by some Members. I would like to support that proposal because, it is the view of Barbados and other Caribbean countries, that the countries that pay early would normally have paid early. Some countries which pay late perhaps cannot pay or are not willing to pay. I think it may be

better to try and introduce other penalties for late payment, rather than to give rebates which amounts to a reduction in the actual amount of money available for expenditure.

In terms of how the governments' financial schemes work, I think it would also be useful to have timely requests for payment to the countries. Certainly, in the case of Barbados, as soon as a request comes in, we deal with it fairly promptly through the Accounts Section. I think we should probably try to emphasize more the need to introduce other schemes to encourage countries to pay.

Indeed, in looking at the suggestions on page 38 of the document, it is not clear that it was the Incentive Scheme that led to the increase in the number of countries paying. I think somebody, two other countries made that point, I do not think that there is any data that strongly suggests or conclusively makes the point that it was the Incentive Scheme that caused these things to happen. It could have been other factors which are not clear.

In brief, I think we should support the Director-General's proposal that the Incentive Scheme be abolished and that there should be others means of encouraging payments and penalizing countries that pay late, including the whole business of countries not being able to vote. I gather that this is not always implemented. If countries have not paid, there should be other ways and means of encouraging them to pay rather than to giving discounts and incentives to people who would normally have paid early.

Ms Kajenwan ITHARATTANA (Thailand): My delegation thanks the Acting Chairman of the Finance Committee for introducing the Report of the Finance Committee, I will remit myself only on the Incentive Scheme to collect prompt payment of contributions.

Having looked at the table on para 3.66, the number of Member Nations who paid their contributions at 31 March 1992 was only 22, and the number has increased to 41 in 1997 at the same period. Within five years the number of Member Nations was increased by nearly 90 percent. I think the number has increased significantly. Therefore this activity contained in para 3.67, in this regard, I fully share the view expressed by the Canadian delegation yesterday.

Thailand could support the Director-General's proposal to abolish the Incentive Scheme only if an alternate scheme of incentive or penalty was concurrently introduced.

In closing, my delegation requests the Finance Committee to reconsider this issue again in the next meeting. If possible, the Finance Committee may recommend ways and means to motivate Member Nations to pay their contributions promptly.

Luigi FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy): Just referring to a very delicate issue, the issue of arrears. Everybody knows that this situation is certainly not positive and that, consequently, it is very important that the amount of arrears which is still to be paid be received, as soon as possible, in order to improve the financial situation of the Organization and, in particular, to cover the accumulated deficit and possibly to cover the After-Service Medical Liabilities.

Concerning the Incentive Scheme for any payments of contributions, we notice that in 1997 there was an increase of the number of Member Nations who paid timely their contribution, 41 compared to 35 in 1996. However, the percentage of the total contribution which was timely paid, 46.92 percent, is still unsatisfactory. I recall when I was in OECD, there was an equivalent scheme both ways, just incentivating those who paid early and penalizing those who paid later. I think that maybe it was a too sophisticated system but the results were very good because people were incentivated to pay early and, as a matter of fact, is something that I would suggest for this Organization. On the positive side, I understand that it is difficult to penalize people that have difficulties in paying on time but at least, to prize those that pay early has quite a good and positive effect.

So, referring to the decision of the Director-General, to suspend the Incentive Scheme, we would like to point out that this decision might cause an increase of the arrears. Consequently, we are not in favour of this decision. In general, we think that the financial situation of the Organization is still serious, even if some contributors have pronounced encouraging statements confirming their engagement of paying arrears. However, we have not sufficient time before the Conference, which is called to approve the Programme of Work and Budget for the 1998-99 biennium and to take decisions about other accumulated expenses of the Organization, such as those for After-Service Medical Liabilities. It would be extremely important that a large amount of current contributions and arrears be paid before the Conference.

Khalid MEHBOOB (Assistant Director-General, Administration and Finance Department):

There are quite a few questions on, particularly, the After-Service Medical Coverage. I, together with my colleague Mr Ruddy, would try and answer the questions which have been posed.

The first one, is how the arrears could be used for such liabilities and whether they can be? The arrears are just like any other contributions, they are credited to the general fund and the Conference is sovereign and can decide how they should be used. But, here again, there are some legal aspects which I would ask, later on when Mr Moore takes the floor to expand on this question.

There was a question from the distinguished Representative of Canada on whether there can be some staff participation in the absorption of some of these service costs. The figure for service costs is the Organization's portion of the liability which the Organization has to face and, consequently, the staff would not be able to absorb any of these costs, it's the Organization's share of the liability.

There was a question of why should we not follow what the UN is doing or some of the other organizations in the UN System. All the UN organizations are beginning to look at this question. In the last biennium we actually were doing what the UN is doing, in other words, not providing any figure but showing a note disclosure in our financial statements. But the UN and the other Specialized Agencies are beginning to look at this issue and they would probably be coming up with similar suggestions as the Organization is doing.

There was a question on the difference between the accounting and the funding of such liabilities and a further question as to what the Organization is doing to recover from some of the other partners of the Organization in implementing its programmes. With your permission, Sir, if I could ask Mr Ruddy to deal with these two questions.

M. RUDDY (Director, Finance Division): What I might do is just try to briefly mention the steps we have taken since the Finance Committee met and first addressed this question, a couple of months ago.

The first thing we did is to meet with the External Auditor to try and agree on how we would record this liability on the books of FAO at the end of 1997. And, we have agreed that we should record one-thirtieth of the overhang that belongs to FAO, that is, if you look at the table on page 40, it shows the FAO portion under funded liability, as US\$ 108 million plus US\$ 16 million in support costs, so about US\$ 124 million would be the initial recording of FAO's liability.

The recording would take two forms, firstly, we would propose to amortize the liability over a thirty-year period. So, we would in fact bring under the books as an unfunded liability one-thirtieth of US\$ 124 million with the actuarial calculation determining the precise amount of money.

Secondly, we would disclose in a footnote to the Financial Statements the remaining portion of that liability that belongs to FAO, based on the actuarial work, and also mention that there is an additional contention liability, if our partners fail to agree to pick up their share of the liability.

The second thing we have done is to draft letters to all of the participating agencies pointing out the findings of this study, attaching a copy of the study, and alerting them that these figures reflect the projections done by the actuaries in January 1996, and therefore they are approximate; that we intend to ask the actuaries back late this year and to update the study so that when, early in 1998, we will be sending them more precise figures on their share of the unfunded liability. At that time, we intend to try to "bill them" for their portion of the liability.

Whether they, in fact, will feel obligated to pay is an entirely different question. In many cases, maybe Mr Moore will speak on this, but I do not think we have a legal basis to collect, particularly in the case of Trust Funds, where the contracts are over the accounts settled and it would be very difficult to get them reopened.

That is where we stand on the accounting side of it. The funding side is an entirely different issue, much more difficult and perhaps, Mr Wade will take on that issue.

LEGAL COUNSEL: I would like to deal first with answers to the question from the distinguished delegate from Mexico, regarding the position with respect to the UN General Assembly and the Scale of Contributions.

Maybe I should explain a little background to begin with. Basically, the setting of the Scale of Contributions is the responsibility of the FAO Conference, under the Basic Texts of the Organization and, in particular, Article XVIII of the Constitution.

Since 1955, the Conference has always indicated that the FAO Scale of Contributions should be derived directly from the United Nations Scale of Assessments; there was a decision to that effect by the FAO Conference in 1955.

Normally, the FAO Conference uses the Scale of Assessments of the United Nations which is in force for the Conference year. So, in this case, it would be for 1997.

There is a difference between the way in which the FAO Conference sets the Scale of Contributions: it sets a Scale of Contributions for FAO on a biennial basis. In other words, it sets a Scale of Contributions for two years: the first year of the biennium and the second year of the biennium. The United Nations General Assembly, on the other hand, sets the Scale of Assessments for the United Nations on a three-year period, which sometimes overlaps with that in FAO and sometimes not, as you will understand. In the present situation, the Scale of Assessments now in force for the United Nations was adopted in December 1994 and covers the period 1995, 1996 and up to December 1997.

As I said, in FAO we normally follow the Scale of Assessments in force in the Conference year. For the last biennium, however, there was a change to this practice and, in fact, since the Scale of Assessments in the United Nations was known for the period 1996-97, it was adopted in December 1994, the FAO Conference decided to align the Scale of Contributions of FAO with the UN Scale of Assessments in force for that period. That was because there was some change, I understand that there were transitional changes in the Scale of Assessments to take into account Eastern Europe, and the quite substantial changes over that period in the Scale of Assessments in the United Nations.

I understand that the Scale of Assessments in the United Nations will be under discussion from the autumn on. The question from the delegate of Mexico is, what is the position with respect to this in the General Assembly and how it will affect us. I think the answer is that, if there is a decision taken in the General Assembly before the time of the Conference, then the Conference could, if it so wished, follow the new Scale of Assessments for the next biennium -- the Scale of Assessments then which would be adopted by the United Nations for the forthcoming three years. It is up to the Conference to take that decision. It may either stick with the 1997 Scale of Assessments, as has

been the practice in the past, or it may decide to derive the FAO Scale of Contributions from the UN the Scale of Assessments that will be in force for 1998-99, as it did in the last biennium. So that is up to the FAO Conference to decide, you, the Member Governments, to decide in November.

If, on the other hand, there is no clear decision from the General Assembly as to any new Scale of Assessments adopted by the General Assembly, then you will have to, first of all, decide whether you will, as the normal practice is, take the 1997 UN Scale of Assessments -- that is the UN Scale in force right at the moment. There has also been a suggestion made in the Finance Committee that the Conference may wish to include an amendment in the Appropriations Resolution that would authorize the FAO Scale to be modified after adoption in December, for example, to take into account any subsequent changes in the UN Scale of Assessments covering 1998-99.

I should also point out that the Committee considered that it was premature to attempt to include any such amendments in the Appropriations Resolution, but it requested that the Secretariat follow the evolution of this issue in the UN Committee on Contributions closely, and revert to it at its September session with an updated situation.

If I may provide some information on what is happening in sister agencies in WHO at the 50th World Health Assembly, a Scale of Assessments was adopted for the financial period 1998-99, which was based on the present Scale of Assessments in the United Nations in force for 1997. I understand, however, there was a request that the Director-General report to the 51st World Health Assembly - that is next year, next May -- on changes, if any, to the Scale of Assessments adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its 52nd Session -- that is in autumn 1997 - and on all the implications for WHO, including its earliest comparable application, taking into account the deliberations of the 50th World Health Assembly and in accordance with the Constitution and Financial Regulations of the World Health Organization and relevant World Health Assembly Resolutions. It also reaffirmed the principle that the WHO Scale of Assessments should be based upon the latest available Scale of Assessments adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The situation in WHO is, of course, different from FAO in that the World Health Assembly meets annually.

If I may now turn to the question raised by the distinguished delegate of Canada. He asked for some explanation of the rules covering the use of arrears, particularly in relation to the recommendation of the Finance Committee regarding acceleration of amortization of the After-Service Medical Coverage shortfall.

I should say that, generally, in principle, arrears are contributions to the Organization. They are contributions which are paid late, but they are contributions to the Organization, and they are subject to the normal rules regarding the use of contributions to the Organization in the Basic Texts, and they should be used for the purposes which the Conference decides in the context of its biennial budget.

I think, however, the distinguished delegate of Canada was also referring to the specific rules which relate to the use of budget surpluses, because the recommendation of the Finance Committee was to examine the implications of the utilization of budget surpluses to accelerate the amortization period.

In this context, I would refer you to Financial Regulation 6.1(b), which indicates that any cash surplus in the General Fund at the close of any financial period shall be allocated among Member Nations in accordance with the Scale of Contributions applicable to that period and, as of 1 January following the year in which the audit of the financial accounts of the financial period is completed, shall be released and applied to liquidate, in whole or in part, first, any advance due to the Working Capital Fund, secondly, any arrears of contributions, and thirdly, contributions for the calendar year following the year in which the audit is completed.

I should also point out, however, that, on a number of occasions, the Conference has made decisions in derogation of Financial Regulation 6.1(b) I believe it should do so with a two-thirds' majority, in accordance with the Financial Regulations. As I say, it has, on occasion, made derogation from this Financial Regulation, particularly to indicate that money should be paid to the Special Reserve Account, to replenish it. It is up to the Conference to take this decision. There are precedents to say that it could take a decision of this kind and it could indicate that the surpluses, if the Conference in the exercise of its sovereign powers so declares, should be used for such other purposes as it decides at the time are appropriate.

I hope that answers your question.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation): I'd like to return for a moment to After-Service Medical Care and the funding issue. In response to the question from the distinguished delegate from the United States of America, as to what is in the current budget proposal and how it is distributed by chapter, I can confirm that the SPWB includes US\$ 6.6 million for After-Service Medical Care under the line for Social Security, in the table for Cost Increases, shown in paragraph 102 of CL 112/3, US\$ 6.6 million is in there on a pay-as-you-go basis, in fact.

To respond to the second part of that question, which is how is it shown in the budget, where is it in the budget and where is it by chapter. Because it is part of staff costs, part of the entitlements, it is shown in the standard cost that is applied by grade across the entire budget. So it is part of the cost of a staff member, be it General Service or Professional, and therefore the US\$ 6.6 million appears wherever staff costs appear in the budget.

This, of course, leads to the funding issue. If you fund After-Service Medical Care in the budget, you increase the cost increase provision, which increases the standard cost, which increases the cost across all of the programmes to cover that particular provision.

There was a question raised as to whether the option exists to fund it or not to fund it. I think the answer is clearly yes, the option does exist. But please bear in mind that all of the figures you have received so far about the annual cost assume, and I should say the actuary assumes, that there will be a fund, which is gradually growing and earning interest. If there is not a fund, then the cost will grow every year at an exponential rate. So, the decision not to fund it is also a decision to recognize that you are going to let the liability grow and that it will have to be faced at a later date.

Some questions were asked as regards the figures that I was quoting and I did take a slightly different line - these are very much estimates at this stage. I quoted a figure of US\$ 17 million in my intervention on the SPWB. This is based on the Actuarial Study as being the share of the incremental amount that the regular budget would have to pay of the total recurring cost if it decided to charge it to the budget. So, it is on top of the US\$ 6.6 million, if I can clarify that. It consists of two elements: it consists of the service cost and then the amortization over thirty years of the accrued liability. The service cost has been defined to you as the amount that the Organization has to put aside to pay for its share of the claims that current serving staff will incur when they retire. I have taken, and this is slightly different from what Mr Ruddy said, because I was taking a rather conservative view from the point of view of planning, I have taken the share which is applicable to the Regular Programme, Support Costs and the Trust Fund element, because the Finance Committee's recommendation to you is that -- I am quoting paragraph 3.77(a). of the Finance Committee's report, CL 112/14, -- "Given the difficulty inherent in establishing the liability of individual Trust Fund donors, FAO should assume responsibility for the accumulated liabilities on Trust Fund programmes." Therefore, my US\$ 17 million includes that share as well.

I want to clarify something there, because I have misled you slightly. I said there were two elements: service costs and the amortization. On the service costs, we are only taking, obviously,

the Regular Programme and the support costs share, because all future Trust Funds will be charged with their share of the service cost. On the amortization, which is the past liability, we are taking the Regular Programme, the support costs and the Trust Fund elements. The respective percentages there, you could work out for yourself from the table in paragraph 3.72, but, for your information, Regular Programme is 51 percent, support cost is 8 percent and Trust Fund is another 14 percent.

Based on the same percentages, or adding up those figures, the total accrued liability at the moment, as calculated at 1 January 1996, for the unamortized accrued liability for After-Service Medical Care, would be US\$ 154 million. The difference between my figure and Mr Ruddy's is that mine is more conservative and has the US\$ 30 million's worth for Trust Funds.

There was a second question which I would like to respond to. The distinguished observer of the Netherlands made a comment in his statement which I regret I have to correct. He stated that, with regard to the Annual Report of Budgetary Performance, and I quote: "we note with concern the projected transfer of resources from the technical programmes to general policies and direction, support and common services, and share the Finance Committee's concern that this trend should be reversed".

I have no objection to that statement. We agree entirely.

It then states: "These transfers have been exercised without prior consultation of Member Nations and not always in line with the priority-setting which should remain the guidelines". That is unfortunate as a statement: I would have preferred it as a question. It is not correct and, for the record, I need to take you through the history of what happened here.

This transfer arises out of the adjustments to the 1996-97 Programme of Work and Budget. In fact, in the paper that we presented to the Finance Committee in May 1996, taking the budget down from the US\$ 706.9 million that had been included in the appropriation distribution by chapter to the US\$ 650 million that you approved as the Appropriation, we provided a paper to the Finance Committee, reference PC 74/2 and FC 84/4. That paper was reprinted for the benefit of the Council as Rev-1. Paragraphs 54, 55 and 56 described what was going to have to happen as regards the new financial framework for the publications pool. In particular, it noted that we would need up to US\$ 7.5 million for separation costs and that these were not funded in the budget, because you were not prepared to provide additional funds for that purpose. But, so that we could implement the proposed change aimed at efficiency savings, we would in fact rely on the savings from vacancies on Professional posts, and we gave you an estimate of what those vacancies were at that time.

We then also described, in paragraph 55, that there was a key point to be brought to the attention of the Committees, which was the impact of the proposal on the budget by chapter. The potential changes in the new financial framework implied the need to adjust the charge-out rates to reflect, as much as possible, the actual costs incurred for services which will, in turn, tend to increase the costs of meeting documentation. So, a change in the charging structure was going to change the distribution of costs. Secondly, the need to identify some costs as direct Regular Programme expenditures so as to remove unjustified overhead charges from the internal rates and thus allow fair competition with external contractors. The example we gave in the paper was that we took out the cost of the Terminology and Reference Section from the pool charges and put it in Chapter one. Why? Because to include that in the rates for our translators was unfair. The outside translators do not have to bear that cost, so why should the internal translators bear that cost if we are going to settle a level playing field for their work?

There are many other examples of those sorts of transfers.

We concluded in that paper, referring to both separations and the change in structure: "In either case, this could cause a shift in resources from one chapter to another. As insufficient progress has

been made on this aspect to forecast the full effect, the Director-General wishes to advise the Finance Committee that he will report on this aspect at its April/May 1997 session".

The Committees recognized that fact and reported, in paragraph 3.15 of CL 111/14, that they were aware that such transfers would be required and they expressed their concern that this could adversely affect the technical programmes' delivery, given that the majority of Professional vacancies were in the technical departments or in the technical groups of decentralized offices.

I continue to quote: "This absorption of the separation costs and other related factors may entail some budgetary transfers during the course of the biennium".

That report was, of course, endorsed by the 111th Session of the Council and so the conclusion I draw is that we have been totally fastidious in our consultations with the Finance Committee, which has, of course, the authority to approve such transfers under Financial Regulation 4.5.b)l).

So, my conclusion is that we feel that that statement should be corrected.

Thomas Austin FORBORD (Chairman, Finance Committee) I think the Secretariat will answer the many questions put by Members. I just want to make a note of what the Council has indicated. There were three decisions or guidance questions that the Council needed to express itself on.

There is a split on the Incentive Scheme. No consensus either way.

Those that expressed themselves on the Scale of Contributions said it was premature to establish a scale and they would prefer to wait and see what happens in New York.

On the After-Service Medical Costs, mostly you asked questions and you have not provided any guidance to the Secretariat on what you wanted to do. I assume that leaves it to the Finance Committee, in September, to provide some further guidance.

Ronald ROSE (Canada): I just wanted to clarify one thing and to thank Mr Mehboob for his careful replies to my questions. He attributed one particular question to Canada and it was not a question that Canada had raised that dealt with the possibility of asking staff to bear some of additional cost for the After-Service Medical Costs. Canada has no compunction at all about putting additional demands on the staff but this is not one of the additional demands that we are asking of the staff.

Secondly, we do recognize that when it comes to finding ways of allocating to Trust Fund donors, their share of the accumulated After-Service Medical Costs, we recognize that you can not go back and reopen existing contracts. What we had asked for was the Finance Committee look for innovative ways of finding ways of recovering these costs in the future.

Thomas Austin FORBORD (Chairman, Finance Committee): Just on this last point, the recommendation of the Finance Committee. It is one that, regardless of what is done on amortization, the other part of the recommendation will be implemented and that is, in the future, all of the current costs, including the current cost of the future liabilities, will be in the budget. In January, we do start a somewhat different scheme, in that, those payments that should have been made in the past, will be made in the future. The outstanding question is whether we begin to amortize those that were not paid. So, when looking at this US\$ 17 million, as Mr Wade said, there are two components in there. One of those will be in the budget. One of them we still have a decision to make on. So, in reply, there is an innovative way that it is going to be collected, we are going to increase your assessments.

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation): First of all, I have some problems because we still have difficulties with these figures and that has obviously to be clarified.

The US\$ 6.6 million that is in the budget at the moment only pays for pay-as-you-go. It does not pay for the service cost. Just to get to the service cost, we would have to add a certain amount to the budget.

Now, can I say, there is a little bit of dispute internally about interpretation of the actuarial reports as to precisely how much has to be added, but it is between US\$ 6 and US\$ 8 million according to my calculations. We would still have to add some money to the budget to pick up the incremental cost of service cost. Then we have to add some more money for the amortization. So, that is where we stand at the moment.

Ronald ROSE (Canada): I thank the Chairman of the Finance Committee, Mr Forbord, for pointing out that the system that has been recommended by the Finance Committee for paying the accumulated arrears resulting from Trust Fund activities, was to charge the entire Membership. My comment was to recognize that was the proposal, but request that the Finance Committee look for a slightly more innovative way.

Secondly, my question would be to the Secretariat. Can they assure us that, in the future, when charges are made for Trust Fund activities, that these standard charges be say 10 percent, 13 percent, 15 percent, whatever, will include the cost of this after-service medical care as one of the components of that standard administrative cost, in the future?

Tony WADE (Director, Office of Programme, Budget and Evaluation): Just a clarification on the delegate of Canada's question. The main element of After-Service Medical Care cost that applies to Trust Funds is to the staff that are working on the Trust Fund themselves. Therefore, it would be charged directly to the project. At the moment, it is not charged in the overhead charge for 13 percent. So, the direct charge to the project, which is a direct charge for the total cost of the staff member, includes, at the moment, a share of After-Service Medical Cost. What is wrong, according to latest accounting standards, is that the calculation of that share is inadequate.

You are right that there would also be an adjustment to the support cost charge because the standard costs for support cost staff, the same as for Regular Programme staff, should also be increased to include the same provision. Therefore, there would be a marginal increase in the charge for posts which are paid for out of the income that we get from the 13 percent. I have to say that we would not change the 13 percent. We would have no justification for doing so. As you know, our policy there, is to reduce costs so that they equal to, or are less than, the 13 percent in any case.

Suharyvo HUSEN (Indonesia): Since Indonesia is not a member of the Finance Committee, I would like to make a brief statement on this Agenda item under discussion.

The Indonesian delegation would like to share its views with other speakers here, in supporting the Finance Committee to request the Secretariat to follow the evaluation of the issue of the scale of contributions for 1998-99 and the UN Committee on Contributions closely and refer to it at the September session with an updated situation.

Regarding the scheme on payments of contributions, the Indonesian delegation would also like to join other Members of the Committee, in considering that the Organization, FAO, should continue with the scheme, as the number of Member Nations, including Indonesia, having paid their contributions, in full, before 31 March, has considerably increased. Therefore, the Indonesian delegation fully supports the content of paragraph 3.68 of the document CL 112/14.

EL PRESIDENTE: Para organizar nuestros debates les pido que cuando deseen hacer alguna declaración, lo hagan en el tiempo dedicado para ello y no en la parte final, para no interrumpir el flujo natural de las presentaciones y respuestas de parte de la Secretaría y la conclusión de los trabajos.

Creo que podemos concluir este tema, en primer lugar diciendo que el Consejo tomó nota de los informes del 86° y 87° período de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas; tomó nota asimismo de la información actualizada sobre el estado de las cuotas, de las cuentas provisionales y de las inversiones de la Organización; observó además que había habido una mejora importante en el estado de las cuotas debido principalmente, al pago muy oportuno del segundo contribuyente de la Organización; tomó nota también de la intención del primer contribuyente de pagar cuanto antes sus cuotas, en noviembre y diciembre, así como su intención de pagar sus atrasos. No obstante, el Consejo lamentó una vez más que aún se registran importantes retrasos en el pago de las cuotas que obligan a la Organización a enfrentar déficits, dificultando la realización de sus tareas.

Respecto de la Escala de Cuotas propuesta para 1998-99, se señaló que la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas estaba estudiando la posibilidad de modificar dicha Escala y, se pidió a la Secretaría que mantuviera informado al Comité de Finanzas y luego al Consejo, para que el Comité de Finanzas en su reunión de septiembre pueda hacer una recomendación ulterior al Consejo. El Consejo también tomó nota de la práctica ya establecida de adaptar la Escala de Cuotas de las Naciones Unidas; la forma en que se llevará a cabo esta práctica dependerá de los acontecimientos en Naciones Unidas previendo además los posibles cambios subsecuentes en la Escala de Cuotas de las Naciones Unidas.

Se tomó nota asimismo, del Informe de la Ejecución del Presupuesto 1996, el cual se endosó.

En lo referente al Plan de Incentivos para fomentar el pago puntual de las cuotas, el Consejo tomó nota que en la práctica no se ha ejercido una influencia muy significativa sobre los Estados Miembros, siendo a su vez un elemento oneroso para la Organización, como lo indica el Informe del Comité de Finanzas. Se reiteró al Comité de Finanzas seguir estudiando este punto y también el hecho de que, el debate en torno a la Escala de Cuotas estuvo dividido respecto a la eliminación de este Plan, como lo recomendaba el Director General y otros miembros de la FAO. En vista de esta división de opiniones respecto a la supresión del Plan de Incentivos, el Consejo pidió a la Secretaría que presentara al Comité de Finanzas en septiembre, propuestas para reducir el costo general del Plan, con miras a recomendar una fórmula más efectiva y menos onerosa.

Podríamos aquí introducir alguna propuesta de compromiso, es decir que en virtud de que los incentivos se aplican hasta el 31 de marzo, podría considerarse que el descuento total del pago se vaya gradualizando de manera que, cuanto más temprano se efectúe el pago, el descuento sea mayor, de manera tal que hacia el 31 de marzo estos incentivos se hayan eliminado. Esta manera gradual quizá reduciría el costo y podría mantener el incentivo. Pero, en fin, es una propuesta que formulo y que podría quizá estudiar el Comité de Finanzas. Repito, no es que lo hayan propuesto ustedes, pero quizás es una fórmula de compromiso que podrían eventualmente aceptar.

En lo que respecta a la Terminación de Servicios y Post-Jubilación se tomó nota de los probables efectos de este asunto sobre los futuros presupuestos de la Organización y se coincidió con el Comité de Finanzas en financiar plenamente el pasivo exigible y aplicar un plan de amortización para el pasivo acumulado.

Finalmente, respecto de la cobertura del Seguro Médico Post-Servicio creo que el Consejo podría confirmar su petición al Director General de estudiar fórmulas para financiar este pasivo, de manera que afecte lo menos posible al Programa de Labores y Presupuesto. Estas opciones, entre las que aquí se han mencionado, podrían estudiarse en el Comité de Finanzas.

Adel Mahmoud ABOUL-NAGA (Egypt): Just one comment about that you referred to the Council that the Incentive Scheme did not affect the rate of payment. This was a financial conclusion but some of the Council Members did not agree with it. I think, I remember, that Canada and some other Member and myself, all agreed that it had an effect, so I do not think that it is the Council's conclusion.

Ronald ROSE (Canada): I simply wanted some clarification as to whether you were attempting to summarize the debate or whether you were trying to come up with, perhaps, an innovative way around. You began by saying that this was your impression of the summary of the debate, and then went on to say, as noted by the delegate from Egypt, that the Council agreed with the conclusion that the Incentive Scheme did not have any effect and should be eliminated. The way it was interpreted was "you note that the Council agreed with the conclusion that the Incentive Scheme did not have any effect on early payments".

EL PRESIDENTE: ¿Ha terminado usted distinguido delegado? Lo que dije es que el Consejo tomó nota del informe del Comité de Finanzas, de que el Esquema no había tenido una influencia muy significativa en promover el pago oportuno de los Estados Miembros. Estamos tomando nota solamente de lo que se refleja en el Comité y del hecho de que persiste una división en torno a la propuesta de suprimirlo, en virtud de que era un esquema oneroso a la Organización.

Eso era todo, estaba yo resumiendo el debate y estaba diciendo que tomábamos nota de lo que dice el Informe.

Ronald ROSE (Canada): Mr Chairman, because you then went on to note that the request that the Finance Committee continued to review this was withdrawn. There was no debate on that particular issue. Then you went on, with what I assumed was a compromise proposal that perhaps it could be reduced or introduced in a phased manner. I simply wanted to say that I did not share that interpretation of the debate.

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias, afortunadamente tomé nota de lo que dije, así que lo tengo por escrito y se lo voy a volver a leer. Lo que dije fue básicamente que se tomó nota de que no había ejercido una influencia muy significativa en las prácticas de los Estados Miembros a la vez que había sido bastante costoso. Es lo que dije al referirme al informe del Comité de Finanzas y luego mencioné, el Consejo tomó nota de que el Comité de Finanzas estuvo dividido respecto a la cuestión de eliminar este plan como lo recomendaba el Director General. El Consejo en vista de la división de opiniones respecto a la supresión del Plan de Incentivos, pidió a la Secretaría que presentara al Comité de Finanzas en septiembre propuestas para reducir el costo general del Plan con miras a recomendar una fórmula más efectiva y menos onerosa. Eso es lo que dije.

Pero eso es todo, simplemente hay que continuar buscando una fórmula con miras a que sea más efectiva y menos onerosa. ¿Tiene usted algo que agregar? Canadá tiene la palabra.

Ronald ROSE (Canada): No, not at this time Mr Chairman. Just to say that your note should, perhaps, be made available to the Drafting Committee because at one point you say, "the Council noted that the Payment Scheme had no effect" and in another point you say, "the Council noted the recommendation that the Payment Scheme had no effect." We just have to make sure it is the latter that we are talking about, but I do not agree that "the Council noted that the scheme has no effect." That is all.

EL PRESIDENTE: Afortunadamente lo tengo escrito con mi propia letra y usted podrá leerlo. No tiene, de todas maneras, ningún efecto mandatorio sobre el informe que ustedes van a aprobar. Sí subrayo que dije "efectos muy significativos", sobre la práctica de los Estados Miembros.

Obviamente intenté recoger el debate de la manera en que se dio y coincido con usted en que no hubo acuerdo. La propuesta creo que debe ser que se sigan buscando fórmulas más efectivas, menos onerosas y me atreví inclusive a sugerir una de compromiso que podría estudiarse también y que consistiría en gradualizar los incentivos de enero al 31 de marzo para que, conforme más temprano se pague mayor sea el descuento. Esa es una posibilidad que se puede estudiar en el Comité de Finanzas. Lo que sí debemos constatar es que el Consejo, como el Comité de Finanzas, estuvo dividido respecto a esta cuestión.

La próxima vez, quizá voy a leer mi resumen en varios idiomas para que no haya problemas.

Thomas Austin FORBORD (Chairman, Finance Committee): Maybe something to add and something to subtract. There were twelve countries that spoke on the Incentive Scheme, including a country speaking for a total of six countries. Three-fourths of those said they wanted to keep the current Scheme and one-fourth of them said they wanted to accept the Director-General's proposal. To me it sounds like the Committee rejected the proposal of the Director-General. Nobody made any proposals that we reduce the cost, except in your summary and maybe you could follow the advice that you gave to the delegate from Indonesia of making proposals in the appropriate place of the discussion rather than in the summary.

EL PRESIDENTE: Usted no me va a decir lo que tengo que decir o no tengo que decir. Tengo una posición independiente y puedo hacer recomendaciones al Consejo conforme considere pertinente para ayudar al debate y tomar una decisión. No le permito que se dirija a mi de esta manera.

De todas formas se ha hecho una propuesta de compromiso y creo que es útil el considerarla, o no considerarla, depende de ustedes. Pero la hago porque creo que podría ayudar a acercar las posiciones.

Respecto al debate sí estuvo dividido, y quizás si más delegados hubieran hecho uso de la palabra más delegados se habrían pronunciado en favor de una opción o la otra. Lo que está claro es que están divididas las posiciones. Eso es todo lo que tenemos que notar.

Yo no quisiera que este tema continuara, les aseguro a ustedes que no es mandatoria la forma en que he resumido los debates y que no se va a imponer al informe que ustedes adoptarán. Simplemente es una forma de indicar el sentido general de lo que ocurrió aquí y, desde luego, proponer fórmulas que ayuden al Consejo a llegar a conclusiones. Si no son aceptables por el Consejo serán rechazadas a la hora de adoptar el informe.

Kezimbira Lawrence MIYINGO (Uganda): I am a little bit worried by the comment of the Chairman of the Finance Committee because I think Council has debated this and several views were put forward. It is worrying to hear that we are going to go by the Committee's decision of rejecting the Director-General's recommendation because some of us did voice that we supported the Director-General.

David SANDS SMITH (United Kingdom): It almost seems that we are re-opening the debate. It seems to me, personally, that there were two elements. The first was that views were divided; the second was that the Finance Committee needs to consider this question further. How that goes forward, what conclusions the Finance Committee may meet, we will have to wait and see until our next meeting.

Ms Melinda L. KIMBLE (United States of America): I concur with the views of the United Kingdom. I think we have spent enough time and we need to send this back to the Finance Committee.

EL PRESIDENTE: Es eso lo que todos queremos, de manera que si no hay ninguna otra observación se da por concluido el Tema 18 y en su informe ustedes revisarán la forma en que se refleja el debate.

III ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP (continued)

III ACTIVITES DE LA FAO ET DU PAM (suite)

III ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y DEL PMA (continuación)

12 World Food Programme

12 Programme alimentaire mondial

12 Programa Mundial de Alimentos

12.1 1st Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board

12.1 Premier rapport annuel du Conseil d'administration du PAM

12.1 Primer informe anual de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA

12.2 Revision of the General Regulations of the WFP

12.2 Révision des Règles générales du PAM

12.2 Revisión de las Normas Generales del PMA

EL PRESIDENTE: Pasamos ahora al Tema 12 Programa Mundial de Alimentos que contiene dos puntos: 12.1 Primer informe anual de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA y 12.2 Revisión de las Normas Generales del PMA.

Los Temas 12.1 Primer informe de la Junta Ejecutiva y 12.2 de la Revisión de las Normas Generales, los vamos a tomar por separado.

Para presentar el Primer Informe de la Junta Ejecutiva, le voy a pedir a mi querido amigo Namanga Ngongi que presente este tema. Yo sé que va a ser un esfuerzo para hacerlo en español, que seguramente ha mejorado desde la última ocasión en que nos vimos, pero seguramente lo tiene escrito ya en inglés.

A. NAMANGA NGONGI (Director ejecutivo adjunto, PMA): Es un placer para mí participar en la reunión del Consejo de la FAO bajo su presidencia. Su liderazgo en el Consejo de la FAO ha siempre logrado resultados muy importantes.

Hoy es mi tarea presentar algunos documentos del PMA para discusión y aprobación del Consejo. Con su permiso, señor Presidente, hablaré en inglés. **(Continues in English)**

The present Report, put before the Council for comments and approval, is the first since the inception of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme and it is set in a new format. The information is kept very brief and focused on the issues of relevance to the FAO Council and ECOSOC. It combines what was, in previous years, reported in several separate documents.

The Report highlights issues related to decisions and recommendations of the Board that have policy and/or financial implications and matters for which the Board has legal reporting obligations towards the parent body. Other issues, such as operational and administrative matters covered in other Reports, have been given less importance.

Part One is the Report of the Executive Board on its substantive activities during 1996; Part Two contains information on follow-up actions on the implementation of the United Nations General Assembly and ECOSOC resolutions, including the issues of harmonization of programmes and follow-up to major United Nations Conferences, and conforms to a common format agreed upon by the forms and programmes of the United Nations.

At its annual session, during the discussions on the relevant Agenda Item, the Board decided that additional information, related to new initiatives and further developments, be incorporated before the transmission of the document to Council. An addendum has, therefore, been issued to comply with the Board's decision. It has been circulated as document CL 112/13-Corr.1.

Juan NUIRY SANCHEZ (Cuba): En primer lugar agradecemos al señor Ngongi, la presentación y subrayamos, como él ha expresado, que este documento está dentro de una composición nueva de informe que adoptó la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA, de forma breve, ágil y tomando las cuestiones fundamentales.

En primer lugar, tenemos que resaltar que el Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe tuvo una amplia participación en todos estos debates y en la confección de este documento, razón por la cual podemos aceptarlo como está. Es una propuesta que nosotros hacemos, conocemos y planteamos la alta estimación que tiene nuestro Grupo Regional con los métodos de trabajo del PMA dentro de la política multilateral y de la cooperación internacional.

Señor Presidente, nosotros quisiéramos dentro de este rasgo de universalidad que caracteriza al PMA hacer un comentario muy apropiado, además tenemos la suerte de tener entre nosotros al Presidente de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA, el distinguido Embajador de Francia. Queremos subrayar un hecho que es fundamental. En la primera reunión del PMA, después de la Cumbre, el primer punto que se puso en la agenda fue el seguimiento del PMA y esto es una cuestión que quiero destacar porque nosotros planteamos, como Grupo Latinoamericano y del Caribe, toda una serie de planes de seguimiento a la Cumbre. Eso lo debe tomar en consideración el Consejo. Nosotros hemos planteado que hay organismos dentro del sistema de Naciones Unidas que tienen que ver con la alimentación y con la agricultura, que sin dejar sus características, reflejan cuestiones fundamentales que están señaladas tanto en la Declaración Política como en el Plan de Acción. Entonces, nosotros tenemos que tener en cuenta esto porque hemos contraído un compromiso como Cumbre de erradicar el flagelo del hambre y la malnutrición; hemos puesto ésto como énfasis fundamental que quiero, si usted me lo permite señor Presidente subrayarlo, ayudar a los pueblos para salir del hambre y de la miseria. Precisamente en la última Junta Ejecutiva nosotros, como Presidente del Grupo Latinoamericano y del Caribe, coincidimos con la distinguida Representación de Senegal, Presidente del Grupo Africano, en señalar el sabio proverbio chino: es mejor aprender a pescar que comer pescado un día.

Aquí se ha hablado mucho de poder cuestionar lo que es la ayuda al desarrollo. Este es un punto que también se debatió y lo queremos subrayar, señor Presidente. Queremos destacar y que se tenga en cuenta aquí que hay unas propuestas del Grupo Latinoamericano y del Caribe relacionadas al primer punto de la agenda del PMA de trabajo de seguimiento de la Cumbre. Teniendo en cuenta todo lo que hemos manifestado, y vista su importancia, queremos que se subraye.

Uu Suhadi MAWARADANA (Indonesia): On behalf of the Indonesian delegation I wish to thank the Secretariat for its WFP Annual Report 1996, document CL 112/13 before us. I would briefly note that, as it states in the report, WFP has examined and questioned its method of work and procedure in order to increase this efficiency cost-effectively and transparently. It came out in the text.

We also note that a provision therefore has been made by WFP, identifying the current and future policy issues concerning equipment, economic regimen and practice of distribution of food aid, increasing project development aid systems, food assistance to emergency situations, encouraging the transition from relief to rehabilitation and development.

My delegation feels that WFP has made a great positive achievement in executing the major development projects and humanitarian programme activities in most of these countries, particularly of course low-income, food-deficit and least developed countries.

Having said that, I would like to inform you that in Indonesia the WFP has been operating for over thirteen years during which time our development and emergency projects were implemented and have been successful. As a result of our social and economic development, Indonesia no longer qualifies as a recipient of WFP food aid assistance, but the Government of Indonesia will continue to contribute to WFP programme and activities in the form of the pledge of time as well as also technical assistance.

Therefore my delegation fully supports and would like to endorse the WFP Annual Report. My delegation hopes that WFP will have more enhanced collaboration within the UN organization system, where more countries as well as other international organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations can carry out its programme and activities for the year ahead, particularly in the follow-up of the Summit.

Regarding the proposed general revision of WFP, Indonesia has participated actively in the Open-ended Working Group which was established by WFP to review and revise the Regulations. Therefore, our delegation would like to also support and endorse these proposed revised Regulations.

Michael TABONG KIMA (Cameroon): We have looked at the report presented by Dr Ngongi and I wish to say that the Cameroon delegation participated very actively in the work that was contributed many elements in this report. We wish to support the recommendations of the distinguished delegate of Cuba that the report be approved, as presented.

Thomas Austin FORBORD (United States of America): The Annual Report to ECOSOC and the FAO Council reflects the considerable achievements of WFP during 1996. Both the Executive Director and her staff are to be congratulated for this distinct and comprehensive presentation. We support its adoption by the Council.

Kezimbira Lawrence MIYINGO (Uganda): Uganda would like also to congratulate the World Food Programme and would like to endorse the report presented for the World Food Programme.

In endorsing this, Uganda would also like to, once again, request the World Food Programme that, as Uganda is the Headquarters of the World Food Programme within the Great Lake Region, we have always appealed - and the Deputy Executive Director is quite aware of my many visits -- that Uganda, having the potential to be able to produce quite adequate foods that could solve the entire Great Lake Region, has always appealed to the possibility of the World Food Programme giving it an indication of a quota that could be bought for meat so the Government and the Minister of Agriculture could be able to mobilize the population into production of this quota so that this quota, when the need arises, does not have to come from outside, but can be mobilized from within. This will allow, of course, our people to combat poverty since they have the potential but the market many times reduces their motivation towards production.

I would like commend the World Food Programme for the activities that it has started off in Uganda in 1986, when we hardly had milk available in the country and we were supported with powdered milk. I would like to report that today Uganda does not use even a kilo of powdered milk, but the industry has picked up and we are now producing enough milk for the entire country and we have even started the export of milk.

Abdou Karim DIOUF (Sénégal): Monsieur le Président, au nom de la délégation sénégalaise, je voudrais remercier M. Ngongi, Directeur exécutif adjoint du PAM, de nous avoir présenté ce document portant sur les activités de fond du Conseil d'administration pour l'année 1996. Il s'agit comme à l'accoutumée d'un excellent document qui renferme des informations très utiles. Le Sénégal, qui est membre du Conseil d'administration, a également participé très activement au groupe de travail pour la révision des règles générales du PAM. Nous avons, comme l'a rappelé

son Excellence l'Ambassadeur de Cuba, également participé aux débats sur ces documents soumis. C'est pourquoi nous voudrions nous joindre à lui, et à tous les orateurs qui se sont exprimés sur cette question, pour demander qu'il soit adopté, et le conseiller pour adoption à la Conférence générale de la FAO.

K.P. FABIAN (India): It is an excellent report reflecting the good work done during the year 1996. My delegation wants to thank the Deputy Executive Director for the excellent presentation of the report and would request him to transmit to the Executive Director and to the Secretariat our appreciation. The WFP deserves support from all of us.

Sra. Cecilia JABER de BLANCARTE (México): El distinguido Representante de Cuba, ya manifestó la posición del Grupo de América Latina. Nosotros, obviamente, lo apoyamos y quería solamente señalar que también nos sumamos al apoyo para la aprobación de este informe.

Apoyamos también el *corrigendum* que se presenta, el cual consigna parte de los debates que tuvimos en la junta anual y en la que la delegación de México hizo señalamientos puntuales que en éste aparecen.

Shahid RASHID (Pakistan): We would also like to associate ourselves with those delegations which have extended their compliments and recommendations to the Executive Director of the World Food Programme and the Executive Board for the presentation of a very clear and precise report. We are heartened to see the improved format and presentation and would therefore like to urge the approval of the Executive Board.

Luigi FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy): I also would like to approve and commend the World Food Programme for the documentation and for the excellent work done. I would also like to say that an occasion like the one today could, in the future, give us the occasion of an exchange of views on how to increase relations and improve any synergic possibilities existing between the two Organizations.

Mme Hataba YAHIA-CHERIF (Algérie): J'aimerais aussi joindre ma voix à ceux qui nous ont précédés et apporter notre soutien aux recommandations contenues dans le rapport.

Fassou ELIE DAMEY (Observateur de la Guinée): Ma délégation, au nom du gouvernement, voudrait remercier sincèrement la direction exécutive et le Conseil du PAM pour tout son appui au projet développement rural. Je me joins également au groupe africain pour approuver ce présent rapport. Je dois ici affirmer que le PAM a des impacts très sûrs sur les affluences, car aujourd'hui, dans les pays avoisinant la Guinée, il y a des points de conflit qui créent une affluence et, puisque l'objectif est d'atteindre la sécurité alimentaire, l'impact du PAM viendrait à point nommé pour appuyer la Guinée à atteindre ses objectifs. Et je dois aussi attirer l'attention sur le fait que le PAM est une des institutions qui a un impact encore très favorable au niveau du paysan parce qu'en Guinée je vous confie qu'il y a une période, qui est la période de soudure, et dont les forces vives de travail ont besoin d'énergie, et c'est avec les produits PAM que nous arrivons effectivement à mettre en oeuvre les projets de développement et à avoir des résultats certains.

Kiala Kia MATEVA (Observateur de l'Angola): L'Angola est un membre du Conseil d'administration du PAM, c'est pourquoi il vient joindre sa voix à ceux qui l'ont précédé et accepte et appuie la proposition faite par son Excellence l'Ambassadeur de Cuba.

Sra. María E. JIMENEZ de MOCHI ONORI (Observador de El Salvador): Sólo unas breves palabras para apoyar la aprobación de este Informe. Como las delegaciones que me han precedido, principalmente la de México y Cuba, ya indicaron lo que mi delegación quería decir, quisiéramos únicamente respaldar esas declaraciones.

Asimismo, deseamos reiterar el apoyo ya expresado por nuestra delegación en la Junta Ejecutiva, ya que como Angola, nosotros somos miembros de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA, respaldar, le decía, el apoyo de nuestra delegación al objetivo de promesa del PMA para el bienio 1999-2000.

Mohamed Said M.A. HARBI (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic): In the Name of God, the merciful and compassionate. We would like to support most strongly all that is contained in this report and should like to reassure this august gathering that the World Food Programme is of vital importance in my country, particularly in the support for agricultural development and the support for displaced persons and refugees, and I should like to praise the activities of the WFP. Once again, I should like to support what is contained in this report and would like to thank, most sincerely, Mr Ngongi for his statement this morning.

Malloum BAMANGA ABBAS (Observateur du Tchad): Ma délégation voudrait également joindre sa voix aux autres délégations qui se sont exprimées pour apporter son appui aux activités du PAM et, en même temps, demander l'approbation de ce rapport qui a été présenté par M. Ngongi.

Paul PAREDES PORTELLA (Observador del Perú): Sólo para apoyar lo señalado por las delegaciones que me han precedido en el uso de la palabra y expresar nuestro reconocimiento a la labor del PMA.

EL PRESIDENTE: Con esto se concluye mi lista de oradores. Deseo subrayar, y ahora le doy la palabra al señor Namanga Ngongi para ello, que en mi introducción les hice notar el documento CL 112/13-Supp.1. Como ustedes saben, ese documento contiene el proyecto de resolución sobre el objetivo de promesas del PMA para el bienio 1999-2000. Le voy a dar la palabra al señor Ngongi para que, presente este documento para las Actas del Consejo.

A. NAMANGA NGONGI (Deputy Executive Director, World Food Programme): First of all, I wish to express the appreciation, not only of myself, but I think, the entire WFP Secretariat and the Executive Director, for the very kind words which have been said here this morning and we can only pledge to continue the work which we are charged to be doing and to do it as effectively as we can. Thank you very much.

Secondly, I wish to reconfirm the WFP's commitment to follow-up on the World Food Summit and, therefore, clearly since the World Food Summit was only at the end of last year, the next Annual Report probably will contain a lot more definitive actions which have been taken as a follow-up to the World Food Summit.

Thirdly, I would express great appreciation not only to the distinguished delegate of Indonesia, but to all the other countries which have spoken clearly to highlight the positive impact that the World Food Programme has in their countries. I think this is information which has been lacking for so long and that a lot of people, probably, sometimes have doubts on the effectiveness on WFP's development programmes. I think that it was very, very useful and we very much thank you for it.

As for the distinguished Ambassador of Italy there may be an opportunity in the future to discuss more on the relationship between the World Food Programme and FAO and other organizations. I think that is very welcome, and just also to inform the distinguished Ambassador that the corrigendum speaks a little bit more on those kind of actions which are taken collaboratively between FAO and the World Food Programme.

On the Pledging Target, if I can pass to that. As the distinguished Council would also note, the Pledging Target is mostly done for the development operations of the programme, which was the former Regular Programme of WFP. The Executive Board is recommending that the Pledging Target be set at US\$ 1 billion or 2.1 million tonnes. However, in endorsing this target, the

Executive Board noted that it was the tendency, in light of the current rate of contributions to the development programme of the World Food Programme, that this target is on the high side but, at least, it also took note that the needs of developing countries were not getting any lower. So it also appreciated that this was a target which was set at an appropriate level to encourage the donors to reach a higher level of budgetary contributions.

What the Council has requested is to endorse the attached resolution to this Pledging Target Resolution and to forward it to the FAO Conference. A similar action will be taken at the ECOSOC, to present the same document and resolution to ECOSOC for onward transmission to the General Assembly for adoption.

EL PRESIDENTE: Si no hay otra observación, podemos entonces concluir que tras reconocer con alto aprecio la importante labor del Programa Mundial de la Alimentación, de su Director Ejecutivo y del personal del PMA, así como las mejores relaciones y la coordinación creciente y mayor sinergia entre el PMA y la FAO, el Consejo adoptó el informe contenido en el documento CL 112/13, así como el documento CL 112/3-Corr.1 y el Consejo, además, adoptó la Resolución contenida en el documento CL 112/13-Supp.1. Le agradeció al señor Ngongi por su presencia y por las explicaciones ofrecidas. El Consejo se congratuló por la forma eficaz con que está trabajando el Programa Mundial de la Alimentación con miras a que el objetivo de promesas se cumpla de manera efectiva, completa y pronta. Si no hay ningún otro punto sobre el Tema 12.1, lo damos por concluido y pasamos entonces al Tema 12.2: Revisión de las Normas Generales del PMA, documento CL 112/19 y el documento CL 112/19-Supp.1.

A. NAMANGA NGONGI (Deputy Executive Director, WFP): The Council has before it, for consideration, document CL 112/19 containing the proposed WFP General Regulations. The text that you have now before you for discussion has been through its various drafts, the subject of extensive and detailed examination by the Open-ended Working Group set up by the Executive Board in 1996. Following intensive deliberations the Board, at its Second Regular Session of 1997, endorsed the final version as set out in the document before you.

The proposed texts for the General Regulations are brief and general in nature, as they will constitute the basis for all future basic texts for WFP. Therefore, it is important to note that the document contains also the proposed General Rules, which, although within the purview of the Executive Board, are submitted to you for information.

The General Rules, which contain a number of provisions on operation details, generally offer a clarifying nature, were approved provisionally by the Board, subject to the approval of the General Regulations by both United Nations General Assembly and the FAO Conference.

The Executive Board and the Secretariat of WFP would like to take this opportunity to express appreciation for the invaluable contribution of the FAO Legal Counsel, Mr G. Moore who is here, during the deliberations of the proposed WFP General Regulations.

The Board requests that the FAO Council endorse the proposed General Regulations and recommend their approval to the FAO Conference. ECOSOC will be requested to take similar action, with a view to having these proposed General Regulations presented to the General Assembly at its Fifty-second Session later this year. The proposed General Regulations, if approved by both the FAO Conference and the UN General Assembly, will enter into force on 1 January 1998.

Louis DOMINICI (France): J'interviens certes en tant qu'Ambassadeur de France mais aussi en tant que Président du Conseil d'administration du Programme alimentaire mondial et je voudrais à ce titre simplement apporter un témoignage au Conseil de la FAO.

Je voudrais dire d'abord que le projet de règle générale qui vous est présenté est le résultat d'un travail approfondi d'un Groupe de travail à composition non limitée, présidé par notre excellent confrère et collègue, le Représentant permanent suppléant de l'Inde à qui je veux rendre hommage. Ce travail, qui a duré plusieurs mois, a permis de recueillir tous les avis, toutes les propositions de formulation et de soumettre au Conseil d'administration du PAM un texte presque définitif. Je voudrais dire aussi que nous avons reçu une aide très précieuse du Conseiller juridique de la FAO et du PAM M. J.M. Powell et de son équipe et je tiens aussi à les en remercier. Excusez-moi, M. Moore.

Enfin je voudrais dire que le Conseil d'administration du PAM qui a débattu avec beaucoup de vivacité de ce projet de règle générale, y a apporté la touche finale dans un débat très constructif où chacun a su faire preuve de compréhension, défendre ses points de vue et en fin de compte consentir les compromis nécessaires. Je peux témoigner que le Conseil d'administration du PAM a travaillé dans un climat très positif, conscient de l'ardente obligation que lui impose la gravité du combat qui est le nôtre dans la lutte contre la faim. C'est le témoignage que je voulais donner au Conseil de la FAO.

Juan NUIRY SANCHEZ (Cuba): Es muy difícil añadir algo más de lo que acaba de decir el Embajador de Francia y Presidente de la Junta Ejecutiva, creo que ha recojido el sentimiento de la intención de todos los que participamos en este grupo de trabajo.

Pero, en nombre del Grupo Latinoamericano y del Caribe, que presido, quisiéramos unirnos a la felicitación por el trabajo realizado por el Representante de la India, por el doctor Moore y, fundamentalmente por la Secretaría del PMA. Creemos, señor Presidente, que este documento se debe aprobar tal como está, con todo nuestro apoyo.

Abdou Karim DIOUF (Sénégal): Le Sénégal, au nom du Groupe africain, voudrait s'associer aux propos qui ont été tenus par l'Ambassadeur de France sur ce document. Nous voudrions à notre tour adresser nos félicitations au Représentant de l'Inde, Président du Groupe de travail à composition non limitée auquel nous-mêmes avons participé. Nous voudrions également associer à ces remerciements le Conseil juridique de la FAO M. Gerald Moore dont l'apport a été déterminant pour la conclusion de ce document. Avec ce document, le PAM dispose du texte de base qui lui donne plus de souplesse puisque le Conseil sera désormais habilité à modifier certaines dispositions touchant à des questions opérationnelles sans recevoir au préalable l'approbation de l'Assemblée générale de l'ONU et de la Conférence générale de la FAO. Il s'y ajoute que c'est le statut et le règlement général proposés qui sont plus conformes aux politiques concernant les ressources et le financement à long terme du PAM. C'est pourquoi ma délégation propose l'adoption du statut proposé par la Conférence générale.

Sra. Cecilia JABER de BLANCARTE (México): La delegación de México quiere unirse a lo expuesto por el Embajador Dominicí así como a las felicitaciones tanto al Consejero Jurídico, el doctor Moore, y al Presidente del Grupo de Trabajo Abierto, el distinguido Representante de India.

La delegación de México, por su parte, desearía señalar que participamos activamente en la revisión de las normas generales, revisión que siguió con la adaptación de terminologías y definiciones del 40º Período de Sesiones del entonces CPA. Estimamos que las modificaciones realizadas a los documentos constitutivos y al reglamento financiero contribuirán a asegurar una mejor fiscalización interna y una gestión financiera eficaz, además de que éstas cuentan con la aprobación de la Comisión Consultiva de las Naciones Unidas en asuntos administrativos y de presupuesto y son compatibles con las normas comunes de contabilidad de las Naciones Unidas.

Asimismo, la delegación de México se une a lo expuesto por el Embajador de Cuba; quisiera, también, señalar que en el seno del Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe, en la revisión de estos documentos, guiamos nuestra participación por una posición constante de apoyo a la necesidad de

mantener en estos documentos, claro y vigente uno de los objetivos esenciales del PMA, que es el impulso a los programas de desarrollo.

David SANDS SMITH (United Kingdom): The close collaboration within the family of the European Union continues and, indeed, the collaboration between Ireland and the United Kingdom. I would ask you to give the floor please to my colleague from the Netherlands, speaking as the Presidency of the European Union.

L.C. SMITS (Observer for the Netherlands): On behalf of the European Community and its Member States, I would like to express our full support the revised General Regulations of the World Food Programme, as contained in document CL 112/19.

The European Community and its Member States have participated constructively in the lengthy process of the redrafting negotiations in the framework of the Open-ended Working Group and, subsequently, in the Executive Board of the WFP.

The outcome of this process contains a number of points which are of the main importance to us and to the international community at large indeed. We therefore propose that the Council approves the revised General Regulations as submitted. Accordingly, we fully support the adoption by the Council of the Draft Resolution contained in document CL 112/19-Sup. 1.

It is our understanding that the proposed General Rules, which are derived from the proposed General Regulations, are submitted to the Council for information only. On behalf of the European Community and its Member States, I would like to inform the Council that the proposed General Rules could be improved and sharpened considerably. This is, for instance, the case in the proposed General Rule 7.2 on Reporting. As soon as feasible, we would like to revert to the Reporting issue in the framework of the Executive Board.

In our view WFP reports are generally made available far too late, which prevents Members of the Board communicating duly with their policy and budgetary authorities and their capitals. Particularly, this is the case where it relates to bilaterally funded WFP operations. The Executive-Director should provide, to the donors, these reports within reasonable time after completion of these operations to allow them to submit to their budgetary authorities the appropriate justifications in due time.

Shahid RASHID (Pakistan): We would also like to commend the work done by the Executive Board and the Ambassador of France and its Working Group, under the very able chairmanship of India, who have worked very diligently with the support of the WFP Secretariat, as well as Mr Moore, for the drafting of the new General Regulations of the Programme.

We are certain that these General Regulations, along with the General Rules, will provide the necessary framework for the smooth and efficient operation of the World Food Programme. We, therefore, would also like to wholeheartedly support the endorsement of the General Regulations by the Council.

Atul SINHA (India): I would be failing in my duty if I were not to take the floor and thank all those who participated in this important work that we did. I now speak as the Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group which worked on this particular document.

I would first like to thank the Ambassador of France and, of course, our Chairman of WFP, who provided support to this Working Group all along, and who guided the deliberations of the Executive Board in adopting this particular document, which was finalized by the Working Group. He gave very valuable suggestions and I thank him for all the kind words he has spoken for me and for the work done by the Working Group.

I would also like to thank all the distinguished Speakers, here before me, who have commended the work done by the Working Group. I wish to inform everybody that very many times we had difficult situations and we had long negotiations, but it goes entirely to the credit of the participants, who were a very large number, and their spirit of cooperation, their spirit to understand each other's point of view, which led to a very satisfactory conclusion to a very difficult task. I am sure, once the Council approves these Regulations, it will lay a very sound foundation for the future work of the World Food Programme.

I would also like to thank Mr Moore, for all the able guidance and technical advice that he gave us on many, many legal matters, and on many other matters where we ran into difficulties. My thanks to the Secretary of the World Food Programme Executive Board, who also provided the secretariat for the Open-ended Working Group. Also, to all the staff of the World Food Programme, who catered to the various requirements of the Open-ended Working Group, and at short notice produced a lot of information, a lot of documents, a lot of suggestions.

With that, I once again all those distinguished Members of the Open-ended Working Group who participated very actively, and without whose support this work would not have been possible.

Thank you very much, and I also recommend that this particular document be approved, as India.

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias distinguido amigo Sinha por sus palabras. Desde luego ha escuchado usted el elogio que ha hecho de su labor el Consejo de la Organización.

Sra. María E. JIMENEZ de MOCHI ONORI (Observador de El Salvador): Nuestra delegación, como otras, participó muy activamente en las labores del Grupo de Trabajo Abierto establecido para la revisión de las normas generales del PMA. Por esta razón nos unimos a las palabras expresadas por el Embajador Dominic de Francia, en su calidad de Presidente de la Junta Ejecutiva. Felicitamos asimismo al Representante Permanente Alternativo de la India por su excelente trabajo, como al señor Moore quien en todo momento nos asesoró en nuestras labores.

Apoyamos, señor Presidente, lo expresado por Cuba y México, principalmente lo que dijo la delegada de México, en el sentido de que debemos mantener siempre presente la importancia de las actividades de desarrollo que ayudan a nuestros pueblos a mejorar sus condiciones de vida de manera sostenible.

Confiamos, señor Presidente, en que este Consejo remitirá el Proyecto de Resolución a la Conferencia para que podamos aprobar las normas generales del Programa.

Kiala Kia MATEVA (Observateur de l'Angola): Au début de son intervention mon collègue et ami, M. Diouf, du Sénégal, a parlé au nom du groupe africain que j'appuie sans réserve. D'autres délégations se sont exprimées en faveur de l'approbation du document et je fais une mention spéciale à l'intervention de son Excellence Monsieur l'Ambassadeur de France. C'est pourquoi ma délégation vient ajouter sa voix à celles qui l'ont précédée et qui ont félicité le Président du groupe de travail, le Conseil juridique de la FAO et les membres du groupe de travail. Ma délégation donc approuve le document et recommande que ce document soit présenté à la Conférence de la FAO.

Mohamed Said M.A. HARBI (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic): My delegation played an effective part in the Open-ended Working Group, chaired by my friend, Mr Sinha, from India. In fact, efforts were made by the Honourable Ambassador of France, the Chairman of the Executive Board, and also efforts made by Mr Moore, FAO's Legal Counsel.

I would like to thank them all and to express my appreciation, because their efforts led to the adoption of this document.

A. NAMANGA NGONGI (Deputy Executive Director, WFP): I guess there is only one point, to thank everybody for trying to get these Regulations approved by the Council. I think that is very much appreciated. The distinguished Chairman of the Executive Board has said so already.

Just on the point raised by the distinguished Representative of the Netherlands, speaking on behalf of the Group of the EU, I would just like to assure him that everything is, of course, being done to try to improve the reporting of the various operations. Of course, it should also be realized that the Organization operates in a very, very difficult situation and sometimes it is not able to get all of the final accounts come in from all the diverse locations which carry out the operations. However, we are doing everything possible.

One of the steps being taken is to try to have a consolidated reporting format for the Director of Multilateral Operations. A format has now been developed and tested for several operations.

Also, for the Bilateral Operations, and clearly Multilateral, there is a general improvement in the financial management of the organization through the FMIP project. We hope that this will lead to a major improvement in the future. Unfortunately, it takes time to make improvements, but I think that some of it has been done already. I only wish to assure you and the other Members that we will do everything possible to improve the reporting.

EL PRESIDENTE: Si no hay ninguna otra observación, podríamos concluir el tema diciendo que, tras agradecer los esfuerzos del Presidente del Grupo de Trabajo Abierto y de sus miembros, agradecer la labor del Asesor Legal de la FAO y también de la Secretaría del PMA y tras recibir seguridades respecto de la mejora futura en la rendición de informes sobre las operaciones así como el manejo financiero, el Consejo acogió el documento sobre la revisión de las normas generales del PMA contenido en el documento CL 112/19 así como la resolución que lo acompaña en el documento CL 112/19-Supp. 1, para su adopción en la Conferencia. Si no hay ninguna otra observación, damos por concluido este tema agradeciendo desde luego la presencia del señor Ngongi y felicitando al PMA y a la Junta Ejecutiva por su extraordinaria labor. Se levanta este tema.

II WORLD FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SITUATION (continued)

II SITUACION MUNDIAL DE LA AGRICULTURA Y LA ALIMENTACION (suite)

II SITUACION MUNDIAL DE LA AGRICULTURA Y LA ALIMENTACION (continuación)

6 Reports of the 22nd (Rome, 23-30 September, 8-9, and 28-31 October 1996) and 23rd (Rome, 14-18 April 1997) Sessions of the Committee on World Food Security

6 Rapports de la vingt-deuxième session (Rome, 23-30 septembre 1996, 8-9 et 28-31 octobre 1996) et de la vingt-troisième session (Rome, 14-18 avril 1997) du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale

6 Informes del 22° (Roma, 23-30 de septiembre de 1996, 8-9, y 28-31 de octubre de 1996) y 23° (15-18 de abril de 1997) períodos de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial

EL PRESIDENTE: Permítanme ahora pasar al Tema 6 sobre los Informes del 22° y 23° períodos de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial. Ustedes recordarán que una parte abundante de estos informes ha sido ya acogida por este Consejo, en particular el tema relativo al seguimiento de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación y otros asuntos concernientes al Resumen del Programa de Labores y Presupuesto. Quedan por tanto para su aprobación las otras partes del Informe del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial.

El Consejo se congratula de contar con la presencia del señor Embajador Pedro Medrano, quien es el Presidente del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria, le da la bienvenida y desde luego se encuentra

aquí para responder a cualquier pregunta que ustedes formulen. Lo que el Consejo debe hacer es tomar nota del informe de estos períodos de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria.

Ofrezco la palabra. Bien, veo que los distinguidos delegados con su silencio manifiestan el apoyo y la aprobación de este Informe y, por tanto me voy a permitir darlo por aprobado, agradeciendo la presencia del Embajador Pedro Medrano y también del distinguido Representante del Reino Unido.

Luigi FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy): Just on behalf of my neighbour, I would like to ask your permission for the Presidency of the European Union to take the floor.

J.P. HOOGEVEEN (European Community): The European Community and its Member States endorse the two reports of the session of the Committee on Food Security. The 23rd Session was the first one after the World Food Summit to deal with the follow-up process.

The topics dealt with in this context included an adjustment of the mandate of the Committee on Food Security, Institutional Arrangements, and the Workplan. These were mainly of a procedural nature and we consider them important. Now that the Arrangements and Workplan are set, we should get started with the actual work.

Concerning the agenda for the next Committee on Food Security, we agreed on a number of substantive items. In view of the importance that we attach to discussing also thematic issues at the Committee on Food Security, we are confident that, at the next session, a satisfactory solution can be found on how to handle thematic issues in future sessions of the Committee.

Thomas Austin FORBORD (United States of America): We support the adoption of the Committee on Food Security reports and, if you were to make a proposal to us to also adopt right now the Committee on Commodity Problems, the Committee on Fisheries, the Committee on Forestry and the CCLM, we would support those as well.

EL PRESIDENTE: Reconozco su impaciencia por terminar esto rápidamente pero tenemos que proceder de manera ordenada. Por favor yo les pido que se apunten ahora porque si no, nos anticipamos un poco a la conclusión y deseo también que sean breves, es un poco tarde. Si sólo van a apoyar el informe, no es necesario que lo manifiesten, basta su silencio para ello.

Mohd. Khairuddin MD. TAHIR (Malaysia): The reason I was late in intervening is that the United States has just made a proposal, that we support not only the report from the World Food . Security Committee, but also the others. On behalf of the Asia Group, we would like to support this proposal by the United States.

Amas RACHMAN (Indonesia): Indonesia, as member of the Committee on Food Security, in general accepts and endorses the reports of the 22nd and 23rd Committee on World Food Security, contained in documents CL 112/10 and CL 112/15.

EL PRESIDENTE: Les quiero decir que si se trata del tema de procedimiento les advierto que no voy a tomar la recomendación hecha por los Estados Unidos. Debemos proceder de manera ordenada y aunque quieran ustedes aprobar cada uno de los informes, una vez presentado cada tema, su silencio marcará la aprobación del respectivo y yo la daré inmediatamente por acordado. Pero vamos a proceder con orden. No estamos adoptando el Informe del Consejo, estamos adoptando informes de los comités técnicos que se someten a la consideración del Consejo y por lo tanto, tenemos que ser serios al respecto.

Pedro Alfonso MEDRANO ROJAS (Presidente del Comité de la Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial): Entiendo que el Consejo está aprobando el Informe del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria. Quisiera expresar, a nombre del Comité, nuestro reconocimiento al Consejo por el

respaldo que nos otorgó durante el período preparatorio, facilitándonos el trabajo e igualmente agradecerle al Consejo por habernos apoyado en la forma en que lo hizo durante las actividades preparatorias de la Cumbre. Entiendo que es nuestro deber, en esta oportunidad, expresar a nombre del Comité a este órgano máximo de gobierno de la FAO, que se reúne en este momento antes de la Conferencia, nuestra gratitud y nuestro reconocimiento por la ayuda prestada por este Consejo así como por parte de la Secretaría de la FAO.

Mohd. Khairuddin MD. TAHIR (Malaysia): My delegation is grateful to the Secretariat for documents CL 112/10 and CL 112/15 and would like to support two particular programmes which contribute directly to food security and nutrition improvement, as well as realization of the goals of the World Food Summit Global Plan of Action.

The programme on street food generates great interest to my delegation, as street food is fast becoming a formalized sector of the economy in developing countries. In local economies, street food plays a dominant socio-economic role in providing easy access to food at an affordable price to a large section of the urban population. Street food thrives on the business or entrepreneurial talents of women and youth. Street food is often family and small business.

Given its importance as an additional source of income-generation and employment, my delegation supports FAO's commitment to this programme and encourages FAO to work with other relevant UN agencies to ensure street food in developing countries is of acceptable nutritional quality, safe and continues to be easily accessible and affordable. FAO, working with other UN partners, could help develop guidelines and legislation that could be useful to governments and local authorities.

The other matter relates to the Special Programme on Food Security. My delegation considers the programme as one of the focal points of food insecurity alleviation efforts, especially for LIFDCs. The programme provides real opportunity for local communities to participate in and implement self-reliant food-producing and income-generating activities with the help of national experts, while FAO plays a catalytic and advisory role. This programme also promotes south-south technical cooperation and my delegation is pleased to note many Asian countries have heeded the call by the Director-General to participate in this programme. My delegation also appreciates and supports the initiative of the Director-General in soliciting cooperation from regional and international financial institutions to complement the resources of FAO and that of participating countries, so that the Programme could be expanded to more countries and regions.²

EL PRESIDENTE: Con esta declaración damos por concluido el Tema. El Consejo acoge los informes del 22º y 23º período de sesiones del Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial contenidos en los documentos CL 112/10 y CL 112/15.

III ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP (continued)

III ACTIVITES DE LA FAO ET DU PAM (suite)

III ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y DEL PMA (continuación)

8 Report of the 61st Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems (Rome, 25-28 February 1997)

8 Rapport de la soixante et unième session du Comité des produits (Rome, 25-28 février 1997)

8 Informe del 61º período de sesiones del Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos (Roma, 25-28 de febrero de 1997)

¹ Statement inserted in the verbatim record on request

EL PRESIDENTE: Pasamos ahora al Tema 8 de nuestra agenda, el Informe del 61° periodo de sesiones del Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos, documento CL 112/6. No necesitamos hacer otra cosa más que acogerlo. Su silencio determinaría que el Consejo adopte este informe.

H. de HAEN (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Department): I have a short announcement to make with regard to paragraph 26 of the Report. That is that I am happy to inform you that the Consultative Sub-Committee on Surplus Disposal has agreed, yesterday, on its revised Report that can, if you so decide, be submitted to the November Council. Basically, the CSSD has brought its catalogue of transactions into line with the Uruguay Round Agreement on Agriculture and has thereby come up with a revised list of food-aid transactions that come under the reporting procedures of FAO's Principles of Surplus Disposal.

Pinit KORSIEPORN (Thailand): Just only a point of correction and further detail. With regard to paragraph 21, where an offer was expressed by my delegation at the 61st Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems. My Government will host a meeting of the Sub-Group on Tropical Fruits in Bangkok.

My delegation would like, at this time, to confirm to the distinguished delegates that as one of the leading producers and exporters of a number of tropical fruits, Thailand is willing to host the first meeting of the newly-organized Sub-Group on Tropical Fruits, in Pattaya, but not in Bangkok. This is the correction. The dates of the meeting are from 21 to 24 April. This is the information I want added in.

In this connection, we would like to invite all delegates to attend this meeting. Thailand, together with FAO, will circulate an official invitation letter with all details in the near future.

Suharyvo HUSEN (Indonesia): Of course I would like to support the proposal made by our friends from the United States to endorse this document of the report. In this case I should follow your advice to keep silent but I only want to give briefly some information.

The Indonesian Government is willing to host the 12th Session of the FAO IGG on Tea which will be convened in Bali, not in Jakarta. Bali will be more of an encouragement to the participants, than Jakarta. That will be from 2 to 4 July 1997. Prior to this meeting, the Indonesian Tea Association will also hold the First International Tea Business Conference which will be held from 30 June until 1 July 1997, also in Bali. At this time we are preparing for the two events at the same place in order to allow the participants, either for the IGG on Tea or for the Business Conference to get together.

On behalf of the Indonesian delegation, I would like to invite all the Members of this Council and the Members of FAO to attend that meeting.

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias distinguido Representante de Indonesia, el Consejo ha tomado nota de estos dos eventos y del lugar, Bali, y, desde luego agradece su invitación para lograr una participación plena. El Consejo acoge, endosa, el informe del 61° período de sesiones del Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos, documento CL 112/6. Con ello lo damos por concluido.

9 Report of the 22nd Session of the Committee on Fisheries (Rome, 17-20 March 1997)

9 Rapport de la vingt-deuxième session du Comité des pêches (Rome, 17-20 mars 1997)

9 Informe del 22° período de sesiones del Comité de Pesca (Roma, 17-20 de marzo de 1997)

EL PRESIDENTE: Pasamos ahora al Tema 9: Informe del 22° período de sesiones del Comité de Pesca, documento CL 112/7.

Como ustedes saben las conclusiones del Comité se resumen en este documento. Les quiero subrayar que la parte relativa al Código de Conducta ha sido ya tratada con anterioridad. No creo que necesiten ustedes hacer ninguna declaración en ese sentido. Yo tenía algunas notas para introducir este tema, pero considero que en virtud de la claridad del informe no es necesario leerlas.

Gian Paolo PAPA (European Community): The European Community and its Member States would like to express its appreciation to the Committee on Fisheries for the work developed during its 22nd Session in March 1997. The Report adopted at that time reflects the positions expressed by the delegations, as well as debates that took place. We have participated in the work of the Drafting Committee and, therefore, we are fully aware of the work behind this Report and of the difficulties that were successfully overcome relating to several items on the Agenda. We would like to take this opportunity to underline the importance that we attach to the work developed concerning two specific aspects included in the Agenda of the Fisheries Committee, namely, the implementation of the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries* and the strengthening of FAO Regional Fisheries Body.

As regards the implementation of the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*, we would like to reaffirm that we consider of great importance the decision concerning the establishment of a report every two years with all the relevant information and, in particular, the information concerning the proposed guidelines for the implementation of the Code. The European Community and its Member States consider that, in the framework of such guidelines, FAO could give an important input to the analysis of the issue of responsible trade in the field of fisheries products in support of responsible fishing.

As for the point concerning the strengthening of FAO Regional Fishery Bodies, the European Community would like to stress that in view of the role played by open regional organizations in securing affective cooperation between the States with respect to the management and conservation of fishing resources, it is vital that all existing bodies be looked at closely and systematically in order to determine the measures that should be taken and their order of priority.

Kezimbira Lawrence MIYINGO (Uganda): Uganda would like to endorse the Report of the Committee on Fisheries. Uganda would like, however, to stress one point which has also been referred to by the representative of the European Union and this is the issue of the Regional Fishery Bodies. Uganda is lucky to have one organization, which is the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization, but I think these organizations need strengthening by FAO. Although the Member Nations, in this case, the East African countries, are in the process of operationalizing this organization fully, support to this organization would be very vital. It is a very new organization and I think, unless it is supported, it will not be able to carry out its rightful functions and be able to achieve the Code of Conduct, which it is required to be put in place, and also to be able to supervise the fisheries resources that are within the region. So I am appealing that FAO should come to our aid, and of course for other organizations, that these are strengthened if the fisheries resource is to be promoted and be used sustainably.

I will also like to refer to the issue of aquaculture that, in the spirit of the World Food Summit, is one of the areas that is going to contribute to food security, especially if we are going to talk about qualitative feeding of our people. I think aquaculture also needs support and the expertise appropriate from the Food and Agriculture Organization. Developing countries would appreciate if technical assistance could be rendered in this field so that the development of the farming of fish becomes one of the contributors to food security and also to poverty eradication.

Further still, I would like to refer to paragraph 21 of the document, which emphasizes and requests FAO that due note be given to governments when these technical meetings are taking place so that appropriate technical staff can be selected by the relevant governments to be able to gain from these meetings.

Henry WOOD (Ghana): The Ghana delegation wishes to commend the Secretariat for the good Report on the 22nd Session of the Committee on Fisheries. As a developing country, with 580 miles of coastal shoreline, a large man-made inland lake and several rivers, Ghana attaches a lot of importance to a decision of the meetings of the Committee on Fisheries.

On page 3, item 2 of the document CL 112/7, COFI urged that the issues of excessive fishing capacity and fishing effort leading to overfishing should be given special consideration by FAO and Member Nations. Ghana fully endorses this recommendation and wishes to emphasize the need to reduce discards and bycatch, as some countries have done, through fishing gear modifications and management measures. This will put a stop to the looming depreciation of fishing resources, especially in the Gulf of Guinea, where fishing vessels from some major industrial countries operate.

The development of aquaculture is an important policy of the Government of Ghana. The benefit of aquaculture development, in the form of generation of income and employment, as a contribution to food security and the improvement of the nutrition of the people is beginning to become visible in my country. To further facilitate this encouraging development, Ghana endorses the recommendation made by COFI in item 8, page 6.

Other issues, such as the recommendations on the implementation of the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries* and the strengthening of the FAO Regional Fishery Bodies, also have our full support.

Purnama KELIAT (Indonesia): The Indonesian delegation congratulates the Committee on Fisheries for the good Report that has appeared in the document CL 112/7. Financial constraints faced by FAO in recent years have forced COFI and, I suppose, also other Committees to make priorities in its work. The fisheries sector, however, has become an important sector in many developing countries in Asia, not only as a source of protein and employment but also a source of foreign exchange.

The fast deployment of fisheries, both fisheries and aquaculture, in the last two decades, has caused concern on the sustainability of the sector itself. The development of the FAO the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries* is very timely. The Code itself has guidance for the deployment of sustainable fisheries and officially further detailed guidelines are awaited. It is clear that, for the implementation of the Code, financial support is necessary and Indonesia wishes to thank Norway for the great financial support it provided to FAO for this effort and still hopes that other developed countries will join Norway in making the world fisheries move towards sustainable fisheries.

As regards the implementation of the Code, Indonesia feels that there is a need to diagnose fisheries execution as part of a fisheries sector study. The fisheries sector study executed by FAO and supported by the World Bank has been geared primarily to investment opportunities. I think it is timely that fisheries sector study should also be geared towards sustainable fisheries. Investment opportunities should be tied to a sustainable principle. Therefore it is important that any fisheries sector study should look into institution promotion in the country, with special emphasis on the fisheries management institution. I would imagine that for the developing countries which respond to the Code, there is much work to be done in the fisheries institution itself. The principle of sustainable fisheries should be embedded in any institution.

With respect to the proposal of the establishment of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, as launched by China, as appeared in the COFI report, Indonesia feels that the arguments for pros and cons in the COFI report is valid. Financial support for the Sub-Committee is certainly a problem, yet expert consultations in regional bodies are certainly needed to identify whether or not the benefit will be

approved by establishing such a Committee. Indonesia would therefore ask FAO to explore the possibility of such expert consultations.

With those three points of concentration above, the Indonesian delegation endorses the Report of COFI as appeared in the document CL 112/7.

Tang ZHENGPING (China) (Original language Chinese): Concerning the report of COFI there is a question that is not very clear to me, that is, as was mentioned by the Indonesian delegate, in paragraph 54 of this report, which mentions the proposal made by the Chinese delegation then. This refers to the proposal made by our delegation that a Sub-committee of Aquaculture be established. I remember at that time, my impression is that it was endorsed by most of the Members at the COFI Session. However, the way it appears in this report, under paragraph 54 it is not very clear whether this Sub-committee will be established. We cannot get this impression from this paragraph, that is, whether FAO will establish this Sub-committee. This is the first point I want to make, because we would like clarification as to whether this Sub-committee will be established or not in the future.

My second point is that in order to establish such a Sub-committee, the Chinese Government expressly wish that, in collaboration with FAO, we can organize an Expert Consultation. Now, I would like to inform the Council that the Chinese Government is actively preparing for this Consultation and, at the same time, is actively engaged in finding resources for this purpose. At that time people said that we could not use funds from the budget but would have to find extra-budgetary funds. Now, we are in active consultation with other relevant agencies in finding such resources. That is why we hope that FAO will seriously consider our proposal that a Sub-committee of COFI will be established.

T. OHASHI (Japan): On behalf of the Japanese delegation I would like to highly appreciate the effort made by the FAO Secretariat to prepare the document CL 112/7. My delegation wishes to endorse, in general, the report of the 22nd Session of the Committee on Fisheries.

I would like to stress two points. First, is with respect with the bycatch and the discard. My delegation notes that at some international fora, other than FAO, there has been much debate, done emotionally and politically and with no scientific backing about the issue of bycatch and the discard. So, my delegation has some concern that such debate with no scientific backing would be jumping to a conclusion, to sufficient fishing activities.

So, in that sense, my delegation considers it appropriate for FAO, with expertise on fisheries, to deal with the issue of bycatch and the discard, because FAO has expertise on fisheries and FAO is the only international forum to provide useful discussions on sustainabilization over marine living resources.

Let me touch upon another item. The last Committee on Fisheries endorsed a Kyoto Declaration and the Plan of Action which was, I repeat, an international conference on sustainabilization of fisheries to food security. That Conference was hosted by Japan in collaboration with FAO in 1995. My delegation, recognizes the importance to implement, as soon as possible, the Kyoto Declaration and the Plan of Action, as well as the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

My delegation expects the initiative taken by FAO to do so, Japan would like to cooperate with FAO in implementing the Kyoto Declaration and the Plan of Action, as well as the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

Ronald ROSE (Canada): Just to say I had wanted to intervene earlier on behalf of the North American region to support the proposal by the United States to approve these reports. In any case I am going to make a statement that applies for both this report in document CL 112/7 and also applies for the Committee on Forestry.

We participated in the debates leading up to these reports and we fully support the conclusions in them and we support the recommendation that these be adopted. The only comment is that we very much look forward to the recommendations which are made in these reports for both high priority and low priority activities to be reflected in the full Programme of Work and Budget that we expect to see later on this year.

EL PRESIDENTE: Tomamos en este punto, obviamente, la parte de su declaración relativa al apoyo del Informe del Comité de Pesca. La otra la incluiremos en la aprobación del informe del COFO.

Atul SINHA (India): I would make only two points and very brief comments at that. First of all, I fully support what China recently said about the importance of aquaculture and the need for the establishment of a Sub-committee on Aquaculture. Indeed, the wording of paragraph 54 might leave some doubts about what exactly was the view of the Committee. However, I think the Council is the appropriate place where we can give a very clear guidance to the Secretariat. On this matter, I would also lend my voice to the need for a Sub-committee on Aquaculture for the very simple reason that it is recognized, worldwide, that the resources of fish in the seas are facing a problem, and the future of world food security, and the future of fisheries resources lie in aquaculture. This has been the reason why a lot of activity has been taken up in aquaculture, and I think it makes a lot of difference if a Sub-committee could look more pointedly into this specific area.

We have been a part of the Committee on Fisheries and we know the very huge agenda that it faces. Therefore, aquaculture somehow, we feel, has not been receiving the kind of attention it should. I think that cost-effective methods could be worked out so that this Sub-committee, could, perhaps meet back-to-back with the Committee on Fisheries to do its work. I think the framework for this could be set if the Chinese delegation's proposal is accepted for an Expert Consultation in the first place to see how the Sub-committee would work.

Therefore, I would once again support China on this particular point and say that aquaculture has a lot of promise and should be given appropriate importance and therefore a Sub-committee could be established.

Secondly, I think this particular report does not mention a very important and recent development which has taken place and which has a lot of future for the Indian Ocean area. That is, the recent setting up of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission. The first meeting of this was held in December, but then subsequently, there were several issues which were not finalized. I must place on record our appreciation for the fact that this Committee met again on a back-to-back basis with the Committee on Fisheries and finalized the basis on which this Commission would work. The Headquarters has been fixed in the Seychelles and the Committee is now well on its way to conserving and enhancing the resources in the Indian Ocean region for tunas. That point is purely for information and I think we, as India, fully welcome this establishment for the very simple reason that this matter has been pending for a very long time and it has now been brought to very successful completion.

Ariel FERNANDEZ (Argentina): En primer lugar quisiéramos manifestar nuestra preocupación sobre algunos de los principales problemas que enfrenta la pesca mundial y que podríamos resumir de la siguiente manera. Por un lado la pesca excesiva, en segundo lugar el descarte y, en tercer lugar la degradación del medio acuático y costero.

Convenimos plenamente en que estos problemas son de carácter mundial y que no podrán resolverse en forma puntual si no existe una conciencia global, tanto a nivel privado como institucional. Apoyamos la creación de medidas consensuadas entre los países pescadores y receptores de pesca y, buscamos que haya mecanismos creativos y medidas que sin afectar la actividad económica permitan dar respuesta a los serios problemas planteados.

Sobre la aplicación del *Código de Conducta para la Pesca Responsable*, queremos dejar señalado nuestro interés en la realización de campañas de evaluación de poblaciones de peces tendientes al aprovechamiento de las mismas y, con la contrapartida de aliviar la presión de captura que sufren las especies más explotadas. Al respecto debería analizarse, en base a los estudios realizados, el interés de colocar dichos productos en los mercados subregionales de manera de hacer más interesante la explotación de las especies tanto desde un punto de vista económico como alimentario, teniendo siempre como contexto la sostenibilidad de las mismas.

Deseamos también señalar nuestro apoyo a las acciones que permitan disminuir el descarte de especies acompañantes y el otorgamiento de un mayor valor agregado a las capturas de las especies marinas, ya sea a través de un procesamiento en tierra como así también en los buques factorías.

En materia de acuicultura se considera que la misma debe crecer en forma ordenada y eficiente pero siempre teniendo previos estudios de su impacto sobre el medio ambiente.

Por último, quisiéramos señalar que mi país promueve acuerdos bilaterales y trilaterales sobre conservación y ordenación de los recursos pesqueros proporcionando apoyo técnico y científico para el establecimiento de tales acuerdos dentro de los límites de los medios disponibles.

Abdou Karim DIOUF (Sénegal): Monsieur le Président, je voudrais au nom de la délégation du Sénégal remercier le Comité des pêches pour le document qui nous est soumis et surtout apporter notre appui à ce qui est dit aux paragraphes pertinents de ce document et notamment le paragraphe 30 qui est relatif au "Renforcement des organismes régionaux des pêches" de la FAO et à cet égard, nous voudrions appuyer ce qui vient d'être dit par le délégué de l'Ouganda: que la FAO apporte son appui à ces organismes régionaux des pêches afin de permettre d'appliquer plus efficacement les dispositions conformes au *Code de conduite pour une pêche responsable*.

Par ailleurs le Sénégal voudrait appuyer le paragraphe 54 relatif à l'aquaculture, surtout quand on sait que cette activité contribue de façon non négligeable à la création d'emplois ainsi qu'à la sécurité alimentaire. C'est pourquoi, Monsieur le Président, nous voudrions encore réitérer ici notre demande que la FAO alloue suffisamment de crédits au Département des pêches de façon à préserver la capacité de celui-ci d'exécuter son programme.

Ralph BOYCE (Barbados): I would just like to say a few brief words on behalf of the Caribbean, in particular, and much of this applies to Latin America as well. As you know, in the Caribbean Fisheries and the fishing industry is an important part of the livelihood of many of the islands, including Barbados, and the idea of a sub-committee or some special emphasis on aquaculture is very important in our case.

There is a species in Barbados, sea eggs which are facing extermination and in fact or extinction, and there is a strong proposal that we look at alternatives for rearing in the open sea. So, aquaculture would be very important in our case.

The question of coordination, of monitoring and systematic look up records and so on about the fishing industry, collection of data and so on, that is very important. I have found that the whole area of training is extremely important, particularly, where there is not the funding to pay large amounts for fees and so on in overseas countries. At the moment we are grappling with the need to train one person but it is about US\$ 60 000 which would more or less burst the budget. So, training, I would make an appeal to the countries that have training facilities to reach out to the countries that really need that sort of training.

I have found in Barbados too and the Caribbean, a need to assist what we call fisherfolk associations to develop. I think if we can help the groups themselves, very often in terms of basic management, basic accounting, and so on. A lot of times they are earning money but they actually

are not utilizing those funds well. There is a tremendous need to assist the groups that relate to the fishing industry. Not just the fishermen, we call them the fisherfolk, people who sell the fish as well, people who scale them and process. Fisherfolk would cover everybody, the families of the fishermen and so on. I have found that there is need for help in very basic ways as I said, a place to have an office set up and things like that.

We, in Barbados and in the Caribbean, are very strongly supportive of the need to give a lot more resources to the fisheries which is a very important aspect of the life of the Caribbean and Latin America.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: I just wished to have a brief opportunity to respond to the comments that have been made with respect to paragraph 54 and more specifically with the proposed Sub-committee on Aquaculture.

I wanted to remind the Council that aquaculture has moved increasingly higher on the agenda of the Organization and the Fisheries Department and that the Director-General has recently pushed inland fisheries and aquaculture even higher on the agenda.

I would point out that the Committee, COFI itself, has the authority to establish a body if it so wishes. The next meeting of COFI would be in 1999 and so there is ample opportunity to consider it. My advice would be not to proceed too quickly, as the paragraph itself recalls, extra-budgetary resources would be required. We do not have resources at the present time for this and we have, the Council and the Conference, a review of statutory bodies underway.

At the discussion yesterday, you note that one of the recommendations that will come out of the Council and to the Conference will be to review the criteria for the establishment of subsidiary bodies. I believe it would be premature to enter into a consultation and the preparation of a proposal until after you see the Conference reaction to the conclusions about statutory bodies. Of course, the other point is that the thrust of that effort that is underway is to try to streamline and reduce the number of subsidiary bodies, not to increase them. So, I would advise you, as a friend, that perhaps it would be better to wait and engage upon this review in 1998.

M. HAYASHI (Assistant Director-General, Fisheries Department): I have been listening very carefully to all the very important statements made by the distinguished delegates.

The Fisheries Department shares almost all the important and valuable remarks made by you distinguished delegates, particularly the emphasis on the importance of our regional fisheries bodies; the importance of the implementation of the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*, the strengthening of the management with a view to ensuring sustainable development of our fisheries resources and aquaculture; the vital importance of our tackling, on the basis of scientific study, the by catch and discard problems; and also the training of our fisherfolks. These are all very important areas of activities of the Fisheries Department and we would like to pursue, as much as possible. Of course, the constraint is always the limited budget allocated to the department.

Within the resources and within the further resources would be, we hope, forthcoming from various donors, extra-budgetary resources, we would try our best to pursue and strengthen our activities.

I would like to address one particular point which was raised by the distinguished representative of China regarding the description of the decision of COFI, in paragraph 54 of the report. When the proposal was made by the distinguished representative of China, during COFI, to create a Subcommittee on Aquaculture, there were a number of support expressed to this idea, but on the other hand, there were some doubts expressed by other delegations.

Therefore we, the Secretariat, think that the discussion in paragraph 54 gives accurately what transpired during that meeting. There was no definitive conclusion with respect to the establishment of the Sub-committee. On the other hand, there was a proposal made by China at that time, rightly pointed out again by the representative of China, that there should be an Expert Consultation on aquaculture. At that time, I clarified the position of FAO that, subject to funding, availability of funding, we are ready to support the holding of such a Consultation.

We are now engaged in the consultation with the Chinese delegation with a view to convening such an Expert Consultation, of course, subject to the availability of funding. One of the questions which could be discussed during that kind of consultation would precisely be the question whether the COFI should create a Sub-committee on Aquaculture.

Finally, I would like to add that, in connection with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Argentina, FAO is ready to support countries in joint management of fisheries resources, including surveying of resources and other technical aspects. Of course, again I have to emphasize that this funding has to be provided from the extra-budgetary resources because of the rather clear priorities set for the activities currently about to be engaged in for the next biennium.

There are limited resources in the regular budget, therefore, I might take this opportunity, to appeal to all of you, to try to come up with generous support through extra-budgetary funding for all these important activities which are suggested or proposed during this debate.

Mohd. Khairuddin MD. TAHIR (Malaysia): My delegation would like to commend the Secretariat for preparing document CL 112/7.

Malaysia recognizes the need to work with NGOs with their valuable roles to play in the development of sustainable resource use and environmental protection in fisheries. Malaysia advocates the setting-up of local branches of NGOs in the country. However, we also recognize that governments, with the assistance of FAO, are responsible to put into effect actions for sustainable development of the world's fisheries with concerns for the environment already determined in Agreements ratified.

We note the initiatives under the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) but would like to express our concern about the impact of these initiatives on the livelihood of fishermen and consumers. We strongly believe that FAO must continue to be the competent body to deal with sustainable fisheries for, after all, FAO is the long-standing body competent enough to do the work in this area.

Malaysia is concerned about the unilateral and uninformed application of the embargo on wild harvested shrimp, especially so when Malaysia has had a long history of serious turtle conservation work. We feel that such decision is against the spirit of World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements on non-tariff barriers.

Malaysia supports the need to develop selective fishing gear and practices to reduce discards as a contribution to sustainability. Nevertheless, not all the measures recommended are applicable to all fisheries. Definitely, as in the case of Turtle Excluder Device (TED), application of such devices is only relevant where there are turtles to conserve and where shrimp trawling constitutes a definite threat. There is no sense in imposing the use of such devices when the season of turtle nesting and shrimp are different.

The Malaysian delegation wishes to support the proposal to strengthen FAO regional bodies. Of relevance to us are the Bay of Bengal Programme (BOBP) and Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC). We find that these two bodies have played very important advisory roles and provided technical support for some of our national and regional programmes. We also support the formation of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC).

The call for implementation of the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries* is strongly supported by my delegation. We laud the effort made by FAO in the publication and dissemination of the technical guidelines for responsible fisheries.

Our country is very serious in this matter and will be taking appropriate steps to implement the *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*. We feel that a full-hearted commitment from all nationals is crucial.

Complementary to the implementation of the Code, we will be upgrading our database information system, which has been set up under a technical cooperation project with Canada. But we would like to inform the Council that the setting-up of this system involves more than just acquisition of technology. It calls for a great deal of effort in terms of manpower and financial commitment to enable the system to work effectively. Most difficult of all, it also calls for a fully functional response system involving patrol vessels and well-trained enforcement personnel.

National efforts need to be complemented by regional initiatives for the purpose of standardization and compatibility of procedures. While we recognize the initiatives made by FAO, we look forward to more national and international work in this direction. Practical implementation needs the mobilization of expertise, training and assistance.³

EL PRESIDENTE: Quisiera darles las gracias al señor Hayashi por su comprensiva respuesta a todas las preguntas hechas. ¿Hay alguna reacción de los miembros del Consejo? Usted señor Hayashi y antes el señor Hjort me han facilitado el trabajo de resumir este debate. Antes de responder a las preguntas ustedes han indicado la forma en que se desarrolló el debate, de manera que podemos decir que tras hacer varios comentarios sobre el interesante Informe del COFI, el Consejo lo endosó. ¿Hay alguna otra observación? No, en ese caso damos por concluido este Tema.

Tenemos escasamente cinco minutos para tomar los puntos 10, Informe del 13° período de sesiones del Comité de Montes y luego una vez concluido, el Tema 20 que es el Informe del 66° período de sesiones del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos.

Voy a pedirles que acepten el siguiente procedimiento. En vista de que hoy en la tarde tenemos que empezar, por razones de conveniencia y procedimiento, con el Tema 13, en particular el punto 13.3 que es la presentación de candidaturas para los cargos de Presidente de la Conferencia y Presidentes de las Comisiones, que es a puerta cerrada y solamente con los Miembros del Consejo, en el estado en que nos encontremos en el debate de los Temas 10 y 20 lo vamos a suspender a las 13.00 horas en punto y luego proseguiremos con el debate de estos temas una vez agotado el Tema 13 hoy por la tarde.

Distinguidos delegados, permítanme pasar al Tema 10, Informe del 13° período de sesiones del Comité de Montes, documento CL 112/8 para decisión. Si ustedes desean endosar este informe, les suplico no hagan ninguna declaración. ¿Desean hacer alguna modificación al mismo, o hacer un comentario? Reconozco a una delegación la de Turquía.

10 Report of the 13th Session of the Committee on Forestry (Rome, 10-13 March 1997)

10 Rapport de la treizième session du Comité des forêts (Rome, 10-13 mars 1997)

10 Informe del 13° período de sesiones del Comité de Montes (Roma, 10-13 de marzo de 1997)

Erdil K. AKAY (Turkey): I have not taken the floor to say that we endorse the report, obviously we do.

² Statement inserted in the verbatim on request

I am only taking the liberty to do so to inform Members of the Council, with reference to the paragraph of the report which refers to the 11th World Forestry Congress to be held in Antalya, in October of this year, that we are deploying all our efforts for a successful holding of this Congress. On this occasion, I would like to reiterate our invitation to all Members of FAO to participate in this important event on Forestry. I hope that I have been short enough.

EL PRESIDENTE: Le agradezco mucho por su cooperación distinguido Representante de Turquía. El Consejo ha tomado nota de la invitación y de los esfuerzos que hace su país para sostener ese Congreso y se lo agradece.

David SANDS SMITH (United Kingdom): Once more, may I ask for the floor for the Observer from the Netherlands, in the Netherlands capacity as Presidency of the European Union.

J.P. HOOGEVEEN (Observer for the Netherlands): The European Community and its Member States would like to express their appreciation for the work developed by the Committee on Forestry during its 13th Session in March 1997.

Sustainable forest management stays high on the international political agenda. Not without reason, it is one of the priorities on the agenda of the Special Session of the UN General Assembly in June this year. With the report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forestry, we set another step towards achieving our common goal of sustainable management of all types of forest. However, there is an urgent need for further action to ensure a long-term commitment to a comprehensive and holistic approach. Building on the forestry principles, a legally-binding instrument in the form of a convention should ensure such an approach.

European Union is of the opinion that a global force convention should be open for signature in the year 2000. Our priority within FAO is now to implement the proposals for action in the IPF Report. As stated in the Report of the Committee on Forestry, FAO plays an important role in the implementation of the IPF Report, especially in the development of criteria and indicators.

As recognized by COFO, the 13th Session offered a unique opportunity to review the activities of FAO, the overall international Forestry agenda and to provide advice to the Forestry Department on the development and implementation of its programme.

The IPF has promoted more effective working relationships between international organizations and offers opportunities to discuss, define and adopt roles which reflect FAO's comparative advantage. We appreciate, therefore, the re-focusing of the Forestry Department's work since COFO 1995, and recognize that the international policy process in forestry will make increasing demands on FAO. To help accommodate these demands, COFO identified areas of work which were considered to be lower priority with regard to FAO support.

Agro-forestry, wildlife and protected area management, forest products and trade are areas where FAO needs to work more closely with other Organizations. We hope that the FAO Secretariat will explicitly address these recommendations in the revised programme of work.

Keeping this in mind, the European Community and its Member States endorse the report of the Committee on Forestry.

Mohd. Khairuddin MD. TAHIR (Malaysia): My delegation would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing document CL 112/8, *Report of the Thirteenth Session of the Committee on Forestry*, for our deliberation.

Malaysia has carefully studied the document and fully endorses the recommendation that FAO accelerates the incorporation into its work programme of the relevant proposals of action as

recommended by the UNCSD *Ad Hoc* International Panel on Forest (IPF), notably the development and implementation of criteria and indicators for measuring progress towards sustainable management of all types of forests, and to continue chairing the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests, taking into account the work of the IPF and the final decisions that would be taken at the Special Session of the UN General Assembly to Review and Appraise the Implementation of Agenda 21, which will be held in New York from 23 to 27 June 1997.

Malaysia also fully endorses the recommendation that the Assistant Director-General of the Forestry Department prepare a broad strategic framework for FAO's planning and implementation of activities in the field of forestry, which would further enhance the implementation of the individual work programmes of its six Commissions, as well as for the Forest Resources Assessment 2000 (FRA 2000) to include elements related to forest biological diversity, forest health and quality.

On the potential positive relationship between trade in forest products and sustainable forest management, my delegation would urge FAO to undertake an assessment of factors that might distort trade in forest products, including tariff escalation on processed products and non-tariff barriers in the form of measures to restrict, ban or boycott the import and use of forest products, in particular tropical timber products, that could have a direct impact on the exports and earnings of developing countries, and on their ability to enhance sustainable forest management, as well as an analysis of on-going initiatives on forest products labelling and certification.

At this juncture, I would also like to stress that my delegation endorses the recommendation that the Panel of Experts on Forest Gene Resources continue to provide advice to the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) in its fields of competence, and until such time as the Commission decides on definitive arrangements in establishing an intergovernmental technical sectoral working group on forest genetic resources.

In this context, FAO should initiate the development of a Global Plan of Action for the conservation and sustainable utilization "of forest genetic resources, while taking cognizance of the work that is currently being carried out by the International Undertaking for Plant Genetic Resources under CGRFA, in order to avoid duplication of efforts and to further enhance complementarity, as well as recognizing the principles of national sovereignty over natural resources, as enshrined in the Forest Principles and the Rio Declaration.

In order to effectively develop this Global Plan of Action, FAO should organize a series of international and eco-regional workshops to evaluate the status and priorities of forest genetic resources conservation and utilization of tropical and sub-tropical forests, similar to those undertaken for the boreal and temperate forests in 1995. Moreover, it is the view of my delegation that the Global Plan of Action should, among others, include the following: mechanisms for the fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from research and development and from the commercial utilization of biological resources, including biotechnological products, as well as payment to local and indigenous communities from the use of traditional technologies developed by them in the sustainable use of forest genetic resources; the opportunities to enhance the capacity and the participation of indigenous people, forest dwellers and local communities in the conservation and sustainable utilization of forest genetic resources; and the relationship between intellectual property rights and the sustainable utilization of forest genetic resources.

With regard to future meetings of ministers responsible for forestry, Malaysia is of the view that such meetings would only be held when there are significant forest and forest-related issues to be deliberated at this high level, and which are of urgency to warrant such meetings. This is in view of the recent recommendation of the Fifth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) that an *ad hoc*, open-ended Intergovernmental Forum on Forests be established under its auspices which, among others, would prioritize forest issues and deal with the over-arching issues related to forests at the international and regional levels, in an integrated and holistic manner.

Finally, my delegation would also like to take this opportunity to strongly urge FAO to substantially increase its forestry budget in view of the UNCED decisions related to forests and the proposals for action as called for by the IPF, as well as the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and Plan of Action, which called for the realization of the full potential of forests and forestry to contribute on a sustainable basis to increasing food production, which was an integral element of actions towards the object of "Food for all".⁴

EL PRESIDENTE: Distinguidos delegados, hemos llegado al final del tiempo de interpretación. Estoy consciente de que hay otros delegados que desean hacer uso de la palabra. Reconozco al de Italia, quien ya nos había hecho una mención muy importante respecto del papel de liderazgo de la FAO en este sector. Estaremos, desde luego, muy interesados en escucharle hoy por la tarde. Sin embargo, tenemos ahora que levantar nuestra sesión. Les pido, por favor, que tomen nota muy estrictamente de lo siguiente. La reunión a las 14.30 horas sobre el Tema 13.3 "Candidaturas para la Conferencia", es estrictamente con jefes de delegación o, en su caso, con un solo representante por país y exclusivamente miembros del Consejo. Es así como lo dictan las reglas de la Organización y no puede haber excepciones. Suplico que respeten este procedimiento y también la puntualidad que requerimos para comenzar con nuestros trabajos.

Una vez concluido el Tema 13.3 abriremos el foro a todos los distinguidos delegados y observadores para tratar los subtemas 13.1 y 13.2. Luego concluiremos con el Tema 10 de nuestra agenda, el Informe del COFO, proseguiremos con el Tema 20 y ulteriormente con el Tema 7, el 22 y el 23.

Distinguidos delegados, se levanta esta sesión y les convoco a las 14.30 horas a los Jefes de Delegación y Miembros del Consejo.

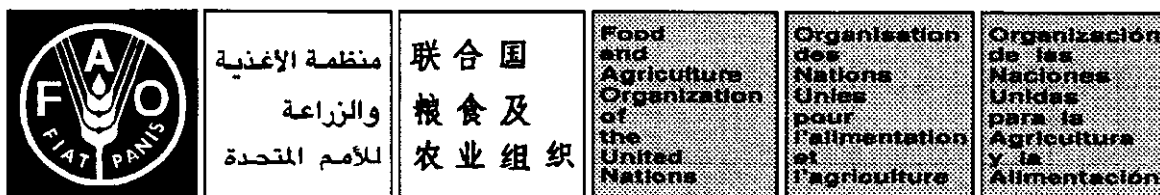
The meeting rose at 13.00 hours

La séance est levée à 13 h 00

Se levanta la sesión a las 13.00 horas

³ Statement inserted in the verbatim on request

5 June 1997



COUNCIL

CONSEIL

CONSEJO

Hundred and Twelfth Session • Cent douzième session • 112° período de sesiones

**EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING
HUITIEME SEANCE PLENTERE
OCTAVA SESION PLENARIA**

5 June 1997

**The Eighth Plenary Meeting was opened at 15.20 hours
Mr. José Ramón López Portillo,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding**

**La huitième séance plénière est ouverte à 15 h 20
sous la présidence de M. José Ramón López Portillo,
Président indépendant du Conseil**

**Se abre la octava sesión plenaria a las 15.20 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. José Ramón López Portillo,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo**

- III ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WFP (continued)**
- III ACTIVITES ET LA FAO ET DU PAM (suite)**
- III ACTIVIDADES DE LA FAO Y DEL PMA (continuación)**
- 13 reparations for the 29th Session of the FAO Conference**
- 13 Préparatifs de la vingt-neuvième session de la Conférence**
- 13 Preparativos para el 29° período de sesiones de la Conferencia de la FAO**
- 13.1 Arrangements for the Session and Provisional Timetable**
- 13.1 Organisation de la session et calendrier provisoire**
- 13.1 Organización y calendario provisional del período de sesiones**
- 13.2 Deadline for Nominations for Independent Chairman of the Council**
- 13.2 Date limite pour la présentation de candidatures au poste de Président indépendant du Conseil**
- 13.2 Plazo para la presentación de candidaturas al cargo de Presidente Independiente del Consejo**

EL PRESIDENTE: Como ustedes saben, estos dos subtemas se encuentran en el documento CL 112/11, el cual contiene los Apéndices A y B, el Orden del Día y el Calendario Provisional para la Conferencia.

En lo que concierne a la Orden del Día en el Apéndice A, hay que añadir un nuevo tema después del Tema 8 con el siguiente título, por favor tomen nota: Negociación de un Instrumento Jurídica-mente Vinculante sobre el Procedimiento de Información y Consentimiento Previos, es decir el ICP, porque hay negociaciones en curso que serán concluidas en tiempo para que la Conferencia pueda pronunciarse al respecto.

Con esta inclusión, el calendario será ajustado apropiadamente. Quisiera llamar también su atención sobre los párrafos 32 y 33 del documento, donde se encuentra el borrador de la decisión del Consejo sobre la organización de la Conferencia con respecto al subtema que concierne al plazo para presentar candidaturas al cargo de Presidente Independiente del Consejo. Se propone en el párrafo 12 del documento, el día viernes 22 de agosto a las 12.00 horas. Espero que no habrá ningún inconveniente en aceptar este plazo que, como de costumbre, se fija entre la conclusión del Consejo de junio y el inicio de la Conferencia de noviembre.

Nasreddine RIMOUCHE (Algérie): Monsieur le Président, je parle au nom d'un grand nombre de pays pour présenter une proposition concernant le point sur l'ordre du jour et le calendrier d'examen des points inscrits pour la Conférence. Un grand nombre de pays affectés par le criquet pèlerin proposent l'inclusion d'un point sur la lutte anti-acridienne à l'ordre du jour de la Conférence, notamment dans le cadre de l'examen des points par la Commission I. La raison qui nous a poussés à demander l'inscription de ce point à l'ordre du jour est, qu'à la lumière de la présentation qui a eu lieu la semaine dernière et plus précisément le 30 mai dernier sur EMPRES dans son volet "Lutte anti-acridienne", les résultats de cette présentation ont mené à la conclusion que la situation reste plus ou moins dramatique, plus ou moins inquiétante, notamment dans la région de la mer Rouge.

Parmi les informations communiquées par la division, une infestation généralisée n'est pas à écarter si des mesures de lutte ne sont pas prises. A cet effet, nous demandons que la Conférence essaie d'étudier cette question et nous soumettons ce point à l'ordre du jour. Le point sera consacré essentiellement à la lutte anti-acridienne, aux mesures prises, au suivi et aux perspectives. Les mesures prises: nous savons que la FAO a déjà pris des mesures. Nous examinons les résultats de ces mesures; et est-ce qu'on pourrait assurer un suivi, est-ce qu'on pourrait apporter des améliorations et quelles sont les perspectives qu'on pourrait envisager pour mener à bien la lutte anti

acridienne et, en même temps, faire face à d'autres situations dramatiques que celles qu'ont connues nos régions en 1988 et en 1993?

EL PRESIDENTE: El Consejo ha tomado nota de esta propuesta de incluir un tema sobre la lucha contra la plaga de la langosta del desierto. Este tema ya se había pedido se incluyera en ocasiones anteriores, en la Comisión 1. Vamos a responder al respecto en un momento. Pero también quiero que se pronuncien respecto a la inclusión del título "Negociación de un Instrumento Jurídicamente Vinculante sobre el Procedimiento de Información y Consentimiento Previos - ICP" después del Tema 8; si no están de acuerdo en incluirlo pronúnciense al respecto.

Ould SIDI ABDALLAH (Mauritanie) (Langue originale arabe): Je voulais seulement appuyer la proposition présentée par l'honorable délégué de l'Algérie qui appelle à l'inscription à l'ordre du jour de la Conférence d'un point relatif à la lutte anti-acridienne.

Kezimbira Lawrence MIYINGO (Uganda): I just wanted to make a little amendment on that proposal. I support it but why do we not, say, include an item on the control of locusts, because we do not only have desert locusts disturbing us. Locusts, the red locusts too, apart from desert locusts.

Ronald ROSE (Canada): I wish to follow your advice and seek some clarification on the other topic that you had suggested. I understood you were proposing that we add an item called, "Negotiation for a Legally Binding Agreement on Prior Informed Consent".

Could you explain to us what the purpose of this will be. Will the agreement be negotiated beforehand and here for ratification? Are there other UN bodies involved in this, because it is not a topic I have been following? Perhaps you could explain the purpose of this.

EL PRESIDENTE: Su pregunta es muy pertinente y le voy a pedir de inmediato al señor Asesor Legal que tome la palabra para explicar la razón por la cual se puede incluir en esta ocasión para la consideración de la Conferencia.

LEGAL COUNSEL: We are in the process - FAO and UNEP -- of servicing an Inter-governmental Negotiating Committee for the negotiation of an international legally-binding instrument for the application of the Prior Informed Consent procedure in trade in certain hazardous chemicals and pesticides.

We have just had the third Session. We expect to finish all of the negotiations by the end of the year. This process has been authorized by the FAO Council and we hope to have finished all of the substantive negotiations, hopefully by October, for a Diplomatic Conference which will take place in December, in Rotterdam.

There is a proposal for a Joint UNEP/FAO Secretariat for the new Convention on Prior Informed Consent which, in fact, making legally binding the present voluntary procedure on Prior Informed Consent contained in the *FAO Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides* and in the *UNEP London Guidelines*.

There will be a need for the Conference to react to this and approve, if it so wishes, the offer of FAO to contribute to a Joint Secretariat for this new Convention, with UNEP.

My colleague, Mr Van der Graaff, has reminded me there will also be questions to be responded to regarding the future of the voluntary procedures, until such time as the legally-binding instrument comes into force.

The Conference is not involved in the negotiation of this; it will be a report on the progress of this and the implications of it for FAO are, particularly from providing a Joint Secretariat with UNEP.

EL PRESIDENTE: Hemos entendido que estos trabajos están adelantados y que la Conferencia puede encontrarse en posición para pronunciarse respecto al ICP.

Ronald ROSE (Canada): We have certainly been involved in these negotiations. We are happy to see that they are moving to a conclusion.

My concern is more one of bringing something to Conference that has not been considered by some of our other Committees. Perhaps it has, but will there be an opportunity, for example, for the Council before the Conference to look at the implications of this? I believe somebody should be looking at the financial implications and the staff implications. Is this normally something that you spring on Conference?

EL PRESIDENTE: Voy a pasar la palabra de nuevo al señor Moore porque es relevante esta pregunta. Efectivamente la única instancia que queda antes de la Conferencia es el Consejo. Es el mismo caso para el tema de la langosta del desierto, respecto al cual no hay ninguna documentación que la FAO haya preparado o, que pueda preparar con relación a este tema de aquí a la Conferencia. Aunque es un tema relevante, obviamente llegaríamos a la FAO un poco huérfanos para su tratamiento.

LEGAL COUNSEL: Just to clarify, the Council has been, of course, fully involved in this matter of the PIC negotiations. The Council, jointly with the UNEP Governing Council, called on FAO and UNEP to start the negotiations. At the session of the Council last November, the scope of the mandate for the negotiations was fully discussed and the Council was, I think, quite happy with the progress achieved at that point.

So, it is nothing new. The negotiations, of course, are not being carried out within the framework of either FAO or UNEP's Governing Bodies. The negotiations are being carried out within the framework of an Inter-governmental Negotiating Committee, which has been set up by both FAO Council and UNEP Governing Council. It is this Inter-governmental Negotiating Committee which is putting together the text. So it is not a question that the text will come now to FAO or to UNEP for further negotiation; it will be fully negotiated by the Inter-governmental Negotiating Committee in pursuance of the mandate given to it by your Council and by the UNEP Governing Council.

On the other hand, we can always put the matter on the Agenda of the Council preceding the Conference, to advise on the administrative and financial matters before it goes to the Conference. I think that will be normal to have the matter on your Council Agenda. Then you can make your recommendations to the Conference, which is the normal way, and the Conference can take its decisions, because it will have certain budgetary implications given that there is a proposal at the moment for a Joint Secretariat. The indications from the Inter-governmental Negotiating Committee are that they very much favour a Joint Secretariat, but that decision has not yet finally been taken by the Inter-governmental Negotiating Committee.

Abdou-Karim DIOUF (Sénégal): Je voudrais intervenir pour appuyer la proposition qui a été faite par le délégué de l'Algérie pour porter à l'ordre du jour de la prochaine Conférence la question du criquet pèlerin ainsi que les mesures prises et le suivi par la FAO. A cet égard, le Secrétariat pourrait peut-être soumettre un document sur la base de la résolution adoptée à ce sujet à la Conférence en 1995.

Adel Mahmoud ABOUL-NAGA (Egypt): I have requested the floor to second the proposal by Algeria to include, on the Agenda of the Conference, an item on control of desert locusts, to be submitted to the first Commission, including the details of control and forecasts as well as the follow-up of the implementation of the decisions taken in the last Conference.

Andrew PEARSON (Australia): I would like to take up on the Canadian questions. I think as it involves potentially finances, resources and all sorts of matters, it would be very worthwhile in fact that we do have the Council immediately preceding the Conference have the opportunity to look at it. I think that is very important, in fact, in terms of providing us with a chance to discuss this before the flurry of the Conference. So if I could please make a strong push for inclusion of that at the Council, with follow-up in the Conference.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: With respect to the recommendation to include under Commission I, an item on Desert Locust, and possibly Red Locust, the Secretariat of course, will do whatever we can in response to the Council decision. I would point out that it is somewhat late in the day, if you will. The Conference normally does not discuss matters -- matters are taken to the Conference that have been discussed in a main Committee or in the Council and are presented to the Conference for decision. We will do our best. I would recommend, in this case, as in the case of the PIC item, that the document that is for Conference, come through the Council. Obviously, the Council is not going to have time to discuss it but, at least, it will have an opportunity to make a recommendation, based on the paper to the Conference. There certainly will not be time for extensive debate at Council or Conference of an item that has not been considered by any other body. We will do the best we can. Mr Van der Graaff did not have any other plans for this summer, anyway.

Nasreddine RIMOUCHE (Algérie): Je m'excuse de prendre la parole une deuxième fois. Pour commenter ce qu'a dit M. Hjort, je crois qu'il faudrait aussi se référer à un document qui a été élaboré, notamment le rapport de la commission de la FAO de lutte anti-acridienne, qui pourrait être une référence pour la préparation du document qui serait soumis au Conseil pour faire des recommandations à la FAO. Donc il y a aussi cette question qui a été traitée dernièrement au niveau de ce Comité qui pourrait servir de référence pour la préparation du document.

EL PRESIDENTE: Me informa el señor Hjort que hubo una discusión aunque breve en el COAG sobre este tema.

Vamos a concluir entonces. Respecto a la organización y al calendario provisional del período de sesiones, el Consejo tomó nota de dos propuestas y coincidió en incluir dos temas. Uno relativo a la lucha contra la langosta del desierto y otras plagas y, el otro tema se refiere a la negociación de un instrumento jurídicamente vinculante sobre el procedimiento de información y consentimiento previos, con el procedimiento siguiente: en primer lugar, el Consejo de la FAO en su 113° período de sesiones recibirá la documentación relevante y debatirá estos dos temas con el propósito de hacer una recomendación concreta a la Conferencia; en segundo lugar el Comité de Finanzas evaluará las implicaciones financieras del ICP con miras a recomendar también la forma de adecuar el Programa de Labores de la Organización.

El Consejo tomó nota de la fecha límite para presentación de candidaturas para la Presidencia Independiente del Consejo que es el día 22 de agosto a las 12.00 horas y acordó en fijar esa fecha.

Ronald ROSE (Canada): I am sorry to have asked and then refused the Floor previously. I am still trying to come to grips with what is going to be discussed under Commission I, under the possible Agenda Item. I believe it is normal that we bring items for decision and if this is more to be an information item, or an up-date, I wonder if perhaps it might be something that may more usefully be presented as an information item or as a general interest item at sometime during the Conference. If there is a half a day when we are perhaps -- I am not sure whether there is a day when we will be waiting for drafts of reports or something like this -- but I am just not sure what the purpose would be of putting it on the Agenda of Commission I, other than to debate a situation, but I do not think we are prepared to agree to more expenditures or new administrative arrangements for this particular problem.

EL PRESIDENTE: Estos dos temas se llevan al Consejo y el Consejo remitiría sus recomendaciones a la Conferencia para que ésta se pronuncie al respecto.

Ronald ROSE (Canada): I was referring only to the Desert Locust Item. I recognize that the Prior Informed Consent Item does require to come to the Conference, that there will be expenses involved, there will be administrative arrangements to take care of and I am very pleased that we have, in fact decided that that would come to Council beforehand and to Conference. My question was, on the Locust Item, it seemed to me it was more of an information item. I was wondering if there was some way that this important topic could be dealt with more as an information item at a point in our agenda when, instead of just one Commission, it could be dealt with to provide information to all delegates.

Nasreddine RIMOUCHE (Algérie): J'avais expliqué dans ma première intervention que le souci des pays affectés était de mettre d'abord la FAO au courant de la situation et de prendre les mesures en conséquence, les mesures qui s'imposent, parce que, selon les conclusions de la présentation qui a été faite la semaine dernière, une infestation généralisée n'est pas à écarter. On va donc être confronté à un danger et à une situation qu'ont connus nos régions en 1988 et 1993. Si l'on parle d'information, je crois que les bulletins d'information qui nous parviennent à l'Ambassade sont suffisants. Ce que l'on propose, c'est que cette question soit traitée. Je crois que le monde est conscient à la fois de la gravité et de l'importance de cette question.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Just to add one additional point to what has just been said, you all recall that there was a Resolution on Desert Locust at the 1995 Conference. The Representative from Algeria is such a gentleman that he has not mentioned that very little action has been taken in response to that Resolution. I do think that the Members have the right to request that the follow-up to that Resolution be considered by the next Conference. I think, in that sense, it is not only an information matter, it is for action.

EL PRESIDENTE: Conforme a lo que acaba de decir el señor Hjort vuelvo a repetir que la conclusión a la que llegaríamos respecto a este tema de la lucha contra la langosta del desierto, es que el Consejo lo trate primero y lleve su recomendación concreta a la Conferencia para que ésta se pronuncie respecto a este tema tan urgente y la FAO tome acción.

10 Report of the 13th Session of the Committee on Forestry (Rome, 10-13 March 1997) (continued)

10 Rapport de la treizième session du Comité des forêts (Rome, 10-13 mars 1997) (suite)

10 Informe del 13º período de sesiones del Comité de Montes (Roma, 10-13 de marzo de 1997) (continuación)

Luigi FONTANA-GIUSTI (Italy): I would like of course to speak in full agreement and support of the European Union statement.

I already took the Floor to speak about the Forestry and the great importance that we attach to this Item.

In all the sections of the document FAO activities are highly appreciated and commended, their continuation is recommended together with the request of extending the interest to new fields. My authority expressed in several occasions the need to strengthen the role of FAO, not only in the traditional sectors but also in new sectors like Fisheries and Forestry.

On the other hand this conflicts with the concern expressed for the limited financial resources allocated to Forestry (Items 20 and 40).

The remedies suggested are an improved planning to reach a better efficiency and prioritization of activities.

The Italian delegation considers the development of criteria and indicators to assess the progress in any field of activity the best and fastest way to improve the efficiency of FAO interventions. A close coordination among the Regular and Field programmes in order to take advantage of the synergy, brings to the same target.

The Italian delegation shares the concerns expressed in Item 35 on the possible unfavourable impact of the on-going decentralization on Forestry Programmes. There is a sound fear that the Sub-Regional Offices would be insufficiently staffed to reach the critical mass and, consequently, their effectiveness could remain below an acceptable level.

While the Italian delegation agrees, in principle, on the recommendations given to enhance efficiency in FAO activities, attention should be paid to prioritization. Priorities should, however, be well-balanced to prevent emargination or even cancellation of activities of minor evidence that can be of considerable importance for some countries in a particular situation.

Ms Adek Triana YUDHASWARI (Indonesia): First let me begin by expressing the sincere appreciation of my delegation to the Secretariat for preparing the excellent document before us CL 112/8.

My delegation would like to highlight the important issues on Forestry. The Forestry pay a significant role in contributing the economic development. Indonesia gives high priority to the national forestry programme since 1993. Indonesia has established a Consultative Group on Indonesian forestry as an appropriate forum to discuss planning, implementation and evaluation of the Indonesian Forestry Action Programmes. This forum is important in providing the recommendations and measures to be taken by Indonesia on forestry-related issues.

Indonesia attaches a great importance of contribution of forestry in economic development, therefore, we support activities on sustainable forest management and suggest that FAO continues to provide necessary assistance to the Member Nations, to monitor progress achieved and to develop strategies, in order to promote the National Forest Programme in the Regular Working Programmes.

The Indonesian delegation is of the view that COFO and the Vienna Forestry Commission play a significant role, as the appropriate fora to discuss issues on forestry, in particular the emerging issue after the World Food Summit. We acknowledge the vital contribution of forests, forest products and forest subsidies made to the Food Security and poverty alleviation. Therefore, we would like to support the recommendation that active and early involvement of countries and bureau of the Commission in preparation of guides, is of paramount importance in order to encourage active participation of the countries.

Finally, my delegation, endorses the Report of the 13th Session of the Committee on Forestry.

Andrew PEARSON (Australia): Certainly, Australia was very pleased with the Report from the Commission on Forestry and feels that it very clearly indicates the areas where FAO should continue to be involved. I would just note that it would not like to see FAO, perhaps, extend its involvement to too greater extent, into some discussions which are taking place at an international level, on considerations of legal implications and developments. Suggestions that FAO should take too strong a role in these, I think would be counter-productive to ensuring FAO maintaining its effective leadership.

Abdou-Karim DIOUF (Sénégal): Le Sénégal voudrait remercier le Secrétariat d'avoir mis ce document à notre disposition, portant rapport de la troisième session du Comité des forêts. Nous voudrions d'emblée apporter notre appui à l'adoption de ce rapport; toutefois nous souhaiterions revenir sur quelques petits points pour réaffirmer la nécessité d'élaborer un plan d'action mondial sur les ressources génétiques forestières, et de la tenue de réunions des ministres responsables des forêts, à l'instar de celle qui a été organisée par la FAO pour la première fois en mars 1995.

Nous pensons aussi que la FAO devrait également poursuivre ses efforts pour l'élaboration de plans d'action régionaux sur les ressources génétiques forestières, comme prélude à l'élaboration du plan d'action mondial. De même, nous estimons que les réunions ministérielles sur les forêts sont opportunes, en ce qu'elles mettent en lumière la priorité du secteur forestier dans l'agenda international. C'est pourquoi nous saluons la tenue en octobre prochain en Turquie, du quinzième Congrès forestier mondial qui va ainsi porter les questions forestières au premier plan des préoccupations mondiales.

Enfin, nous souhaitons réaffirmer le rôle de chef de file de la FAO dans les travaux du Groupe intergouvernemental sur les forêts, en particulier le Groupe de travail inter-institutions sur les forêts, tout en soulignant l'importance de la tâche de la FAO dans le suivi des travaux de New York. Le Sénégal, qui fait partie des tout premiers pays à avoir signé la Convention sur la désertification, voudrait ici mettre l'accent sur les problèmes de désertification et réitérer encore sa demande que la FAO apporte tout son appui aux pays qui sont touchés par le fléau de la sécheresse et de la désertification.

Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil): Concerning the question of a Ministerial Meeting for forests, I think we had the longest discussion during the Commission and it is our understanding that we should not go against the Resolution taken at the Regional Conference. We had a Resolution voted in Asunción and we considered that Report should be adopted the way it is but if we are going to discuss this Item again, we are ready to do, to assist on this point.

Juan NUIRY SANCHEZ (Cuba): Muy breve, señor Presidente, apoyamos totalmente lo planteado por la distinguida Representación de Brasil.

EL PRESIDENTE: Considera la Secretaría que no hay en verdad aquí ningún tema específico sobre el cual comentar, vamos entonces a concluir este punto diciendo que, tras hacer diversos comentarios sobre el papel de la FAO en torno al sector montes y tomando en cuenta esos comentarios, el Consejo acogió el informe del 13° período de sesiones del Comité de Montes.

Con eso se concluye el Tema 10 y pasamos al Tema 20: Informes del 66° período de sesiones del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos.

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS (continued)

QUESTIONS CONSTITUTIONNELLES ET JURIDIQUES (suite)

ASUNTOS CONSTITUCIONALES Y JURIDICOS (continuación)

- 20 Report of the 66th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (Rome, 5-6 May 1997)**
- 20 Rapport de la soixante-sixième session du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques (Rome, 5-6 mai 197)**
- 20 Informe del 66° período de sesiones del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos (Roma, 6-7 de mayo de 1997)**

EL PRESIDENTE: El señor Hamdi está presente entre nosotros, aunque tenía un compromiso importante a las 16.00 horas ha esperado pacientemente a que el Consejo avanzara en sus

deliberaciones, para dirigirse al mismo y presentar los cuatro puntos de este tema que los tomaremos en su totalidad.

Salah HAMDI (Président, Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques): C'est avec plaisir que je vous présenterai une brève introduction du rapport de la 66ème Session du CQCJ tenue les 5 et 6 mai 1997 et qui a débattu de quatre points fondamentaux.

Le premier point est relatif aux amendements à l'Article XXXIII du Règlement général de l'Organisation et au Règlement intérieur du CSA. Ces amendements sont introduits pour tenir compte de la mission confiée au CSA par le SMA pour le suivi de la mise en oeuvre du Plan d'action du Sommet dans le cadre de l'engagement 7, ainsi que du transfert des fonctions de l'ex-Conseil mondial de l'alimentation (supprimé par l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies) à la FAO et au PAM pour la partie aide alimentaire.

Ces amendements ont été au préalable examinés quant au fond par la 23ème Session du CSA.

Le CQCJ a constaté que les amendements proposés sont conformes aux Textes fondamentaux de l'Organisation.

Le deuxième point porte sur des amendements à l'accord portant création de la Commission Asie-Pacifique pour la pêche et au Règlement intérieur de ladite Commission. Après examen, le Comité a considéré que d'un point de vue strictement juridique, les amendements proposés sont conformes aux Textes fondamentaux de l'Organisation.

Les deux autres points concernent deux accords similaires de coopération conclus par la FAO respectivement avec le Centre de réforme agraire et de développement rural pour le Proche Orient et avec l'Organisation INFOFISH pour l'Asie-Pacifique.

Le Comité a constaté que ces deux accords sont conformes aux Textes fondamentaux de l'Organisation et tiennent compte des principes directeurs et critères fixés par la Résolution 59/69 de la Conférence.

Enfin, le Secrétariat a présenté au Comité, à titre d'information, dans le cadre du point "Autres questions", un projet de memorandum d'accord entre la FAO et le Haut commissaire des droits de l'homme au sujet des modalités de mise en oeuvre du "Droit à la nourriture pour tous" tel que consacré dans l'engagement 7 du Plan d'action du SMA.

Telle est la substance des travaux du CQCJ lors de sa dernière session que nous soumettons à votre considération pour adoption et transmission à la Conférence.

EL PRESIDENTE: Gracias señor Presidente del CACJ, señor Hamdi. Ha sido usted exhaustivo en la presentación de este informe. Si los distinguidos delegados desean adoptarlo con su silencio, ello indicará un endoso pleno al informe y, en consecuencia, a los correspondientes proyectos de resolución, informes y a acuerdos que se deben tomar para ser transmitidos y decididos finalmente por la 29ª Conferencia de la FAO.

Juan NUIRY SANCHEZ (Cuba): No quería referirme al Informe del 66º período de sesiones del Comité de Auntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos, sino unirnos a sus palabras de aprobarlo por consenso.

Como todos sabemos, el amigo Hamdi, Representante Permanente de Túnez, dentro de poco se marcha de estos predios. Quisiera pues, aprovechar la oportunidad que se me brinda para decirle que ha sido un gran diplomático, que con su carácter amable y gentil ha abogado siempre por la cooperación y la negociación constructiva. Su ausencia se notará y podemos decirle, los que lo

conocemos, que podrá volver a su país con la satisfacción de haber cumplido con su misión. Le deseamos los mayores éxitos en las misiones que le dé su Gobierno.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias por esos comentarios y desde luego nos unimos plenamente a sus elogios. El Consejo le ha rendido a usted, señor Hamdi, un muy merecido homenaje, yo a usted 1° conozco también desde hace muchos años, es mi amigo y le deseo a usted todo lo mejor.

Salah HAMDI (Président, Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques): Je me dois de vous dire tout ce que je ressens en ce moment, après les paroles aimables que m'a adressées mon ami, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur de Cuba, et après ce que vous-même venez de dire, Monsieur le Président, ainsi qu'après les applaudissements de mes collègues; j'en suis ravi, et je vous en remercie beaucoup. C'est pour moi un grand honneur que d'avoir reçu cet hommage du Conseil. J'espère que nous nous reverrons en d'autres occasions, et j'aimerais vous dire que j'emporte avec moi les meilleurs souvenirs de ma brève expérience ici, parmi vous, au sein de cette Organisation que nous aimons tous.

EL PRESIDENTE: Con esta aclamación, con este elogio a su persona, el Consejo endosa este informe del CACJ, le rinde a usted homenaje y le despide con los mejores recuerdos. Muchas gracias señor Hamdi por la misión cumplida.

Bien, señores delegados, con esto concluye el Tema 20 de nuestra agenda. Despedimos al señor Hamdi y continuamos con el Tema 7: Informes de la Tercera Reunión Extraordinaria y de la Séptima Reunión Ordinaria de la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos para la Alimentación y la Agricultura, documento CL 112/17, CL 112/18.

II WORLD FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SITUATION (continued)

II SITUATION MONDIALE DE L'ALIMENTATION ET DE L'AGRICULTURE (suite)

II SITUACION MUNDIAL DE LA AGRICULTURA Y LA ALIMENTACION (continuación)

7 Reports of the 3rd Extraordinary (Rome, 9-13 December 1996) and 7th Regular (Rome, 15-23 May 1997) Sessions of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

7 Rapports de la troisième session extraordinaire (Rome, 9-13 décembre 1996) et de la septième session ordinaire (Rome, 15-23 mai 1997) de la Commission des ressources phytogénétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture

7 Informes de la tercera reunión extraordinaria (Roma, 9-13 de diciembre de 1996) y de la séptima reunión ordinaria (Roma, 15-23 de mayo de 1997) de la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos para la Alimentación y la Agricultura

EL PRESIDENTE: El Consejo se honra con la presencia del Embajador Gerbasi que es el Presidente de la Comisión. Como ustedes saben, la tercera Reunión Extraordinaria de la Comisión concentró sus actividades en la negociación del Compromiso Internacional Sobre Recursos Fitogenéticos, en armonía con el Convenio de Diversidad Biológica y la séptima Reunión Regular tuvo también como objeto principal la continuación de las negociaciones para la Revisión del Compromiso. Los otros dos objetivos fueron el del seguimiento de la Conferencia Internacional de Leipzig e iniciar el proceso gradual para la ampliación del mandato de la Comisión.

Voy a dar inmediatamente la palabra al señor Embajador Gerbasi para que presente los informes de la Comisión, y después retomaré la palabra para referirme a un punto específico de este tema.

Fernando GERBASI (Presidente de la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos): Como nuestra reunión, la séptima Reunión Ordinaria de la Comisión, se celebró hace pocos días, el documento CL 112/18 que contiene nuestro informe ha sido circulado recientemente, me permitiré hacer algunas observaciones sobre su contenido para un mejor conocimiento de los señores delegados.

Quisiera comenzar refiriéndome a que la tercera Reunión Extraordinaria de la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos para la Alimentación y la Agricultura, se dedicó exclusivamente a la continuación de la Revisión del Compromiso Internacional, negociaciones a las que también se les dio un amplio espacio durante la séptima Reunión Ordinaria tal como usted lo señalara hace poco.

Esta reunión regular fue especialmente significativa, por ser además la primera reunión de la Comisión ampliada y la primera en dar seguimiento a la Conferencia Internacional de Leipzig y a las recomendaciones de la Cumbre Mundial sobre la Alimentación.

La importancia que los países atribuyeron a esta reunión y, en especial, al proceso negociador del Compromiso Internacional, queda reflejado en el hecho de que contó con la mayor participación en la historia de la Comisión, es decir 337 delegados procedentes de 113 países y 26 organizaciones internacionales estuvieron presentes durante esta séptima Reunión Ordinaria. Es muy significativo el que aproximadamente el 60 por ciento de los delegados de los países, vinieron de sus capitales.

Esta participación masiva, que tuvo una gran importancia en los avances realizados en las negociaciones, fue facilitado gracias a fondos extrapresupuestarios proporcionados por el gobierno de Suiza. Quisiera recordar que la Comisión acogió calurosamente esta asistencia prestada por Suiza, a la vez que reconoció la que había dado Suecia y Noruega para las consultas regionales.

Igualmente hizo un llamado a los países donantes para que siguieran prestando toda la asistencia para futuras reuniones de negociación. Yo quisiera aprovechar la ocasión para reiterarlo en esta oportunidad.

Durante esta reunión de la Comisión se eligió por primera vez una mesa directiva en la cual están representados todos los grupos regionales. Durante las negociaciones del Compromiso Internacional reinó una excelente atmósfera de cooperación entre los países y fue posible establecer mecanismos que permitieron un proceso dinámico de negociación.

Consultas regionales e interregionales previas, hicieron posible la elaboración de documentos regionales que fueron utilizados por la mesa directiva para elaborar un texto consolidado de los tres artículos más controvertidos del Compromiso Revisado, es decir del alcance del Compromiso, el acceso a los recursos genéticos y los derechos del agricultor. Este texto consolidado presentado por la mesa, sirvió de base para las negociaciones que tuvieron lugar en el marco de dos grupos establecidos *ad hoc*.

Al final de la sesión, la Comisión reconoció los progresos significativos realizados y estuvo de acuerdo en que se habían establecido buenas condiciones para avanzar. En palabras de la propia Comisión, estos progresos evidenciaban la importancia fundamental de la conservación y utilización sostenible de los recursos fitogenéticos para la alimentación y la agricultura y la distribución equitativa de los beneficios derivados de su uso con el fin de garantizar la seguridad alimentaria mundial. Se destacó también, en especial, la necesidad de una participación política de alto nivel en el futuro proceso negociador.

Parece claro que estas negociaciones han entrado en una fase crucial, en la que parece posible que las buenas intenciones y la importancia dada por los países miembros a este tema, se traduzcan en un consenso político que deberá permitir la conclusión de las negociaciones dentro del próximo bienio. Es decir, ojalá sea antes de la Conferencia de la Organización en 1999.

Teniendo en cuenta las recomendaciones del COAG y en cumplimiento de la Resolución de la Conferencia 3/95 y de las Resoluciones del Consejo 1/110, en las que se ampliaba el mandato de la Comisión y se definían sus estatutos, la Comisión estableció y adoptó los estatutos de dos Grupos de Trabajo Intergubernamentales de carácter técnico subsidiarios de la Comisión, uno sobre Recursos Genéticos Animales para la Alimentación y la Agricultura y otro sobre Recursos Fitogenéticos para la Alimentación y la Agricultura. Los Grupos de Trabajo tendrán una composición geográfica equilibrada con 27 Países Miembros cada uno y, la Comisión deberá decidir en cada bienio, la necesidad que se reúnan estos Grupos para cumplir tareas específicas.

La Comisión consideró también el seguimiento del Plan de Acción Mundial adoptado durante la cuarta Conferencia Técnica Internacional sobre Recursos Fitogenéticos de Leipzig de 1996 y pidió que la Comisión desempeñara una función dinámica y creativa para facilitar y supervisar la aplicación del Plan de Acción Mundial.

La Comisión sugirió que el secretariado presentara un informe al Consejo en 1998 sobre las medidas que la FAO ha tomado para facilitar y supervisar la aplicación del Plan de Acción Mundial.

La Comisión también consideró otros elementos del sistema Mundial de la FAO y especialmente la red internacional de colecciones *ex-situ* con los auspicios de la Organización, recomendando que los acuerdos existentes entre la FAO y 12 centros internacionales de investigación agrícola que ponen sus colecciones en esta red hasta octubre de 1998, fueran prorrogados, pendientes de la finalización de la revisión del Compromiso Internacional.

La Comisión también recibió informes sobre política, programas y actividades de la FAO y de otras 33 organizaciones internacionales y, destacó la importancia de la colaboración con estas organizaciones, especialmente con la Secretaría del Convenio sobre Diversidad Biológica y con el Instituto Internacional de Recursos Fitogenéticos.

Por último, señor Presidente, la Comisión estableció sus prioridades hasta su próxima Reunión Ordinaria. Como primera prioridad, decidió presentar al Consejo la propuesta de convocar una Reunión Extraordinaria de la Comisión para continuar las negociaciones de la Revisión del Compromiso Internacional. Como segunda prioridad, la convocatoria de una Reunión del Grupo de Trabajo Intergubernamental de Recursos Genéticos Animales para la Alimentación y la Agricultura. Como tercera prioridad, la convocatoria de una Reunión del Grupo de Trabajo Intergubernamental de Recursos Fitogenéticos para la Alimentación y la Agricultura.

La Comisión estuvo de acuerdo en que su Presidente, en este caso quien les habla, convocara estas reuniones una vez que el Director General hubiera confirmado que se disponían de los fondos necesarios y del presupuesto ordinario de la Organización, o bien procedentes de fuentes extrapresupuestarias.

Estas decisiones de la Comisión ya las conoce del Director General, quien oportunamente me dará respuesta sobre los fondos ordinarios o extrapresupuestarios.

Permítame agregar, señor Presidente, por que considero fundamental este tema que la Comisión tiene ante sí, ciertamente hubo un avance muy positivo en las negociaciones de la Revisión del Compromiso Internacional, para armonizarlo con la convención sobre diversidad biológica y, es importante que este avance ya iniciado, se continúe en el tiempo a través de la reunión extraordinaria.

Yo me hago eco del llamado que se formuló, para que en el futuro las delegaciones, independientemente del alto nivel técnico que hasta el momento han mostrado, vengán acompañadas o presididas por delegados que puedan tomar decisiones en el transcurso de estas negociaciones de

forma tal que esta revisión pueda concluirse lo más pronto posible y se le de acatamiento, tanto a las resoluciones de la Conferencia, como al llamado que nos hizo la conferencia de las partes en la última reunión que realizara en Buenos Aires en diciembre del año pasado.

EL PRESIDENTE: Gracias señor Embajador Gerbasi, Presidente de la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos, por este exhaustivo informe que tanto alimenta nuestros debates. Ha sido usted suficientemente explícito, no necesito recordar aquí lo que el Consejo debe observar. Solamente voy a hacer mención a una cuestión que ha preocupado a algunos miembros en este proceso de transición hacia una Comisión con funciones más ampliadas. Recordaré, en primer lugar, la Resolución 3/95 de la Conferencia en donde y cito respecto a la ampliación del mandato de la Comisión, consideraba que "la ampliación del mandato facilitaría un enfoque integrado de la agrobiodiversidad y la coordinación con los gobiernos que se ocupan cada vez más de cuestiones normativas con respecto a la diversidad biológica de manera integrada".

La Conferencia consideró también que la Comisión ampliada orientaría y supervisaría las políticas y actividades de la FAO en esta materia y contribuiría en una cooperación más estrecha con la Conferencia de las Partes del Convenio de la Diversidad Biológica, con la Comisión sobre el Desarrollo Sostenible, la Organización Mundial de Comercio, el Grupo Consultivo sobre Investigaciones Agrícolas Internacionales y otras Organizaciones Intergubernamentales y No Gubernamentales.

Esto me lleva simplemente a subrayar la importancia de que en este proceso de cambio se aseguren las funciones que deberá enfrentar el Secretariado, funciones que deberán ser revisadas, así como también reforzar su capacidad con el fin de que pueda cumplir con su papel en una Comisión que ahora, ampliada a todos los recursos genéticos de interés para la agricultura y la alimentación, pueda continuar facilitando las negociaciones con las del Compromiso Internacional.

David SANDS SMITH (United Kingdom): When I was a small boy, I had a history book and it had rather nice pictures in it, in particular pictures of people who were called heralds. I am beginning to feel rather like a herald. May I perform that role once again, Chairman, and ask that you should give the floor to the Observer from the Netherlands, on behalf of the European Union.

L.C. SMITS (Observer for the Netherlands): Thanks first of all to the herald of the United Kingdom, of course. On behalf of the European Community and its Member States, I welcome the reports of the 3rd Extraordinary Session and of the 7th Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and note, with satisfaction, that progress is being made. In this context, I would express our thanks to the Honourable Ambassador of Venezuela, Mr Gerbasi, for his important contribution to this result.

The last session of the Commission resulted in a better understanding of the precise objectives of each region, reflecting a confluence of the positions of the vast majority of delegations.

We want to continue and complete negotiations on the revision of the International Undertaking. The European Community and its Member States want to keep the momentum of these negotiations as well as to put pressure on this process which concerns a major economic, political and social issue.

I want to raise two issues, in this respect: one is on budgetary matters; the other is on the date of the Extraordinary Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources.

First on budgetary consequences. As we already shortly indicated that, in our statement on the Programme of Work and Budget, provision must be made for the two inter-governmental Technical Working Groups, one on Animal Genetic Resources and one on Plant Genetic Resources, established by the Commission. This provision should cover, not only the costs of holding the

meetings but also strengthen the Commission, Secretariat and capacity in the relevant technical divisions, in particular for the implementation of the Global Plan of Action adopted last year in Leipzig. Budgetary resources should also cover the extensive work needed for FAO to respond effectively to the requests by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to contribute to the work programme on agro-biodiversity established at its 1st Session in Buenos Aires.

The second point I want to make is on the Extraordinary Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources. In paragraph 42 of the Report, it is stated that the Commission decided to submit to Council a proposal to convene an extraordinary session devoted solely to the pursuit of the negotiations for revision of the International Undertaking.

The EC and its Member States strongly request the Council to endorse the Commission's proposal, and we would ask the Director-General of FAO to ensure that this Extraordinary Session can be held and adequately prepared by the Technical Working Groups.

As to the date of the Extraordinary Session, in our opinion it should take place as soon as possible. We attach great importance to having this session before the FAO Conference in November this year. This would enable FAO to send, at the highest level, a positive message on the revision of the International Undertaking to the 4th Conference of the Parties to the CBD, which will be held in Bratislava in May 1998. In any case, this Session has to be held before the CBD meeting.

EL PRESIDENTE: Me gustaría hacer dos observaciones muy breves, una con respecto a los Grupos de Trabajo que como ustedes saben, tendrán una composición de 27 miembros y se reunirán solamente una vez por bienio. Considero que las necesidades de financiación de estos Grupos son relativamente menores, lo que importa es asegurar que el Secretariado de la Comisión en su conjunto tenga las capacidades para llevar a cabo éstas y las otras, no solo de los Grupos de Trabajo sino también de las reuniones extraordinarias y de las futuras reuniones de la Comisión en virtud de sus funciones renovadas y expandidas.

La otra observación es referente al período extraordinario. Este dependerá de que lleguen a la Organización los recursos extrapresupuestarios necesarios para celebrarla. Creo que más depende de esto que de otra cosa.

Putro SUMPENO (Indonesia): On behalf of the Indonesian delegation, I would like to capitalize the concern of Group 77 that the last session of the FAO Technical Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture was unable to reach a consensus. I was amazed by the fact that the request of G77 to recognize farmers' rights failed to draw sympathy from distinguished delegates from developed countries with an accommodation that farmers' rights is merely a concept.

With the present era of globalization, we realize that the proposed multilateral exchange of PGRFA is obviously unavoidable. It is our belief, therefore, that the multilateral exchange of PGRFA system is to be formulated in a timely fashion by taking into account the interests of both developed and developing countries. In this connection, I would like to emphasize that the multilateral exchange of PGRFA should be based on facilitated access for the mutual benefit of both donor and recipient parties in order to facilitate global food security and sustainability of PGRFA for the future generation.

However, I could not resist to express my disbelief that we failed to reach agreement on the issue of equal sharing of benefits from the commercialization of PGRFA derived from multilateral exchange.

I was further dismayed by the fact that our colleagues from the developed countries were reluctant to provide a small incentive to the developing nations where most PGRFA were derived. On the other hand, with their advanced expertise and technical knowhow, most developed countries tend to

take economic benefits through manipulation and development of new clones and hybrids from those PGRFA and subsequently patented for commercial purposes.

We believe, therefore, it is not fair if the commercial benefit of PGRFA is only enjoyed by certain groups, whereas the countries of origin are left in poverty and becoming more and more dependant on developed countries for the supply of new clones and hybrids in the coming years.

I, therefore, would like to remind Council that unless there is a mutual understanding on this issue, I am afraid that we will not be able to reach an agreement in the next Extraordinary Meeting of the Technical Working Group on PGRFA.

In the meantime, I would like to capitalize our desire and support for the establishment of a new inter-governmental technical working group on Animal Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. In fact, we would also like to see the establishment of inter-governmental working groups on forestry and fisheries in the near future.

Kezimbira Lawrence MIYINGO (Uganda): Yesterday I expressed my concern over the fact that there appears to be an imbalance in dealing with genetic resource, that a lot of emphasis has been concentrated on plant genetic material and resource while the animal genetic resource appears not to have emphasis focused on it. I have been going through this report, which of course I endorse entirely, but I could see that the animal genetic resource, once again, has not been focused on adequately. Yesterday I thought that I would have got an answer but I did not get an answer for this.

I also would like to appeal that work on genetic resource and assistance in its development in the two sectors need to be accelerated. Those of us in the Third World or in the developing countries, Africa especially, are the owners of a lot of genetic material which either remains unknown in terms of its potential and is neglected or is taken away from us illegally without us recognizing its full benefit, and we do not get return from it as has been voiced by the previous speaker.

This is of great concern and we would like FAO and these Committees to accelerate the negotiations that are going on and the setting-up of these technical committees, facilitating them to be able to carry out the duties that they are supposed to do.

Yesterday, I also voiced the concern of East Africa and the Great Lake region which have not yet got a project sponsored, like our brothers in the SADEC countries, where research has already begun into the genetic resources of the area. I appeal to FAO to find a sponsor speedily so that we can also handle our genetic resources.

Roberto O. VILLAMBROSA (Argentina): Señor Presidente permítanme en primer lugar agradecer a la Secretaría la presentación del informe que tanto trabajo nos costara hace pocas semanas y agradecer también al Embajador Gerbasi por el esfuerzo realizado que hizo posible un progreso substancial en las negociaciones del Compromiso Internacional, progreso que nos induce a continuar y a impulsar el proceso de la negociación. No obstante, señor Presidente, con referencia a la intervención que hizo previamente el delegado de la Unión Europea con respecto a la próxima Reunión Extraordinaria de la Comisión, tendría que decirle que para este año no se encuentran previstos los recursos presupuestarios para esta reunión. Me gustaría ser optimista como él, pero en vista del calendario que tenemos por delante, más allá de que mi delegación impulse el proceso de continuación de estas negociaciones, no parece posible hacerla antes de la Conferencia general de este año sino que se tendría que tener en cuenta el próximo año y hacer consultas sobre la fecha que sería más adecuado teniendo en cuenta otras reuniones que están en el horizonte.

Me refería anteriormente volviendo al tema del presupuesto, señor Presidente, en el día de ayer luego de haber creado la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos, y de haber establecido un progreso en el

Compromiso Internacional, tenemos menos presupuesto para la Comisión en el próximo bienio que el que teníamos en el anterior, luego de haberle otorgado prioridad política y técnica a este tema.

Por otra parte me gustaría recibir de la Secretaría alguna respuesta para saber si para el próximo bienio se tiene previsto algún refuerzo en las estructuras de la Secretaría teniendo en cuenta las previsiones que todos los gobiernos hemos tenido y las prioridades que hemos establecido en esta Comisión. Digo esto con la creencia y el convencimiento que estas estructuras deben reforzarse en función de las prioridades y ésta es una de las prioridades que nosotros nos hemos fijado. De manera que sería bueno conocer las previsiones para el próximo bienio y concentrarnos en este tema, que es también uno de los temas prioritarios que hemos establecido.

Ms Melinda L. KIMBLE (United States of America): First of all, the United States delegation would like to thank the Secretariat for the preparation of this Report, which is an important report summarizing the work today on a very important area of FAO's technical work. We would also like to extend our particular thanks to our distinguished colleague, Ambassador Gerbasi, for his leadership at this most recent session of the Commission on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. We believe that his efforts were critical to the progress that was made.

As we said in our statement on the Summary Programme of Work and Budget, FAO has a unique role in this area of genetic resources. We can do this work nowhere else. Support for the negotiations on the Undertaking, the working groups, and the requirements of the technical secretariat are among the highest priorities of FAO's work in our view and we believe these activities must be fully funded. We also believe that, given the importance of the International Undertaking negotiation, it is essential to secure regular budgetary funding for this activity.

While we agree with the European Union that the scheduling of the negotiations will be important, our thinking is similar to that of Argentina. We believe this meeting might best occur in late spring 1998 after, not before, the CBD Conference of Parties which will be held in Bratislava in April 1998.

Given the work ahead this year on a Programme of Work and Budget, the FAO meetings of the Programme and Finance Committees, and the intense demands as we prepare for Conference, plus ongoing environmental negotiations, we cannot see how we can easily schedule another meeting for the Commission on Plant Genetic Resources.

Henry WOOD (Ghana): The Ghana delegation is happy that the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture has indicated, in paragraph 36 of the report, in document CL 112/18, that priority in this future work programme should be given to the negotiations for the revision of the International Undertaking.

Ghana looks forward to a speedy conclusion of negotiations on the International Undertaking, which will bring it in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Developing countries, especially Africa, are endowed with great crop diversity. As already indicated by the distinguished delegates of Indonesia and Uganda, plant materials in developing countries are most often given away to developed countries, where they are used for breeding of improved varieties which have been commercialized and patented without any benefit accruing to the donor countries or to the poor farmers from the developing countries who have developed the crops over hundreds of years. The developing countries of the world should benefit from the commercialization of plant genetic resources taken from them. This should be in the form of technology transfer from the developed to the developing countries, the strengthening of institutions in developing countries engaged in work on plant genetic resources, joint research on donated germplasm with local plant breeding institutions, and funding from multilateral systems.

Through such assistance, the developing countries would be able to halt the alarming disappearance of plant genetic resources, and put in place the necessary machinery to protect and conserve these resources.

In addition, farmers from developing countries could benefit from the improvement in crop varieties, increase their productivity and ultimately enhance their living conditions.

It is in this regard that Ghana fully supports the outcome of the Africa Regional Preparatory Meeting held in Addis Ababa, from 19 to 25 April this year, where African countries called for the revision of the International Undertaking to reflect the needs of African countries, with particular reference to farmers' rights, to reach a state of benefit-sharing of profits from the use of plant genetic resources.

Andrew PEARSON (Australia): I would entirely agree with a number of statements that have highlighted the progress that was made at the meeting we have just held on the Commission for Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. I think it was a very good meeting, and one of the key underpinnings for that success was the development of better understanding of positions of the various participating countries. As the EU quite accurately pinpointed, and also as my distinguished colleague from Indonesia also highlighted, the fact that, in going forward, we will need to work towards mutual understanding.

On this basis, I would like to suggest that it is very important that we give ourselves some time to establish further mutual understanding, that to attempt to rush things at this stage may well, in fact, not create the very positive environment we are looking to repeat to enable us to indeed conclude before the next Conference meeting -- not the one at the end of this year, but the one two years down the track.

We would suggest that that is an important timeframe we look at, a two-year period from the end of this year, which will include the meeting in Bratislava, a number of other discussions centring on the environment which will touch on genetic resources. So we believe that a meeting later, rather than earlier, would serve the interests of everybody in preparing well, preparing themselves, in preparing the other countries, the understandings, and also the necessary understanding for the delegations, to ensure that when they come to that meeting, they are able to negotiate and they are able to make those decisions which are going to be so crucial.

I would support the suggestion of a later timing, as proposed by the United States, as being an opportunity for us to wait but, ultimately, advance faster in the process.

Albano L.T. ASMANI (Tanzania): First of all, I wish to compliment the Chairman of the Commission, the Ambassador of Venezuela.

Having said that, Tanzania has very effectively participated in the work of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, notwithstanding its financial problems.

It is ironical for a country like Tanzania, where 90 percent of its people are farmers, not to support the question of farmers' rights. I know there are so many here who are the preachers of human rights. Now, the humans in Tanzania are the farmers, so if there is a question of human rights, then it is ridiculous to deny farmers' rights because we have nobody other than farmers.

Having said that, let me go to the contents of paragraph 42. There is so much work that is outstanding and I believe, if we have got the will, we can find the resources. Therefore there is all the possibility to convene this Extraordinary Session.

I cannot comprehend why it becomes a problem to some of us to have this extraordinary meeting. Now, there is a question of when, tomorrow or the day after tomorrow? I think there is merit to have this meeting as soon as is practical.

Therefore, I concur that we should have this preferably before the Conference, and I think that is a possibility.

I wish to support those speakers who have strongly said that the exploitation of plant genetic resources cannot continue in some of the countries and, therefore, ways and means should be found to make sure that we benefit from whatever is happening around the world.

Lastly, I wish to say that I do support my colleague from Uganda, that East Africa should definitely be considered for a project on this very important subject of genetic resources, both for plants and animals.

Ronald ROSE (Canada): Just to be brief, I want to echo the words of my colleagues who previously congratulated Ambassador Gerbasi for his sage guidance of the Commission at its most recent meeting.

I also want to congratulate the Secretariat for the rapid turnaround in the Report of the meeting that really just concluded two weeks ago, and I think that is an excellent standard they have set.

I did not intend to take the floor on this item, but I do feel it is necessary to respond to the proposals that were made by the delegate of the Netherlands on behalf of the Member States of the European Union, and my thoughts were summed up by the comments of the representative of Australia, echoing the comments of the United States in terms of timing. We also believe that we need some time to prepare ourselves and to prepare other partners in these negotiations and, as we mentioned in the Commission and we repeat now, we believe the best timing is for some time in the late spring of next year.

Per Harald GRUE (Observer for Norway): Let me just express the strong support of my delegation for the position expressed by those countries which have underlined the need for two new negotiating meetings as soon as possible and, in any case, before the CBD meeting.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: The Secretariat is extremely pleased at the progress that has been made on this matter. We would like to see even further progress. It would be very nice to be able to go to the Conference, in the same position as you now are with the IPPC, through very good efforts this week.

That is not going to be the case.

The specific question was asked, or at least implied, would we have resources to have an Extraordinary Session before the Conference or, that is, in this biennium. The answer is no. There are no resources available. One, of course, can always try to reshuffle resources but, I did not hear anybody suggest where we should reduce.

I would point out that a Commission meeting costs about US \$250,000. That is equivalent to the cost of a P-5 for a whole biennium or, for the last quarter of a biennium, 4 P-5s.

This is what we are talking about, trade-offs.

We would welcome extra-budgetary resources for an Extraordinary Session. I would point out that, even if resources were available, it would not be very easy to schedule another session this year.

The Organization has committed its facilities from 20 September to 10 October, and so we would not have access them, and of course we have the Conference coming up, a relatively full schedule.

Another maybe even only a technical detail, but we are required by you to have invitations out six months in advance. If we did so tomorrow, then we could have a session the first days of December. In other words, there are difficulties, but I must inform you that, at the present time, we do not have resources in the current budget for a session in this biennium.

Turning to the next biennium, questions have been asked, specifically, do we have resources for strengthening and for holding meetings of Commissions, Working Groups, and so forth. In the zero-real, there are provisions at the present time for one meeting of the Commission during the next biennium, and one meeting of the Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources, and one meeting for the Working Group on Plant Genetic Resources.

In the real-growth scenario, there is a provision for a second meeting of the Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources. You will see that in paragraph 15 of the supplement document to the Programme of Work and Budget.

In the zero nominal, we have tried very much and very hard to protect the resources that are in the Summary Programme of Work and Budget for Genetic Resources, and you see reference to that fact in paragraphs 53 and 58, where respectively we talk about the plant and animal genetic resources. We have tried to the maximum degree not to make reductions, even if we have to go to zero nominal.

I would say that I do not believe that one would characterize this as a substantial strengthening of our resources for plant and animal genetic resources. We would maintain the Secretariat, we would have resources for these Working Groups. This is an additional Working Group, over and above what we have had in the past. In that sense, it is strengthening, but in terms of the Regular Programme posts, further detail can be given, but I do not believe, even at the zero-real, there is any substantial strengthening either in the Animal Division or in the Plant Division.

It might be interesting to note that, as I was listening to the statement of the European Union, I could not help but feel joy to hear the implication that the Community has decided to support at least zero-real, if not, real-growth.

Otherwise, of course, one could not conform with what they were proposing.

A. SAWADOGO (Sous-directeur général, Département de l'agriculture): Je crois que M. Hjort a donné l'essentiel des réponses qu'il fallait donner. Je voudrais revenir sur certains points spécifiques, en particulier sur le déséquilibre observé notamment par les délégués de l'Ouganda et de la Tanzanie sur les ressources zoogénétiques par rapport aux ressources phylogénétiques. Le Secrétariat ne fait que suivre les directives qu'il a reçues des organes directeurs et qui sont de procéder, de manière progressive, en essayant d'achever le travail entrepris sur les ressources phylogénétiques et d'élargir graduellement le travail qui est fait sur les autres ressources, en particulier sur les ressources zoogénétiques.

Je voudrais également dire qu'au moins un des pays des Grands Lacs, connu de l'un des deux orateurs, a introduit une demande de PCT pour maintenir des ressources zoogénétiques, je crois qu'il s'agit de chèvres, dans un pays avoisinant cette région. Ce qui veut dire qu'il y a quand même des opérations qui sont en cours et que les pays des Grands Lacs ont la possibilité de demander des projets de coopération technique pour commencer, d'ores et déjà, à faire quelque chose.

Je voudrais faire un bref commentaire sur la nécessité de renforcer l'Organisation de la FAO dans son travail sur les Ressources génétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture. Il va sans dire que ce

renforcement concerne les Ressources génétiques des pêches, des forêts, des animaux domestiques et aussi des plantes, sans compter le Secrétariat. C'est un ensemble qui est assez important, et pour lequel le maximum sera fait, mais en donnant la priorité à la Renégociation de l'engagement international, comme cela nous a été demandé. Je voulais simplement dire qu'organiser effectivement une Réunion extraordinaire de la Commission d'ici la fin de l'année paraît difficile. Je souhaitais que l'on nous dise aussi si nous aurons un soutien extra-budgétaire pour organiser une Réunion extraordinaire sur les ressources zoogénétiques, que nous avons prévue pour décembre.

Pour le reste, je voudrais joindre les appréciations du Secrétariat à celles des orateurs, les remercier pour ce qu'ils ont dit du Secrétariat, et aussi dire que l'organisation de la Commission des ressources génétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture et sa manière de travailler sont vivement appréciées par les collaborateurs que nous sommes.

Jorgen Skovgaard NIELSEN (Denmark): I have listened with great interest to the explanation of the Deputy Director-General and this gives me occasion to put a question. If the negotiations on the undertaking do not proceed any further from now until the meeting of the Conference of the CBD in Bratislava, what would happen then? Time does not stand still and, according to my information sources, the indulgence of the CBD may be rather limited, with the consequence that, if FAO does not deliver what is expected? Maybe the task will be put in another place and that will result in some savings in FAO because there would be no need to spend so much money on the work on genetic resources. I would like to enquire if I can get any information about what are the expectations about the reaction from the CBD because it would be nice to have two years more to negotiate in calm, but I am afraid that we are not left two years negotiation time.

Fernando José MARRONI de ABREU (Brazil): After hearing the comments made by Mr Hjort on the Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium, I would like to remind this Council that the Commission had decided in order of priorities for the next meetings and the extraordinary meetings and, if we do adopt the Report, I think we have to modify the Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium according to the priorities adopted by the Commission.

Reacting to the comment just made by the distinguished delegate of Denmark, it is the understanding of our delegation that we are not linked to the CBD. The negotiation, after an undertaking in this forum, is independent. We had a call from the CBD saying or suggesting that the undertaking could be eventually a protocol to the CBD, but we are not going to lose this forum just because we do not have the resources for an immediate meeting.

Ms Melinda L. KIMBLE (United States of America): I would just like to support the point just made by Brazil. I think there is a very high priority attached to an Extraordinary Session of the Commission, a priority for this meeting that would extend to whatever budget level we adopt. I do not think that the Secretariat can necessarily determine what the implications are for this meeting versus our position on the budget. I mean this meeting needs to go forward.

I would also say that my understanding of the deliberations in the COP are exactly those of Brazil and that we could have the leeway to have the meeting after this CBD in April and in fact that timing would be very good.

David SANDS SMITH (United Kingdom): Once again may I please ask for the floor for the Presidency of the European Union.

L.C. SMITS (Observer for the Netherlands): Do not blame the herald for asking again for the floor for the European Union Presidency.

In reaction to a number of honourable delegates who spoke on this subject, I think it is not the right moment to go into detail on the different positions. The last session resulted in a better

understanding of the positions of the different regions and I think let us make use of the momentum to conclude these negotiations.

Regarding the timing, I strongly disagree with what was said about the timing, that it could easily be after the Conference in Bratislava.

The third point I want to stress is on the budget. I considered the remarks of Mr Hjort as a joke. We think genetic resources are a serious subject and we think that FAO has to make funds available from the regular budget. I think it would be very curious that an issue, which is considered as a top priority - and I have not heard anybody who disagreed with this -- has to be funded by extra-budgetary resources and I want to stress this because it is happening more often that priorities -- what the Members see as priorities -- have to be financed by extra-budgetary resources. I think what is important, what is top priority, has to be funded from regular resources.

H. HILDEBRAND (Alemania): Quiero primero endosar lo dicho por el Observador de los Países Bajos en cuanto a la conveniencia de aprovechar el momento, el ímpetu y los avances logrados en la última reunión de la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos para la Alimentación y la Agricultura.

Haciendo alusión a lo dicho por Australia, me pregunto cómo podemos pensar en una perspectiva de tiempo que es prácticamente de mediano plazo y, para terminar, quisiera agregar un elemento que tal vez sea bueno recordar. Hace un año estábamos en los últimos preparativos para la Conferencia de Leipzig, no ciertos del éxito, pero lo logramos. Una de las metas de la Conferencia era poder terminar también la revisión del Compromiso Internacional, cosa que por diferentes razones no logramos. Es una advertencia que quisiera agregar en cuanto a la necesidad y, también hago alusión a lo que dijo el Representante de Dinamarca, que el tiempo no espera. La pérdida de valiosos recursos fitogenéticos tampoco.

EL PRESIDENTE: Creo que están claras las posiciones. Debo advertir antes de dar la palabra al Secretariado que, aunque está dividido el Consejo respecto de la oportunidad o el momento apropiado para llevar a cabo la Reunión Extraordinaria, no hay nadie que no haya identificado la altísima prioridad que se le otorga al hecho de concluir el proceso de revisión del Compromiso Internacional. Todos han manifestado la urgencia y la importancia de llevar a cabo esto. Algunos se pronunciaron por la necesidad de no precipitarse, de tomarlo con serenidad, otros se pronunciaron en el sentido de que era fundamental considerar la Conferencia de Bratislava y la importancia de insertar allí la conclusión de la revisión del Compromiso.

Como hay un acuerdo en el Consejo respecto a la prioridad que merecen los recursos genéticos, creo que podríamos dejar al Director General que explore, de nuevo, la posibilidad de llevar a cabo la Reunión Extraordinaria lo antes posible. Esa es la prioridad, no creo que nadie haya restado importancia a la Reunión. Reconocemos que está dividido el Consejo respecto del tiempo para celebrarla pero quizá con algunas consultas pueda llegar el Director General a una conclusión que a todos convenga y nos permita adelantar en este proceso. Es una pregunta simplemente: ¿podría una recomendación de este tipo ayudarnos a encontrar una solución en este Consejo dividido respecto al momento para celebrar la Reunión Extraordinaria?.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Let me make clear it is not a matter of priority of the issue as far as we are concerned either, if you refer to the first statements, the introduction I made to this. I was also reporting a fact however. The fact is that at the present time we do not have resources in the Regular Programme budget for this. As I said, one can always try to rearrange things but it is not easy. It is a substantial amount, as the members of Finance Committee in particular know; we are in a rather tight and difficult situation. Just yesterday, I think, or the day before, from this same Division, I had to turn down a request for a temporary staff member for four months to help them do some work because they do not have the resources in their allotment and we do not have any excess that we can use to augment that allotment.

I mean, it is not a joke. It damn well is not a joke. What we have to go through here is no joke at all. You have to try and juggle the priorities. I said to you that, as far as the next budget is concerned, we have put in the zero real some additional resources for Plant Genetic Resources, Animal Genetic Resources, for genetic resources generally. There are very, very few programmes where that is the situation. I also said to you, in the nominal we tried not to reduce. We have not made a reduction and there are also very few programmes where there have been no reductions or where we have been able to protect to that degree. That is an indication that we share the view with you that it is an extremely high priority programme. But if you will recall the discussion yesterday, there were some concerns from this very Council, and you will have in your report that you did not like the proposed reductions that were taking place in meat and milk and other livestock areas or in the seeds, seed security and, so forth, areas in these same programmes. We have proposed that to you.

If you have to go to zero nominal, we have to take money out from somewhere. We have said that it is our perception that genetic resources is among the highest priorities, therefore, we take out of milk, meat, seeds and so forth. But there is not uniform appreciation and agreement on that position either. We, of course, will do whatever we can to hold the next session. We want to see the agreement negotiated as soon as possible. But at the present time there just are not resources there. We again would invite, encourage and we appreciate, the extra-budgetary resources that have been given to us in the past for these extraordinary sessions.

One final point. I think it need not be stated but there are no resources for two sessions of the Commission in the next biennium in the zero real, even, or in the nominal. So if, as the representative from Brazil stated, the recommendation here as the first priority is an extraordinary session in the next biennium, then it either means leaving out the working groups -- probably both of them - because it takes just about as much for a commission meeting as for two working group meetings, or adjusting the budget.

EL PRESIDENTE: Estas palabras han sido severas y todavía está en revisión y en proceso de finalización el proyecto de PLP para 1998-99; quizá en todo este proceso que va a ir también a los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas, podríamos encontrar un hueco para revisar esta cuestión, que el Consejo y todos los miembros han destacado: es de una alta prioridad para la Organización asegurar que se lleven a cabo las reuniones y los trabajos previstos para la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos.

Fernando GERBASI (Presidente de la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos): Yo quisiera ante todo, a título personal, dar las gracias a aquéllos, que muy amablemente se refirieron a la manera como conduje los trabajos en este 7º período ordinario. Me complace constatar, al igual que usted, que hay un total y pleno respaldo a la labor de la Comisión y, sobre todo, a las prioridades que la Comisión fijó a través de sus párrafos 40 a 45 de su Informe.

Señor Presidente, y abusando de su paciencia y de los señores miembros del Consejo, yo quisiera aprovechar la oportunidad para hacer un llamado en el sentido de que ciertamente el momento que hemos alcanzado no se debe perder. Y la verdad es que, por como ha explicado el señor Hjort, puede haber dificultades presupuestarias. La Comisión fue muy sabia al señalar que sus prioridades se establecían en función de las oportunidades que en el presupuesto ordinario o extrapresupuestarias existieran. He escuchado con mucho interés que algunos países indicaron que una reunión extraordinaria negociadora debería efectuarse con el presupuesto ordinario. Yo creo que esto se podría alcanzar simplemente, señor Presidente, si los países donantes financiaran extrapresupuestariamente las reuniones de los Grupos Técnicos, de forma tal, que liberen el dinero que se tiene pensado utilizar para estas dos reuniones técnicas y permitan realizar entonces la Reunión Extraordinaria de la Comisión, lo más pronto posible y de conformidad con las consultas que nos corresponderá hacer y que el Director General también efectuará.

EL PRESIDENTE: Hemos tomado nota de su propuesta. Esta podría incluirse en el Informe y desde luego revisarse por el Comité del Programa y de Finanzas si ustedes lo tienen a bien. Asimismo, la posibilidad de acomodar o encontrar algún otro hueco en el proceso de preparación final del proyecto de Labores y Presupuesto para incluir estas reuniones.

Adel Mahmoud ABOUL-NAGA (Egypt): I surely understand the motive behind the proposal of Mr Gerbasi. However, I would like to raise the point of the importance you are all giving to the Animal Genetic Resources Working Group. We cannot come here to Council to fight over two meetings when we normally get one. It is not fair to come to Council for another argument. I hope I raise this voice highly, it is not the case. If they want to cancel the Working Group for the Plant Genetic Resources, alright. I accept that. I think it is very important to keep the meeting for the Animal Genetic Resources.

EL PRESIDENTE: Yo no entendí que esa fuera una propuesta y menos aún la del señor Embajador Gerbasi. El lo que dijo es tratar de acomodar las cosas de tal manera que pudiéramos tener la Reunión Ordinaria de la Comisión, y desde luego las otras dos reuniones; la del Grupo Técnico sobre Recursos Fitogenéticos y la de Zoogenéticos financiadas con recursos extrapresupuestarios. Pero la del Embajador Gerbasi es una propuesta para la financiación de la totalidad de las reuniones en virtud de lo que dijo el señor Hjort, que podemos seguir explorando. Usted es miembro del Comité del Programa y estoy seguro que será muy activo en este punto en septiembre.

Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil): We would like to support the proposal presented by Ambassador Gerbasi. If possible, we would like to complement the proposal.

We understand that certain regions and certain donor countries are very interested in these meetings. I would complement it and say, that we have two alternatives, either looking for resources for an extraordinary meeting in order to maintain the meetings for both Working Groups or we go for the proposal of Ambassador Gerbasi. We could eventually use both alternatives.

Mohd. Khairuddin MD. TAHIR (Malaysia): We note the considerable progress made in the negotiations for the Revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture at the Seventh Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. We consider that the general agreement among almost all regions on the need for a multilateral system, which is efficient, effective and transparent, to facilitate access to and exchange of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA), and to provide for the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilisation of these resources, including the transfer of technology, capacity building, exchange of information and funding. Working towards a consensus in such a multilateral system is a crucial first step towards the speedy completion of the revision of the International Undertaking.

Mr. Chairman, in our view the multilateral system of access and exchange should constitute more than just a set-up for the exchange of germplasm, but rather it should generate benefits, whether monetary or non-monetary, through its very existence and functioning and that such benefits should be shared fairly and equitably. In this regard, the modalities of the system within which conditions of access, along with benefits-sharing have to be worked out and agreed upon, since decisions in these areas would allow countries to decide on the types or categories of germplasm to be placed into the system. We would like to support the Commission's designation of the negotiation for the Revision of the International Undertaking as its uppermost priority for the next biennium and the proposal to convene an extraordinary session devoted solely to the negotiation.¹

¹ Statement inserted in the verbatim record on request

EL PRESIDENTE: Si no hay otra delegación que desee hacer uso de la palabra, podemos entonces concluir manifestando que el Consejo adoptó los informes de la Tercera Reunión Extraordinaria y la Séptima Reunión Ordinaria de la Comisión de Recursos Genéticos, dio la máxima prioridad a las prioridades allí señaladas, a la necesidad de concluir con un proceso de revisión del Compromiso Internacional de Recursos Fitogenéticos y a la búsqueda de una solución para financiar la celebración de la Reunión Extraordinaria lo más pronto posible. Asimismo se destacó la necesidad de llevar a cabo las Reuniones Ordinarias y las de los Grupos Técnicos de trabajo sobre recursos fitogenéticos y zoogenéticos.

Se insistió en el proceso de expansión de la Comisión, se **dio** la bienvenida a la creación de estos grupos y se dio toda la importancia al fortalecimiento de las capacidades y de los recursos del Secretariado a fin de que cumplan con las tareas ahora expandidas que tendrán, en virtud de los compromisos de cooperación y coordinación con otras instancias, ya contraídos.

Distinguidos delegados, con esto creo que podemos concluir el presente tema, los puntos de vista respectivos van a ser reflejados en el Informe. Yo no los quiero repetir aquí; tenemos en verdad poco tiempo y queremos dar la mayor parte de éste al Comité de Redacción. Si me permiten, pasaré al Tema 22 de nuestra agenda. Le agradezco al Embajador Gerbasi a nombre del Consejo su presencia y desde luego por el desempeño que tuvo como Presidente de la Comisión.

Agradezco también la presencia del señor Sawadogo y de los otros miembros de la Secretaría y damos por concluido el tema. Pasamos al Tema 22, Fecha y Lugar del 113° período de sesiones del Consejo, documento CL 112/INF/8.

VI OTHER MATTERS

VI AUTRESQUESTIONS

VI OTROS ASUNTOS

22 Date and Place of the 113th Session of the Council

22 Date et lieu de la cent treizième session du Conseil

22 Fecha y lugar del 113° período de sesiones del Consejo

EL PRESIDENTE: El lugar, como ustedes saben, es en esta Sala Roja, y las fechas, como figuran en el documento, son del 4 al 6 de noviembre en virtud de que la Conferencia comienza el día viernes 7 de noviembre. ¿Hay algún comentario? ¿Ninguno? Entonces queda así decidido.

23 Any other Business

23 Autres questions

23 Otros asuntos

EL PRESIDENTE: Distinguidos delegados, respecto de Otros Asuntos hay un tema que está incluido en la Orden del Día y éstas son las medidas que recomienda el Comité Consultivo de la FAO sobre Seguridad e Higiene en el Trabajo para promover que se evite fumar en los edificios de la FAO. La razón de ello no es tanto discriminar a los fumadores o enajenarlos, sino simplemente aceptar que fumar afecta a aquellos que no lo hacen y los afecta de tal manera que daña su salud sin que ellos lo quieran. Por eso la Organización y también siguiendo el ejemplo en otras partes de Naciones Unidas, está promoviendo que en un período de dos años esta Organización llegue a ser una Organización donde en sus edificios no se fume. Esta propuesta del Centro Médico de la FAO, quiero advertirles, es la primera que se presenta a la consideración del Consejo por parte del Centro Médico y por tanto creo que debemos darle nuestra plena bienvenida. Espero, por tanto, distinguidos delegados, que ustedes coincidan con esta propuesta que se introduce en Otros Asuntos y que podamos acordarla. No habiendo ninguna delegación que desee hacer uso de la palabra respecto a este punto de Otros Asuntos, lo daremos por concluido y lo aceptamos, con júbilo, diría. Aceptado.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Finalmente, respecto de otros puntos, encuentro que la delegación de Uganda desea hacer un comentario y le paso la palabra. Uganda la tiene.

Kezimbira Lawrence MIYINGO (Uganda): After you have spoken about smoking, I would like to draw the attention of Council to an issue I mentioned yesterday. This time, about coffee that every one of us drink.

Yesterday, I pointed out in my contribution that although coffee is not one of the strictly considered food items and, therefore, probably does not constitute to food security or insecurity, it is one important commodity which could contribute to food insecurity in that it provides income for many communities around the world, especially in Africa and some other tropical countries. I mentioned that there is a threat to the coffee industry which is originating from a fungal infectiopn, called the coffee wilt disease. I wanted both the Council and the Food and Agriculture Organization to note it so that among the precise priorities that it sets this is one very important subject that is threatening the entire coffee industry. I think it deserves attention because all efforts that were underway to try and ensure food security could be frustrated if this disease spreads uncontrolled.

EL PRESIDENTE: Estoy seguro que a través de EMPRES la FAO hará sus mayores esfuerzos para atender estos problemas de la roya del café que es, como sabemos, uno de los principales productos de exportación de varios países, entre otros el suyo.

Distinguidos delegados, si no hay otro tema respecto a Otros Asuntos, vamos a dar por concluido el Programa de nuestro Consejo. Vamos a levantar la sesión para permitirle al Comité de Redacción que de inmediato se aboque a la finalización del Proyecto de Informe que nos someterá el día de mañana. Yo espero, desde luego, que el Comité de Redacción avance lo más rápido posible hacia la finalización del texto, de tal suerte que el Consejo pueda quizá aprobarlo el día de mañana aunque sea relativamente tarde o, más bien, hacia el atardecer como aparece en las Ordenes del Día. No estoy seguro de que podamos cumplir con ese propósito, depende del Comité de Redacción y depende desde luego de que los textos estén a tiempo para ser traducidos y reproducidos en los idiomas oficiales de la Organización.

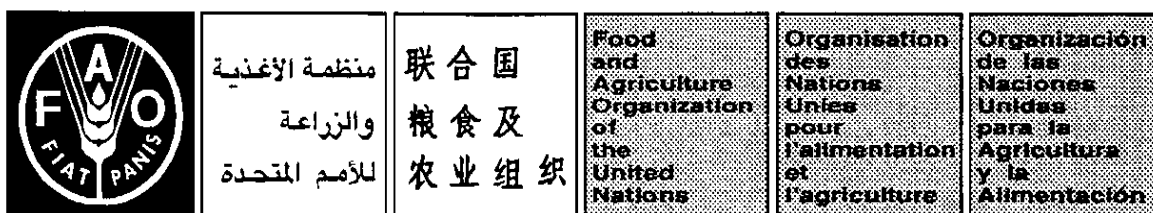
Distinguidos delegados, no habiendo ningún otro asunto, levantamos la sesión y les congratulo por estos debates tan fructuosos, tan creativos.

The meeting rose at 17.40 hours

La séance est levée à 17 h 40

La sesión se levanta a las 17.40 horas

7 June 1997



COUNCIL

CONSEIL

CONSEJO

Hundred and Twelfth Session • Cent douzième session • 112º período de sesiones

**NINTH PLENARY MEETING
NEUVIEME SEANCE PLENIERE
NOVENA SESION PLENARIA**

7 June 1997

**The Ninth Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.50 hours
Mr. José Ramón López Portillo,
Independent Chairman of the Council, presiding**

**La neuvième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 50
sous la présidence de M. José Ramón López Portillo,
Président indépendant du Conseil**

**Se abre la novena sesión plenaria a las 9.50 horas
bajo la presidencia del Sr. José Ramón López Portillo,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo**

EL PRESIDENTE: Queda abierta esta sesión plenaria para la Adopción del Informe. Antes de proceder a ello -y espero que hayan podido descansar el día de ayer, desde luego todos aquellos que no participaron en el Comité de Redacción- les informo que: el Comité de Redacción tuvo que dedicar muchas horas a su trabajo. Marcharon con paso firme, creo que nos han presentado un magnífico informe, pero que acaba de llegar a sus manos, por lo menos las partes finales. Por eso, les voy a dejar algunos minutos para que terminen de leerlo y así tratar dicho Informe en su totalidad.

Antes de pasar a la Adopción del Informe voy a suspender la reunión por unos minutos.

Deseo que tomen nota de un último párrafo del informe que es indispensable incluir y que por alguna razón no apareció en los trabajos del Comité de Redacción y me refiero al Tema: Otros Asuntos, relativo a la recomendación de prohibir el uso del tabaco en todos los edificios de la FAO.

El párrafo es una propuesta que hago en virtud de que no está incluido en el Informe. Lo voy a leer lentamente para que puedan tomar nota. Será distribuido a la brevedad posible en todos los idiomas.

El párrafo podría decir así: Recomendación de prohibir el uso del tabaco en todos los edificios de la FAO.

El Consejo tomó nota de las recomendaciones del Comité Consultivo de la FAO sobre seguridad e higiene en el trabajo relativas al uso del tabaco en los edificios de la FAO y convino en la introducción progresiva de una política encaminada a crear un ambiente libre de humo dentro de la FAO.

Distinguidos delegados, tenemos aquí en el podium al Presidente del Comité de Redacción, el señor Berthery. No le voy a pasar la palabra ahora porque quiero que ustedes puedan consultarse sobre la forma de adopción de este informe, así como terminar de leer los últimos proyectos de informe que han sido apenas distribuidos.

Cuando nos reunamos dentro de unos minutos voy a proceder a pasarle la palabra al señor Berthery para que presente el Informe y una vez hecho esto, lo adoptemos.

Antes de suspender voy a hacerles un anuncio. Es a petición de la Presidencia del Consejo que pido a los Presidentes de los Grupos Regionales que se reúnan conmigo en mi despacho inmediatamente después de esta reunión.

Bien, señores delegados, les dejo consultar el Informe y suspendemos la sesión por unos minutos.

The meeting was suspended from 10.00 to 10.40 hours

La séance est suspendue de 10 h à 10h 40

Se suspende la sesión de las 10.00 horas hasta las 10.40 horas.

EL PRESIDENTE: Les agradezco mucho su paciencia en espera de la última parte del Informe. Antes de comenzar nuestros trabajos de adopción del mismo, deseo dar la bienvenida al Director General que se encuentra con nosotros en esta última fase del período de sesiones.

Tengo que manifestarles el agradecimiento que debemos hacer a los servicios de traducción e impresión que trabajaron toda la noche para presentarnos hoy en la mañana estos proyectos de informe.

Daniel BERTHERY (Président, Comité de rédaction): Je ne vais pas vous faire un long discours pour vous présenter le rapport du Comité de rédaction que nous avons achevé hier après-midi, après environ 15 heures de travail. Ce que je voudrais vous dire, c'est que je suis d'abord très sensible à

l'honneur que vous m'avez fait en me désignant pour remplir la fonction de Président de ce Comité de rédaction. Je voudrais vous dire aussi que l'esprit des membres qui a animé ce Comité tout au long de nos travaux a été très positif, et s'ils ont été longs, ils se sont déroulés dans une excellente atmosphère avec beaucoup de sens de la coopération, du compromis et de la conciliation pour refléter au mieux les débats de ce Conseil. J'en remercie très sincèrement tous les membres de ce Comité. Je voudrais aussi saluer le travail accompli par le Secrétariat avant, pendant et après nos longues sessions, et l'effort tout particulier que cela représente de la part des personnes qui ont assuré la production des documents sans oublier les interprètes. Maintenant, je voudrais signaler quelques ajustements. Je ne vais pas m'appesantir sur les ajustements linguistiques, comme vous avez invité les membres à le faire, mais simplement sur quelques omissions ou additions que le Comité de rédaction avait adoptées mais qui ne sont pas tout à fait reflétées comme tel dans les documents qui ont été présentés; c'est pourquoi il est important de les signaler. Je demanderai d'ailleurs ensuite au Secrétariat de bien vouloir compléter la liste qu'il a tenue de son côté.

En ce qui concerne le REP/1, à la page 2, et au paragraphe 3: si ma mémoire est bonne, les deux pays qui sont mentionnés dans ce paragraphe 3 n'ont pas été cités lors des travaux du Conseil, et je pense qu'il n'y a pas lieu de les citer dans ce rapport. Je demande donc que cela soit supprimé.

Concernant le REP/2, je voudrais attirer l'attention sur le document "Situation mondiale de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture", le point 4, paragraphe 3, où là je pense qu'il s'agit d'un problème qui ne concerne que la version française mais néanmoins, je le signale car c'est plus qu'une erreur linguistique: on ferait un contresens si la deuxième phrase était maintenue comme telle dans la version française du paragraphe 3. Je pense qu'en anglais il n'y a pas de contresens. Il faut lire en français: "Il a noté la nécessité d'améliorer l'accès de tous les pays et plus particulièrement des pays en développement au marché des exportations".

Dans le REP/3, qui concerne le suivi du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation, point 5, paragraphe 9, dernière page de ce rapport: le Comité de rédaction avait décidé de supprimer la phrase qui demeure, je crois, dans les versions tant anglaise que française et sans doute peut-être dans les autres versions et qui se lit comme: "La relation entre le PSSA et la lutte contre la pauvreté a fait l'objet de questions et d'explications". Le Comité avait pensé qu'il n'y avait pas lieu de maintenir cette phrase, et l'avait donc supprimée.

Dans le REP/5, concernant l'Examen des organes statutaires et des groupes d'experts de la FAO, au paragraphe 5, une phrase est manquante, je pense uniquement dans la version française; je demanderai donc qu'elle soit rétablie; il s'agit de la troisième phrase qui concerne le Codex et qui, je pense, se lit comme suit dans la version anglaise: "The Council agreed that the Codex Alimentarius Commission should review all proposals pertaining to its bodies"; cette phrase ne figure pas dans la version française et devrait être rétablie.

Maintenant je vais demander au Secrétariat de m'aider pour vous donner lecture des autres points, toujours à faire corriger dans notre rapport conformément aux travaux de notre Comité de rédaction.

Ms Miriam M. SAIF (Secretary, Drafting Committee): This amendment affects paragraph 4 of REP/5.

There should be minor deletions in the very first sentence of that paragraph. The Report should read: "For Regional Conferences and other regional bodies, the Council agreed that it was important to obtain agreement of the countries of the region before changes were made".

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias, quizá afecte la versión en inglés solamente.

Ms Miriam M. SAIF (Secretary, Drafting Committee): I think it affects all the language versions.

EL PRESIDENTE: ¿Desean ustedes que se repita este último punto?. Puede usted repetir su propuesta. Yo tengo la impresión, por lo menos en español, de que ya se dice que el Consejo convino en que para las conferencias regionales y otros órganos regionales eran importantes. No sé si tiene que modificarse en otros idiomas. En inglés veo que no está, pero en español sí está.

Ms Miriam M. SAIF (Secretary, Drafting Committee): Going back to paragraph 4, one would delete in the original version that you have before you "the contribution of the", and replace that by "for". So, it would read: "For Regional Conferences and other regional bodies,"; we delete "that was stressed", and we just continue with the rest of the sentence: "the Council agreed that". Of course we delete "for Regional Conferences and regional bodies", because it has already been mentioned before, and the phrase remains the way it is drafted in the original text.

The full reading is as follows: "For Regional Conferences and other regional bodies, the Council agreed that it was important to obtain agreement of the countries of the region before changes were made".

EL PRESIDENTE: Ahora entendimos bien y espero que todos hayan tomado nota. Antes de proceder, pregunto si desean hacer alguna aclaración respecto a los comentarios que ha hecho el Presidente del Comité de Redacción y la Secretaría del Comité de Redacción. No, entonces puede usted continuar Presidente del Comité de Redacción.

Daniel BERTHERY (Président, Comité de rédaction): Je souhaiterais, avec votre permission, que vous donniez la parole au Secrétariat pour continuer avec les autres omissions ou ajustements que j'ai, avec le Secrétariat, repérés.

EL PRESIDENTE: ¿Han tomado nota?. Repítalo por favor Secretaria.

Ms Miriam M.SAIF (Secretary, Drafting Committee): On REP/6 I will read paragraph 4. Now paragraph 4 will just have one sentence, instead of the two sentences that you have before you.

Paragraph 4 would read as follows: "The Council was informed that the inclusion of after-service medical coverage costs in 1998-99 would incur additional costs in the region of US \$17 million".

You should please delete the second sentence because, as I mentioned, this point is covered in REP/10.

Then, right after paragraph 9, we just delete the introduction item. So we delete "More specific views".

EL PRESIDENTE: ¿Han tomado nota de estos cambios?. ¿Desean que se repita?. No, entonces, por favor continúe Secretaria del Comité.

Ms Miriam M. SAIF (Secretary, Drafting Committee): There is also a change affecting REP/9, paragraph 11. We should delete the sentence that reads as follows: "The document was introduced by the Deputy Executive Director of WFP". Paragraph 11 would just have one sentence and it would read as follows: "The Council, after considering document CL 112/13-Sup.1, "WFP Pledging Target", adopted the following resolution."

Also, the Chairman informs me, on paragraph 8, the date of the First Session of the Sub-group on Tropical Fruits should be 21 to 24 April, instead of what was included in the original text which is 21 to 23. I will repeat: it should be 21 to 24 April and the sentence would read: "The Council took note of the information given by the delegate of Thailand of his Government's offer to hold the First Session of the Sub-group on Tropical Fruits, in Pattaya, 21 to 24 April 1998".

These are the changes that we have as regards REP/9.

As regards REP/10, which is the REP document that you just received a few minutes ago. There is a major change in paragraph 5(c). I will read it out for the benefit of all the delegates and perhaps then I will read it slowly.

"noted the results of the actuarial study on the cost of After-Service Medical Coverage and agreed on the need to correctly account for such costs, while it recognized that full service costs for current employees should be included in the budget. It also recognized that certain questions remained outstanding, in particular as regards..." and then it continues the way it is.

We delete "it further noted that in its consideration of the budget" which is the phrase that, in the English text at least, appears in the sixth and seventh sentences. We have a new sentence that is significantly modified. "The Council." -- we delete "had already" -- "requested the Director-General to continue to explore." -- we delete "alternative" -- "solutions to." -- we delete "covering these costs" and include "the accumulated liability" -- ".so as to minimize the negative effects on the substantive output of the Organization, taking into account other approaches being adopted in the UN system".

I just wanted to mention for the benefit of the delegates that this is the sub-paragraph that we had deleted from the previous REP/4 I believe it was, and was included here. So, I will read subparagraph 6 as regards all the changes.

"noted the results of the actuarial study on the cost of After-Service Medical Coverage and agreed..." -- please delete "in principle" -- ".on the need to correctly account for such costs. While it recognized that full service costs for current employees should be included in the budget, it also recognized that certain questions remained outstanding in particular as regards the responsibility for that part of the liability that related to staff funded by other institutions". Please delete "it further noted that in its consideration of the budget".

I will read it once again slowly.

"noted the results of the actuarial study on the cost of After-Service Medical Coverage and agreed on the need to..." Please in that previous phrase delete "in principle", --"in principle" is deleted --"... on the need to correctly account for such costs."

Daniel BERTHERY (Président, Comité de rédaction): J'ai bien conscience de la difficulté que cela peut poser de suivre comme cela un texte qui est lu. Et autant je peux, bien sûr, confirmer que ces amendements ont été traités dans le Comité de rédaction de cette sorte - donc il est correct de les maintenir et de rappeler ce qui a été décidé dans ce cadre - mais je pense que nous serions beaucoup aidés s'il était possible que le Secrétariat distribue le papier correspondant à ces corrections de manière à ce que chacun les ait sous les yeux.

EL PRESIDENTE: Podríamos hacer eso, pero entonces tardaríamos quizás horas para tenerlo en todos los idiomas, como ustedes deseen hacerlo.

Ms Melinda L. KIMBLE (United States of America): Perhaps we could trust the Secretariat to provide us with the corrigendum after we have adopted this. I do not think that we need to look at it in writing now. These were technical changes which the Drafting Committee worked very closely with Mr Wade in getting down and I think everyone was just trying to be specific, so I hope we can just accept that we will be provided a corrigendum later.

EL PRESIDENTE: Gracias por su colaboración y por su propuesta tan constructiva. No quiero entrar en un debate respecto a la forma de proceder.

Mame BALLA SY (Sénégal): Pour cette première phrase, il n'y a que deux mots à supprimer: "en principe". Si on nous avait dit de supprimer "en principe", ce serait très clair; donc si les autres modifications se structurent de cette manière, il n'y a aucun problème, mais relire toute une phrase pour ne supprimer que "en principe", cela polarise notre attention et nous fait perdre du temps avec la traduction qui, souvent, n'est pas simultanée.

EL PRESIDENTE: Gracias. Puede continuar por favor, Secretaria del Comité de Redacción. Háganos notar las partes que desaparecen de la oración, las partes que se agregan a la oración y cuando termine cada oración deténgase por favor.

Ms Miriam M. SAIF (Secretary, Drafting Committee): This concerns the second sentence of sub-paragraph (c). Please delete "however". This sentence now starts with the following phrasing: "While it recognized that full service costs for current employees should be included in the budget,...". Then we insert "it also" and the sentence remains exactly as it is drafted in its original version.

EL PRESIDENTE: ¿Han tomado nota?. Les vuelvo a repetir, siguiendo la propuesta de la distinguida Delegada de Estados Unidos, se va a presentar inmediatamente después un *corrigendum* que se va a distribuir a ustedes. Pero, sí, deseo que tomen nota de estos cambios, son cambios técnicos.

El Comité de Redacción, como ha dicho el señor Berthery, lo revisó y espero que depositen ustedes toda su confianza en el señor Berthery, en el Comité de Redacción y en la Secretaría que elaboraron este párrafo. Para información del Consejo, por favor continúe indicando los cambios y una vez concluido ésto, preguntaré al Consejo si desea más aclaraciones.

Ms Miriam M. SAIF (Secretary, Drafting Committee): Third sentence in sub-paragraph (c). "It further noted that in its consideration of the budget" - please delete that phrase. "It further noted that in its consideration of the budget" is to be deleted.

The sentence would then start with "The Council.." - please delete "had already". The rest of the sentence remains the same up until "alternative". Please delete "alternative". After "solutions to", "covering these costs" is deleted and it is replaced by "the accumulated liability". The rest of the phrase remains the same up until "Organization", where you will please insert a comma. Then there is a new phrase to be added "...taking into account other approaches being adopted in the UN system".

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias por esa aclaración. Sé que hay muchas dudas respecto al texto; es particularmente complicado, pregunto al Consejo si pueden depositar su plena confianza en el Presidente del Comité de Redacción, del Grupo de Redacción que lo vio y de la Secretaría de la FAO para que este párrafo, como ha sido leído, a pesar de que ustedes no han podido tomar nota de él plenamente, se corrija.

Se les distribuirá un *corrigendum* al respecto, como propuso la distinguida delegada de Estados Unidos, espero al final de nuestra sesión. ¿Son todos los cambios que tiene usted?.

Ms Miriam M. SAIF (Secretary, Drafting Committee): There is one final change. There is an additional sub-paragraph (d) that was not inserted. The new (d) reads as follows:

"Shared the concern expressed by the Finance Committee in connection with the need to transfer resources from the Technical Programmes to general policy and direction, support and common services and urged that action be continued to reverse this trend to the extent possible".

EL PRESIDENTE: ¿Desean que se vuelva a leer el párrafo?. Por favor vuélvalo a leer, despacio.

Ms Miriam M. SAIF (Secretary, Drafting Committee): "Sub-paragraph d). Shared the concern expressed by the Finance Committee in connection with the need to transfer resources from the Technical Programmes to general policy and direction, support and common services and urged that action be continued to reverse this trend to the extent possible".

EL PRESIDENTE: Con esto concluyen los cambios.

Daniel BERTHERY (Président, Comité de rédaction): Je regrette ces longues corrections. C'est effectivement conforme à ce qui a été décidé par le Comité de rédaction. Ceci a fait l'objet de textes mûrement écrits qui sont conformes aux notes que j'avais prises moi-même. Il est simplement, je le regrette, dommage qu'ils ne soient pas dans le rapport, que le rapport ne soit pas conforme à nos discussions, mais on peut comprendre qu'après les longues heures de travaux que nous avons eues il y a eu cette petite erreur technique. Omission importante.

Merci Monsieur le Président de votre compréhension.

EL PRESIDENTE: El Consejo debe expresarle a usted y a los miembros del Comité de Redacción su pleno agradecimiento por el trabajo que realizaron hasta tardas horas de la noche y también durante quince horas el día de ayer; un trabajo exhaustivo, un trabajo bien hecho. Entiendo que ha habido cambios de última hora que no se pudieron incluir, pero esto quizá es producto también del hecho de que hemos recortado nuestras reuniones y los tiempos se han estrechado. No tenemos la holgura de antes para llevar a cabo todas estas modificaciones.

Vamos a someter ahora el proyecto de informe para su adopción.

ADOPTION OF REPOR

ADOPTION DU RAPPORT

APROBACION DEL INFORME

DRAFT REPORTS PARTS 1-10

PROJETS DE RAPPORTS 1-10

PROYECTOS DE INFORMES 1-10

Pedro Alfonso MEDRANO ROJAS (Chile): Yo quisiera en primer lugar agradecer muy sinceramente al Comité de Redacción, a todos sus miembros y, por supuesto, a la Secretaría del Comité por el esfuerzo que han hecho en presentarnos un informe que, a nuestro juicio, recoge adecuadamente nuestro debate y los acuerdos que hemos tomado y en tal sentido, señor Presidente, creo que puedo interpretar a todos mis colegas. Quisiera sugerir que este Informe sea adoptado en bloque, en su totalidad.

EL PRESIDENTE: El Consejo ha tomado nota de su propuesta. En un momento la voy a someter a conservación del Consejo.

Louis DOMINICI (France): Je voudrais d'abord, en réaction à la proposition du Chili, dire que nous sommes tout à fait d'accord au nom de la délégation française avec cette proposition. Mais je n'en dirai pas plus sur ce point.

Je voudrais parler au nom de la Région Europe que j'ai l'honneur de présider. Je souhaiterais en effet saisir l'occasion de la séance finale de notre Conseil pour revenir sur l'esprit de cette 112ème session du Conseil et je voudrais dans ce contexte au nom de la Région Europe avoir une pensée, une pensée particulière pour tous ceux qui travaillent à la FAO et qui concourent à la réalisation de nos objectifs communs. Je voudrais leur dire que les nombreuses questions, les nombreuses observations, les nombreuses critiques aussi, qui ont été formulées sur tel ou tel document, sur telle

ou telle orientation, manifestent avant tout l'intérêt que nous portons à l'Organisation et à tous les personnels qui l'incarnent à Rome comme sur le terrain dans le monde. Nous mesurons bien la quantité et la qualité de travail qui est accompli par ces personnels sous votre haute direction, Monsieur le Directeur général. C'est pourquoi je tiens tout particulièrement à assurer tous les personnels de la FAO de notre estime et de notre confiance, ainsi que de notre souci de veiller à leur avenir et à leur épanouissement professionnel et personnel au sein de la FAO. Voilà ce que je voulais dire, Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Directeur général, au nom de la Région Europe. Je suis heureux d'avoir eu la possibilité de le faire aujourd'hui comme je le voulais, simplement avec le coeur.

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias por esas palabras, distinguido Representante de Francia, que estoy seguro todo el Consejo comparte con esta aclamación.

Mame BALLA SY (Sénégal): Je pense qu'au nom du Groupe Afrique qui a également participé très activement à la rédaction de ce rapport, qui généralement est un chef-d'oeuvre compte tenu de la complexité des questions qui ont été abordées, et des difficultés de ces mêmes questions qui ont suscité naturellement des intérêts divers qui peuvent donner lieu à certaines incompréhensions et même à des écarts de sentiments - mais cela est la nature du multilatéralisme - nous approuvons nous aussi la proposition pertinente faite par mon collègue du Chili. Je voudrais simplement, en réitérant ce que vous aviez dit sur la nécessité de veiller à la fatigue du Secrétariat, parce qu'en réalité il a accompli un travail surhumain et il n'était même pas normal aujourd'hui de le soumettre à d'autres exercices, demander d'accorder davantage les textes surtout dans leur traduction.

Cela dit, Monsieur le Président, je voudrais revenir un peu au REP/9, au para. 6. Nous pensons que, en nous référant au document CL 112/18, au para. 47 de ce même document, lorsqu'on s'est félicité de la générosité de certains pays, je pense qu'il y avait un pays qui avait été cité dans le document de travail qui ne figure pas ici. Je me demande: est-ce que c'est une omission? et j'espère que ce soit le cas. Il s'agit de la Suède. Si c'est le cas, tant mieux; peut-être devrions-nous le souligner pour qu'on puisse se conformer au document de travail; si c'est pour d'autres raisons, à part celle de participer au Conseil de rédaction, qui nous échappent, nous retirons ce que nous avons dit.

En conclusion, le Groupe africain - dont, comme vous le savez, je suis le Président, - et vous comprendrez qu'assurer la tâche de la présidence d'un groupe composé de pays aussi confrontés avec les difficultés les plus aiguës n'est pas une tâche facile et cela m'amène peut-être parfois à avoir des attitudes assez dures que l'on ne comprend pas mais toujours dans un esprit de construction pour réaliser le rêve de tous: faire en sorte que ce monde là soit un monde meilleur pour tous et naturellement pour les populations les plus affectées - a accueilli avec beaucoup de joie et de réconfort la déclaration faite par mon collègue de la France, qui situe bien l'esprit dans lequel également les Etats africains se trouvent et je peux vous assurer que cet esprit sera maintenu tout au long de nos travaux, naturellement tout en essayant, autant que possible, de faire en sorte que les intérêts les plus importants de notre Groupe soient exprimés et soient défendus dans toute la mesure du possible en tenant compte des préoccupations des uns et des autres.

Je pense qu'il était nécessaire pour nous aussi de le dire et d'adresser toutes nos félicitations à tous ceux qui ont oeuvré à ce document, à tous ceux qui ont participé naturellement aux débats et qui ont tenté d'enrichir nos discussions. Nous en prenons note, nous en sommes particulièrement satisfaits et nous vous renouvelons notre détermination à continuer dans cette voie pour que nous arrivions tous aux conclusions les meilleures pour les uns et les autres et pour les objectifs et les buts qui ont été assignés à cette prestigieuse Organisation.

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias por estas palabras, distinguido Representante de Senegal que estoy seguro todos comparten y desde luego el Consejo también agradece la forma en que el grupo africano se ha desenvuelto no solamente en este Consejo sino en todos, siempre haciendo

aportaciones de gran trascendencia y manifestando la posición que su región tiene y, lo delicado de la situación de la seguridad alimentaria en muchos de los países que la componen.

Distinguidos delegados, tengo en mi lista al distinguido Delegado de Cuba. Inmediatamente después voy a someter a ustedes la propuesta que se ha hecho, en el sentido de adoptar el informe en bloque.

Juan NUIRY SANCHEZ (Cuba): En definitiva es muy difícil hablar luego de lo que han dicho los embajadores de Francia y Senegal tanto en elocuencia como en sus medulares expresiones. Pero queremos destacar que el grupo Latinoamericano y del Caribe ha tenido también una participación muy activa en estos documentos en que se ha buscado, en el análisis del debate, soluciones para incluir y lograr aspectos en el fortalecimiento de la FAO.

Creo que dentro de ese principio se trabajó y, se debe seguir en una línea consecuente. Se analizó buscando transparencia y equilibrio dentro de las condiciones que se presentan, otras, lógicamente se continuará trabajando en esa misma dirección.

Queremos destacar que somos también una región de países en desarrollo, con serias dificultades, pero es fundamental lo que planteó el Embajador de Francia en el espíritu observado dentro de estos debates que han tenido lugar en estos días, en que ha primado siempre el fortalecimiento de la FAO y el respaldo a su Director General y a sus colaboradores que, como sabemos, tienen una alta profesionalidad en todo sentido.

Es por tanto que nosotros, lógicamente, estamos totalmente de acuerdo con lo propuesto por Chile y nos unimos, de todo corazón, en lo que han planteado los embajadores de Francia y Senegal.

EL PRESIDENTE: Someto a su consideración, entonces, la propuesta que ha sido aquí formulada de adoptar el Informe en bloque. Si hubiera alguna delegación que se opone a ello, entonces procederíamos a adoptarlo por secciones, es decir empezando por el REP/1, REP/2, REP/3, etc. Pregunto entonces: ¿hay alguna delegación que se opone a la propuesta de adoptar el informe en bloque con las modificaciones que han sido anunciadas y los ajustes de carácter tipográfico y también a la traducción que procedan?. ¿Hay alguna delegación?. ¿No?. Por aclamación aprobamos el Informe.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Draft Reports of Plenary, Parts 1-10 were approved

Les projets de rapports de la Plénière, parties 1-10, sont approuvés

Los proyectos de los informes de la Plenaria, partes 1-10, son aprobados

EL PRESIDENTE: Al haber aprobado el Informe de este 112° período de sesiones, nosotros hemos también manifestado nuestro profundo agradecimiento al Presidente Berthery, Presidente del Comité de Redacción y a los miembros del mismo, así como a la Secretaría de la FAO que hicieron una labor estupenda de equilibrio en la presentación de estos trabajos.

Daniel BERTHERY (Président, Comité de rédaction): Merci, Monsieur le Président et merci à tous. Vous m'aviez déjà fait l'honneur de me nommer pour cette fonction, maintenant vous me comblez en approuvant en bloc ce rapport. Vraiment j'en suis très ému, je vous remercie beaucoup. Et vous avez montré ainsi d'ailleurs l'indulgence sur aussi les petites difficultés que nous avons eues tout à l'heure. Vraiment, je vous en suis très reconnaissant à tous.

Adel Mahmoud ABOUL-NAGA (Egypt) (Original language Arabic): I would like to say how satisfied and happy I am and how happy and satisfied the rest of my group is, because of the climate that prevailed at this Council Session, and also how happy we are to see the excellent job done by the Drafting Committee, headed by our excellent colleague, Mr Berthery.

It is Saturday, we are all eager to go home but we want to say goodbye to two good friends who will be leaving us after this: our colleague Mr Sands Smith from the United Kingdom and Mr Rashid from Pakistan. I am speaking about them personally but I am sure that I am reflecting the views and opinions of the colleagues who have got to know them throughout the preparatory negotiations for the World Food Summit, which were lengthy and difficult, but each of these two gentlemen was very successful in all that they did. Personally, I think we are really going to miss the Shakespearian English of our colleague Mr Sands Smith and the legal, peaceful, pleasant turn of phrase that characterizes our colleague Mr Rashid. We would like to wish them all the best in their future assignments; wherever they go, they will always have our thoughts and support.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias por este elogio bien merecido a dos colegas que nos van a dejar. Yo sé que hay otros que también nos van a dejar, pero como no ha sido comunicado oficialmente, no me atrevo a mencionar sus nombres. A ellos igualmente debo expresarles, a nombre del Consejo, nuestro más pleno agradecimiento y reconocimiento por una labor extraordinaria que han cumplido no sólo en mantener un alto espíritu en esta Organización, sino en facilitar los debates y contribuir de manera tan exitosa a los resultados del Consejo.

Quizá alguien desea mencionarlos. Yo no lo puedo hacer, repito, pero sabemos quienes son o, por lo menos, creemos quienes son y a ellos nuestro pleno agradecimiento.

Antes de concluir le voy a pasar la palabra al señor Director General.

LE DIRECTEUR GENERAL: Je voudrais vous remercier, Monsieur le Président, d'avoir eu l'amabilité de me donner la parole. En fait, je voudrais juste exprimer ma gratitude à tous les Membres du Conseil qui ont travaillé dans des conditions difficiles, pendant des heures très longues, parfois de nuit, et qui comme toujours, après des débats intenses, arrivent à un consensus. Ce consensus est le meilleur témoignage de l'unité de notre institution et c'est le meilleur témoignage que les idéaux d'universalité qui ont présidé à la création de cette institution sont toujours perçus par l'ensemble des Etats Membres.

Avoir 174 Etats Membres et essayer d'arriver à ce qu'ils se mettent d'accord alors qu'ils ont des conditions économiques, sociales et politiques, différentes, n'est pas tâche aisée. Il faut toujours un esprit de donner et de recevoir. Il faut toujours un soucis de comprendre l'autre, de respecter sa perception, ses problèmes, ses considérations. Et les représentants des Etats Membres, ont donné à chaque fois la preuve éclatante qu'ils sont à la hauteur de leur tâche. Je voudrais les en remercier vivement et aussi les remercier pour l'appui et le soutien qu'ils apportent au Secrétariat de cette Organisation. Le Secrétariat, mes collègues et moi-même, puisque nous faisons un travail d'équipe, avons toujours considéré que les observations qui sont faites sur notre travail, sur nos projets, sur nos programmes, sont des facteurs d'amélioration de la qualité de ce que nous faisons. Nous ne les avons jamais considérées comme étant des éléments négatifs. Nous essayons cependant toujours de jouer notre rôle d'impartialité, d'objectivité et essayons aussi, dans la détermination de nos actions, de tenir compte des intérêts et des uns et des autres, pas des uns ou des autres. Et je pense que dans cette voie que nous avons prise, dans ce chemin que nous sommes en train de parcourir, sous votre direction, nous aurons toujours votre appui.

Je voudrais enfin vous remercier pour vos encouragements, car nous avons besoin d'encouragements, nous n'avons pas une tâche facile, nous avons à faire face à des conditions difficiles, nous sommes dans une période de coupures budgétaires, nous sommes dans une période de suppression de postes. Ceci a un impact sur le personnel, il y a des agents dont les carrières sont menacées, il y a des agents qui ne savent pas de quoi sera fait demain, et les propos très aimables et très encourageants que vous avez tenus ici, sont de nature à me permettre de mieux les inciter à continuer dans leur fonction internationale au profit de la communauté mondiale et surtout au profit de 800 millions de personnes qui chaque soir retournent à leur domicile pour dormir sans avoir pu satisfaire le droit le plus élémentaire de l'être humain, le droit à la nourriture.

Encore une fois, je voudrais remercier tous les représentants des Etats Membres, tous ceux qui ont participé aussi aux comités, aux sous-comités, aux groupes, tous ceux qui les ont présidés et naturellement remercier tous mes collègues du Secrétariat, les interprètes, les traducteurs, et les autres membres du personnel, y compris dans les départements techniques, qui sont souvent restés ici toute la nuit pour pouvoir présenter un travail à la hauteur de vos espérances et à la hauteur de ce que vous êtes en droit d'attendre de cette institution.

Je vous remercie.

EL PRESIDENTE: Gracias señor Director General por estas palabras de aliento. Pregunto si hay algún otro Miembro que desee hacer uso de la palabra. En este caso, distinguidos delegados, creo que me queda poco por decir. El señor Director General y quienes han intervenido antes que yo, han ya expresado lo que podría yo decir al final de estos trabajos que han mantenido un alto espíritu.

Este ha sido el primer Consejo después de la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación; todos albergábamos y seguimos albergando las más altas expectativas después de una Cumbre tan exitosa. El hecho de que la Organización se encuentre en un proceso de transformación no significa de ninguna manera que los efectos de esa Cumbre no se vayan a alcanzar para fortalecer a esta Organización y menos aún que el espíritu crítico e inquisitivo con que ha actuado el Consejo sea un voto de desconfianza sino, por el contrario, como lo han manifestado ustedes, un voto de interés y de esperanza para ver una Organización mucho más creíble, mucho más fortalecida, mucho más orientada hacia los objetivos que ha delineado el Plan de Acción y que ustedes han defendido al hacer mención de las prioridades de esta Organización.

Igualmente, esta Organización se realinea en el contexto de las transformaciones de Naciones Unidas de una mayor coordinación y cooperación con esas agencias y claro, también, con las que resultan de la sociedad civil.

Yo creo que han sido ya expresadas, y con mayor elegancia, las palabras que al respecto podríamos convenir en declarar. Creo que ustedes están satisfechos con nuestros trabajos que, repito, han mantenido de nuevo en alto el espíritu con el que ustedes trabajan en este Consejo y con la gran eficacia con que la Secretaría de la FAO nos ha ayudado para realizar nuestras deliberaciones.

Distinguidos delegados, no tengo nada más que decir sino agradecerles a ustedes, a los Observadores que nos han acompañado, por sus aportaciones; agradecer de nuevo al Presidente del Comité de Redacción y sus miembros y a la Secretaría de la FAO toda, incluyendo a toda la lista que podríamos recordar aquí de funcionarios de la Organización y personal de servicio, quienes nos han apoyado; y, desde luego, Director General, mis últimas palabras van para usted, mi agradecimiento personal por el apoyo que nos dio permanentemente tanto a mí como al Consejo para nuestros trabajos y, a través de usted, a todos aquellos que le acompañan en esta gran tarea.

Distinguidos delegados, con esto terminan nuestros trabajos. Se levanta la sesión y nos vemos en noviembre. Muchas gracias.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

The meeting rose at 11.45 hours

La séance est levée à 11h 45

Se levanta la sesión a las 11.45 horas