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Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
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Organisation des Nations
Unies pour l'alimentation
et l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الأغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Fifty-first Session - Cent cinquante et unième session -
151.º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 23-27 March 2015
VERBATIM RECORDS OF PLENARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL**

**Rome, 23-27 mars 2015
PROCÈS-VERBAUX DES SÉANCES PLÉNIÈRES DU CONSEIL**

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ACTAS TAQUIGRÁFICAS DE LAS SESIONES PLENARIAS DEL
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**Hundred and Fifty-first Session
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151.º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 23-27 March 2015
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Roma, 23-27 de marzo de 2015**

**FIRST PLENARY SESSION
PREMIÈRE SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
PRIMERA SESIÓN PLENARIA**

23 March 2015

The First Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.38 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La première séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 38
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la primera sesión plenaria a las 9.38
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the first meeting of the 151st Session of the FAO Council to order.

I wish to welcome Council Members and observers to this session, especially those of you who have travelled to be here today.

Before proceeding, I would like to ask the Secretary-General of the Council to make a short announcement. Mr Gagnon you have the floor.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Thank you. I wish to bring to the attention of the Council that the European Union is participating in this meeting in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of Article II of the FAO Constitution.

I have been asked to inform you that the declaration made by the European Union and its Member States is contained in information document CL 151/INF/3, which is available online and at the documents desk. I wish to draw the attention of the meeting to this declaration.

CHAIRPERSON

I now wish to extend a warm welcome to the Director-General, who has joined us for the start of this opening meeting. Director-General, you have the floor.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Mr Wilfred Ngirwa, Independent Chairperson of the Council, Your Excellencies Ministers, deputy ministers, and high-level government representatives, Members of the Council, Distinguished Representatives, Ladies and gentlemen.

It is an honour to open this Session of the Council. As usual, this is a busy week. You will discuss the next Medium Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget, evaluations of governance, and FAO regional and subregional network. And on Wednesday, I will address you, again, this time as candidate for re-election to the position of Director-General of FAO.

The main point I want to address today is our next PWB. Over the past few weeks we have had constructive exchanges.

Two weeks ago the Programme and Finance Committees and their Joint Meeting supported the next Programme of Work proposal, the enhancement of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), and the emphasis and de-emphasis areas. At an informal seminar with Permanent Representatives last week we saw that there is a clear possibility of achieving consensus.

I hope that we build on this and advance towards a consensus on the Programme of Work and Budget. I believe all of us would like to see an agreement in Council. We also believe it can be done this time, but remember that reaching consensus requires flexibility from all sides.

In my first years in office we strengthened the trust in the Organization. We sharpened our focus. We became more efficient. In the last three years, we have found USD 108 million in savings without cutting our Programme of Work. On the contrary, we are fully delivering our Programme of Work. And now we also have better control of our finances, by completing the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Project (IPSAS). I am honoured to inform that FAO will have the first set of IPSAS compliant statements published by next week. This is a major achievement.

Transformation has been a central element in my work until today. Now, consolidation with flexibility are the keywords. We are consolidating our ongoing work while maintaining flexibility to adjust to changing contexts and emerging challenges.

The proposed PWB makes FAO more relevant and useful to you, in the context of our mission and of the Sustainable Development Goals to be adopted later this year. The adjustment includes additional emphasis to certain areas, and de-emphasis, realignment and shift of focus in others.

The areas of emphasis and de-emphasis have just been presented to you in greater detail in Information Note 4. Let me highlight that we are increasing funds for nutrition and climate change. We will fully fund all areas of additional emphasis within the current budget level. I am sure all of you welcome this.

Let me add that we are also tailoring our relationship with Middle Income Countries using a two-sided approach. First, focus support in governance, policy, climate change adaptation and nutrition, including obesity. Second, work with those that are ready, and willing, to invest or increase investment in South-South Cooperation.

I hope this approach can be part of a wider effort to review global FAO coverage. This is a particularly important recommendation of the Synthesis of Evaluations of Regional and Subregional Offices that you will discuss. I am confident that an independent review of FAO coverage can improve the support we offer you.

The corresponding budget to implement our proposed programme of work is of USD 1 billion and 45 million.

There are some numbers I would like you to keep in mind when you consider the proposal.

First, USD 14 million. These are resources identified within the current programme of work to be reallocated in the 2016-2017 PWB. They come from the areas of de-emphasis and the reduction of the Capital Expenditure Fund. And will be used to fund the areas of additional emphasis.

Another important number is USD 33 million. This is the increase in costs for the next biennium. It is a real funding requirement that must be met to deliver the programme of work. I am containing all cost increases that are under my authority. We are cutting to the bone. The majority of cost increases relate to staff costs that fall under the authority of the International Civil Service Commission and the General Assembly, in New York, which make binding decisions for the UN Common System. The only way to reduce staff costs is if you, Members, firmly engage the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly when it reviews proposals from the ICSC.

I know that many countries are still facing a complicated economic situation. But FAO is also hit.

The crisis that affects FAO has been ongoing for 20 years, and has led to a real budget fall of 30 percent. It is the direct result of the Zero Nominal Growth policy that began in 1994. The word "growth" is completely misleading. Zero Nominal Growth means a real cut in our budget, staffing, and capacity to serve you. During these 20 years, FAO has been asked to deliver more and more. At some point, the rubber band snaps. I think that we are very close to that point.

I am not asking you to give money away.

I am asking that you invest in your organization. So that we can do what you are asking us to do, to the benefit of everyone, especially the poor, hungry and vulnerable.

This is clear as the only real funding increase I am asking in the PWB proposal will be fully allocated to the Technical Cooperation Programme: USD 6.1 million, the equivalent of only 0.6 percent of our current budget. Let me point out that the increase will raise the TCP budget to the 14 percent level that you determined in the 1989 FAO Conference.

Let me add that these funds go through FAO, directly to support countries. They will be used exclusively to give additional assistance to Small Island Developing States in adapting to climate change. The importance of this support has become painfully more evident with the devastation caused in Vanuatu by Cyclone Pam a week ago.

Now, given the possibility of PWB consensus during Council, I am proposing a two-step approach to reach the TCP level we all want: the first step will include USD 3 million for the TCP in this Programme of Work and Budget, and fund the remaining 3.1 million through voluntary contributions. The second step will raise the TCP level to 14 percent at the 2017 Conference.

I believe this approach will bring us closer to a budget level that is acceptable to all. And it also shows how little margin we have to find further savings.

I want to be very clear with you. FAO will continue to look for efficiencies. We will always do that because we believe it is part of our duty, part of our responsibility. But I would be irresponsible if I said to you, today, that I could simply cut 5 or 10 million dollars from the budget and still deliver our Programme of Work in the same way. So this is the situation we are in, risking a reduction in our Programme of Work because of repeated budget cuts over the years. This is a line that none of us want to cross.

Let me finish by saying that FAO has the vision, the staff, the networks, the partnerships and, most importantly, your trust to give a decisive contribution to your food security, nutrition and sustainable development goals. We now ask for the matching budget needed to fulfill this promise.

I wish all of you a fruitful work this week. I thank all of you for your attention.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you.

I would like to remind delegates that to ask for the floor they simply need to press the red button located by the microphone. The light will flash until the delegate has spoken. The order of speakers will be automatically recorded and displayed on the screen above the podium.

I now invite the Secretary-General to give a brief account of the documentation for this session.

SECRETARY- GENERAL

The documentation for this session of Council includes 15 main documents.

Four documents are reports of Council Committees which took place on or after 23 February, the deadline for despatch of Council documents.

Of the remaining 11 documents, eight were published before or by the deadline and three in the week following the deadline.

Item 1. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

Point 1. Adoption de l'ordre du jour et du calendrier

Tema 1. Aprobación del programa y el calendario

(CL 151/1; CL 151/INF/1 Rev.1; CL 151/INF/3)

CHAIRPERSON

The first item on the agenda is the *Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable* as set out in documents CL 151/1, CL 151/INF/1 Rev.1 and CL 151/INF/3.

Document CL 151/1 contains the Provisional Agenda which was distributed on 21 January 2015 to all Members of the Organization, together with the invitation to this Session.

Since our 150th Session in December 2014, no invitations have been issued to Non-Member Nations to attend FAO meetings, nor have there been any applications for Membership in the Organization, hence sub-item 9.1, *Invitations to Non-Member Nations to attend FAO Sessions*, and sub-item 9.2, *Applications for Membership in the Organization*, can be removed from the Agenda.

Are there any comments on the proposed amendment?

Thank you, the Agenda is adopted as amended.

With respect to the Provisional Timetable, you have before you document CL 151/INF/1 Rev.1.

I should like to point out that the items on the Provisional Agenda have been scheduled to allow the Drafting Committee to convene its first meeting on the afternoon of Wednesday, 25 March. This in turn should enable the Committee to finish its work in good time on Thursday and so allow the Report to be adopted on Friday afternoon.

Does this draft Timetable, with the deletion of item 9, meet with the approval of the Council?

Thank you, the Timetable is approved.

I would like to draw the Council's attention to the proposal contained in my pre-session letter regarding the procedure to be followed when examining the reports of the Programme and Finance Committees and their Joint Meeting. Given that the reports of these meetings contain advice and comments on the following items on the Council agenda: Reports of the Programme Committee and Finance Committee on item 3, *Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17*; Report of the Programme Committee on item 7, *Synthesis of Evaluations of FAO Regional and Subregional Offices*; Report of the Joint Meeting on item 11, *Assessment of Governance Reforms, including consideration of the Independent Review Report*, and item 16, *Status Report on Antimicrobial Resistance*, I propose that we make comments on these specific matters when the pertinent item is taken up. This will help focus our debate and avoid repetition.

I take it that the Council approves this approach.

Ladies and Gentlemen, before we continue with the Agenda, and in the interest of the safety of all of us, I request your attention for a short video presentation on fire safety.

Video Presentation

Présentation vidéo

Videopresentación

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

Point 2. Élection des trois vice-présidents et nomination du Président et des membres du Comité de rédaction

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

CHAIRPERSON

We now move on to Item 2, *Election of three Vice-Chairpersons, and Designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee*.

Following consultations among the Regional Groups, the following proposals for the three posts of Vice-Chairperson have been received: His Excellency Amr Mostafa Kamal Helmy from Egypt, His Excellency Neil Briscoe from the United Kingdom and His Excellency Godfrey Magwenzi from Zimbabwe.

If there are no objections, I wish to congratulate the three Vice-Chairpersons on their election.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

M. Hassan ABOUYOUB (Maroc)

Je regrette d'avoir à prendre la parole sur ce point de l'ordre du jour pour informer les Membres du Conseil du fait que le Groupe Afrique n'a jamais pu se réunir en 2015. La réunion qui était prévue le 23 janvier dernier avait été reportée *sine die* en raison de difficultés internes relatives au renouvellement de ses organes dirigeants.

Donc, je vous demande Monsieur le Président de considérer la candidature qui vient de notre région comme une candidature individuelle parce qu'elle n'a jamais été approuvée par le Groupe Afrique. Cette proposition est une proposition de sagesse d'un pays qui n'a jamais voulu faire entrer la politique dans cette Organisation de manière à ne pas distraire notre attention, notre énergie, notre volonté de notre objectif ultime qui est celui de combattre la pauvreté, la faim dans le monde.

Si dans le cas contraire, vous considérez que c'est une candidature de gauche je vous demanderai l'avis du Conseil juridique et je demanderai que nous ayons des consultations pour remédier à un point

qui peut constituer un grave précédent au sein de cette Organisation puisqu'il s'agit ni plus ni moins de remettre en cause la participation légitime aux travaux d'un groupe régional, donc à atteindre et remettre en cause les droits prévus par les statuts de cette Organisation et qui touchent le fonctionnement de notre participation aux travaux de cette Organisation, qui touchent les modalités d'élaboration du consensus et remettent en cause notre objectif.

Mr Godfrey MAGWENZI (Zimbabwe)

I must say I am surprised by the intervention by His Excellency the Ambassador of Morocco. The candidate in question is actually from Zimbabwe.

Now I know that we have ministers. We have come from far to attend to issues of importance to Member Countries, issues of food security, issues of nutrition. I also know that the other Regional Groups have no interest in what goes on within the Africa Group. Therefore, I will make my intervention short but to give you an understanding of the issue being raised I would just take a few minutes to give you some background.

It is not true that the Africa Group has not met. It is true that the Africa Group was supposed to have a change of leadership on 23 January. But this did not happen because the country that was Vice-Chair which was supposed to assume the Chairmanship in accordance with the Africa Group's rules for some reason had decided not to proceed to take over the Chairmanship. So we could not have a handover because we did not have an incoming Chair at that point in time.

We therefore held several meetings to persuade this country and I am happy to say that they are finally ready to take over the Chairmanship and the handover will happen. But, in the interim, we held several meetings, including on 5 February, where we agreed what we would do: elect the other Members of the Africa Bureau with Kenya as Vice-Chairperson and wait and leave the issue of the Chairmanship until the country that is supposed to take over had agreed.

So indeed, the other members were elected on 5 February and we do have a Bureau in office right now as we speak. During that meeting on 5 February, we made a number of critical decisions, one of which was to endorse the candidature of Dr. Graziano. Another decision was to endorse the candidature of the Independent Chairperson, Ambassador Ngirwa.

These matters were taken to the G77. Last week we met as a group and held nominations whereby Zimbabwe, Algeria and Gabon were nominated for posts during this current Council. We also allocated and endorsed responsibilities, including to the Kingdom of Morocco, which this afternoon will speak on the budget on behalf of Africa.

Following the meeting of 5 February we went the next day to the G77 and again the candidates were endorsed in that forum. Please note that, in both meetings, Morocco did not object to the candidatures that were proposed. This is why it is very surprising that they are raising the issue here.

Of course it is not always easy to understand Morocco. At times they will bang the table, at times they will shout, at times they threaten to walk out, at times they walk out and at times they are too angry to even say anything so we can never know what they will do from one minute to the next.

Having said that, this should not be seen as a sign that there is division in the Africa Group. There is no division. What you are seeing is just a normal quarrel between siblings which is normal in any family and, as they speak this afternoon, all of us in the Africa Group will be fully behind Morocco and what they will say on behalf of our Group.

Mr Hassan ABOUYOUB (Morocco)

Everybody had noticed that I did not mention any happening, any facts within the Africa Group. I will read, with your permission, the statement of His Excellency the Ambassador of Zimbabwe and it is in the draft minutes of the Africa Group.

The Ambassador of Zimbabwe said that according to the rules of procedure, the Africa Group needs to always take into account the relevant resolutions and decisions of the African Union (AU) and he specified that he also consulted his capital who expressed concern that the chairmanship of the Africa Group cannot go, cannot go, to a country that has abandoned the AU.

If his Excellency withdrew this paragraph and cancelled it, I am very comfortable with his statement. If it's not the case, you understand, Mr Chairperson, this is a serious problem in the function of the FAO system.

CHAIRPERSON

I think this is an internal Africa Group matter, which does not need to be debated at Council. Therefore, the candidature of the Africa Group for the Vice-Chairperson post will be put on hold until the Africa Group sort out the issue through consultations and communicate the results to the Council for endorsement.

I take it that the other two candidatures for the post of Vice-Chairperson, His Excellency Amr Mostafa Kamal Helmy and His Excellency Neil Briscoe, are endorsed.

For the Drafting Committee, the Regional Groups have proposed Mr Vimlendra Sharan from India as Chairperson, and the following countries as members: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, Egypt, Gabon, Germany, Iceland, Japan, Pakistan, Russian Federation, and United States of America.

Are there any objections? Thank you, it is so decided.

May I suggest that, in line with our consolidated method of work, Council Members keep their interventions as brief and focused as possible, and that preference be given to interventions by representatives of regions whenever feasible, rather than single countries repeating comments already made.

Similarly, the quality of interpretation will be improved if interventions are made at a reasonable pace.

I should also like to remind you that the full written text of your interventions may be submitted for the Verbatim Records of this Session, and a shorter version delivered orally in the interest of good time management.

Furthermore, I would also like to request that if you wish to make a statement during the meeting a copy of the text be provided to the Secretariat in advance. This will allow the interpreters to convey your ideas as clearly as possible. The relevant email address for the submission of electronic versions of statements will be projected on the screen behind me and is also given in the Order of the Day. Timely submission of texts facilitates the work of the verbatim reporters and ensures greater accuracy.

Following discussions on each of the agenda items, I will draw up conclusions to facilitate the drafting of the report of this session. The report will consist of conclusions, decisions and recommendations in keeping with the practice established at recent sessions of Council. I invite you to point out any inadvertent omissions that you believe should be included in the draft report rather than waiting for the meeting of the Drafting Committee. In this way the task of the Drafting Committee will be made easier, allowing it to carry out its work more efficiently.

In addition, may I remind you that in the interest of good time management, it is important that we start each meeting on time. Please ensure that you are here in the Red Room at the times indicated in the Order of the Day.

Item 4. Report of the Joint Meeting of the 117th Session of the Programme Committee and 157st Session of the Finance Committee (11 March 2015)

Point 4. Rapport de la Réunion conjointe du Comité du Programme (cent dix-septième session) et du Comité financier (cent cinquante-septième session) (11 mars 2015)

Tema 4. Informe de la reunión conjunta del Comité del Programa en su 117.º período de sesiones y el Comité de Finanzas en su 157.º período de sesiones (11 de marzo de 2015)

(CL 151/5)

CHAIRPERSON

We now come to item 4, *Report of the Joint Meeting of the 117th Session of the Programme Committee and the 157th Session of the Finance Committee (11 March 2015)*. Please ensure that you have document CL 151/5 in front of you.

I now invite Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI, Chairperson of the Finance Committee, who chaired the Joint Meeting, to introduce the Report.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

I am pleased to be here with you this morning to present a report of the Joint Meeting of the 117th Session of the Programme Committee and 157th Session of the Finance Committee. This report is presented in document CL 151/5.

Most of the matters considered by the Joint Meeting are covered separately under dedicated items of the agenda as the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) explained earlier. These items refer to the *Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (reviewed) and the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17*, the *Synthesis of Evaluations of FAO Regional and Subregional Offices*, and the *Assessment of FAO Governance Reforms*, including consideration of the Independent Review Reports which are covered separately under items 3, 7 and 11 respectively of the agenda of this session of the Council.

As agreed with the Independent Chairperson of the Council, I shall now present to you salient highlights of the Report of the Joint Meeting on one remaining item considered by the Joint Meeting and which referred to the progress on language balance in FAO's products.

Globally the Joint Meeting took note of the document 'Progress on language balance in FAO's products' and expressed appreciation for improvements in language balance in the past year. The Joint Meeting called for continuous efforts to ensure language balance and requested the Secretariat to report regularly on information on the balanced use of languages. This is the only item that I wanted to introduce at this point. The rest will be done subsequently.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

La delegación argentina interviene para solicitar la palabra para el Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe, en la persona de la distinguida Embajadora de Nicaragua.

Sra. Monica ROBELO RAFFONE (Observador de Nicaragua)

Realizo esta intervención en nombre del Grupo de países de América Latina y el Caribe.

El GRULAC comparte plenamente las conclusiones del informe de la reunión conjunta de los Comités de programas y de finanzas y agradece a los Países Miembros y a las respectivas presidencias los trabajos realizados. Destacamos el espíritu de cooperación en que se desarrolló dicha reunión conjunta, así como las coincidencias alcanzadas, en particular el reconocimiento a la continuidad del Plan a Medio Plazo de ello para 2014-2017 y el apoyo al Programa de Trabajo 2016-2017.

Ese espíritu constructivo nos alegra pero no nos sorprende. Es el resultado de cuatro años de fructífero trabajo conjunto entre los Miembros y la Administración a lo largo de un proceso en el que todos juntos logramos fortalecer la FAO. La Organización cuenta hoy con Objetivos Estratégicos claros y renovados, como de remarcó de trabajos basados en resultados.

Como la estructura recientemente descentralizada y eficiente y con capacidad para ajustar las prioridades a los desafíos que surgen a todo nivel. En conclusión, la FAO puede responder a las necesidades de los Países Miembros de una manera más concreta, diversificada y eficaz. El GRULAC entiende que así estamos haciendo realidad el compromiso de todos los Miembros con el objetivo compartido de erradicar definitivamente el hambre, la inseguridad alimentaria y la malnutrición.

CHAIRPERSON

May I again say that interventions be based on the progress of language balance in FAO's products, that is what the Chairperson of the Joint Meeting has presented. Other items will be dealt with later.

M. Charles ESSONGHEC (Gabon)

C'est un privilège et un honneur pour moi de prendre la parole au nom du Groupe régional Afrique. Je voudrais avant tout féliciter le Président indépendant du Conseil pour le doigté avec lequel il conduit nos travaux.

En ce qui concerne le point qui nous intéresse présentement, le Groupe Afrique se félicite des conclusions qui ont été adoptées dans le cadre du rapport de la Réunion conjointe du Comité du Programme et du Comité financier, et approuve évidemment les décisions retenues au sein de ce rapport.

Mr Vladimir V. KUZNETSOV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We would like to thank the Secretariat for the Report presented and for the very detailed presentation that we have heard.

Regarding the language balance in FAO's products, it is with satisfaction that we see that the Secretariat has started implementing the Council's decision to improve the situation with regard to language balance in the Organization. We believe indeed that observance of multilingualism is a very important aspect of everyday work in FAO, and we believe that this directly contributes to achieving its strategic goals. We see progress in the use of Russian in the various organizational activities and are satisfied with the fact that the Secretariat has assured us in this respect and count on this continuing in the future. We see practical results indeed.

The Russian part of the FAO TERM Portal has expanded and it has some 35,000 equivalents now. There is a Russian website for FAO which is developing Russian pages with regard to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Protection, and we welcome the liaison between the Organization with potential information partners, publishing houses and the media. It's important, of course, to keep up progress in those sectors where there has been improvement and others where it's less visible.

And, indeed, it's important to expand the Russian translation group. They must be staffed with highly qualified and experienced specialists. Indeed, it is important to ensure translation of earlier publications as well as more recent ones into Russian; for example, Standards of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures, the Codex Alimentarius, etc. This enables easier relations with the Eurasian Economic Commission, which is the governing body of the Eurasian Economic Union. We are going to support the Organization's administrative efforts in this direction and will be monitoring progress.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Happy Nowruz to those who celebrate it. Afghanistan's response to the language balance is that we endorse (a), (b) and (c) of paragraph 11.

Mr Vimlendra SHARAN (India)

India makes this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We endorse the report and urge the Secretariat to continue its efforts on language balance in FAO.

Sr. Luis Alberto ALVÁREZ FERMÍN (Venezuela)

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela agradece la presentación del informe, y respecto al punto del multilingüismo, reiteramos, como ya lo hemos hecho varias veces, en diversos foros de la ONU, incluyendo la FAO y otras Organizaciones de las Naciones Unidas en Roma.

Abogamos por un proceso de transformación y reforma de la Organización más democrático e incluyente, donde se tome en cuenta las necesidades de todos los países, incluyendo los progresos reales en el equilibrio lingüístico de los productos de la FAO y la disponibilidad de los documentos con suficiente alteración a las reuniones, ya que esta situación limita la participación efectiva de las delegaciones, limitando la exposición de las propuestas.

Mr Fiesal R.S. AL ARGAN (Jordan) (Original language Arabic)

I should like to intervene on behalf of the Near East Group with regard to the language balance in FAO's products. We Arabic-speaking countries appreciate the efforts made by FAO to improve the use of the Arabic language in the Organization and in Arabic documents. We look forward to seeing the Arabic language being represented equal to other languages, and we would like to extend our thanks to all of you for the language programme in FAO.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

Sobre este punto, la Delegación argentina, acoge con beneplácito todos los esfuerzos que se realizan sobre este argumento y recuerda la política del Gobierno argentino de firme apoyo a la resolución 50/11 de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas adoptada en 1995 sobre el multilingüismo

Mr Bandev AL SHALHOP (Saudi Arabia) (Original language Arabic)

Everybody stressed the importance of languages and the language balance in FAO. I fully support Jordan's intervention in this regard in stressing the importance of the Arabic language.

Twenty-two countries of the Organization and over 200 million people speak this language. In those countries it is the official language in schools and universities and it is a language used by all. When FAO issues its publications in Arabic, it will be widely used. We stress the importance of our language, an official language of the Organization, and we want to see it represented on an equal footing with other languages.

Mr Arman HOVHANNISYAN (Observer for Armenia)

We would like to support the Delegations who spoke in favour of the linguistic balance. We consider that this as an important tool for the efficiency of this Organization. At the same time, we also commend the improvements reached in recent years and encourage the Secretariat to capitalize on the improvements and achievements reached in this regard.

Mr Zaur GADIMALIYEV (Observer for Azerbaijan)

Observing the language balance is also supported by Azerbaijan. A multilingual approach is also very important for my country. As you know, mainly technical staff from the capitals and from line ministries attend most of the FAO meetings and the use of the Russian language can better serve their work in these meetings.

Mr Evgeny SOBOLEVSKY (Belarus) (Original language Russian)

The Report of the Joint Meeting of the 117th Session of the Programme Committee and the 157th Session of the Finance Committee indeed demonstrates a spirit of constructive work which is indeed conducive to enhancing the effectiveness of the work of the Organization. In analyzing the Report, we were interested to note the document relating to progress on language balance. We indeed believe that there's a positive momentum ongoing with regard to Secretariat efforts to enhance multilingualism.

We note with satisfaction that indeed there has been substantive progress in ensuring language diversity, especially with regard to the parameters of those languages for which progress has been lagging so far. Practically, we especially commend the fact that there have been more publications issued, both in print and electronically, in Russian. We see various updates, for example. We believe that the economic viability of these efforts has gone on track and this makes it possible indeed to continue efforts to enhance production and dissemination of Russian language publications.

We applaud the efforts of the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia for which all of the information on its internet site is being translated into Russian. We are happy to see that more Russian language staff have been taken on with a view to ensuring accurate work in Russian. We are sure that the enhancement of language balance will improve the Russian section of the FAOTERM Portal. We believe that this will certainly enhance our interaction between the Eurasian Economic Union and FAO, and this will be conducive to expert communication and exchanges.

We call upon the Secretariat to continue to make further efforts to fully implement Russian in the Organization. And in this connection, we support the recommendation of the Joint Meeting to present regular updates with regard to the observance of the principle of multilingualism in the FAO.

Mr Nurlan ZHALGASBAYEV (Observer for Kazakhstan) (Original language Russian)

The Kazakhstan Delegation would like to speak very briefly about the issue of the progress of language balance and use in the Organization. We note indeed that the situation in this regard has

improved and attach importance to the observance of the principle of multilingualism. We believe that this is very closely tied to achieving the objectives of the Organization. Indeed, it is important to ensure progress on language balance, especially with regard to Russian, where we believe that there hasn't been enough progress so far.

For our region, Central Asia and Kazakhstan, the use of Russian is extremely important and relevant as 100 percent of our population use Russian. Our administrative bodies, our farmers, agro-business participants, all of them need and use Russian language products coming from FAO, so it is important to ensure both the quantity as well as the quality of the Organization's written and oral products. This will enable the people in our region, our consumers, to interact with FAO more closely, as well as people around the world.

We would like to commend the efforts made by FAO recently to enhance the use of Russian. We applaud the Technical Cooperation Department's website pages in Russian; we are happy to see the regional and subregional work in this regard for FAO; and we would like to support the Organization's efforts in pursuing this work of enhancing language balance in the future.

Mr Jianmin XIE (China) (Original language Chinese)

We thank the Secretariat and the Chairperson of the Finance Committee for the Report of the 117th Session of the Programme Committee and 157th Session of the Finance Committee. As a member of the Programme Committee we have participated fully in the discussions and support adoption of the Report.

With regard to the issue of the balance of languages, we would like to thank FAO for the efforts made over the years, especially in the use of the Chinese language, as a lot of work has been done in this area. It has improved efficiency, and we hope that the use of Chinese will be further improved in the future. China will continuously support FAO and the Secretariat in its efforts to improve language balance.

Mr Jaffer Ahmed ABDELLA OMER (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

At the outset, we fully support this Report. It is important that we recognize and acknowledge the improvements and the efforts made in terms of the language balance in FAO, as well as in the field of translation and interpretation. However, there is still a lack of balance in the use of official languages.

We would like to urge the Secretariat to continue its efforts to further improve and bridge the gap in terms of language balance and language use. This should also be taken care of at the level of the Regional Offices and in the Regions as a whole.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. I want to conclude on this item as follows.

The Council endorsed the Report of the Joint Meeting, welcomed improvements in language balance and underlined the importance of continuing efforts, particularly for those languages for which progress lagged behind.

Item 5. Report of the 117th Session of the Programme Committee (9-13 March 2015)

Point 5. Rapport de la cent dix-septième session du Comité du Programme (9-13 mars 2015)

Tema 5. Informe del 117.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa (9-13 de marzo de 2015)
(CL 151/4)

CHAIRPERSON

We will now continue with Item 5, *Report of the 117th Session of the Programme Committee*. The document before Council is CL 151/4.

Ladies and gentlemen, in line with the approach we adopted at the start of our meeting, I wish to point out that the *Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17* and the *Status Report on Antimicrobial Resistance* are respectively the subject of item 3 and item 16 of the

Agenda of this Session of Council. I would therefore request that debate takes place under those specific items in order to avoid repetition.

I now invite Ambassador Cecilia Nordin, Chairperson of the Programme Committee, to introduce the Report.

Ms Cecilia NORDIN VAN GANSBERGHE (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

It is an honour for me to be here to report on the Programme Committee's important work. First, I would just like to say that as we sat down to work in the German room on Monday 9 March 2015 there was a glaring absence. Professor Ayazi was not behind his country plate as usual. The whole Committee was much concerned: first, for our friend and colleague's health, and second, I will have to admit, for ourselves.

How would we manage the discussions without his measured and highly valued counsel? However, in spite of being very seriously ill, he sent to us written notes that were read out and taken into consideration. So you can be assured that his spirit was with us. It is with a happy heart that I can see you again among us. Thank you very much, dear Abdul, for your devotion to this Organization and its goals, and happy Nowruz.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Ms Cecilia NORDIN VAN GANSBERGHE (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

That was well-deserved. Going back to the Report, as our dear Chairperson pointed out, Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) is a very pressing item and has its own point on the agenda, which we will revert to tomorrow. We will also go back to the Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget.

First, we would consider two management items. Those old-timers and *aficionados* of the Programme Committee will remember that we have discussed an amendment to the Basic Texts concerning the deadline for receipt of special documents in all languages prior to each session to ensure their timely delivery. We have pushed this issue to the new Committee to take into consideration. Besides, we would like to suggest the selection of a Vice-Chairperson of the Programme Committee for the whole mandate of the Committee and hope that the new Committee will also take this up.

Then, we looked at the terms of reference for the independent evaluation of the evaluation function. We looked forward to this evaluation as an Independent Evaluation function that is fundamental for the Organization and its Members to correctly assess FAO's work, including efficiency and funding estimation. We pointed out that the Evaluation of the FAO Reform in the Governing Bodies, which has just been issued, has produced good points that should be taken into consideration when finalizing the terms of reference. As the Office of Evaluation is the primary object of the Evaluation, its role should be carefully considered and clarified. Regarding the Independent External Panel, which is planned to assist the Evaluation Team, the Programme Committee suggested considering available expertise in the Rome-based UN Agencies and in the UN. We also believe that in the Evaluation regional matters should be addressed. We requested regular updates by the consultants at each Programme Committee session, until the presentation of the complete evaluation, in order to actively follow-up on this vital exercise.

As you are aware, we had two follow-ups. First, we have the Evaluation and then two years later we have a check on how it is going with the work carried out. The first one was the follow-up on the Evaluation on FAO's role in Investment for Food Security and Nutrition, Agriculture, and Rural Development. We noted that this is still a work in progress, and we also noted Management's assurance that all recommendations will be implemented by the end of this year. We underlined the importance of the Investment Centre's work, and appreciated the alignment of this work with the Strategic Framework and the Strategic Objectives Action Plans. We encourage further efforts in establishing a staffing plan with the required skill combination as well as strengthening and diversifying partnerships. We suggested that better communication of FAO's work and vision in

investment would result in stronger ties with financial institutions. Moreover, we underlined that close cooperation with Rome-based UN Agencies, in particularly IFAD, is essential.

The other follow-up was the Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Europe and Central Asia. We noted with satisfaction that the 'One-FAO' approach is now firmly established in the region and that the use of Russian is being extended as we have just heard in the last item too.

The establishment of the Gender Network is a step forward, but we strongly emphasized the importance of recruiting gender experts with the required skills as soon as possible. I am sorry to say that Progress has been somehow lacking. The presence of the ECE Chair in the Committee allowed us to confirm that the European Committee on Agriculture is indeed in the process of being revitalized.

Now we come to a very important report which is the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report.

This is an important tool to monitor how things are progressing during a biennium. As we know, the Programme Implementation Report that reviews the entire biennium comes much later. So this Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report is the report that we have to rely on when discussing the coming biennium.

We commended the Secretariat for the advance in implementing a results-based management method and the report is much improved. We stressed the need for an excellent system of monitoring to measure results and to serve as an analytical base for decisions and we deemed that the present methodology is well on its way.

We appreciated that the work is mostly on track and we encouraged the Organization to renew their efforts concerning more difficult areas such as cross-sectionality, working across several sectors at once, gender, and inclusiveness.

We advise further work on goal setting with inputs from all levels, not the least from country offices, to formulate appropriate targets for the period in question. Setting indicators is an ongoing process whereby time and resources must be considered.

Mr Muhammad Hashim POPALZAI (Pakistan)

We are making this statement on behalf of the Asia Group. These are just a few brief comments on some of the items in the report because the other items will be commented upon under a separate Agenda items.

We welcome the good progress made in the implementation of PWB 2014-15 as outlined in the Mid-Term Review, and note with appreciation that 80 percent of the output indicators showed good progress. As for the draft terms of reference for the independent evaluation of the evaluation function, we endorse these and look forward to the final report of the Independent Evaluation along with the views of the Management and Programme Committee.

Regarding the follow-up to the Evaluation of FAO's role in Investment for Food and Nutrition Security, Agriculture and Rural Development, we welcome the progress achieved in the implementation of related recommendations.

We also note with appreciation the follow-up of evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Europe and Central Asia. With these comments, we endorse the report of the Programme Committee

Sr. José Antonio CARRANZA (Ecuador)

El Ecuador como miembro del Comité del Programa, respalda el informe, y solamente queremos comentar en el tema relativo al Informe de síntesis del examen a mitad de período correspondiente a 2014.

Al respecto, queremos expresar nuestra satisfacción por el hecho de que el 82 por ciento de los indicadores de las realizaciones muestra un progreso considerable y que se han alcanzado los resultados previstos para 2014, e incluso superado en algunos casos.

El examen de mitad de período evidencia además que ha habido un avance más lento en cuanto al apoyo de la FAO a la mejora de las políticas multisectoriales integradas a escala nacional y también donde se respalda el desarrollo de las capacidades nacionales para catalogar, recopilar y analizar datos con miras a la toma de decisiones.

Lo mismo ocurre en cuanto a las iniciativas de ordenación sostenible de los ecosistemas, o el apoyo a la definición de estrategias de desarrollo rural. Estas son áreas importantes, e instamos a la FAO a redoblar los esfuerzos para el mejoramiento del rendimiento en estos ámbitos.

Si bien los resultados son inferiores a la meta establecida para 2014, en cuanto al apoyo a la elaboración y aplicación de sistemas de protección social, y entendemos que el tema de la protección social es relativamente nuevo en la FAO, respaldamos que se continúen realizando los mayores esfuerzos en este campo, el cual el Ecuador considera fundamental para la erradicación de la pobreza rural.

No obstante, queremos expresar nuestro apoyo a la labor de la FAO en cuanto al Objetivo Estratégico 3 de la reducción de la pobreza rural.

Queremos expresar que el Ecuador se congratula que la FAO por primera vez esté aplicando sistemáticamente los principios de la gestión basada en resultados, ya que esto contribuirá a tener una Organización más eficiente que logre alcanzar sus objetivos.

Finalmente, queremos manifestar nuestro agradecimiento y felicitación a la Presidenta del Comité del Programa, por la excelente labor desempeñada, cuya guía y liderazgo contribuyó decididamente a la eficacia de los trabajos del Comité.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We would like to thank the Secretariat for having prepared the Report on this agenda item as well as the Chairperson of the Programme Committee for her very detailed presentation.

We positively assessed the preliminary data on the programme implementation and budget implementation of FAO for 2014 and welcome the fact that 82 percent of the objectives identified for this period have been achieved and most of them have even been more than fulfilled. We believe that this is a fine result for the first year of work based on the new planning system. We hope that by the end of this year the Organization will be able to further improve this indicator.

We are satisfied with the progress made for the implementation of related recommendations on the conclusions of the independent evaluation of the Regional and Subregional FAO Offices for Europe and Central Asia. This relates in particular to the rectification of the operational process of FAO Governing Bodies in the Regions and the attention given to the use of Russian in preparing publishing information.

We welcome the mechanism, introduced in this biennium, of regional initiatives which is called upon to ensure the connection between FAO activities and the way they are aligned to individual countries, regions, and global objectives of the Organization.

We agree with the conclusion of the Programme Committee that it is important to appraise Member Nations of the course of progress in implementing this work. Further, we positively evaluate the report on implementing the mentioned recommendations regarding the assessment of FAO's role in encouraging investment.

This topic is especially important given the fact that the Committee on Food Security has adopted the principles of responsible investment in agriculture and food systems. Thus, we agree that the work of the FAO Investment Centre is important as it interacts with other International Institutes and the Private Sector.

We believe that this is important and in this regard, the preparation of a Corporate Strategy for the Organization to promote investment is certainly a step in the right direction.

Mme Karima BOUBEKEUR (Algérie)

L'Algérie intervient sur ce point au nom du Groupe Afrique. Le Groupe Afrique se félicite des progrès réalisés et des résultats obtenus en matière d'exécution du Programme de travail et budget 2014-2015, notamment l'exécution de 82 pour cent des indicateurs relatifs aux produits et 68 pour cent des cibles ont été dépassés, et encourage la FAO à poursuivre ses efforts dans les domaines qui connaissent une lente progression.

Il est également important de notre point de vue que les régions puissent être informées des progrès réalisés dans le cadre des initiatives régionales et nous espérons une amélioration de la qualité des Cadres de programmation par pays ; il faudra veiller d'une manière continue à leur cohérence vis-à-vis des priorités de la FAO. Comme les membres du Comité du Programme, le Groupe Afrique insiste sur la nécessité de disposer d'un système de suivi qui sert à mesurer les résultats pour faciliter la prise de décision.

Concernant le mandat pour l'évaluation indépendante de la fonction d'évaluation, et à l'instar des membres du Comité du Programme, le Groupe Afrique accueille favorablement le projet de mandat de l'évaluation indépendante de la fonction d'évaluation et insiste sur la nécessité de définir plus clairement le rôle du Bureau de l'évaluation. Le Groupe Afrique réserve à son tour un accueil favorable au rôle de la FAO en matière d'investissement pour la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle, l'agriculture et le développement rural, et aux progrès réalisés en matière de mise en œuvre des recommandations de l'évaluation. Nous sommes très satisfaits de savoir que les travaux réalisés par le centre d'investissement ont été alignés sur le Cadre stratégique et les plans d'action relatifs aux objectifs stratégiques.

Le Groupe Afrique met l'accent sur l'importance de renforcer la coopération avec les organisations ayant leur siège à Rome et à développer des partenariats afin d'accroître les contributions volontaires pour appuyer les travaux dans ce domaine d'action. Enfin, je tiens à remercier Madame la Présidente du Comité du Programme qui a excellé dans sa présidence du Comité.

Mr Luca FRATINI (Italy)

Italy would like to ask the floor for Latvia as current President of the Council of the European Union.

Ms Elina GRINPAUKA-PETETENA (Observer for Latvia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States.

We endorse the conclusions of the Programme Committee and would like to highlight a few issues not covered under other agenda items for follow-up to these deliberations.

We welcome the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report 2014 as a promising model of reporting on achievements by the Organization. We underline the importance of strengthening indicators and effective monitoring to measure results, which will help in FAO's decision making process. We also believe that it is very important to report on the progress of Regional Initiatives as they represent the priorities of each region.

While we welcome the draft terms of reference for the independent evaluation of the evaluation function, we would also like to stress the need of clarifying the role of the Office of Evaluation. We attach great importance to the full independence of this Office. We encourage lesson-learning from other offices of evaluation in the UN System and the involvement of other experts. We look forward to being updated regularly on the progress of the evaluation.

We take note of the report "Follow-up to the Evaluation of FAO's Role in Investment in Food Security, Nutrition, Agriculture and Rural Development" and encourage full implementation of all recommendations, as well as greater cooperation with the other Rome-based Agencies in this regard.

With regard to the Follow-up to the Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Europe and Central Asia, we are satisfied to see that the 'One-FAO' has been established in the region and look forward to its consideration. We also welcome the establishment of the Gender Network and would appreciate updates on its progress.

In conclusion, we wish to express our appreciation of the focused discussions and guidance provided by the Programme Committee. We would like to thank all Committee members and especially the outgoing Chairperson, Ms Cecilia Nordin van Gansberghe, for her commitment and the great job she has done, ensuring the Committee's focus in supporting FAO in improving its effectiveness and delivery of results.

Mr John NORRIS (United States of America)

The United States wants to recognize the leadership of the Chair and thank her for her work and the work of the Members of the Committee on this report.

The United States endorses the Report, including the proposed Resolution on Antimicrobial Resistance. Having said that, we believe there are some inaccuracies in the Status Report on AMR which we will address during discussion on Item 16, *Status Report on Antimicrobial Resistance*.

Sr. Luis Alberto ALVÁREZ FERMÍN (Venezuela)

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela agradece al Comité del Programa por la presentación del Informe del 117.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa, en el cual se examinaron diversos asuntos relativos a la planificación del programa y la evaluación, teniendo consenso, en particular, con respecto al Informe de síntesis del examen a mitad de período correspondiente a 2014, párrafo 4, en el seguimiento de la evaluación de la función de la FAO en la inversión para la seguridad alimentaria y nutricional, la agricultura y el desarrollo rural párrafo 8, el seguimiento de la evaluación de la Oficina Regional de la FAO para Europa, y la Oficina Subregional de la FAO para Asia Central, párrafo 9.

Finalmente, agradecemos las contribuciones realizadas por todos los Miembros que han hecho sus aportes para que estas evaluaciones lleguen a buen término.

Ms María Laura DA ROCHA (Brazil)

Brazil thanks the Chair of the Programme Committee for the presentation of this report. Brazil joins Members in welcoming the good progress and results achieved so far in the implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15.

We also support the endorsement of the Programme of Work proposed in the *Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17* which will be further discussed.

Concerning the terms of reference for the independent evaluation of the evaluation function, Brazil particularly welcomes the inclusion in the Evaluation Panel of specialists from other UN Agencies with similar business models and needs.

Regarding the evaluations of FAO Regional and Subregional Offices, Brazil supports the endorsement of the three Recommendations, especially number one, which involves FAO Members' and Management's review of the types and coverage of FAO representations as well as the location of Regional and Subregional Offices.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

First of all I wish to thank Cecilia for her kind words. I must say, she is an outstanding Chairperson and I am very proud to be part of her team. Thank you, Cecilia.

My comment on the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report is that this is indeed a very cheerful report and a certificate of good health. Only two of the 51 output indicators are off track.

The point that I want to make is that out of the seven outputs with moderate progress, five are concerned with capacity development of Governments, stakeholders, and valuable groups whereas the remaining two deal with support to public services. Obviously, these areas need more attention.

On the independent evaluation of the evaluation function, I wholeheartedly agree with paragraph seven of the Report of the Programme Committee. However, it may be advisable if the terms of reference consider three additional points and these would be:

Firstly, knowledge gained from the Evaluation exercise should be used by other units of the Organization.

Secondly, assess the advisory role of the Office of Evaluation (OED) on results-based management, programming and budgeting as stipulated in paragraph 34(c) of the Evaluation Charter.

Thirdly, to look into the pros and cons of relinquishing responsibility for the evaluation of projects to the Regional and Subregional Offices.

As for the role of investment, I have only one comment to make and that is we would like to see more upstream work being done by the Investment Centre Division (TCI) and that they should not just remain a project factory but an institution that can help future work and that is upstream work.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

La Delegación argentina interviene como miembro del Comité del Programa.

En primer lugar, la Delegación argentina quiere resaltar la excelente labor desarrollada por la embajadora de Suecia, Sra. Cecilia Nordin van Gansberghe, en la conducción y dirección y en la presidencia de este Comité.

En segundo lugar acogemos con beneplácito el Informe de síntesis del examen a mitad de período correspondiente a 2014.

En particular, quisiéramos destacar en el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2016-17, el apoyo que en el documento se identifica a las áreas consideradas de alta prioridad, como el tratamiento transversal que se le ha asignado a la cuestión de la nutrición y el aumento para los esfuerzos en la Cooperación sur-sur.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

I would like to thank the Chairperson of the Programme Committee for her presentation on the Committee's deliberations.

The large number of participants at this meeting indicates the high level of importance that countries attach to this last Council session before the FAO Conference in June.

Australia looks forward to the discussions, both formal and informal, throughout the week to support the Organization in its efforts to implement the strategic guidance provided by Members.

In regard to this specific Council item, Australia would like to confine its intervention to one matter discussed by the Programme Committee and that is the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report. Australia fully supports the recent efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of this Organization and we are most interested in impact and outcomes.

A preliminary step is the level of outputs, which is the focus of the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report, but we note the overall performance in 2014 in relation to the positive movement in the majority of the key performance indicators.

We support the Organization in continuing to improve its ability to measure performance, both for better management, including being able to address any areas of under-performance and also to demonstrate impact to members and to donors. This is critical.

The Results-based Reporting Framework in the 2014-2017 Medium Term Plan has been a significant improvement but we cannot rest on our laurels. The system needs to continue to evolve and learn from the experiences gained during this biennium.

We would like the Council Report on this agenda item to include the following points:

“The Council encouraged the Secretariat to continue to develop the Results-based Monitoring System and apply the lessons learned from the development of the performance framework in the 2014-17 Medium Term Plan, including the early engagement of the Decentralized Office Network; and the Council looked forward to receiving information on FAO's contribution to achievement of outcomes in the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15 for the Council's review”.

Ms Sultana AFROZ (Bangladesh)

Bangladesh endorses the Report of the 117th Session of the Programme Committee and congratulates the Chairperson on her leadership. I also had an opportunity to work with her as Vice-Chairperson in the Programme Committee three years ago

Bangladesh welcomes the good progress made and implementation of Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15 as outlined in the Mid-Term Review with over 80 percent of output indicators achieved.

Bangladesh also endorses the draft terms of reference for the independent evaluation of the evaluation function. We look forward to the final report of the Independent Evaluation along with views of Management and the Programme Committee.

Bangladesh fully welcomes the progress achieved in FAO's role in Investment for Food and Nutrition Security, Agriculture, and Rural Development and for FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Europe and Central Asia.

Mr Jianmin XIE (China) (Original language Chinese)

China would like to thank the Secretariat and the Programme Committee for submission of the Report. The Chinese Representation appreciates the work done by the Programme Committee. In our view, the Chairperson of the Programme Committee is a very responsible and highly efficient person. Of course, we also appreciate the cooperation of the Members as well as the efforts made by the Secretariat.

Ms Cecilia NORDIN VAN GANSBERGHE (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

I would like to thank you for endorsing the Report of the Programme Committee which I think is due to the fact that the Committee has worked very, very well together in an extremely warm and cooperative spirit. My wish for the new Committee is that this will continue because it does assist the Council which is the whole purpose of the Programme of Finance Committees. I hope at the Council in June that there will be a good mix of old and new hands elected.

I know you have heard me say this before, but I hope and I believe that the people that will be nominated will be qualified and interested in the work of the Programme Committee and also that their employer will understand that this can be onerous work at times so that they give them the full possibility of doing this important work, and also that they will be able to undertake the full two-year mandate because you know things are happening quickly and sustainably and we have to continue to follow the process. It is very hard to dip in and dip out.

With that, I would like to thank you all very much. It has been a privilege for me to be able to work in the Programme Committee with such excellent colleagues and, hopefully, to contribute to the good work of the Organization.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Ladies and Gentlemen, my conclusions for item 5 are as follows.

The Council endorsed the report of the 117th session of the Programme Committee, and:

- a) welcomed the good progress and results achieved in implementation of the Programme of Work during the 2014-15 biennium as outlined in the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report – 2014, and stressed the importance of effective monitoring of results, and of continued efforts for delivery of the Regional Initiatives;
- b) endorsed the recommendations for the finalization of the terms of reference for the independent evaluation of the evaluation function, including due care and attention to the role of the Office of Evaluation, and looked forward to receiving its final report, along with the views of Management and the Programme Committee;
- c) welcomed the progress presented in the follow-up report to the Evaluation of FAO's role in investment for food and nutrition security, agriculture and rural development, noting the importance of further strengthening partnerships with financing institutions and other UN Agencies;

d) welcomed the progress presented in the follow-up report to the Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Europe and Central Asia, welcoming the establishment of 'One-FAO' and the Gender Network.

With this, item 5 is concluded.

Item 6. Report of the 157th Session of the Finance Committee (9-13 mars 2015)

Point 6. Rapport de la cent cinquante-septième session du Comité financier (9-13 mars 2015)

Tema 6. Informe del 157.º período de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas (9-13 de marzo de 2015)
(CL 151/3; CL 151/LIM/2)

Item 6.1 Status of Contributions and Arrears
Point 6.1 Situation des contributions et des arriérés
Tema 6.1 Estado de las contribuciones y los atrasos

Item 6.2 Scale of Contributions 2016-17
Point 6.2 Barème des contributions 2016-2017
Tema 6.2 Escala de cuotas para 2016-17

CHAIRPERSON

We now move on to item 6, *Report of the 157th Session of the Finance Committee (9-13 March 2015)*. Please ensure you have documents CL 151/3 and CL 151/LIM/2 regarding the Status of Current Assessments and Arrears before you.

Document CL 151/LIM/2 sets out the status of assessments and arrears as at 16 March 2015.

Member Nations currently owe to FAO over USD 438 million for 2015 and prior years, which complicates FAO's liquidity management.

As of 16 March 2015, 75 percent of 2015 assessed contributions still needed to be settled. This is higher as compared to the same period last year.

Sixty-nine Member Nations still had arrears outstanding from 2014 and previous years and 18 owed arrears in such amounts as would prejudice their right to vote at the forthcoming Session of the Conference in accordance with Article III.4 of the Constitution.

I now invite Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI, Chairperson of the Finance Committee to introduce this item.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

At the outset, I would like you to bear with me because it could be quite a long Report due to the items discussed. I am pleased to be here now to present a Report of the 157th Session of the Finance Committee. This Report is mentioned in the documents that were outlined by the Independent Chairperson of the Council. This being the last session of the Committee as its members now dealing with FAO matters, the Committee proceeded with the election of Mr Matthew Worrell of Australia as Vice-Chairperson for the remaining period, noting that henceforth the Vice-Chairperson will be elected for the entire term of the Committee.

As agreed with the Independent Chairperson of the Council, I shall now present to you salient highlights of the Report of the Finance Committee meeting except for those matters referring to the *Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17* which are covered separately under item 3 of the Agenda of this Session of the Council. The Report covers four broad areas: the financial position of the Organization; budgetary matters; human resources; and oversight.

The Committee reviewed the financial position of the Organization. The Committee welcomed the improved liquidity position of the Organization at 31 December 2014 and urged all Member Nations to make timely and full payment of assessed contributions to ensure that FAO continues to meet the operating cash requirement for the Programme of Work. The Committee noted that the level of the General Fund deficit had improved compared to the end of 2013 but still remains significantly high, standing at USD 862.2 million due to unfunded staff-related liabilities. The Committee reviewed the Report on Investment 2014 and noted positive performance of the short-term and long-term

investment portfolios, both of which had significantly exceeded their respective benchmarks. The Committee appreciated the solid governance arrangement in place, concurred with and encouraged the Secretariat to continue its prudent investment approach for the short term investment portfolio. The Committee reviewed and endorsed the proposed scale of contributions for the 2016-17 Biennium, and transmitted to Council the draft Resolution set out in paragraph 12 of CL 151/3 for adoption of the FAO scale of contributions for 2016-17 by the countries.

The Committee reviewed the 2014 Actuarial valuation of staff related liabilities and noted that total staff related liabilities as at 31 December 2014 amounted to USD 1,390.5 million, representing an increase of USD 133 million from the valuation at 31 December 2013. The Committee recognized the importance of this highly complex matter and recalled that it had been regularly reviewed and discussed by the Committee during its previous sessions. The Committee encouraged the further active participation of the Secretariat in the UN Common System's search for a solution to this issue, and urged the Secretariat to continue in its efforts to contain the costs of the current medical insurance plans, including changing FAO's cost-sharing arrangements of health insurance premiums between the Organization and plan participants.

On budgetary matters, the Committee reviewed the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report focusing on Functional Objectives and Special Chapters – the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) and the Management of delivery and resources. The Committee expressed satisfaction with the overall performance in 2014, noting that 70 percent of the key performance indicators for Functional Objectives and Special Chapters were on track. The Committee appreciated the level of implementation of the TCP, and noted that the overall delivery of major population resources and volunteer contribution in 2014 was on track. The Committee reviewed the Annual Report on budgetary performance and Programme and Budget in the 2014-15 biennium, and approved the forecasted budgetary transfers arising from the implementation of the 2014-15 Programme of Work.

The Finance Committee considered FAO cost recovery policy, which was based on the progressive development of the Comprehensive Financial Framework for Cost Recovery, that it had reviewed in three of its sessions – the 151st, 154th and 156th. The Committee endorsed the new FAO cost recovery policy as presented in Annex I of document FC 157/10 and its transitional arrangements for its implementation from January 2016 for endorsement by the Council. We suggested this endorsement should take place. The Committee also endorsed the indirect support cost rate of 7 percent. The Committee requested the Secretariat to report on the initial experience with the implementation of the policy at its spring 2016 session and to be updated regularly on the implementation of the policy

On the issue of human resources, the Committee welcomed the significant progress made in the fields of human resources management in the Organization and encouraged continued effort by the Secretariat in this area. The Committee noted the ongoing recruitment and for it to adjust the Organization's vacancy rates to deliver required to enable requisite flexibility and encouraged the Secretariat to fill key positions. The Committee also encouraged the Secretariat to review measures which could improve geographic distribution in non-represented or under-represented countries without prejudice to recruitment on the basis of merit. The Committee looked forward to receiving further information on this and other initiatives at future sessions on progress in the fields of Human Resources

On oversights, the Committee examined the 2014 Annual Report of the Inspector General and appreciated the quality of the Report and the analysis of issues presented, which cover the full range of responsibilities under the mandate of the Office of the Inspector General, noting that the work of the Office of the Inspector General presented, was very relevant and a useful tool for management and governance of the Organization. The Committee reiterated the importance of continued attention by the Management of strengthening internal control in the Decentralized Offices. The Committee recognized the challenges of implementing internal control policies in the field, the Inspector General's observation in this regard and the requisite steps taken by Management to address gaps identified by the Inspector General

The Committee reviewed the Progress Report on Implementation of the External Auditor's Recommendations. It noted the updated status of implementation of the recommendation of the

External Auditor's and encouraged the Secretariat to continue in its effort to address outstanding recommendation. The Committee considered the FAO Accountability Policy and noted that the Policy had been issued in December 2014. The Committee looked forward to receiving information on the implementation of the Accountability Policy in conjunction with a Report on the implementation of the Internal Control Framework at its spring session 2016.

The Committee examined the Ethics Committee's Annual Report 2014 that presented the recommendation of the Ethics Committee for the new Ombudsman and Ethics Office. The Committee welcomed the Ethics Committee's Annual Report for 2014 and the training provided by the Ombudsman and Ethics Committee to FAO staff.

The Committee examined the Progress Report on Delegation of Authority to Bodies under Article XIV of the Constitution, taking into account their differentiated nature. The Committee recalled previous guidance provided by FAO Governing Bodies to the Secretariat regarding the provision of appropriate financial and administrative autonomy and welcomed the information provided on areas where Delegations of Authority and Functional Facility have been extended to Secretariat of Article XIV Bodies which were under consideration. The Committee noted Management's readiness to examine any specific issue of an operational nature which could negatively impact upon the functioning of Article XIV Bodies and requested Management to give timely consideration to these matters and report on the matter from time to time.

Overall, the 157th Session of the Committee was very productive, and in particular, I believe that it was possible to address a number of important issues facing the Organization. On behalf of the Members of the Committee I would like to extend our appreciation to the Secretariat for its assistance in our deliberations, especially the timely delivery of documents and our gratitude to the Member Nations of FAO for providing us with opportunity to follow the important work of the Organization.

On a personal note, I want to thank my Government, represented here by His Excellency the Minister for Agricultural Development, for giving me the opportunity and relevant assistance to discharge these high level responsibilities. Chairing the Finance Committee is an extraordinarily challenging experience that puts one at the heart of the Organization considering the wide range of subjects and areas covered.

On other aspects, I want to recognize the professionalism of the Secretary of the Committee and entire team supporting him without which, the work of the Committee would have been less efficient. I now stand before you to provide further explanation you may have regarding our Report.

Mr Dzulkifli ABD WAHAB (Malaysia)

I speak on behalf of the Asia Group. We thank the Chair of the Finance Committee for the comprehensive Report and acknowledge the Chair's contribution in guiding the Finance Committee through his continued contribution and the collective contribution from the whole team. We welcome the Report of the 157th Session of the Finance Committee and wish to highlight the following points.

We are pleased to endorse the FAO Cost Recovery Policy and the transitional arrangement for its implementation from 1 January 2016, as well as the indirect support cost rate of 7 percent. We take note that the policy was based on the progressive development of the Comprehensive Financial Framework for Cost Recovery which has been reviewed by the Finance Committee. The model is based on full proportional cost recovery with attributable support costs and the new categories of direct operational costs, direct support costs, and indirect support costs.

We also welcome the good progress and update on human resources and encourage continued effort by the Secretariat in this area.

Ms Maria Laura DA ROCHA (Brazil)

Brazil thanks the Chair of the Finance Committee for the good and hard work and supports this Report.

Considering that the paragraphs of this report related to the Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget will be addressed in a different agenda item, Brazil would like to highlight the following points.

We congratulate FAO management for the good financial position of the Organization, as recognized in this report. The Committee noted, for instance, that FAO was in a better liquidity situation in the end of 2014 and observed the positive performance of the short term and long term investment portfolios during 2014.

In terms of budgetary matters, FAO presented another good performance in 2014. In this regard, around 70 percent of the key performance indicators for Functional Objectives and Special Chapters were on track. Brazil appreciates such results.

We would like to underline our satisfaction with the efforts with a view to implementing the FAO Cost Recovery Policy endorsed by the Finance Committee. Such a policy will certainly contribute to make this organization more efficient and effective.

Concerning human resources management, Brazil understands the ongoing recruitment efforts to adjust vacancy rates to the level required to enable flexibility. It is important, however, to be sure that these vacancies will not affect the delivery of the Programme of Work.

Brazil notes with concern the increase in the number of non-represented countries and under-represented countries and encourages FAO to address this situation and improve geographic distribution. We recognize, however, that members should avoid any temptation of micromanagement and trust the DG and secretariat to implement measures regarding recruitment in general.

Finally, Brazil appreciates the quality of the annual report of the Inspector General and welcomes their positive results.

M. Menye ESSIMI (Cameroun)

Le Cameroun a l'honneur de prendre la parole sur ce point 6 de l'ordre du jour au nom du Groupe Afrique. Notre intervention couvre tout aussi bien les points 6.1 que 6.2.

Le Groupe Afrique félicite le Comité financier pour la manière professionnelle avec laquelle la 157^{ème} session s'est déroulée et pour la qualité du rapport qui a été produit, dont les recommandations pertinentes sont susceptibles de guider et de faciliter le travail du Conseil. Le Groupe Afrique se félicite de l'examen approfondi de la situation financière de l'Organisation, des questions budgétaires, des ressources humaines et des questions relatives au contrôle entrepris par le Comité financier.

Pour ce qui concerne la situation financière de l'Organisation, nous prenons acte de la trésorerie qui s'était améliorée au troisième trimestre de la première année de ce biennium par rapport à la même période en 2013. Cette embellie, que nous souhaitons progressive et durable, ne peut l'être que si les Membres paient à temps leurs contributions mises en recouvrement. Nous notons aussi que le déficit du Fonds général, qui tient particulièrement aux obligations non financées relatives au personnel, s'est maintenu à un niveau relativement élevé et nous demandons que le Comité financier continue à suivre étroitement cette question. De même, nous attendons avec intérêt de recevoir le rapport détaillé de la deuxième Conférence internationale sur la nutrition, tel que demandé par le Comité. La situation des obligations liées au personnel, notamment l'assurance maladie après cessation de service, dont le montant continue de s'accumuler et d'augmenter, reste une question préoccupante pour le Groupe Afrique. Tout en notant que la solution doit être trouvée à l'échelle globale du système des Nations Unies, nous encourageons le Secrétariat à rester attentif en jouant un rôle prépondérant dans les discussions qui se déroulent au sein du groupe de travail de la Commission de la fonction publique internationale.

Ayant examiné la situation des contributions au programme ordinaire au 16 mars 2015, y compris les montants recouverts et les arriérés de contributions, nous notons un taux de recouvrement satisfaisant au-delà de 25 pour cent. Par contre, le nombre de pays ayant accumulé des arriérés (soit 18 au total) et qui risquent de perdre leur droit de vote, reste inquiétant. Il est important que ces pays puissent d'ores et déjà, sinon payer leurs arriérés de contributions, du moins engager la procédure habituelle pour la restitution du droit de vote. Ayant examiné le barème des contributions proposé pour 2016-2017, nous l'approuvons et recommandons la transmission à la Conférence pour approbation de la résolution y afférente.

Au titre des questions budgétaires, nous nous félicitons des résultats positifs obtenus en 2014, tels que rapportés dans la synthèse de l'examen à mi-parcours, ainsi que les résultats budgétaires provenant de l'exécution du programme. Nous apprécions en particulier le bon niveau d'exécution du Programme de coopération technique. À cet égard, nous encourageons le Secrétariat à garder cette dynamique pour que le Rapport d'exécution du Programme que nous attendons en 2016 puisse présenter des résultats honorables. Par ailleurs, nous entérinons la décision du Comité d'approuver la politique de recouvrement des coûts, ainsi que les arrangements institutionnels transitoires proposés.

En matière de ressources humaines, nous prenons note des avancées dans le domaine des ressources humaines et restons particulièrement attentifs aux actions visant à améliorer la représentation géographique au sein du personnel organique. Nous restons aussi convaincus que la bonne mise en œuvre de la politique de mobilité, ainsi qu'une délégation de pouvoirs pourraient accroître les bénéfices de la décentralisation. Au plan du contrôle, le Groupe Afrique se félicite du rôle de l'Inspecteur général, dont les recommandations pertinentes adressées au Directeur général constituent un important outil de gestion. À cet égard, nous apprécions la collaboration agissante entre le Secrétariat et le Bureau de l'Inspecteur général, ainsi que le soutien apporté par le Comité de vérification à l'activité de contrôle au sein de l'Organisation.

S'agissant particulièrement des actions entreprises sur la délégation de pouvoirs pour assurer une autonomie financière et administrative appropriée aux organes relevant de l'Article XIV de l'Acte constitutif, nous prenons note de la variété des actions entreprises qui tiennent compte des spécificités de chaque organe, et encourageons le Secrétariat à continuer dans sa politique de l'examen différentiel au cas par cas.

Avec ces commentaires, le Groupe Afrique approuve le rapport de la 157^{ème} session du Comité financier.

Et pour clôturer mon propos, je tiens à remercier ici, au nom de mon Gouvernement, l'ensemble des Membres de la FAO qui ont fait confiance au Cameroun pour présider le Comité financier depuis 2011. Le Cameroun s'est senti honoré par cette haute marque de considération et de confiance. Les informations qui nous parviennent font état d'un mandat bien mené, grâce à l'engagement et au dévouement inlassables de Monsieur Médi, Président du Comité financier, à qui j'adresse ici mes chaleureuses félicitations pour un si bon état de service.

M. Luca FRATINI (Italie)

L'Italie voudrait demander la parole pour la Lettonie en tant que Présidente actuelle du Conseil de l'Union européenne.

Ms Elina GRINPAUKA-PETETENA (Observer for Latvia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate country to the EU, Turkey, aligns itself with this statement.

We welcome the report of the 157th Session of the Finance Committee which again covered a broad range of important issues. The EU and its Members States note with satisfaction that, due to the timely payment of Members' contributions, the liquidity of the organisation is good. However further attention should be drawn to the increasing unfunded liabilities, in particular for After-Service Medical Coverage. We support the Committee's request to the Secretariat for further active participation and a leading role in the UN Common System's search for a solution to this issue. We acknowledge the progress in containing the costs of the medical insurance plan and encourage the Secretariat to continue its efforts.

We encourage FAO to continue its prudent investment approach and the solid governance arrangements which lead to positive performance of the investments portfolios during 2014, significantly exceeding their respective benchmarks.

We also endorse the proposed Scale of Contributions for the biennium 2016-2017 and the respective resolution set out in document FC 157/5.

We endorse the new FAO Cost Recovery Policy as presented in Annex 1 to the FC 157/10 document and the transitional arrangements for its implementation from 1 January 2016. We agree that this is due to complex changes in budgeting and accounting processes and to its preparation and monitoring.

Therefore we welcome the fact that the Committee will monitor and guide the implementation of the policy, in particular in the area of flexibility.

We note the significant progress made in the field of human resources management and encourage the Secretariat to continue its efforts. Likewise, we encourage the Secretariat to fill key positions in order to ensure FAO's core competencies and delivery of the Programme and Work. Therefore we endorse the Committee's request for more information on vacancies, broken down by department, and on progress in the field of human resources, including management's efforts to motivate staff.

Since the EU and its Member States were strongly supporting the ICN2 process and continue to be committed to advancing the agenda on nutrition, we look forward to receiving management's comprehensive and detailed financial report on ICN2.

Finally we take the opportunity to thank the outgoing chair of the Committee, Mr Médi MOUNGUI, for his exceptional and long-standing commitment to FAO's goal and work.

Mr Vladimir V. KUZNETSOV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

Russia as a member of the Finance Committee participated in the preparation of the Report which has been presented and we fully support it. We would like to refer to some aspects thereof.

Firstly, we welcome what the Secretariat has achieved with regard to staff, all of the efforts that the Secretariat has made with respect to staff and human resources, especially when it comes to enhancing the effectiveness of the Organization's work.

Secondly, Russia supports the introduction of a model of comprehensive financial recovery, a cost recovery mechanism, and we hope that by the end of the year we will get detailed information with regard to the way that this is going to be practically implemented. Thirdly, with regard to the financial obligations to staff after service which indeed accounts for the main liabilities and deficit in the funding of the Organization, Russia is in favor of there being a search to resolve this problem within the general UN System.

In concluding, I would like to thank our Chairman of the Finance Committee for the very conscientious work which he has carried out, demonstrating professionalism and high qualifications, as well as for his very patient resolve to work to results in our work as well as for his wonderful sense of humour.

Ms Doojduan SASANAVIN (Thailand)

Thailand associates itself with the statement made by the Asia Group.

We would like to thank the Committee for providing concise and good coverage of the technical review of financial issues of the Organization.

Thailand supports the endorsement of the Council on the recommendations provided by the Committee on the timely payment of assessed contributions to ensure smooth delivery of the Programme of Work. We appreciate that the Committee explored the possibility of payment in domestic currency for those countries hosting regional offices. We also welcome the proposed scale of contributions for the 2016-17 biennium to follow the UN scale of assessment.

Thailand thanks the Committee for the insight review of the Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (reviewed) and the Programme of Work 2016-17 as well as the Committee's request that the Secretariat quantify the areas of emphasis, and de-emphasis in the Programme of Work, including GIAHS, TCP, and the approach for providing FAO services to middle-income countries. We look forward to discussing this matter further in Item 3.

Sr. Luis Alberto ALVÁREZ FERMÍN (Venezuela)

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela agradece la presentación del Informe del 157.º período de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas (documento CL 151/3).

Revisada la documentación presentada y en conocimiento de los esfuerzos cumplidos por parte de los Estados Miembros durante las discusiones sustantivas que tuvieron lugar en la reunión, una vez más, respaldamos las recomendaciones del Comité sobre el pago puntual de las cuotas asignadas, tomando como base la escala de cuotas propuestas para el bienio 2016-2017 sobre el Plan a Medio Plazo 2014-2017 ya revisado, y el Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto para el 2016-17, y sobre la nueva política de recuperación de costos de la FAO.

Tomamos nota con aprecio de la decisión del Comité sobre las transferencias presupuestarias previstas como consecuencia de la aplicación del Programa de Trabajo para 2014-2015, entendiendo que las mismas cumplen con los parámetros establecidos en los Textos Fundamentales de la FAO para tal fin.

Respaldamos la orientación brindada por el Comité a la Secretaría sobre todos los demás asuntos de su incumbencia, así como las iniciativas encaminadas a mejorar sus propios métodos de trabajo, siempre y cuando tales métodos no impliquen erogaciones financieras adicionales más allá de lo comprometido financieramente internacionales previamente adquiridos con la Organización.

Respecto de la escala de cuotas para 2016-17, de acuerdo con lo establecido en documento CL 151/3, las cuotas para la República Bolivariana de Venezuela permanecerán iguales a las del periodo 2014-15, es decir con una alícuota de 0,627.

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela, como ya lo ha hecho veces anteriores, acoge la recomendación del Comité de Finanzas para que los Estados Miembros cumplamos con el pago puntual de las cuotas asignadas a fin de asegurar que la FAO pueda ejecutar el Programa de trabajo y presupuesto aprobado por la Conferencia.

Asimismo queremos resaltar que el incremento de la cuota para nuestro país en el año 2014 sufrió un incremento del 48 por ciento con relación a la cuota del año 2013; sin embargo, dado que la seguridad alimentaria es de carácter estratégico para la política del Gobierno venezolano, forma parte de nuestras prioridades financieras cumplir con los compromisos adquiridos con la FAO, pero no podemos ser indiferente a la situación económica de crisis mundial y su impacto en la economía de los países en desarrollo.

Mr Jianmin XIE (China) (Original language Chinese)

China would like to support the statement made by Malaysia on behalf of the Asia Group. We would like to endorse the report presented by the Secretariat and the Chairperson of the Finance Committee. There are three points specifically that I would like to focus on in my intervention.

First of all, we welcome the fact that the financial situation of the Organization has improved over the years. We are very happy about the benefits and the good performance registered with regard to the investments made and we would like to take this opportunity to thank the Chairman of the Finance Committee for his excellent leadership and work over the past few years because it is thanks to his leadership that we have been able to achieve satisfactory results.

Secondly, China wishes to endorse the proposed Scale of Contributions for the biennium 2016-17. According to this proposed Scale of Contributions, China ranks sixth amongst the Members and first amongst developing countries.

Thirdly, we welcome the improved effectiveness with regard to the recruitment of human resources and we have also taken note of the improvements registered with regard to gender equality and geographic representation.

China would like for the Organization to improve the representation of under-represented countries and regions.

Ms Natalie BROWN (Unites States of America)

The United States, as a member of the Finance Committee, can endorse this report.

We applaud FAO for managing within its means and taking a prudent, responsible approach to ensuring the proper financial and governance oversight.

We feel particularly fortunate to have such a strong team under the leadership of Denis Aitken, which includes the Director of Human Resources, Ms Monika Altmeier, and the Director of Finance and Treasurer, Mr Aiman Hija. You have all been instrumental in promoting a new culture of transparency. We would also be remiss if we did not thank our outgoing Chairperson for his knowledge and experience and for his dedication over the last two biennia – *merci beaucoup Médi*.

Although this afternoon we will discuss the Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-17, I would like to highlight one item that may feature in our discussions, not for the concepts nor its content, but the process, and that is the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) programme.

As we have said in previous sessions of this body and other governing body meetings, we support the GIAHS concept but continue to have questions about its formalization. I do not think the United States is alone here and as long as concerns remain, funding its secretariat through the regular budget before the Governing Bodies approve the conference resolution to formalize the programme is premature and an affront to the important work of these committees.

At the conclusion of the Finance Committee Session in November and the Council in December, we fully expected the Secretariat to provide the information requested by the Committee on Agriculture, the Finance Committee and the Council prior to this session. The brief mentions in the PWB are insufficient and set a dangerous precedent if we allow this item to go forward as it now stands.

If, after review and by a recommendation from the relevant Governing Bodies, it is agreed that the GIAHS programme should be formalized, the United States would be supportive of a budgetary transfer from the Multidisciplinary Fund to support the GIAHS secretariat through the remainder of the 2016-17 biennium, in line with prior practice for funding GIAHS by the Organization.

The United States is committed to preserving the authority of the Governing Bodies and hopes that the Secretariat will reconsider how this item is presented to the Members.

CHAIRPERSON

You are right that this issue will be discussed under the item on the PWB as contained in paragraph 202 on page 48.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have two announcements to make. First, I wish to invite Members to visit the information booths in the Atrium on the Strategic Objectives, which provide an opportunity to gather further information on the main results achieved under each of the five Strategic Objectives, as well as Objective 6. The information booths will be available in the Atrium during the course of this week.

Secondly, I have been asked to inform you that there will be a meeting of the Africa Group immediately after the end of this session in the Ethiopia room.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. We will resume at 14:30 to continue with this agenda item.

The meeting rose at 12:32 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 32

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.32

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Fifty-first Session
Cent cinquante et unième session
151.º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 23-27 March 2015
Rome, 23-27 mars 2015
Roma, 23-27 de marzo de 2015**

**SECOND PLENARY MEETING
DEUXIEME SÉANCE PLENIERE
SEGUNDA SESIÓN PLENARIA**

23 March 2015

The Second Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.35 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La deuxième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 35
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la segunda sesión plenaria a las 14.35
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, I declare the Second Meeting of the 151st Session of the FAO Council open.

Before continuing our work on item 6, I would like to invite you to view a short video presentation on interpretation. By following the guidance provided in the video I am sure we can facilitate the work of the interpreters and so improve communication among us.

Video Presentation

Présentation vidéo

Videopresentación

Item 6. Report of the 157th Session of the Finance Committee (9-13 mars 2015) (continued)

Point 6. Rapport de la cent cinquante-septième session du Comité financier (9-13 mars 2015) (suite)

Tema 6. Informe del 157.º período de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas (9-13 de marzo de 2015) (continuación)

(CL 151/3; CL 151/LIM/2)

CHAIRPERSON

Let us now return to item 6, *Report of the 157th Session of the Finance Committee (9-13 March 2015)*.

I will give the floor to Members who requested to speak this morning and to any others who may wish to intervene.

Mr Amr HELMY MOSTAFA KAMAL (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

It is a pleasure for me to make this statement on behalf of the Near East Group and North Africa. This 151st Session of FAO Council is taking place at a time when FAO's importance is continuing to rise, especially in dealing with international challenges, specifically food security, climate change, the dearth of water, and the deterioration of arable lands. These are all areas which compel the Organization and us to work on without stinting the Organization's objectives.

The Finance Committee at its last session addressed a number of important issues directly related to the Strategic Orientation of FAO. The Near East Group would like to highlight the following points.

Firstly, we welcome the Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-17 because it is a support for the Strategic Objectives of FAO through the Medium Term Plan, especially given that it includes new areas where there should be greater emphasis and others where there should be some de-emphasis. We also welcome the increase of resources for food, climate change, and South-South Cooperation.

Secondly, we cannot fail to stress areas where emphasis should be reduced, however, these should not conflict with the priorities in the Near East. One of the areas where de-emphasis has taken place in the Programme of Work is water resources. De-emphasizing this point does run counter to the concerns of the Near East; the countries of which have determined that this is a priority and they have launched initiatives in order to combat problems of water shortage.

Thirdly, the Near East supports the increase in TCP from 6.1 percent so it can reach USD 140 million as a response to the needs expressed by developing countries for whom technical cooperation is of vital importance for their development. This is also a response to decision 89 of FAO which had requested that the percentage of the TCP should not be lower than 14 percent of the Organization's budget. Over the course of time, it should reach 17 percent. We call on the Director-General to track very closely the implementation of that demand.

Fourthly, at a time when we have stressed the need for Member Nations to pay their contributions in a timely manner, we cannot fail to stress the need for efficiency gains to continue to be made in the Organization's activities on condition that this does not have a negative impact on the Programme of Work, in accordance with the guidance of the 149th Session of Council.

Fifthly, South-South Cooperation programmes are growing in importance internationally. This is an issue that requires a stepping up of efforts in order to provide necessary support to countries of the

South from the countries that are supporting them. FAO must try to recover costs so that it can afford greater flexibility to South-South Cooperation and assist in its implementation.

Sixthly, as regards Human Resource Management in FAO, the Near East Group expresses its concern at the fact that there are countries in our region that are not represented in the Secretariat and that do not have their fair share in terms of geographical distribution. This means greater work needs to be done to bring about better geographical distribution in all departments of the Organization, especially in higher levels, and we await a swift report from the Director-General on what progress has been made until now.

Seventh and lastly, we remain confident that fruitful discussions in this Council will allow us to reach an agreement on the proposed budget level so that we address the needs of developing countries and their economic situation, and allow the Organization to move forward in attaining its Strategic Objectives.

Mr Mafizur RAHMAN (Bangladesh)

I would like to thank the Finance Committee, all its Members, particularly the, for the very hard work carried out for the last two years.

I would like to comment on what was actually mentioned in the Report of the Finance Committee at its 157th Session. We are endorsing the whole Report as it is. Particularly, we share the views of the Finance Committee regarding the TCP and GIAHS. We are fully satisfied with this and we are endorsing it as it is. We endorse the Mid-Term Synthesis Report. We endorse the Report of the Ethics Committee. Particularly we would like to reiterate our support of the Finance Committee's position on the Programme of Work and Budget.

Mr Osamu KUBOTA (Japan)

First, we congratulate the Chairperson of the Finance Committee on his leadership and the excellent work he has done over the past two years. Japan is a Member of the Finance Committee and fully endorses the Finance Committee Report. We would like to limit our comment to the FAO Cost Recovery Policy. We endorse the new full recovery policy with indirect cost rate of 7 percent and implementation from 1 January 2016.

We would like to reiterate one thing covering this matter in the report. Because this is a substantial change of cost recovery measure, we believe it is important for resource partners to fully understand the new policy. In this regard, we request the Secretariat to communicate to resource partners on the transition and implementation measures.

Mr Gaafar Ahmed ANDALLAH OMER (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

I would like to refer to transfer of resources between the various areas of the budget. We understand what the budget has done in revamping the Programme of Work in order to bring about greater clarity in the areas in which it works in order to improve implementation and to make efficiency gains. Budget transfers have made it possible to highlight expected results, and this has also facilitated the work of the Organization in the area of exchanging experience, capacity development and the development of new technologies that preserve the environment.

It has also been stressed that South-South Cooperation should be facilitated together with support for regional initiatives to improve performance in crucial areas such as Early Warning, prevention of transboundary diseases and transboundary animal diseases. We note the FAO's policy for accountability, especially in resolving the problems faced by the Organization as well as the three clusters of work which are vital if the administration is to gain any credibility. The Organization and its staff are accountable to our partners. The Organization should delegate the requisite authority for better implementation in the field. The FAO Secretariat, when preparing reports and evaluations, must listen to FAO's recipients and these positive points brought out in what we have seen.

There is also a need to make judicious use of resources which we mobilize for implementation of FAO projects. It is also necessary to determine the various phases according to which these projects and programmes should be implemented; thereby partnerships will be more fruitful. The progress made in

implementation of the previous Programme of Work and Budget has been clear. Functional Objective 8 has been attained making it possible to establish partnership agreements in the area of resource mobilization, promotion of South-South Cooperation, and efficiency gains. Those responsible for these partnerships in the Regional Offices have been very efficient, thereby facilitating the attainment of these results. The progress made in the TCP through implementation of its projects has also been worthy of praise.

Fourthly, we agree with the Finance Committee's Report, and call for no efforts to be spared in its implementation, whether it be beneficiaries or in the Secretariat as regards the financial situation. It is necessary to ensure that cash flow is commensurate with the needs of the programmes. We call on all states to pay their contributions in good time and in full so that the Organization can carry out all its activities, especially at a time when FAO is facing major problems such as food security, climate change, galloping demographic growth, increasing desertification, and the scarceness of water.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

Firstly, I would like to thank the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, as others have done, for his leadership and dedication over the course of the two terms that he has been in the important and very challenging position. Being a Member of the Finance Committee, I also have firsthand experience of working with the Chair and want to thank him for the significant effort that he has put in. Australia can agree with the Finance Committee's recommendations dealing with assist contributions, the proposed scale of contributions, and the new Cost Recovery Policy.

There are two areas where I feel the Organization is putting in a strong effort, and that relates to the financial position in HR Management. I think the financial position of the Organization and financial management is a very challenging task, but I think the Organization, particularly under the leadership of the Head of the Corporate Services Department and the Director of Finance and Treasurer, has put in significant effort to try to best place the Organization.

On HR, I think we have seen a significant transformation in the way that the Organization approaches this critical issue. I think a couple of years ago the Committee and other countries recognized that HR was really a critical weakness, or HR Management was a critical weakness within the Organization. During the course of the last three years, however, there has been a very significant improvement in the way that the Organization has approached this issue and we are starting to see the fruits of that significant work.

On a couple of other really important things - if you have not already, I would encourage countries to have a look at the 2014 Annual Report of the Inspector General. I think this sort of document, the Annual Document, really gives a good insight into what is happening in the Organization, with a strong focus on internal control issues. It touches on a number of critical issues facing the Organization, not only here in Headquarters but importantly in the Decentralized Offices. That is something which I think the Organization recognizes and is doing things to try to strengthen some of the internal control process and it is an area though that needs continued strong focus. Related to that, the Finance Committee has recently been following the development of the Accountability Policy, which again has a strong focus on internal control and is really trying to ensure that staff within FAO are aware of their responsibilities and take those responsibilities seriously as they relate to a number of areas, but importantly the critical implementation of the Programme of Work.

Lastly, regarding the Article XIV Bodies, the Committee received an update from Management on the implementation of providing appropriate financial and administrative autonomy and just to put that focus on the need for Management to be open to having those discussions with relevant Article XIV Bodies where there are still some outstanding issues around receiving appropriate administrative and financial autonomy.

M. Moungui MÉDI (Président du Comité financier)

Je voudrais d'abord remercier tous les membres du Conseil qui ont pris la parole lors de la présentation du Rapport de la 157^{ème} session du Comité financier. Les mots aimables que les uns et les autres ont prononcé à mon endroit m'ont touché au plus profond de moi-même, et ont été certainement un appel à mieux faire et à faire davantage pour le bien de l'Organisation et pour le bien de la communauté

internationale. Ce ne sont pas des mots qui doivent être adressés à une seule personne. Nous avons eu un Comité extrêmement efficace de ce point de vue, et je pense que c'est l'efficacité de ce Comité qui a permis d'arriver au rapport qui vous a été présenté, mais surtout d'être à même de vous présenter des résultats concrets du travail des organes directeurs, notamment de cet organe compliqué qu'est le Comité financier.

Par expérience je peux dire que c'est un organe compliqué parce que vous passez sans transition des finances aux budgets, aux audits. Passer d'une question à l'autre totalement différente demande beaucoup de concentration. J'adresse donc aux Membres ici présents les mêmes mots aimables que vous m'avez adressés. Je sais également que cela m'a permis d'entendre la reconnaissance de mon Gouvernement sur le travail que nous avons fait, ce qui m'a également beaucoup ému, et je lui en sais gré. Je voudrais relever deux choses qui ont été dites pendant la session, deux mots clés : la transparence. Vous savez, gérer les finances n'est pas toujours chose facile, et quand les Membres reconnaissent qu'il y a eu une évolution dans la transparence de la gestion financière, c'est un élément fondamental à prendre en considération. Mais ensuite, il y a la question de la flexibilité, qui est demandée au Secrétariat par les Membres pour permettre au Secrétariat de fonctionner, mais aussi de pouvoir rendre compte.

La gestion des ressources humaines est une question clé. Beaucoup de Membres y ont fait référence en examinant les initiatives qui ont cours actuellement au sein de la Division des ressources humaines. Nous, au sein du Comité financier, étions étonnés par le nombre de difficultés qu'il y a autour de ces initiatives. Du point de vue du Comité financier, nous pensons que la plupart d'entre elles sont en bonne voie et avons donc encouragé le Secrétariat à faire davantage pour que les ressources humaines et leur gestion aient une place de choix au sein de cette Organisation. Nous avons également pensé qu'il y a un minimum de responsabilités à déléguer aux Bureaux décentralisés.

C'est une bonne chose que notre Secrétariat devrait prendre en compte, et le Comité financier a poussé dans cette direction, pour que plus de responsabilités et d'autonomie soient données aux Bureaux décentralisés, notamment en ce qui concerne la mobilisation des ressources. Cette autonomie devrait également aller au-delà, surtout comme l'a mentionné l'Australie tout à l'heure, pour les organes de l'article XIV. Nous reconnaissons qu'ils ont des activités de nature différenciée et nous avons encouragé le Secrétariat à les traiter au cas par cas. Nous pensons que ce message est passé et nous allons continuer à suivre du côté du Comité. Certaines mesures ont été demandées par les Membres à la FAO, notamment sur le plan de la nouvelle politique de recouvrement des coûts. C'est une action importante. Je crois que le Japon tout à l'heure mentionnait qu'il faut que le Secrétariat rende compte régulièrement des mesures transitoires qui sont prises et de leur mise en œuvre.

Les organes directeurs doivent pouvoir suivre cela de près parce que c'est une révolution qui est envisagée ici, en matière de recouvrement des coûts, et nous pensons qu'il s'agit d'une autre lourde tâche. Nous sommes là en phase expérimentale; nous devons – je n'ose pas dire – donner carte blanche au Secrétariat pour travailler, mais nous pensons que c'est dans cette direction qu'il faut aller, c'est-à-dire laisser le Secrétariat fonctionner avec cette nouvelle politique, et attendre que les informations ou les rapports nous soient rendus régulièrement.

Dans cet ordre du jour, nous avons deux choses importantes à faire. D'une part, approuver le barème des contributions qui se trouve dans l'annexe de notre rapport, mais également attirer l'attention des Membres sur les arriérés de contribution. Pour le barème des contributions, il y a une résolution qui devrait aller à la Conférence. Nous pensons que le Conseil va entériner cette résolution, mais pour l'état de contributions des Membres qui ont des arriérés, je pense que la déclaration du Cameroun au nom du Groupe Afrique était claire, à savoir stimuler les pays à initier la procédure qui est connue pour que ces pays, d'ici à la Conférence, ne perdent pas leur droit de vote. Nous pensons que c'est une chose importante pour l'Organisation. En remerciant tous les Membres pour leurs commentaires, nous vous savons gré d'avoir approuvé le Rapport de la 157^{ème} session du Comité financier.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. I want to make the following conclusions on item 6.

The Council approved the Report of the 157th Session of the Finance Committee, and in particular:

- a) urged all Member Nations to make timely and full payment of assessed contributions to ensure that FAO continued to meet the operating cash requirements for the Programme of Work;
- b) recommended that the draft Resolution on the FAO Scale of Contributions for 2016-17, presented in paragraph 12 of document CL 151/3, as set out in *Appendix ...* to this report, be submitted to the 39th FAO Conference in June 2015 for adoption;
- c) noted with satisfaction the progress made in implementing the approved Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15, as presented in the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report – 2014;
- d) noted that the Finance Committee had authorized forecasted budgetary Chapter transfers arising from implementation of the Programme of Work 2014-15 in favour of Chapters 2, 5, 8, and 10 from the budgetary Chapters 1, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11 and 12;
- e) endorsed the new FAO Cost Recovery Policy as presented in Annex 1 of document FC 157/10, including the introduction of an Indirect Support Cost Rate of 7 percent, and looked forward to the Finance Committee's monitoring of implementation of the Policy;
- f) noted the significant progress made in the field of Human Resources Management in the Organization;
- g) noted the ongoing recruitment efforts to adjust the Organization's vacancy rates to a level required to enable requisite flexibility, encouraged the Secretariat to fill key positions to ensure the Organization's core competencies and delivery of the Programme of Work, and noted the Finance Committee would receive further information in this regard;
- h) noted the Finance Committee would consider a full financial report on ICN2;
- i) noted Management's engagement in the monitoring of Article XIV Bodies activities and reporting periodically thereon.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

I am not quite clear on the reference to monitoring of the Article XIV Bodies. How does this refer to any intervention that was made on this issue. If we could have clarification on this it would be appreciated.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

I think the issue raised here by our colleague from Australia is with regard to your summary on the element of Article XIV Bodies. What was in discussion was the delegation of authority to Bodies under Article XIV and I think if we could add that there will be monitoring of the delegation, or the differentiated delegation of authority to Article XIV Bodies, because we recognize the differentiated nature, more or less.

I think for that, it could be the trick, if Australia could come to view it so.

CHAIRPERSON

Let's try to capture what is contained in your report. Maybe it will help us formulate this.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

“Noted Management's engagement in the monitoring of Article XIV Bodies' activities, including specific issues of an operational nature, and reporting periodically therein.”

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

An alternate suggestion, which I think would more accurately reflect the discussion at least from my perspective, would be to recall the previous guidance that Governing Bodies have provided to Management about providing appropriate financial and administrative autonomy to the Article XIV Bodies, note the Progress Report that Management has provided on the implementation of that decision, and note that the Council will continue to receive periodic reports going forward.

Something along those lines I think would be an accurate reflection of the discussion. I am a little bit confused with the reference to monitoring. I think perhaps you could misunderstand the way that that is being presented. That is a suggestion.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. Could you give a formulation that we can present to Members?

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

“Recalling previous guidance provided by the Governing Bodies on the provision of appropriate financial and administrative autonomy to Article XIV Bodies, Council noted the implementation to date and looked forward to receiving Management’s report on the matter from time to time.”

CHAIRPERSON

Could the Secretary-General read it out to see if Members agree to this formulation?

SECRETARY-GENERAL

“Recalling previous guidance provided by the Governing Bodies on the provision of appropriate financial and administrative autonomy to Article XIV Bodies, Council noted the implementation to date and looked forward to Management’s report on the matter from time to time.”

CHAIRPERSON

Is this acceptable? Thank you.

Item 3. Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17
Point 3. Plan à moyen terme 2014-2017 (révisé) et Programme de travail et budget 2016-2017
Tema 3. Plan a plazo medio para 2014-17 (revisado) y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2016-17

(C 2015/3; C 2015/3 Information Notes 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5)

CHAIRPERSON

We proceed now with item 3, *Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17*. Please ensure that you have document C 2015/3 before you.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Nordin, Chairperson of the Programme Committee, and Mr Moungui Médi, Chairperson of the Finance Committee and Chairperson of the Joint Meeting held on 11 March, to report on the discussions on this item during the respective meetings.

Ms Cecilia NORDIN VAN GANSBERGHE (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

In the Joint Meeting we proceeded as we have done with myself and Mr Médi giving the synthesis of our discussion in the respective committees and then we had a discussion of common points in the Joint Committee.

In the Programme Committee, we warmly welcomed this clear and well-structured document. Furthermore, the Programme Committee was of the opinion that the outreach of the Secretariat on this matter as manifested, for instance, in the Director-General’s informal seminars, and contributed to a better understanding.

We particularly commended the identification of trends and underlined in particular, the importance of the five challenges, the Post-2015 process, climate change, trans-boundary diseases, nutrition, and urbanization and migration. We also commended the identification of areas for emphasis and de-emphasis with explanations.

The Programme Committee expressed the wish for a document detailing allocated trends. And finally we appreciated the efforts to increase South-South Cooperation.

The Programme Committee endorsed nutrition as a third crosscutting theme while pointing out the close link between nutrition and gender. We noted with satisfaction the highlighting of food safety manifested by consolidating FAO efforts into one office.

The Programme Committee advised FAO to continue to look for cooperation with partners in order to avoid overlaps. We appreciated that the guidance from the Regional Conferences had been incorporated. We counselled the Organization to keep a keen eye on the staff situation to ensure that the right competence, skills, and qualifications are available at the right location at the right time. Furthermore, we emphasized the importance of consolidating the decentralization effort to reinforce FAO working in unison.

The Programme Committee appreciated the development focus of TCP work and agreed with efforts to assist the Small Island Developing States.

Finally, the Programme Committee appreciated FAO's work with a growing group of middle income countries.

Mr Mougui MÉDI (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

Members may feel that my report is a little bit disorganized, but it is on purpose because I had to chair the Joint Meeting and the Finance Committee and so for each specific item, in order not to repeat myself, I will just share with you the decision as we reached it. This is because some of the issues were discussed in the Finance Committee and the Joint Meeting. So I just gave the elements that pertained to the Finance Committee and the elements that pertained to the decision that came out from the Joint Meeting.

I am now pleased to be here with you today to present the outcome of the discussion of the 157th Session of the Finance Committee and of its Joint Meeting with the 117th Session of the Programme Committee on the Medium Term Plan 2014-15 (reviewed) and the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 presented in document C 2015/3.

The discussions of the Finance Committee focused on the technical review of the proposal within its mandate where the Joint Meeting considered the budget level and made observations acknowledging the outcome of the separate deliberation of the two Committees.

Both the Finance Committee and the Joint Meeting underlined the importance of continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization in the Medium Term Plan and supported the Programme of Work proposed by the Director-General.

The Finance Committee and the Joint Meeting appreciated the identification of proposed areas of emphasis and de-emphasis and savings, and welcomed the proposed reallocation of USD 14.2 million, to higher priority areas.

They also welcomed the increase in the TCP appropriation to bring it to 14 percent of the net appropriation in line with Conference Resolution 9/89. The Finance Committee supported the Organization's restructuring proposals, noting that they did not entail additional costs for the Organization.

In its technical review of the proposals, the Finance Committee reviewed in detail the anticipated cost increases. The Finance Committee welcomed the additional information provided by the Secretariat during their session on cost increases assumptions and estimates, which contributed to the downward trend of USD 1.3 of the anticipated cost increases in the PWB document.

In a similar downward adjustment of the proposed budget level of USD 1 billion 44.8 million at the 2014-15 budget rate of exchange.

The Finance Committee requested that this additional information be made available to all Members and I am pleased to note that the Secretariat has done so by publishing Information Note number one. The Finance Committee urged continued close and careful assessment of cost increase assumptions.

The Finance Committee and the Joint Meeting requested the Secretariat to consider opportunities for further savings and efficiency measures without affecting the implementation of the Programme of Work. The Finance Committee further recognized that efficiency savings efforts should focus on staff costs, noting that the vast majority of these costs were not under the authority of the Director-General. The Finance Committee encouraged FAO members to engage with the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly in this regard.

In addition, the Finance Committee and the Joint Meeting requested further information to facilitate reconsideration of the proposal by the Council on areas of emphasis and de-emphasis including: the globally important Agricultural Heritage System, antimicrobial resistance, the use of TCP resources to help Small Island Developing States and the provision of services to Middle Income Countries.

I can now inform you that Information Notes 1 to 5 are available. We were informed this afternoon that Information Note 5 is now available at the document desk. The Finance Committee noted a proposal to improve the financial health of the Organization including the funding of the after service medical coverage, past service liability, and to increase the level of the working capital fund.

Finally, both the Finance Committee and the Joint Meeting supported and encouraged the idea of reaching a consensus on the budget level of the 151st Session of the Council. At this juncture, I trust the Council may be able to move in this direction during today's debate and to follow through if necessary by the mechanism of the Chair if you so wish, Mr Chairperson of the Council.

Moreover, on a personal note, we want to thank sincerely both Chairs of the Finance Committee and the Programme Committee for their able support during our deliberation.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. I now give the floor to Mr Boyd Haight, Director of the Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management, to present the report.

Mr Boyd HAIGHT (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management)

This morning the Director-General introduced his proposal for the Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium. He highlighted the approach of consolidation with flexibility, including through areas of emphasis and de-emphasis, and the efforts to achieve savings and control cost increases while fully delivering the Programme of Work.

I cannot hope to state a more persuasive case than he did this morning. What I can do is to reinforce the proposal and in particular focus on the additional information that the Secretariat has provided in the past week, in response to the requests of the Programme and Finance Committees that you have just heard from the Chairs.

Review of Medium Term Plan 2014-17

First let me touch on the reviewed Medium Term Plan for 2014-17 – the MTP. You will recall that the MTP provides the four-year results framework for making progress on FAO's five Strategic Objectives: that is, the 17 Outcomes and 50 Outputs, with targets and indicators, to be achieved by FAO and its Members during the four year medium-term timeframe.

I would like to highlight four aspects emerging from the review of the MTP during 2014, which was only its first year of implementation.

First, we will maintain continuity in strategic direction of the Organization and in the results framework, that is the Objectives, Outcomes, Outputs and indicators.

Second, having listened to the Regional Conferences and Technical Committees during 2014, our work will take account of the five recent trends and developments, which were also highlighted by the chair of the Programme Committee, relating to the impact of climate change on agriculture and food security; nutrition in the follow-up to Second International Conference on Nutrition; the control of trans-boundary plant pests and animal diseases; urbanization and migration; and the emerging Sustainable Development Goals.

Third, and related to the previous point, nutrition will be treated as a cross-cutting theme in the MTP. This will provide for the technical leadership for FAO's work on nutrition; the mainstreaming of nutrition across FAO's Strategic Objectives; and for policy and operational coordination with the UN system.

This will also strengthen the link of our work on nutrition with the work on gender which cuts across the strategic objectives as was also mentioned by the programme committee chair.

Fourth, we will apply and continue to develop the monitoring system for the results framework. You have seen the first use of the monitoring system in the Mid-Term Review 2014, which documented evidence-based results at Output level for management decision making and accountability to Members. We will monitor and report on achievement of Outcomes, including an assessment of FAO's contribution to Outcomes, in the Programme Implementation Report for 2014-15 early next year.

Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17

The MTP provides the programmatic basis for the Programme of Work and Budget. The PWB quantifies the costs to carry out the two-year programme of work. It also lays out the Organizational structure and implementation arrangements, and makes provision for long-term liabilities and reserve funds.

The programme of work is defined by the five Strategic Objective action plans, and the enabling environment that is provided by the sixth Objective, the Functional Objectives and the Technical Cooperation Programme. They work together as a package to achieve the defined outcomes and outputs in our results framework.

As the Director-General said this morning, we are consolidating our ongoing work while maintaining flexibility to adjust to changing contexts and emerging challenges.

I will briefly focus on eight elements of the PWB proposal, including the additional information that was provided over the past week in response to the requests of the Committees.

First, we have identified areas of emphasis and de-emphasis in the technical and functional areas of work of the Organization. This takes into account the guidance provided by the governing bodies, the recent trends and developments, our experience during 2014 as documented in the Mid-Term Review, and the country capacity and partnerships. The exercise allowed for the reallocation of some USD 14.2 million in the PWB from lower to higher priority areas of work, as well as a shift of around USD 4.2 million within programmatic areas, such as within the Joint FAO/IAEA Division for work on nuclear techniques in food and agriculture, as described in the Information Note number 4.

Second, the 15 regional initiatives put in place during 2014, as endorsed by the Regional Conferences, will continue and be strengthened in the next biennium. The regional initiatives provide a means to focus FAO's work on regional priorities that contribute to outputs of the Strategic Objectives, taking into account priorities in the Country Programming Frameworks. We will use the Multi-disciplinary Fund to catalyze the regional initiatives, particularly in view of their cross-cutting nature. They cut across the Strategic Objectives.

Third, we have refined the organizational structure in three ways:

- We are regrouping the existing units on foods safety and the Codex Secretariat into a new Office of Food Safety in the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Protection, to raise its profile without any resource or governance implications;
- We are consolidating our human resources functions under the Director of the Office of Human Resources;
- We are realigning and focusing the functions of the Office of Support to Decentralized Offices, and the South-South Cooperation and Resource Mobilization Division, in particular with respect to policy and oversight of project operations, addressing concerns raised by our Inspector General and the External Auditor.

Fourth, the changes in post allocations are made in line with the areas of emphasis and de-emphasis, without increasing the budgeted post count. The increase of 35 professional posts in decentralized offices is offset by an equivalent reduction of posts in Headquarters, almost all of which in the general service category.

Fifth, resources amounting to USD 20 million are ring-fenced under the Strategic Objectives for FAO's funding commitments to various conventions and treaty bodies, such as the Codex Alimentarius and its related scientific advice, and to Article XIV Treaty Bodies such as the secretariat

of the International Plant Protection Convention, and the secretariat of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, to mention a few.

Sixth, the proposal strengthens the Technical Cooperation Programme by USD 6.1 million to help Small Island Developing States address the impact of climate change - on average USD 150,000 per eligible SIDS country. The use of the TCP for this purpose is further elaborated in Information Note number 5 that has just been published.

Seventh, additional resources are needed to be able to deliver the programme work to take account of inflation – known as cost increases. These costs were estimated at USD 34.3 million in the PWB document published in February – the lowest level of cost increases in the past seven biennia. The estimate was subsequently adjusted downwards by USD 1.3 million based on updated information, to USD 33 million, as considered by the Finance Committee two weeks ago as you heard from the Chair, and described in Information Note number 1, *Cost increase assumptions and estimates*.

Furthermore, as highlighted by the Director-General this morning, the majority of cost increases relate to staff costs that fall under the authority of the International Civil Service Commission, which is carrying out a comprehensive review of the UN common system staff compensation package. Information Note number 3 on *Reducing Staff Costs* provides you with an update on the ICSC deliberations and proposals that we urge Members to support at the UN General Assembly.

Finally, let me turn to the resource requirements to deliver the programme of work in 2016-17.

After taking account of the adjustment to estimated cost increases that I just mentioned, the proposed budgetary appropriation for 2016-17 stands at USD 1,044.8 million.

As you heard from the Director-General this morning, he has demonstrated his commitment to find efficiency savings by reducing bureaucracy and staff costs. This includes the USD 108.2 million in savings found since 2012, as set out in Information Note number 4. This is an unprecedented level of savings. We have cut non-staff costs to the bone. The focus is on staff costs, which may make up 75 percent of our budget. As mentioned earlier, we have looked within the programme of work to identify areas of work to de-emphasize so that we can address the higher priority areas identified by the governing bodies.

We recognize the economic and financial challenges still faced by many Members. As you heard this morning, the Director-General is now proposing a two-step approach to increase the level of the TCP appropriation. The first step would include an increase of only USD 3 million for the TCP in the PWB 2016-17, and funding the remaining USD 3.1 million from voluntary contributions during the biennium. The second step would be to increase the TCP to 14 percent of the budgetary appropriation for the 2018-19 biennium at the Conference in two years time.

The effect of this approach is to bring the level of the proposed budgetary appropriation for 2016-17 down by USD 3 million to USD 1,041.8 million.

As the Director-General said in his opening remarks this morning, we continue the drive to make FAO more relevant and useful to you. The reviewed Medium Term Plan for 2014-17 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17, which are submitted for the consideration of Council, aim to consolidate our work while maintaining flexibility to adjust to changing contexts and emerging challenges.

The secretariat is available to help you in your deliberations and quest to reach a consensus on a recommendation of the budget level.

Mr Majid DEGHAN SHOAR (Islamic Republic of Iran)

I am speaking on behalf of the G77 and China. From the outset, the G77 plus China commends the Director-General for his undeniable commitment to make this organization much more efficient and effective. The DG has led FAO in a major transformational change and much has been reached so far.

The positive results of this transformation can already be seen. The Mid-Term Review of the 2014-15 biennium, for instance, shows that delivery of the current PWB is on track, with around 80 percent of output indicators achieved.

We agree with the Report of the Joint Meeting in underlining the importance of continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization in the Medium Term Plan.

In this sense, the G77 plus China supports the endorsement of the Programme of Work as proposed in the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17. We understand that this Programme of Work seeks to consolidate on the transformation so far, achieve more results and impact, and address changing global realities.

The G77 plus China appreciates FAO's initiative to identify areas of emphasis and de-emphasis and we also thank the Secretariat for providing all the information and explanation in this regard. We agree with the report in welcoming the proposed reallocation of USD 14.2 million within the existing budget to priority areas.

The G77 plus China certainly supports the proposed increase in the TCP in order to address the impact of climate change in Small Island Developing States. We agree with the previous statements made by the Director-General on the utmost importance of providing better conditions to Small Island Developing States.

We recognize the existing limits for further savings, particularly regarding staff costs, especially given the unprecedented levels of savings that this organization has already been able to achieve over the last few years. In this regard, G77 plus China highlights that any further measures must not affect the delivery of the Programme of Work. It is imperative to protect the Programme of Work.

The G77 plus China also understands that FAO will need additional financial resources from its members to deal with cost increases, the vast majority of which arise from staff costs.

The G77 plus China thanks the Director-General for the flexibility and efforts with a view of reaching a consensus on the PWB 2016-17 during this Council Meeting, and therefore supports the sharing of the source of increase in the TCP for Small Island Developing States between the regular programme budget and extra-budgetary resources in the coming biennium.

G77 plus China aligns itself to the Director-General and others in the pursuit of consensus.

In this sense, we urge the Independent Chairperson of the Council to establish informal discussion in the form of Friends of the Chair in order to achieve a consensual solution regarding the budget level in this Council meeting.

Sra. María Eulalia JIMÉNEZ (El Salvador)

Señor Presidente, quisiera solicitarle conceder la palabra a la Embajadora de Nicaragua, quien hará una declaración en nombre del Grupo de Países de América Latina y el Caribe (GRULAC) sobre este tema.

Sra. Monica ROBELO RAFFONE (Observador de Nicaragua)

Hago esta intervención en nombre del Grupo de Países de América Latina y el Caribe (GRULAC).

En primera estancia el GRULAC se asocia a la declaración realizada por el Embajador de Iran, Presidente del G-77 y China, en nombre de este grupo.

El GRULAC agradece a la Secretaría la preparación del Documento C2015/3 que contiene la revisión del Plan a Plazo Medio para 2014-17 y el Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto para 2016-17, así como las oportunas presentaciones que se han hecho sobre el mismo, lo que ha permitido realizar un análisis detallado de su contenido.

El GRULAC desea recalcar el esfuerzo que el Director General y su equipo ha llevado a cabo para dar respuesta a las observaciones presentadas por los Países Miembros en las reuniones de los Comités de Finanzas y de Programa. Agradecemos la oportuna información brindada a través de las diferentes notas informativas sobre temas financiero y de administración.

Tanto la revisión del Plan a Plazo Medio como el Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto para el próximo gobierno son el reflejo de la profunda transformación ocurrida en esta Organización, evidenciando que los elementos establecidos en el Marco Estratégico son pertinentes y constituyen el

fundamento de la labor futura de la FAO, así como la identificación de las áreas prioritarias para el trabajo de la Organización.

El GRULAC comparte el Programa de Trabajo presentado por el Director General pues está enfocado a las prioridades expresadas por nuestros países en sus respectivas Conferencias Regionales.

En este marco y con realción al enfoque que se indica para los países clasificados como de ingresos medios y medios altos, destacamos que los países del GRULAC ya somos socios activos de la FAO, pues participamos de forma relevante en la Cooperación Sur-Sur y triangular que brinda la Organización y estamos comprometidos a continuar en esta vía.

Sin perjuicio de ello, el GRULAC desea enfatizar que si bien los países de nuestra región han realizados grandes avances en la lucha contra el hambre y la malnutrición, todos ellos aún enfrentan serios desafíos en su camino al desarrollo sostenible y tienen necesidades específicas de cooperación internacional que deben ser provistas por FAO, comprendido el mantenimiento de la financiación de las oficinas de la FAO en los países de la región.

Consideramos que el solo criterio del ingreso per cápita (países de ingresos medios, medios altos y más altos) no contempla las múltiples dimensiones del desarrollo en nuestra región.

En este contexto, entendemos que todos los Miembros debemos alcanzar un consenso para aprobar un presupuesto adecuado que permita cumplir con el Plan de Trabajo 2016-17, en base a las propuestas del Director General, a las que reiteramos nuestro más sólido y completo apoyo.

Estamos seguros que el espíritu constructivo continuará durante el presente Consejo y facilitará un consenso respecto al nivel del presupuesto. El GRULAC reitera su disposición a trabajar para lograr ese consenso y estamos dispuestos a respaldar al Presidente Independiente del Consejo en sus esfuerzos para alcanzarlo.

El GRULAC solicita que estas consideraciones queden apropiadamente reflejadas en el resumen que realizará la Presidencia del Consejo sobre este tema.

El GRULAC reitera su total compromiso y voluntad política de trabajar con la FAO para la erradicación del hambre, malnutrición y la pobreza en el mundo.

Mr Muhammad Hashim POPALZAI (Pakistan)

We thank the Secretariat for this very informative presentation.

We welcome the PWB, especially the well-constructed and reasonable budget proposal which seems to be cognizant of the prevailing difficult economic situation. We note that it has been prepared taking into account guidance received from Regional Conferences, Technical Committees and the Council concerning priority areas of work. We also welcome the concrete results shown in the current biennium. The Mid-Term Review of the current biennium shows that over 80 percent of the output indicators are on track and achieved the planned results for 2014, and in over 50 percent of the cases targets have been exceeded.

The transformational agenda was introduced by the Director-General in 2012 and the 2016-17 biennium will provide a period of consolidation of efforts to continue to adjust the ways of working to serve the Member Nations effectively. Consequently, we agree with the Finance Committee's endorsement of the concept of continuity in the strategic direction of the Medium Term Plan and the consolidation of transformational change in the Programme of Work.

An aspect which is particularly welcome is the identification of the areas of emphasis and de-emphasis for the first time in the PWB document. Among the areas of emphasis we particularly support the work on Nutrition, Climate Change, and South-South Cooperation. We are pleased to note that this exercise has resulted in the reallocation of USD 14.2 million to priority areas within the PWB from the areas of de-emphasis and we welcome the additional information provided in Information Note 4.

We also support the inclusion of GIAHS in the areas of emphasis because it is important for sustainable agriculture. It is our understanding that implementation of GIAHS will be mainly through extra-budgetary resources and the amount included in the budget proposal is in the nature of seed money to

commence work and attract extra-budgetary resources. We would, however, request, some information on the plans for strengthening the Governance of GIAHS during 2016-17.

We support the increase of USD 6.1 million proposed for the TCP in the 2016-17 budget, and welcome the fact that this will increase the TCP appropriation to 14 percent of the net appropriation in line with Conference Resolution 9/89 and to address the impact of climate change in Small Island Developing States.

As regards the cost increases, the methodology for calculating the Cost Increases follows the approach previously approved by the Finance Committee, Council and Conference. They represent the adjustments for biennialization and inflation. The cost increases preserve the purchasing power of the net appropriation and prevent any negative impact on the delivery of the Programme of Work. Consequently, we endorse the amount of USD 33 million in respect of cost increases included in the proposed total level of the budget.

Paragraph 123 of the document states that efficiency gains and savings remain a high priority for the Organization. In this respect, while we consider that the achievement of efficiency savings and reduction of costs to be a legitimate objective of any organization, we need to recall that FAO has been required to find savings in past biennia each time the budget is discussed.

In fact we note from the document that since 2012 FAO has achieved unprecedented savings of USD 108.2 million with 235 posts being abolished. We see from Information Note 2 provided by the Secretariat that these efficiency gains and savings are of a recurrent nature and are incorporated fully in the PWB 2016-17. The same Information Note also identifies some areas of further review, but they cannot be quantified at the moment. Consequently, any further cuts can have a negative impact on the Programme of Work.

Such a course of action would be contrary not only to the advice of the Finance Committee, but also the guidance of the Conference which emphasized that identification of efficiency gains and savings should be driven by the goal of ensuring the most efficient and effective use of resources, and not at the expense of the delivery of the PWB.

We also need to bear in mind that the largest component of the cost increases is relating to staff costs and these increases are outside the control of the Organization and will depend on the ICSC comprehensive review which is being undertaken and the decision of the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly which are expected in the fourth quarter of 2015.

In conclusion, we endorse the proposed Programme of Work and Budget and also support the Director-General's proposal of sharing the increase of USD 6.1 million in TCP resources between the Regular Budget and extra-budgetary resources equally. This is a positive gesture to introduce flexibility with a view to achieving consensus on the PWB 2016-17 during this Council.

We support these efforts and would entreat all members to join together in pursuit of a consensus on the budget level during this session of the Council. In this connection, it may be best to establish an informal mechanism such as the Friends of the Chair in order to achieve a solution based on consensus. Perhaps the Independent Chairperson would consider establishing such a mechanism.

Mr Segfredo SERRANO (Philippines)

The Philippines aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Ambassador of Iran on behalf of G77 and China. We likewise appreciate the efforts and flexibility of the Director-General and the Secretariat in crafting an appropriate Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium towards a more effective and efficient delivery of the mandate of this institution. We briefly wish to focus on the following points.

We commend the identification of the areas of emphasis, de-emphasis and savings, and the initiatives and adjustments in the PWB that would be beneficial to developing countries, including middle-income and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

We strongly support the reallocation of USD 14.2 million within the existing budget to priority areas, particularly the coordination and mainstreaming of work on nutrition, assistance to countries on

international negotiations and implementation of adaptation measures to climate change, and support to the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) programme. We reiterate the multifaceted value of GIAHS not only on food security and food production, but in the protection and conservation as well of significant and important agricultural biodiversity and associated landscapes.

We concur with the increase of the Technical Cooperation Programme appropriation up to 14 percent of the budget's net appropriation.

We join the call and stand ready to cooperate in reaching consensus on the PWB in this Council session.

Finally, we are extremely grateful and look forward to the continuation of FAO's work in the promotion of family farming and its integration in the FAO Strategic Framework and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, as endorsed by the Committee on Agriculture and this Council.

Ms María Laura DA ROCHA (Brazil)

This statement is delivered on behalf of the BRICS: Brazil, Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa. We welcome the words of the Director-General and commend his vision and the work he has done so far in reinforcing the role the Organization has to play as a cornerstone of agriculture and agrarian development considering the all relevant aspects involved, such as technology, climate and economy, having as a reference food security and nutrition.

We would like to refer to the Fourth Meeting of the BRICS Ministers of Agriculture and Agrarian Development which took place in Brasília on 13 March, when the Ministers emphasized the importance of agriculture and rural development areas in which our countries play an important role in production and trade, and science and technology. Our Ministers applauded the activities related to the International Year of Soils and expressed commitment to the negotiations on the Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, bearing in mind the concern on the grave impact of climate change, especially the risk posed by extreme weather events on agriculture and food and nutrition security.

Having this in mind, we welcome the profound and competent leadership of Professor José Graziano in conducting FAO in the right direction. Establishment of the Organization's five Strategic Objectives reflects the clear understanding of FAO's role in all areas that relate to the well-being of the world. The Director-General is doing well and we commend him for this.

This session of the Council has the responsibility of recommending to the Conference the approval of the FAO Programme of Work and Budget. We understand that all the conditions are set to reaching an historical agreement when, for the first time in many years, the Council can recommend not only the approval of the programme of work itself, but also the corresponding appropriations. We would like to highlight that over the last three years FAO succeeded in finding efficiency savings of more than USD one hundred million due to committed and serious management and we have all the reasons to believe that the efforts to make this Organization more efficient and effective will continue. Let us give the Director-General well deserved credit.

To conclude, Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa would call for approval of the PWB by the Council in order to leave room for the heavy and substantive agenda which awaits us in the Conference.

Mr Vimlendra SHARAN (India)

India aligns itself with the statement made by G77 and the BRICS. Let me first place on record our appreciation for Boyd and his colleagues not only for the document but also for the Information Notes explaining these documents. It is the fifth occasion for us to speak on this topic and while we do not wish to reiterate all that we have said earlier, it is necessary for us to use this opportunity to underline our support for the effort made in consolidating and streamlining FAO's work over the next biennium through identification of priority areas and areas of de-emphasis.

For us, FAO's work in the poor, weak, and fragile states is of paramount importance and we therefore fully support the proposed increase in TCP as it is directed toward those in dire need of such interventions.

We also support the initiative to streamline GIAHS in FAO's core work programme. GIAHS is a heritage for the future and, unlike structural heritages, these are living heritage systems, rich in globally significant biological diversity and evolving from core adaptation of community with the environment.

In them, we have a promising pathway shaped on traditional farming systems that can help in increasing own farm food production and improving rural livelihood. India therefore aligns itself with the previous speakers, and possibly China which is going to speak after this and others, to support a formal anchoring of GIAHS within FAO to secure its international status and provide for its operational framework.

We welcome the mainstreaming of nutrition across all Strategic Objectives and look forward to an effective role for FAO in the international arena in combatting malnutrition in conjunction with its efforts in ensuring food security.

The PWB has indicated FAO's changing role in middle income countries, especially in the higher middle income countries, and we keenly await the contours of this new MIC strategy.

The Director-General has alluded to it in his various addresses to the Permanent Representatives and we welcome its articulation in Information Note 4 which we received yesterday. We look forward to further details being elaborated in the coming months on the same.

In principle, we are in broad agreement with the need to rethink and reorient our involvement with the MICs. We also look forward to an enhanced role by FAO, in partnership with WHO and OIE, in controlling antimicrobial resistance.

In the end, let me say that our delegation looks forward to an early and amicable consensual decision on the budget level. Efficiency savings are always welcome but we need to balance this exercise against the time and effort spent on achieving the same. The budget level must ensure that the Programme of Work is adequately resourced.

In this regard, we support the suggestion by the Director-General this morning of the two-step approach to funding of the additional resources required for the TCP. With these comments, we look forward to the Independent Chairperson of the Council's initiative in helping Member Nations arrive at this consensus.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Afghanistan is making this statement on behalf of the Near East Group, but first we want to associate ourselves with the statement made by the Ambassador of Iran on behalf of G77 and China.

My statement will cover ten areas, ten points. Most of them are related to the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17.

One, The Near East Group appreciates the conciseness of the MTP and the Programme of Work and Budget which is 25 percent less than the same document that was presented to the 38th Conference of FAO in June 2013.

The Near East Group observes noteworthy improvements throughout the document and particularly in the presentation of Strategic Objective 5, paragraph 226 to 233; Objective 6, paragraph 234 to 246; and Functional Objective 8, paragraph 252 to 259.

The Near East Group supports the inclusion of nutrition as a cross-cutting issue along with gender and governance and wishes to emphasize the synergy between nutrition and gender.

Two, the Near East Group has less to say about the MTP except to express its appreciation about the articulation of new section 'A', paragraph 3 to 21, containing 11 global trends and five global challenges, which was emphasized by the Chairperson of the Programme Committee.

Three, in the foreword to the document, the Director-General underscored the term consolidation and the Near East Group agrees with this choice of term. Comparing the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 with the Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15, the number of outcomes and outputs of the five Strategic Objectives have been unchanged: 17 outcomes and 48 outputs. There is only one small increase in targets from 22 to 33.

However, considerable work is still required to refine the indicators of all of the 17 outcomes, especially the four outcomes under Strategic Objective 2.

Four, the Near East Group supports the Director-General's proposal of a net appropriation of USD 1,011.7 million before cost increases. On cost increases now reduced to USD 33 million according to Information Note 4, it is important to note that 69 percent of this is due to personnel service which is beyond the control of FAO.

The Near East Group supports the incremental increase of USD 6.1 million to TCP which is intended to assist Small Island Developing States that are prone to disaster like the recent Cyclone Pam that devastated Vanuatu.

The Near East Group supports the eight areas of emphasis which have been further elaborated in Information Note 4 with a total sum of USD 14.2 million, especially with the additional increase for nutrition, climate change, South-South cooperation, and GIAHS (paragraph 72).

We find Information Note 4 very useful as it underscores increased attention to two areas of concern to the countries of the Near East and North Africa: firstly, the work on trans-boundary animal diseases of concern to smallholder communities and, secondly, more support for governance in the Near East and North Africa, especially the regional initiative on water scarcity.

FAO's record of efficiency gains is very good: USD 18.2 million from 2012 until now. But it must be recognized that the level of the proposed budget as presented by the Director-General is tight, and to squeeze it further will create distortions and weaken the synergy between the different chapters of the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17.

For developing countries, the protection of the core programme is imperative. The core programme consists of the five Strategic Objectives, Objective 6, TCP; and functional Objective 8, outreach. In this connection, the Near East Group welcomes paragraph five of the report of the Joint Meeting which states that the search for further efficiency gains must not affect the implementation of the Programme of Work.

Nonetheless, for good management, we expect that the top management will always be looking for judiciously selected efficiency gains during the Programme of Work implementation, provided, as we said before, the core programme is not eroded.

Number five, as compared with the current biennium, the Programme of Work and Budget shows considerable shifts in net appropriation among the five Strategic Objectives and among outcomes within the same Strategic Objective.

The net increase for SO5 is 32 percent, 12.1 million, while the net loss for SO1 is 13 percent, 12.4 million. The resource shifts among outcomes within the same Strategic Objective are even greater. Seven outcomes have gained in net appropriation and five outcomes have lost.

The Near East Group recognizes that these shifts are the manifestation of the ordering of priorities, making strategic adjustments where required and exploring the new challenges that arise. This is good practice and is worthy of praise, yet the resource shift to a point understates the agility of professional staff moving from one technical area to another without serious disruption and retaining the competency mix of the professional staff. This issue should have been dealt with under Objective six.

The other factor is staff mobility which has been addressed recently through the issue of DGB 2015/7, FAO Geographic Mobility Programme, and which we consider to be an important step in the right direction.

Six, core voluntary contributions which were projected at USD 164.9 million in the current biennium are no longer mentioned in the Programme of Work and Budget as a separate entity, and paragraphs 84-86 do not explain why. The Mid-Term Review Synthesis did not mention them either.

Given the vital support of core voluntary contribution to the knowledge base of FAO, particularly for innovative studies, multi-disciplinary work, pilot programmes and the preparation of badly needed policy and technical guidelines, we would like to have some explanation as to why the core voluntary contributions were not mentioned separately.

Seven, the Near East Group welcomes the modest increase in net appropriation for the five regions. Compared with the current biennium, the increase is 3.5 percent and all regions benefit from it, including the Near East Region. The increase in extra-budgetary resources for the five regions is 4.9 percent as shown in Annex 4. We note that the major beneficiaries of the increase in extra-budgetary resources are Africa and the Near East. The share of Latin America and the Caribbean remains stable, but a sharp decline of 17 percent is projected for Asia and the Pacific Region which is worrisome.

Number eight, table three shows a net addition of 35 professional posts for decentralized offices of which nine are national professional posts as listed in Annex 5. Africa has 11 posts, the Near East five, Asia-Pacific four, Europe and Central Asia two, and Latin America and the Caribbean one post.

The Near East Group appreciates this positive development which is designed to strengthen the technical capacity of the decentralized offices.

Nine, the sequential path from outputs for which FAO is directly responsible to deliver to outcomes for which FAO is not directly responsible to deliver but which are the core elements underpinning its five Strategic Objectives needs to be explained to the Membership and other partners with clarity.

This is important because the TORs will have to show outcomes. In the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report, the progress of output was shown as good, moderate or off track, but there was no indication given as to whether the outputs produced are on track in contributing to the outcomes.

The Near East Group is aware that this is a difficult area, but it may be advisable if the coordinators of the five Strategic Objectives were to collectively attend to this issue and come up with something that is understood by the Membership and which could be implemented and monitored at the country level with this difficulty.

If country, subregional and regional offices are required to monitor outcomes for reporting purposes, then they are entitled to receive specific guidance on the sequential path of moving from output to outcomes and what that entails.

Point number ten, the Near East Group subscribes to the four adjustments in the organizational sector as spelled out in paragraphs 95 to 111 while the central of its core remains unchanged.

Finally, the dialogue between Management and the governing bodies on the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 has been candid, constructive and friendly. Management has responded expeditiously to additional information requested by the governing bodies and this is highly appreciated.

Among the Membership, there is a willingness to move toward a consensus on delivery of the budget for presentation to the 39th FAO Conference in June. We have a figure of USD 1,044.8 million which can be further reduced to USD 1 billion 41.8 million by taking USD 3 million out of the incremental increase of TCP.

If this Council can reach a consensus on the budget level, this will be a landmark and a great leap forward in confidence-building between Management and Membership.

Under your wise leadership, the Near East Group is hopeful about reaching a consensus on the level of the budget for 2016-17.

Mr Jianmin XIE (China) (Original language Chinese)

China thanks the Secretariat for having provided the Immediate Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-17. China endorses the statement made by the Delegate of Iran on behalf of the G77

and China. China also endorses the statement of Brazil on behalf of the BRICS countries. At the same time, I would like to stress the following four points.

Firstly, the Medium Term Plan for 2014-17 has broadly taken on board the recommendations from the Regional Conferences and the Technical Commissions. The document has carried precise analyses of the most recent developments and changes in the five major areas of activity: the post-2015 Development Agenda, climate change, prevention of plant and animal diseases, nutrition, and urbanization and migration. We endorse these analyses of current trends and new developments.

Secondly, as regards the Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-17, this document has also taken on board the recommendations made at the Regional Conferences and the Technical Commissions. In the light of current trends and new developments, the document has proposed a reallocation of USD 14.2 million to eight priority areas: nutrition, climate change, South-South Cooperation, the Permanent Coordinator Resident System of the United Nations, statistics, agriculture, and GIAHS. At the same time, this document proposes the de-emphasis and readjustment of 13 areas of activity. As regards the organizational structure and Human Resource Management and post-readjustments within the Secretariat, the document has proposed measures which the Chinese Delegation supports.

Thirdly, the Chinese Delegation appreciates the USD 6.1 million increase for the strengthening of technical cooperation to benefit Small Island Developing States in order to bring the TCP share up to 14 percent of the appropriation of the regular budget. We also support the increase in the posts for the GIAHS Secretariat. We also agree with the strengthening of South-South Cooperation and resource mobilization for the creation of a liaison office for South-South Cooperation responsible for staff training.

In conclusion, we are grateful for the Director-General's efforts and we hope he will seek to use every possible means to make efficiency gains and savings, as in the past.

Ms Doojduan SASANAVIN (Thailand)

Thailand fully supports the statement made by the Group of 77 and China on this item. We would like to express our appreciation to the Director-General for providing the MTP (reviewed) 2014-17 and the PWB 2016-17 documents and his efforts in providing straightforward explanations of the key issues, behind and inside the documents, in several consultations before this Council meeting. We also welcome the Information Notes provided by the Secretariat on cost increase assumption, further efficiency gains and savings, and reducing staff costs.

Thailand agrees with the identification of areas of emphasis and the reallocation of the resources from areas of de-emphasis to areas of emphasis in the PWB 2016-17. We thank you for technical support provided by FAO in GIAHS for the past year and we would appreciate the continued support and services provided by FAO in this area in the next biennium.

Thailand supports FAO work on climate change adaptation, in particular vulnerable areas. In this regard, we support the increase in TCP for climate change adaptation in SIDS. We encourage FAO to further explore the work on climate change impact and adaptation for agriculture, fisheries, and forestry in coastal areas in middle income countries.

As climate change is threatening global food security, Thailand supports FAO's global efforts, working in the close collaboration with other UN Agencies such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Development Programme, as well as the World Meteorological Organization. Given the Organization comparative advantage in agriculture, FAO could contribute technical expertise to those organizations. Building on the Organization's existing work on agriculture market outlook, under the Committee on Commodity Problems, FAO can also play a leading role in developing and providing a medium to long term agricultural outlook, taking into account climate change.

Thailand notes with appreciation that over 80 percent of the Organization's output indicators are on track to achieve the result. We are happy to know that since 2012, the Organization can save more than USD 100 million. We encourage the Secretariat to explore further cost savings ways, without causing a negative impact on the Organization's delivery of the programme of work.

Thailand took note of the cost increase assumption and estimates and we look forward to an agreeable budget level at this Council session.

Mr Osamu HASHIRAMOTO (Japan)

Japan appreciates the Report and the work by the Programme Committee. We basically welcome the reviewed MTP and would like to point out some key areas of importance.

First, under Strategic Objective 2 (SO2), as stated in the document, we expect FAO to promote sustainable practices in the agriculture, forestry, fisheries and livestock sectors as well as coordinated cross-sectorial actions when necessary, taking into account diversity among Countries and Regions. This is the fundamental work of FAO.

We consider the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIHAS) as one of the important activities under this strategic objective. This is because it helps to sustain agriculture, forestry, fisheries and livestock sectors which have been fostered in respective local environment and contributes to developing rural economy and revitalize local communities. Japan supports this initiative and expects FAO to further enhance the GIAHS.

We appreciate that FAO, under the SO4, underscored addressing challenges across value chain. We would like to highlight that linking food value chains from small farmers to consumers, retailers, markets and consumers contributes to enhancing small producers income and reducing food losses. To establish effective and efficient food value chains, we expect FAO to collect, analyse and disseminate knowledge and information as well as to promote public-private partnership.

The reviewed MTP draws attention to the control and response to transboundary plant and animal pests and diseases. We are of the view that this is a critical issue but difficult to tackle by a single country. The international community should concertedly manage and tackle such trans-boundary challenges. We expect FAO will take leadership in this area, by providing effective preventive measures and appropriate responses, promoting timely and accurate information dissemination and will work in a coordinated manner with other related organizations to avoid duplication of work.

We support FAO's activities on normative work under Objective 6, technical quality, knowledge and services such as statistics, capacity building and guideline setting as they are the basis of all activities across agriculture and food security and the area in which FAO can make the most of its knowledge and expertise.

Furthermore, including nutrition as the cross-cutting theme under Objective 6 in response to ICN2 is welcomed. Prompt action for the implementation of its outcome documents, the Rome Declaration and the Framework for Action, is needed. At the same time, FAO should leverage its comparative advantage by focusing its scope in view of the roles of the relevant organizations. We believe "food-based approach" and "nutrition sensitive agriculture" are key areas where FAO can maximize its performance.

We have a final comment on one of the Core Functions, "facilitation, promotion and support policy dialogue at global, regional and country levels." Although face-to-face discussions on significant subjects can be meaningful, we have seen many meetings organized by FAO whose outcomes and effectiveness were obscured. To maximize limited resources, we request FAO to carefully examine cost, outcomes and follow-ups when planning a meeting to see whether it is worth holding.

Regarding PWB, my colleague Osamu Kubota from the Embassy will continue on this.

In relation to PWB 2016-17, Japan would like to make a comment on three aspects that are 1) budget lever, emphasis and de-emphasis and special funds.

First, regarding the budget level, Japan is now in a situation of sever financial constraints and faces large depreciation of the Japanese yen as compared to two years ago. Given the challenges Japan faces we cannot support any budget increase and we are in favour of maintaining zero nominal growth of the budget. From this viewpoint we encourage FAO to identify further saving and efficiency growth of the budget. We note that the amount of saving and efficiency gains achieved in the 2014-15 biennium was as much as USD 30 million and appreciates the enormous effort made by the Director-General. We

would like to ask the Director-General to continue to identify further savings and efficiency gains. We recognize that the main part of staff related costs are mostly decided in New York, however, there is still much that FAO can do and we must do everything what we can.

In the first place, it seems to us that the proposed PWB is formulated based on the previous budget level.

However we believe that the budget is essentially formed from the baseline that is the accumulation of the amount that is really needed.

Second, Japan appreciates and supports inclusion of GIAHS in the areas of emphasis. The GIAHS initiative has been increasingly acknowledged and the number of designated GIAHS sites has been expanded worldwide.

We understand that GIAHS will be implemented mainly through voluntary contributions but some seed money which is a minimum requirement to be used for the GIAHS Secretariat operations as well as attracting extra budgetary resources is needed.

We understand that nutrition and climate change are in the areas of emphasis. At the same time, we acknowledge that the issues of nutrition and climate change are also under the mandate of other organizations. To avoid duplication, FAO should focus on the activities of food and agriculture for which the Organization has a comparative advantage, while making effective collaborations with other relevant organizations. Therefore, we would like to review further what FAO should do in the areas of nutrition and climate change.

Third: Japan does not support the USD 16.2 million replenishment of the Working Capital Fund (WCF). It is explained that this is to raise WCF to the level of at least one month. We cannot understand the background of this increase and the reason that one month level is reasonable.

Lastly, we support the fact that in this PWB no funding increase is required for the terminal payment fund and special reserve account.

Mr Mafizur RAHMAN (Bangladesh)

We would like to align with the statement made by Iran on behalf of the G77 and with the statement made by Afghanistan on the Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget.

Bangladesh would like to thank the Director-General and his team for presenting the Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (reviewed) and the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17. We are very happy to see that this is the first time that a review of the MTP 2014-17 covers recent trends and developments in the external environment, FAO's results framework and monitoring framework. We appreciate that in the reviewed MTP five broad priority areas have been identified, namely, Post-2015 Development Agenda, climate change, transboundary plant and animal pests and diseases, nutrition and urbanization and migration. We thank and appreciate that FAO is following the strategic direction towards its mandate.

Bangladesh appreciates the identification of eight higher priority areas of emphasis, as well as 13 areas of de-emphasis and reallocating resources from de-emphasis to emphasis areas. This is the beauty of the proposed PWB 2016-17 where realignment within technical and functional areas of work has been identified. Among the areas of emphasis, we particularly support the ones on GIAHS, nutrition, climate change, and South-South Cooperation, etc. We endorse the reallocation of USD 14.2 million in eight priority areas.

From the document and further the Information Notes provided, we have come to know that the Director-General has tried further savings and efficiency gains achieved in the last biennium and we found that altogether USD 108.2 million efficiency were saved during the 2012-15 period. We must say that it is a remarkable achievement of the current Director-General in his tenure.

We support the area of emphasis including GIAHS. The GIAHS initiative has been increasingly acknowledged and the number of designated GIAHS sites has been expanded worldwide. We believe that GIAHS is extremely important for sustainable agriculture, biodiversity conservation and

agricultural production which will contribute in the areas of family farming, poverty reduction, and food security.

We appreciate the additional budget proposal for TCP, especially for SIDS in general and for the overall Programme of Work. We endorse the budgetary chapter's allocation in the PWB for 2016-17.

We appreciate that nutrition has been given a higher priority as a cross-cutting issue that highly relates to food security. We all know that the Rome Declaration and the Framework for Action on Nutrition have been adopted at the ICN2 held last year and have provided a greater mandate for FAO to work on, and we think the nutrition issue has been well taken in the MTP and PWB.

I would like to say that some of the Members are considering that we should maintain the Zero Growth in the budget level. I would like to very humbly ask all the Members, as we cannot maintain the Zero Growth level on population increase, as we cannot deny the need for more food production for the in-place population and as we cannot disagree with the post increase, we think it is mandatory to have an additional budget level to complete the Programme of Work for 2016-17.

Finally, considering the cost biennialization of staff cost and inflation, Bangladesh strongly supports the Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-17 proposed by the Director-General and we also expect that Member Nations will support it. However, we are in favour of having a consensus on the budget level through a negotiation under the form of Friends of the Chair.

Ms Eun Jeong LEE (Republic of Korea)

The Republic of Korea commends the Secretariat's work and effort in reviewing the Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (reviewed) and in preparing the Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-17.

We particularly appreciate FAO's effort in increasing efficiency and enhancing delivery of the Programme of Work through reinforced delivery mechanisms and some adjustments made to the organizational structure.

We recognize the importance of FAO's role in eradicating hunger, food insecurity, and poverty, and in achieving the targets set under the Sustainable Development Goals, which is to be endorsed in September this year.

In addition, given the growing importance of addressing malnutrition, Korea, as one of the donor countries of ICN2, endorse adding 'Nutrition' as a cross-cutting theme in FAO's Strategic Framework, which is also in line with the outcomes of ICN2.

We have reviewed proposals made by FAO in consultation with the Programme and Finance Committees and are pleased to endorse the budget level for 2016-17 proposed by FAO. We encourage FAO to make continuous efforts to derive visible outcomes in accordance with the results-based framework.

With regard to the Programme of Work and Budget, we appreciate Management's effort in identifying areas of de-emphasis and emphasis, and welcome allocation of resources, amounting to USD 14.2 million, to higher priority areas such as nutrition and climate change, particularly for the Small Island Developing States, social protection and gender.

In particular, we support the Director-General's proposal to increase USD 6.1 million for Technical Cooperation Projects and would like to commend the TCP-concerned divisions for their achievements during this biennium.

Korea particularly appreciates FAO's allocation of extra-budgetary resources. TCP is a special programme recognizing agricultural traditions maintained in remote areas by small-holders and farmers in Asia, Latin America, and other areas. This is a kind reward to rural people who contribute to preserving biodiversity and preparing themselves for climate changes for a long time.

We expect to see effective implementation of the Programme of Work based on well-formulated work plans and arrangements. Finally, we look forward to efficient use of resources and encourage Management to continue their efforts to find additional resources through developing partnerships and mobilizing resources.

Sr. Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italia)

Italia pide que la palabra pueda ser dada a Letonia en su calidad de Presidente de turno del Consejo de la Unión Europea.

Ms Elina GRINPAUKA-PETETENA (Observer for Latvia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States.

First, we would like to express our appreciation for the outreach activities on this important topic which took place before this Council meeting. This enabled us to be better informed and adequately prepared for discussions on the Medium Term Plan (reviewed) 2014-17 (MTP) and the Director General's proposed Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 (PWB) for the next biennium at this session of the Council, which would be the first time since the FAO Reform.

We remain convinced that FAO's work must build on its comparative advantage in areas within its agreed mandate, including food, agriculture, fisheries and forestry, coupled with effective collaboration with other partners to add real value to its work. We recognise and appreciate the need for further consolidation of the transformational changes the organisation went through in recent years by maintaining flexibility to adjust the programmes and concur with the threats and challenges identified in the MTP.

We take note of the adjustments in the review of the MTP and welcome the abridged version of the document, which has a clearer structure. In particular, we welcome the efforts to give more emphasis to FAO's real added value in the development of global public goods, norms, and standards, including capacity-building as reflected in the restructured Strategic Objective 6. FAO has a unique normative and standard-setting role as a knowledge organisation. In this regard we note the greater emphasis on nutrition as a direct follow-up to the ICN2 and in line with earlier recommendations by this Council. In this field also we strongly advocate a close collaboration with other partners.

We welcome the enhanced format of the proposed PWB 2016-17. In particular we note the introduction of a description of areas proposed for higher priorities and those which should be de-emphasized.

At its last session, the Council requested that FAO play a greater role in assisting countries to contain the growing threat of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). The importance of tackling AMR was also highlighted by the Programme and Finance Committees. This is reflected in Strategic Objective 4, paragraph 218, but it needs to be given greater prominence in the MTP as well as in the PWB.

Regarding the areas of greater emphasis, we would like to express our satisfaction with FAO's increased efforts to address nutrition, including nutrition-sensitive agriculture, as a cross-cutting theme. We also welcome the increased emphasis on climate change. Nutrition and climate change are critical issues on which concrete results are very much needed. We would nonetheless appreciate receiving more information on the intended concrete use of the substantial additional resources allocated to activities in these areas.

As regards climate-smart agriculture, we take note of the fact that FAO is hosting the secretariat of the Global Alliance on Climate-Smart Agriculture. We would appreciate receiving information on the costs involved for FAO.

We underline the importance of concrete cooperation between countries from the different regions. In this regard, we take note of the significant voluntary allocations for South-South cooperation, particularly by middle-income countries. In the light of this development, we would appreciate further explanations on FAO's approach to providing services to middle-income countries and its cost implications for the Regular Programme.

As regards social protection, we would like the additional resources to be utilized only in areas within FAO's mandate. We recognize the important role of other organizations in this field within the UN System and request further information on concrete examples of FAO's collaboration with them. In this connection we also need clarification regarding the concrete themes of FAO's engagement in the field of migration.

As concerns work on Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS), we acknowledge that heritage systems can be regionally or globally important. We have taken note of the explanations on GIAHS provided through Information Note 4. However, we would appreciate receiving further information, in particular on the planned governance of the initiative, the financial aspects and the envisaged collaboration between FAO and UNESCO, as was requested by the Committee on Agriculture, the Finance Committee and the Council.

With regard to the additional resources for the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), which have been proposed in response to a recommendation made by the FAO Conference 26 years ago, we would like to receive further explanations. We would also encourage the Secretariat to consider reflecting in the PWB the intended use of TCP resources distributed across the strategic objectives.

We welcome the fact that FAO is playing its full part in the operation of the Resident Coordinator system, which we see as sign of increased collaboration and coordination at the country level to which we continue to attach the greatest importance. The joint programming was well noted by the latest MOPAN assessment.

We underline the need to avoid a situation in which the intended de-emphasis of some areas leads to a reduction in the normative work of FAO. We take for granted that a de-emphasis in Tenure does not prevent the completion of outstanding tasks related to the Voluntary Guidelines for the Responsible Governance of Tenure. We also expect FAO to provide information on and assistance with the application of the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems.

We wish to see more emphasis on the key area of gender and governance and would appreciate more details on how FAO intends to translate these crucial cross-cutting themes into reality. It is also important to link gender and governance to the new cross-cutting theme of nutrition.

We reiterate the need to ensure that de-emphasis and also the continuing decentralization do not endanger the critical mass of substantive competence in crucial areas at headquarters. In this regard we would need further explanations.

We wish to underline the importance for FAO of retaining and attracting competent staff at the different locations and seize this opportunity to thank the dedicated staff of FAO for their commitment.

We remain concerned by the deteriorating overall financial health and increasing deficits of FAO over the last decade, primarily due to long-term staff-related obligations. We have taken due note of earlier considerations in this regard, including relevant recommendations by the Finance Committee. Concerning the deficit resulting from the funding gap of the After-service Medical Coverage (ASMC), we can agree that an amount of USD 14.1 million should again be provided by the Member Nations for the next biennium.

We again want to emphasize that we remain committed to supporting the work of FAO and the implementation of the agreed programme of work. As the biggest provider of funding to FAO (i.e. core and voluntary contributions), we are ready to give our support in improving FAO's overall performance and efficiency.

While we recognize the significant efforts made in the past to identify savings, we are convinced that savings and efficiencies could still be found. Due recognition should also be given to the previously agreed one-time character of certain costs for implementation of the IPA reform measures and the expected recurrent savings and efficiency gains.

Given the current global economic crisis and the severe financial difficulties of many Member Nations, we cannot support any budget increase. In this regard, we refer to examples set by other international organizations. We are convinced that there is room to protect FAO's programme of work without any increase and that any proposed increase has to be compensated for by a corresponding decrease in other areas.

We are however ready to engage in the important discussion and dialogue with the aim of arriving at a common agreement on the next PWB 2016-17.

Mr Jon E. JONASSON (Iceland)

This statement is made on behalf of the Nordic countries, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. Moreover, Denmark, Finland, and Sweden align themselves with the statement just delivered on behalf of the EU.

We would like to endorse the report of the committees on the Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 with the following comments.

We welcome the assessment made on recent global trends and development and would like to highlight the recognition of the diminishing quality and quantity of natural resources and ecosystem services we are experiencing together with the growing impact of climate change.

Without healthy soils and healthy oceans we will not be able to meet the goals of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. First among them: eradicating poverty and securing food security and nutrition for all.

It is in these areas where we see FAO with comparative advantages and expect clear global leadership and increased delivery.

We note that the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 consolidates existing actions with the MTP while adding emphasis in certain areas. We agree with the approach of consolidating action including in the area of further decentralization.

In this context we note the conclusion in the Finance Committee report on the need for continued effort to strengthening internal control in Decentralized Offices, as discussed in the Annual Report of the Inspector General.

We support the eight high priority areas of work identified and we welcome the list given for the areas of work being de-emphasized and realigned and support the request of the Programme Committee for information on resource allocation trends, as well as on the areas to be emphasized and de-emphasized.

Among the higher priority areas, we would have liked to see separate points and stronger emphasis on giving women and men equal opportunities and empowerment of women, in accordance with the outcome of the Open-ended Working Group and the SDGs.

These issues as presented in the document do not belong solely to social protection or youth employment and migration but are cross-cutting across all FAO Strategic Objectives. We have resolved to promote equal opportunities for women and men, as well as empowerment of women.

Women, one half of humanity, must be able to fully and effectively participate in sustainable development policies, programmes, and decision making at all levels. We welcome the breakdown of funding for gender into the strategic and functional objectives.

However, taking into account that closing the gender gap and empowering women is central to all FAO's five Strategic Objectives, we would expect the funding level to be higher. The document rightly refers to requests by the Conference in 2013 that there should be a minimum funding of activities promoting gender equality. The percentage at that time was 2.1 percent of FAO's overall budget.

From the way the present budget is presented, it is difficult to see how gender, as a cross-cutting issue, is reflected throughout the budget. We would like to see more information on this issue, possibly in an annex.

In this regard, we would also like to recall that the last Conference welcomed that The Technical Cooperation Programmes portfolio should allocate 30 percent of programmes and projects to gender equality. We would appreciate more information on the progress to that.

The Conference requested regular updates on FAO's implementation on FAO's policy on gender equality and UN-SWAP standards. We look forward to receiving the report on this, including an update on progress on the establishment of a gender market system at the Conference Session in June.

We also look forward to the next Programme Implementation Report to receive detailed assessment of the cross-cutting issues, foremost gender.

Knowing that I am speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, you will not be surprised that I have one more issue on gender. With reference to information distributed in the Finance Committee, we regret to see that women still represent only 22 percent of staff in higher level positions D1 and above in FAO which is less than impressive.

Furthermore, in the ten years between 2006 and today, little has changed and the small change seems attributed to the fact that the number of men have gone down. Having said that, we would also like to acknowledge and commend the important work FAO has done so far in giving women and men equal opportunities.

To sum up, we are still eagerly awaiting the impact of the gender policies put in place by Management. Time is pressing in order for FAO to truly be a modern and flexible organization fit for today's and tomorrow's purpose.

Another issue we would have liked to see mentioned among the higher priority areas is a separate point and stronger emphasis on renewable natural resources. As an example, focus on sustainable use of renewable natural resources and coherence of normative and technical work across divisions to achieve results within FAO.

Finally, we received recently the MOPAN assessment of the FAO. It makes positive conclusions about the efforts in carrying out deep and wide ranging reforms across the organization. In this regard, we would like to highlight the importance of motivated staff and the importance of inclusive dialogue processes to continue positive progress and results in the next biennium. Results-based management is still a work in progress and we would like to encourage the determined action to be continued. I thank you.

Mr Vladimir V. KUZNETSOV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

The Russian Delegation fully supports the statement delivered by Brazil on behalf of the BRICS countries on this item. We thank the Secretariat for preparing a detailed and clear draft Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-17. We endorse the programme aspects of the proposed PWB. We agree with the conception of FAO developed by the FAO Director-General as a knowledge Organization with its feet on the ground.

We support the stepping up of FAO's standard setting and standardization work as well as the precise linkage between emergency humanitarian aid and development systems. We welcome FAO's policy of stepping up interaction with middle income countries.

In this regard, we commend the plans to extend the network of Decentralized Offices of the FAO in the relevant countries of Europe and Central Asia. I would not like to delve into micromanagement and juggle with figures and give the Secretariat recommendations regarding the allocation of resources for one technical area or another. But at the same time, I would like to point out with special emphasis the introduction of nutrition among the cross cutting themes in the context of Strategic Objective 6. We note the coordination of ICN2 follow-up and the need for food safety, and the increased attention of the Organization to that problem.

We also call for the development of FAO's work in the field of social protection and combatting transboundary spread of plant, pest, and animal diseases. We welcome the clear cut list contained in document C 2015/3 and the Information Note of the themes which are supposed to be the subject of de-emphasis for resource transfers within the regular budget.

At the same time, we count on the continuation in one form or another of the FAO's work in the areas of large scale forestry and education for nutrition. The significance of this issue was singled out for special emphasis in the outcome documents of ICN2. We also support the proposals to adjust the structure of the Secretariat as long as they do not trigger additional expenditure of the organization.

We highly commend the work of the organization to bring about substantial budget savings through efficiency gains including the personal endeavors of the Director-General in this area. We call on the

Secretariat to continue in the future, its policy of savings and the utmost efficiency in the utilization of its financial resources.

We share the general aspiration of Member Nations to achieve consensus on the level of the budget for the next biennium during this Session of the Council. Russia consistently calls for containing unjustified growth in the budgets of international organizations in the UN System. Nonetheless, we feel that in this specific case, the Secretariat has given sufficiently convincing grounds for the requested funding parameters and a further cut to the budget may jeopardize the work of the Organization and its mandate.

Russia, for its part, is ready to contribute in every possible way to achieving consensus on the budget in the context of a dialog including in the group of Friends of the Chair.

Ms Mi NGUJEN (Canada)

In general, Canada supports the analysis and redesign of the Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17. More specifically, Canada recognizes the importance being placed on the new Office of Food Safety and supports the integrated approach which should help increase its visibility of scientific and technical support for food safety.

We strongly support the funding increase to the technical and normative work of the Organization under Objective 6. Canada supports the integration of gender, governance, and nutrition as cross-cutting themes. We are however concerned with the lack of gender integration throughout the Programme of Work. Although we are pleased to see the inclusion of gender in Objective 6, we would encourage FAO to also include gender equality results and gender sensitive indicators in the outcomes and outputs throughout objectives one to five given that gender is a cross cutting theme for FAO. This would be in line with commitments made at the 2013 Conference with regard to refining FAO's work on gender specific targets, base lines, indicators, and gender de-segregated data.

Like others, we welcome the identification of the proposed areas of emphasis and de-emphasis and also appreciate the Information Note 4 providing further details including quantification of resource allocations.

We support the increased work on antimicrobial resistance. However, we are disappointed that the Note did not provide further details on GIAHS as requested, in particular given concerns expressed and that we share on the lack of respect for the integrity of the process and for the authority of the Governing Bodies.

Canada would like to thank the Secretariat for a comprehensive and well thought out budget proposal and for the subsequent downward revisions. We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate that Canada maintains a policy of zero nominal growth. We hope to advance discussion on the budget in a constructive spirit and we hope to reach a final budget level acceptable to all Members that the Council could recommend to the conference for the first time.

Ms Natalie BROWN (United States of America)

The United States would like to thank the Director-General and the Secretariat for this thorough proposal. We appreciate the effort that went into developing the PWB and consider it a good roadmap for the coming biennium.

We also appreciate the comments of the Nordic Group on gender issues and concur.

We note the integrated proposal of over USD 2.5 billion, including USD 1.5 billion in extra-budgetary resources is a significant increase over the current biennium. We commend the Secretariat for its excellent work which has attracted additional resources. FAO should consider this increase as evidence of the progress towards the NEW FAO that the Director General has been building, and that more members are choosing FAO as the partner of choice when considering work related to ensuring food security and nutrition.

Nevertheless, we note that the proposal includes an increase to the regular programme of work and the member state assessments. The United States policy objective for the regular budget of international organizations is zero nominal growth. United States policy advocates achieving this objective through

cost savings, efficiencies, and offsetting of proposed programme increases through reductions in low priority activities.

Regarding efficiencies and cost savings, we appreciate FAO's effort to present a document which clearly aligns resources with the program of work, but we are disappointed that the benefit of expected efficiency savings is not reflected in this presentation. The United States believes that in an integrated budget of over USD 2.5 billion, further efficiencies can be found. For example, paragraph 135 notes significant efficiency and savings from changes to servicing of staff and entitlements and modernization of official correspondence activities, but no figure is stated. We would like to request that the Secretariat explore finding further savings. We would also like to request further information on what would be the impact to the programme of work if the proposed increase is not approved.

The United States would also like to better understand the need for such a high allocation to the Multi-Disciplinary Fund. We believe this fund's original intent in 2010-11 has become redundant with the new Strategic Objectives and the matrixed approach to the Strategic Framework.

We would like to point out that the outputs under 1.2.A are missing. This is particularly troubling given that one indicator refers to independent national human rights institutions addressing violations of Right to Food. We would request that parenthesis be removed.

We would encourage the Secretariat to use previously agreed language and change references to the Right to Food to the agreed upon, "progressive realization of the Right to Food".

Under Output 2.3.1, we are unclear if FAO is supporting stakeholders to develop new international instruments? The comma should be omitted, otherwise this conflicts with the de-emphasis in paragraph 75(e).

FAO should also consider including national financial institutions and frameworks, and perhaps even private financial institutions, among the entities identified as key stakeholders under Strategic Objective 5. Our national experience has found that it is critically important to engage the Ministry of Finance and other budgetary bodies so that there is a plan in place to make adequate national financial resources available in a timely way.

At this time, we cannot support the PWB as presented. We would like to reach consensus at this Council and would be happy to join a Friends of the Chair process to achieve it.

Sr. Manuel Eduardo CLAROS OVIEDO (Venezuela)

Nosotros agradecemos también la presentación del documento C 2015/3 con la Propuesta de Programa y Presupuesto y nos sumamos a las declaraciones expresadas por Irán, a nombre del G-77 más China y por Nicaragua, a nombre del Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe (GRULAC).

Agradecemos al Director General y a su staff por la presentación de este documento extenso y detallado, en el que se destacan las prioridades de la Organización, los aspectos presupuestarios relevantes, los objetivos para el próximo bienio, así como las esferas que serán de mayor interés para la Organización.

Hemos considerados el resultado de las deliberaciones mantenidas separadamente y en conjunto por el Comité del programa y el Comité de finanzas sobre la propuesta de Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto (PTP). Tomando nota del espíritu de cooperación prevaleciente entre los Miembros y con la Secretaría, estamos conscientes de la importancia de la continuidad en la orientación estratégica de la Organización en el Plan a Plazo Medio y del apoyo al Programa de Trabajo. Valoramos positivamente las esferas en las que se propone prestar mayor y menor atención y en las que se debería hacer más ahorro. Acogemos con agrado la propuesta de reasignar 14.2 millones de dólares a las esferas de mayor prioridad.

Acogemos con satisfacción el aumento de la consignación para el Programa de cooperación técnica hasta el 14 por ciento de la consignación neta, en consonancia con la resolución 9/89 de la conferencia, que permitirá hacer frente a los efectos del cambio climático en los Pequeños Estados Insulares en desarrollo.

Al igual que señalaron otras delegaciones, solicitamos que el trabajo de la FAO en temas intersectoriales, especialmente aquellos que están vinculados con la materia medioambiental, se realice conforme al mandato de la Organización, sin solapar decisiones de otros foros ambientales correspondientes.

En cuanto a la metodología de trabajo con los países de ingresos medios, que es un tema que también han señalado varias delegaciones, queremos reiterar lo expresado por el GRULAC en el sentido de que el criterio del ingreso per cápita no contempla las múltiples dimensiones del desarrollo. Sin embargo; esto no ha obstaculizado que muchos países catalogados como de ingresos medios y medios altos sean socios activos de la FAO y participen dinámicamente en proyectos de Cooperación sur-sur. Como ejemplo de esto, Venezuela suscribió en el año 2013 un programa ejecutivo con la FAO para implementar iniciativas de cooperación técnica triangular en los campos de seguridad alimentaria, soberanía, alimentario y nutricional y de la reducción de la pobreza.

En los últimos 15 años, hemos otorgado respaldo político y financiero a iniciativas de cooperación sur-sur en las que se destacan: el plan para la seguridad alimentaria y nutrición de la CELAC, el plan de erradicación del hambre y la pobreza Hugo Chávez a ser implementado en la zona económica ALBA Petrocaribe y el proyecto de Cooperación sur-sur para fomentar sistemas de producción de arroz en África.

Respecto de la cuantía del presupuesto, apoyamos la idea de llegar a un consenso en el presente periodo de sesiones. Como han señalado otras delegaciones, es muy importante que durante el Consejo se pueda alcanzar un consenso sobre esta materia. A pesar de las dificultades ocasionadas por la situación económica de crisis mundial y su impacto en las economías de los diferentes países, como ha sido señalado por los principales contribuyentes al presupuesto de la Organización, creemos que el programa propuesto debe contar con un presupuesto adecuado que garantice su ejecución y permita al Director General continuar su gestión de manera exitosa.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

La Argentina respalda la declaración efectuada por el G77 más China y la declaración realizada oportunamente por el GRULAC. La Argentina entiende que estamos ante una histórica oportunidad para con un ulterior esfuerzo consolidar todo el trabajo realizado en la Organización, en su Marco Estratégico y en la identificación de áreas prioritarias arribando a un consenso respecto al nivel de presupuesto.

Con respecto a qué consecuencias tendría no aprobar un nivel de presupuesto adecuado, la Argentina cree y sabe que todas las delegaciones son conscientes que ello resentiría el programa de trabajo. Desde este punto de vista, la Argentina reitera nuevamente su disposición a discutir en el futuro los problemas relativos al personal en las sedes oportunas, Comité de programa y coordinación de Naciones Unidas, CAPI y Quinta Comisión y reitera su oportunidad y su disposición a trabajar con otros países en la redacción de un documento a ser enviado a nuestros representantes permanentes en Nueva York a estos efectos.

La Argentina, por último, realiza un llamado a todas las representaciones para poder aprobar tanto el Plan a Plazo Medio (revisado), como el Plan de Trabajo y Presupuestos (PTP) para 2016-2017 en este Consejo.

M. Bruno MAIGA (Mali)

Je prends la parole au nom du Groupe Afrique. Les membres du Groupe Afrique ont réservé un accueil favorable à la présentation du document, et se sont félicités de la publication de lettres d'information pour une meilleure compréhension du sujet, de la définition des domaines à mettre en avant ou en retrait et de ceux dans lesquels il était possible de réaliser des économies, et enfin de la proposition de réaffecter 14,2 millions de dollars à des domaines plus prioritaires.

Les membres du Groupe se réjouissent aussi de l'augmentation des ouvertures de crédits pour le PCT qui représentent maintenant 14 pour cent des montants nets des crédits ouverts, conformément à la résolution 9/93 de la Conférence, en vue de traiter les conséquences du changement climatique sur les petits États insulaires en développement.

Les membres du Groupe sont favorables à l'idée d'obtenir un consensus sur le montant du budget, durant cette séance du Conseil.

M. Serge TOMASI (France)

Je ne vais bien sûr pas faire de déclaration puisque mon pays est membre de l'Union européenne, et que nous souscrivons pleinement à la déclaration faite par la présidence de l'Union européenne.

Mais j'ai été frappé par le fait que beaucoup de délégations ont appelé à un consensus, car pour construire un consensus il faut d'abord que nous ayons la même analyse du point de départ de la négociation, c'est-à-dire du budget qui nous est présenté. Donc, je voudrais juste poser deux questions très simples à Monsieur Boyd Haight et savoir s'il pourrait nous répondre simplement.

Première question: le budget qui est proposé s'élève à 1044,8 millions de dollars. Dans notre compréhension il s'agit d'un budget en hausse nominale de quatre pour cent. Avec quatre pour cent de hausse, nous sommes loin d'une croissance nominale 0, pour laquelle, selon nous, il faudrait réduire le budget de 40 millions de dollars.

Et ma deuxième question: cette hausse de quatre pour cent du budget devrait en principe se traduire par une hausse moyenne de quatre pour cent des contributions des États Membres de la FAO qui financent le budget régulier. Quatre pour cent, auxquels s'ajouterait par ailleurs, pour la partie qui est financée en dollars, l'effet de change pour les pays dont la monnaie nationale est actuellement en baisse par rapport au dollar.

Monsieur Boyd Haight peut-il donc me confirmer que ce budget proposé est bien en hausse de quatre pour cent et que cette hausse du budget de quatre pour cent se traduira en moyenne par une hausse des contributions des États Membres de quatre pour cent?

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

Firstly, Australia acknowledges the Director-General's efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of FAO. Australia is a strong supporter of these efforts. There have been significant changes in the way of doing things in this Organization in recent years and we are eagerly waiting to see whether these changes will result in increased impact and generation of desirable outcomes. This is a key focus for Australia.

One thing that I wanted to highlight as well in my intervention, which has not been discussed so much this afternoon, is that we are still in a transition mode in the implementation of the new Strategic Framework.

Obviously that was a key topic that we discussed in the lead-up to the last budget, and that really from our perspective, there would appear to be still some significant challenges in the full implementation of the horizontal way of doing things in FAO with the purpose of achieving the five Strategic Objectives.

There would continue to be a need for strong communication, leadership, and coordination between Headquarters and the Decentralized Office Network to ensure that the whole Organization is equipped and motivated so that the Organization has the best chances of achieving the Strategic Objectives.

Our sense is that this is still work in progress and it needs continued strong attention by Management. We would also make the comment that with the recent strong focus on Decentralization, that we stress the importance of FAO's normative global public good work that is done mainly at Headquarters, and our expectation that this will continue to receive a high priority going forward.

In relation to the PWB document, we welcome for the first time the identification of proposed reallocations of existing resources from areas of de-emphasis to areas of high priority and this is something that Australia has long been requesting.

We believe that this is a good start. Yet, Australia considers that given the cost increases facing the Organization the Secretariat may need to identify further areas of de-emphasis as well as other efficiencies and savings.

We welcome the proposed stronger focus of FAO on assisting the Small Island Developing States while addressing the impacts of climate change. As Co-Chair of the Southwest Pacific Region, Australia has been working with FAO to ensure that it improves its effectiveness in assisting the Pacific Island Countries.

Australia believes that all Organizations, including those of the United Nations, have a responsibility to continue to look for ways to deliver their mandates more effectively and efficiently and with a fiscally sensible approach to budget determinations.

Australia considers the proposed budget level too high and out of touch with global and national financial pressures. Following on from the French Ambassador's latest intervention, we note our understanding that the latest proposal is a USD 36 million increase on the current budget level.

We also note the Secretariat's recent track record in finding efficiencies and savings, and this is something to be proud of.

Australia is confident that FAO will be able to find the necessary savings and other measures required to reduce the budget level to a figure where consensus can be reached.

Ms Cecilia NORDIN VAN GANSBERGHE (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

I have listened with great interest and I think there is a strong consensus that this proposal and the Mid-Term Review are actually much better, clearer and legible documents at this time.

Besides, I think that we are broadly discussing fine adjustments. There are certain areas where we still have consensus to be found but I would agree with my French colleague that there is to be a strong consensus for the first time. I mean this is my fourth time in this kind of discussion and this is the first time that we actually look as though we could possibly reach an agreement on the budget level.

Then, of course, we will further discuss the details but that is an ongoing work. That is what happens after the Conference as well when the Secretariat will take all the decisions made at the Conference and work with these until the Council in December 2015.

This was the whole reasoning behind moving the Conference from November to June. So, I believe that you have all listened to each other and there are certain points that we need to continue to clarify.

There are certain issues that I am sure Mr Haight will give us further information. Yet, at some point we have to stop asking for additional information and actually see what we have.

I am quite struck by the fact that this Programme of Work and Budget contains, as I can see it, the most information that we have had and still we always want to have more information. We just have to consider that in our future work.

Mr Moungui MÉDI (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

I think that this was a great discussion. I believe that the conversation among the Member Nations shows that we are more or less on a par with the global idea to move forward with the Programme of Work and Budget.

There is one thing that I deem I should remind ourselves. Every time, I do not know how many of you have witnessed this conversation, but every time there is a document on this it starts with emerging issues. This is something that is fundamental as we are discussing.

I have heard many times the idea of area of emphasis and area of de-emphasis. Please remember, every time we have to de-emphasize, there should be a response to emphasize. It is true. You cannot be proportionately the same, but it could also be higher than what we assume. That is a point that I really wanted to make. If the emerging areas are higher than what we want to de-emphasize, and the emerging issues here are many – we are talking of nutrition, we are talking of climate change, we are talking about other things like GIAHS, AMR. These are emerging issues that we recognize as valid.

The only thing we can do, if we want to approach this, is to give the subsequent level of budget to approach those emerging areas. Now it is very difficult to strike a balance between what you have to

de-emphasize and what you have to emphasize. I think that Mr Boyd Haight has a very difficult job in setting that balance.

What I want to say here is that we have tried to the best we could do in the Finance Committee to try to understand the details of the budget and that is reflected in the Report of the Finance Committee.

I believe that if you look at the budget, for me, it is very balanced at this stage because we have started at a very modest proposal from the Director-General. It was a really, modest one, compared to what they experienced in the past where we started with an increase of 11 percent, 10 percent, 5 percent.

Yet this time, if I understand correctly the budget, it is USD 6.1 million increase. The rest is automatic.

We had to look at it as an automatic way of adjusting the budget with regard to the inflation rate and so on. It is still an element of negotiation, so we have not been able in the Finance Committee to address the issue of the level of the budget.

I thought to do so on this part, even in the Joint Meeting. So now, what are the areas of convergence? I think that will be helpful. Those areas of convergence will be helpful in the negotiation, but also the areas where we are separated. They would be also important for us to negotiate. I have outlined a few.

We have nutrition, some say it is important. We have GIAHS, some say it is important; others say no. We have climate change, the TCP, and some are talking about keeping the critical mass of global staff in Headquarters. When you say that, then you have to look for that critical mass yourselves. These are things that are very difficult for Membership to outline.

Now I would like to come back to something that was mentioned briefly. The amount of additional information requested is tremendous and I think that we are putting the Secretariat under high pressure to produce it. Even if we give ourselves the three months prior to the Conference, that is a really gigantic job.

Especially the EU outlined about eight additional information areas. I think it is time for us to reach an agreement. We have requested that in the Council we should strive or try to do everything to reach a consensus on the budget level before the Conference.

It is up to us Members to reach that agreement. I hope that we can work together to do so.

Mr Boyd HAIGHT (Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management)

Thank you to all for the very careful reading of the document. I have engaged with you several times on this and I think we are making good progress. I know that some of the Information Notes have been only recently published, including the TCP note just today. In fact this is an unusual sequence of governing body meetings, having only one week between the Programme and Finance Committees and the Council is unusually short, but we will do whatever we can to provide you with the information you need to move forward on agreeing on the Programme of Work and the budget level.

I do not pretend to be able to respond to all of the questions here. I would like to focus on a few areas. Several members have mentioned the link between the outputs and the outcomes in our results chain, our cause and effect relationship, and I would like to refer you to – and we can make it available at the documents desk - a document that we prepared for the 149th Session of the Council in May of last year on the FAO results chain accountability for delivery (CL 149/LIM/6).

In figure 2 of that document, it gives some examples of how we will be able to measure the contribution of our outputs to the outcomes that are in the document. These of course are only examples, one per objective, and we are setting up to measure these contributions. I'll give you an example of Strategic Objective five. I think several members have highlighted how important and also clear this particular objective is.

At the output level, output 5.2.1, we support countries and regional institutions to set up or improve their mechanisms to identify and monitor threats and assess risks to deliver timely early warning of disease or threats. In other words, it is a mechanism that we are responsible for putting in place.

EMPRES, if you know about the emergency prevention programme for locusts, for example, sets up mechanisms to help countries identify locusts. That is a mechanism which we help countries set up.

The outcome relates to the institutions in the countries and the regional institutions providing and using regular information on early warning against these threats. The outcome is that those mechanisms are put to use and that is what we have to measure. We can measure our contribution because we helped to establish the mechanism.

The next step, which is one that has to be done together with the countries, is using these mechanisms. That is the nature of an outcome. So we can, in most cases, define what our contribution is but what we are now working on is, having a baseline for the outcomes, how to measure the change at the outcome level.

You can look in that document to see more of how we can try to measure the outputs and the outcomes. It was too early of course to do this in the Mid-Term Review 2014. Do not forget that we have only had one year experience in this four-year framework and we still have some distance to cover to get to the end of the four-year period.

There have been several requests for additional information. I think some of these are probably in the notes that you may not have had time yet to digest, on TCP in particular. I can tell you on Climate Smart Agriculture, as the European Union asked, it is funded exclusively from the extra-budgetary resources. Of course it does help move forward our work on climate change. I think near the end of last year there was a meeting of the Secretariat and a call for extra-budgetary resources.

On GIAHS, we have brought into the Information Note the PWB proposal and I will underline it is a proposal to provide resources within the new budget for two positions to support the Secretariat. This is pending a decision by the Governing Bodies on the PWB.

On the multidisciplinary fund, and I would also like to link this back to what I said about outcomes, we have a complex strategic framework. We have cross-cutting objectives. We maintain our disciplinary units in the house. We have our Departments of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry which recognize the areas of excellence in which we work that are guided by the technical Committees on Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry.

We have to find ways to ensure that our staff are able to apply their knowledge and, in particular, that the norms and standards that they develop to help countries move forward on their use and move the indicators of the outputs and the outcomes. That is where the multidisciplinary fund is being leveraged this year, this biennium, and would be intended for next biennium.

For example, we are using it at the moment to help us do the baseline surveys. We have completed the baseline surveys for the outcomes and it may help us the first time around in monitoring and measuring the performance.

It is particularly important for the regional initiatives. The regional initiatives of which there are now 15 – there were six pilot initiatives in the second half of the last biennium – we see them as a very important way to help us focus our work in the regions. These initiatives were not just invented. They came from the recommendations of the Regional Conferences at which many ministers attended and provided their guidance, what they want the organization to focus on in the region.

You have heard in this forum and others, for example, the Near East Region pointing to the importance of water and water governance, and though we may have shown that, as an area of realignment in the programme, we are still able to provide the necessary support to that important area for the Near East Region. So our multidisciplinary fund helps us to catalyze the work of our sectorial specialists in the areas that address the regional priorities.

We still have some emerging areas. We have been supporting the post-2015 development process using the MDF. Many of you know that we have been collaborating with the other Rome-based agencies to help develop some of the indicators. Of course, this process will finish at the end of this year and then we need to move forward with actually adapting our work to helping member countries with the sustainable development goals.

If I could answer a very specific question that Japan raised on the Working Capital Fund. This is not part of the budget proposal itself but the Director-General has an obligation to include in the PWB document the status of the Organization's funds and reserves and one of those is the Working Capital Fund. So he has, and this was also responding to a request of the Finance Committee to put forward the fact that in order to have one month's worth of working capital under the Regular Programme, we would need to increase the Working Capital Fund from about USD 28 million to USD 42 million.

However we have not heard any support for this proposal. It is not included in the budgetary appropriations resolution, and it is important to understand that it is not part of the budget itself.

I have heard two interventions very specific on the extra-budgetary contributions, and Afghanistan in particular on the core voluntary contributions. We have committed to coming back in the adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget at the end of this year with updated estimates on voluntary contributions. This is because in the last several biennia, the extra-budgetary estimates that we had in the PWB documents that were produced at that time, which is already one year before we even start implementation, are significantly different than what we are able to actually mobilize.

We feel now with the progress we have made, with the Strategic Objectives being in place, with our corporate areas of resource mobilization, that we are going to be able to come back with a better estimate not only of the level but also how those resources are aligned to the Strategic Objectives and it would also include through the regional initiatives.

In the past we had to define three types of voluntary contributions: core voluntary, development and emergencies. As you know, we have been trying to link the emergency and development contributions. In the past there was a very serious separation. Much of our work, especially under Strategic Objective 5 is about resilience and building capacity.

Core voluntary contributions have also been rather difficult for us to define and, for this reason, we have not included them in the document this time around. I am sure if Mr Ayazi had been in the Programme Committee two weeks ago, we would have had a better discussion on this. It does not mean that those contributions are not there but it does mean that we are trying to look at our voluntary contributions more in terms of the Strategic Objectives rather than classifying them by core, development or emergencies.

Finally on the budget level, just to clarify: taking into account the Director-General's proposal which he made this morning – and he also made it last week in the Informal Seminar – to have only a USD 3 million increase in the appropriation for the TCP under the understanding that the other part would come from extra-budgetary resources in 2016-17.

The proposal now stands at USD 1,041.8 million. That is a USD 36.2 million increase over the present level. It is effectively a nominal increase, almost exclusively, for the cost increases. Only USD 3 million of that would be for the TCP. The other USD 33 million is for cost increases. It is effectively a nominal increase and that is where we will leave it for now.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Ambassador Nordin. Thank you, Mr Médi, and thank you, Boyd and the Members for discussing this very important Agenda item which is intended to set our work for the coming two years.

In review of the discussion that we have had on this Agenda item we note that there are still some areas whereby Members need to consult and to reach consensus. I am unable to make a conclusion on agenda item 3 now.

However, I note Members' desire to reach a consensus on the programme as well as on the budget level. Thus, I wish to refer to the proposal you made that a Friends of the Chair meeting be convened to facilitate discussion on the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17.

In this regard, I would like to propose to you that a meeting of the Friends of the Chair take place tomorrow afternoon immediately following the close of this plenary meeting, in the King Faisal room. We will have translation in all languages available until 20:30 hours.

Considering past experience, as we have done this several times, I would also propose that the group be composed of three representatives from each Regional Group with speaking rights while the meeting be open to all Members who wish to attend in the capacity of observers. I will also invite the Vice-Chairpersons of the Council to attend.

Then we will come back to conclude on this Item after the Friends of the Chair meeting. I hope this receives your approval.

Item 7. Synthesis of Evaluations of FAO Regional and Subregional Offices

Point 7. Synthèse des évaluations des bureaux régionaux et sous-régionaux de la FAO

Tema 7. Síntesis de las evaluaciones de las oficinas regionales y subregionales de la FAO

(C 2015/10; C 2015/10 Sup.1)

CHAIRPERSON

We now turn to Item 7, *Synthesis of Evaluations of FAO Regional and Subregional Offices*. The relevant documents are C 2015/10 and C 2015/10 Sup.1.

I give the floor to Ambassador Cecilia Nordin, Chairperson of the Programme Committee, to report back on the discussions held in that Committee on this item.

Ms Cecilia NORDIN VAN GANSBERGHE (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

As you will all remember, we have had some very interesting Regional evaluations starting in 2009 and culminating the year before last, looking through all the Regions. During that period, we saw that certain areas were coming back, critical areas we call them, and we wanted to have a short synthesis document detailing common critical issues so that we could better understand where the system-wide structural challenges were. If you have looked at the synthesis of evaluations that we have before us, it is not quite that document. So when we discussed this item in the Joint Committees, we did express the request for the original idea of identifying common critical issues to be delivered to us as well. In reviewing this document that is before us, we saw the three recommendations, and we were endorsing them, but we, along with Management, had some hesitations about Recommendation 1. For those of you who, like myself, have spent a very long time working in this Organization, you will remember that we have tried to go down this route before establishing common criteria for the Decentralized Offices and we have not succeeded. A lot of time and effort were spent on it and we did not achieve it.

And if I am allowed a personal comment, I think even if we had those criteria, it might lead to a less flexible situation because, as we have said several times, things are happening fast and FAO needs to be a flexible Organization to answer the demands of its Members. If we have some criteria set in stone where the Offices should be with the budget situation as we have just discussed, it would be very difficult for Management to deliver optimally. So these were the few remarks I wanted to make.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. I now give the floor to Mr Masahiro Igarashi, Director of the Office of Evaluation, to introduce the report.

Mr Masahiro IGARASHI (Director, Office of Evaluation)

I am glad to present this Report in front of you. Indeed, behind this there is a full Synthesis Report which is available from our Evaluation Office website, as usual practice. I would invite you to look at that original Synthesis Report as well because it contains a number of information that did not come into this short Report in front of you.

This Synthesis Report, as the Ambassador has outlined, came from the synthesis of five evaluations conducted over the years 2009 to 2013. As such, we had to go through some process of updating, validating, and rationalizing the contents. The statistical information, financial information, et cetera, have been updated and re-analyzed. Now this is for the period when the decentralization has accelerated and in which a lot of changes were made to the policies, assistance and actions taken for the Decentralized Offices and, therefore we had to re-examine a number of issues written in the original reports. A number of issues also addressed in the individual reports were presented to the

Programme Committee and responded to by Management since 2010. Actually, they were implemented according to Management's response and three of them have already been followed up and reviewed. As a certain number of actions were already taken in response to the original reports we had to take all this into account and re-review that synthesis report.

After this, we went on to conduct some validation processes. We reviewed the findings to see whether they were supported by solid evidence and analysis that are still valid today and found that some of the items originally in the reports had also to be updated in this context.

For example, the vacancies issue. Each individual report looked at vacancies and, in most cases, concluded that they are too high. However when we investigated further, looking at different cases from individual evaluations, not only from this Regional evaluation but also from country and project evaluations, we found that it is not that simple when you look at it from the broader Human Resource Management perspective. The Decentralization process has necessitated some flexibility and fluidity in the Human Resource Management situation and vacancies, as transitional phenomena, have actually been utilized to accommodate changes in the roles and functions of Decentralized Offices, and therefore we have re-analyzed that issue from this perspective as well.

In this regard, we looked through different issues in the current context for making a forward-looking report and came up with the Synthesis Report that is available on the website. From there, we extracted the issues that we deemed strategic and forward-looking for consideration by the Council. We asked the question, has Decentralization led to better coverage and response? Have the priorities setting and programming mechanisms adapted to a more Decentralized FAO? Has the capacity of Decentralized Offices to service the needs of Members improved? The conclusions and recommendations are presented in the report in front of you. Overall, we found that Decentralization accelerated with major policy structure changes during the evaluation period, and progress has been made towards a more inclusive and harmonized management model. However, we are still on the way. Challenges remain to find a right balance between global and local needs and expectations.

The first issue is related to the coverage the Ambassador referred to. We found that the Country Office presence is essential. There have been enhancements to the FAO Office Network which led to improved services. However, we found that there are some issues raised through the research and evaluations on the locations of some Regional and Subregional Offices and types of arrangement in different economic situations. Therefore, we recommended that Members and Management consider reviewing the present coverage of representation in countries and the location of those Regional and Subregional Offices.

The second issue relates to the programming aspects of Decentralization. We found that the process, especially the recent priority setting process, has made it clearer that the programmes are aligned with the corporate level Strategic Framework. However, the linkages between national priority and needs and the corporate strategies may not have been totally harmonized up to this point. Also, we found that the quality of the Country Programming Framework, being a relatively recent tool, has not been even, therefore we made a few recommendations to take measures to improve the quality, effectiveness and coherence of the Country Programme with corporate priorities across all countries.

The third issue is capacities. As you have seen during the programme and budget discussions, there are limitations in resources and how to service the Decentralized Network of country offices is a challenge. We looked at these issues and found that there have been general improvements throughout the process but we found that as far as skill mix is concerned some difficulties are still being experienced in Regional, Subregional and country offices. This we also validated with recent interviews in relation to some of the evaluations.

Sr. Luis Alberto ALVÁREZ FERMÍN (Venezuela)

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela desea ceder la palabra a la Representación de la República de Nicaragua en nombre del GRULAC. Posteriormente, la Delegación hará su intervención correspondiente.

Sra. Monica ROBELO RAFFONE (Observador de Nicaragua)

Hago esta intervención en nombre del Grupo de Países de América Latina y el Caribe (GRULAC).

El GRULAC agradece la presentación de este tema y con relación a la conclusión número 1 y a la Recomendación número 1, derivada del análisis de la conducción del proceso de descentralización, reitera lo expresado en la discusión del Tema 3; con respecto a la clasificación de los países de la región como de ingresos medios, medios altos y más altos, en el sentido de que el solo criterio de ingreso per cápita no contempla las múltiples dimensiones y los serios desafíos que los países de la región enfrentan en su camino hacia al desarrollo sostenible, teniendo necesidades específicas de cooperación internacional.

Mr Ringson J. CHITSIKO (Zimbabwe)

I speak on behalf of the Africa Group and it is a privilege and honour for me to participate in this 151th Session of the FAO Council. I take this opportunity to thank FAO for the excellent arrangements laid out for the success of this Session. I also thank you, Chairperson, for the able manner in which you are steering our discussions.

Let me, on behalf of Africa, make my intervention on the agenda item, the Synthesis of Evaluations of FAO Regional and Subregional Offices for the period 2009-2018 presented in document C 2015/10 as it relates to our region.

As we noted at its 149th Session, the Council stressed the importance of a forward-looking synthesis report on the five evaluations of Regional and Subregional Offices to be submitted to the Conference in 2015 through the Council. This Synthesis forecasts on the following three questions of strategic interest to the Members in management. These have been outlined already by the presenter and I will not repeat them.

The Africa Group welcomes the Synthesis of the said evaluations, and as a Group, we are convinced that the report has done justice to the three strategic areas of interest to Member Countries. Generally, Mr Chairman, progress has been made in the Decentralized Offices in Africa. However, there is need for centrality of country-level action for FAO in the Region. We also note with satisfaction the forecast of Country Programming Frameworks to address country priorities and the determination by FAO representatives to deliver programmes and results.

However, we observe that the following actions by FAO are critical for the effective delivery of programmes by regional, subregional, and country offices. That is the continued delegation of authority to FAO Representatives to lead planning and the delivery of country programmes; the need to ensure that Decentralized Offices are effectively capacitated in terms of human and financial resources and decision-making to reflect Decentralization priorities, and the need to ensure that future co-budget allocation proposals better reflect the priority of Decentralization in Africa and also the need to strengthen recruitment of female professionals.

We therefore request FAO to maintain the focus on technical partnerships with Regional economic communities within the scope of specific areas of collaboration for which resources are available. In the area of Decentralization and Decentralized Offices Network, we, in Africa, fully support the measures taken by FAO to strengthen capabilities within the Regional Offices, Subregional Offices, and Decentralized Offices Network through a skills mix review. To this end, Mr Chairman, we highly recommend measures aimed at strengthening the capacity of country offices and the selection of FAO Representatives with the requisite technical and managerial competencies. We also strongly urge FAO to ensure that the Decentralization programme is adequately resourced in terms of increased co-financial allocations to the regions in future.

We welcome the strategic use of TCP's in line with Country Programming Frameworks which have been completed or those that still await endorsement in 45 countries and also aligned to the reviewed Strategic Framework. In this regard, we recommend the completion of the Country Programming Frameworks in the remaining two countries.

In closing, the Africa Group is happy to note that FAO Management has welcomed the synthesis of the evaluation of FAO Regional and Subregional Offices, and that significant progress has been made

in terms of implementation of these recommendations as reflected in the 'Management Views Report', document C 2015/10 Supp.1. This is a good indication of progress towards the continued strengthening of FAO's Decentralized Offices, the coherence of their work with corporate and additional priorities, and their impact in delivering these results.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Chairperson, we had five very good evaluations on the five Regions. These five evaluations produced 52 recommendations. They probably produced more than 100 findings. The Programme Committee decided and the Council agreed that a synthesis should be prepared, OED was supposed to go thoroughly through the findings, conclusions, suggestions, and recommendations of the five evaluations and take the Management response, and with all this rich material, come up with very few selective recommendations that will guide the improvement of the Regional and country offices over the next decade.

We are not getting what we want. What we are getting is an object on Decentralization, which is useful, but it doesn't come with any strategic solutions. The question still remains: will the Council accept this as a synthesis or accept it as another document on Decentralization? And then whether the Council wants to recommend that it should go to the Conference or not.

In our opinion, this synthesis as it is should not go to the Regional Conference next year because it will be severely criticized. It doesn't provide any guidance. Let me just quote the main Report "the OED did not combine findings of the issues taken by Regional Offices". It clearly says since no recommendation is mentioned, I assume they also did not less the recommendation. So it's a decision that the Council will take. But I said that what is produced is a very useful document, but it's not what it was intended to be.

Ms Eun Jeong LEE (Republic of Korea)

This statement is made on behalf of the Asia Group. First of all, we would like to express our appreciation to the Office of the Evaluation for the preparation and its quality of the Synthesis Evaluation Report of the FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices. This Report contains five evaluations of Regional Offices and Subregional Offices carried out over the period 2009-13 and provides FAO Management and Member Nations with an independent evaluation assessment of various aspects related to decentralization, including their performance, policies, reforms and the transformational changes.

We welcome the progress made by FAO towards a more decentralized structure to enhance efficiencies across the whole Organization and impact on the national and regional projects with the increase in FAO Decentralized Offices of 83 out of 142 Members as of January 2015.

With regard to priority setting and the programme mechanism at regional and country level, the Country Programming Framework (CPF) is a key tool and FAO has made significant progress as indicated in the report. However, there is still room to enhance the quality of the CPFs in such aspects as situational analysis, results-framework, estimation of resource requirements, resource mobilization strategies and gender mainstreaming.

We agree with the recommendation that the Decentralized Offices should be supported at all stages of preparing the CPFs and will contribute to maintaining coherence between the programme at the country level and with FAO priorities.

In addition, it is a concern that only a few institutions within countries such as the Ministry of Agriculture had participated in the process of preparing the CPFs. We urge the FAO country offices to encourage concerned ministries or organizations to actively take part in the preparations, evaluations and the vision process of CPFs in the future.

The Asia Group would like to highlight the progress in Decentralization by giving the example of the rice initiative. This is the case from the Asia Pacific Region, an initiative that was developed by FAO Headquarters and the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, in line with the priorities identified by the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific in 2012.

As can be seen, the regional initiative developed in the Regional Conference is reflected in the FAO Strategic Framework and Objectives. In other words, the Regional Conference had become a major player in priority setting of the Organization, leading to a stronger ownership and engagement of its Members.

With regard to the financial position of the Decentralized Offices, resource mobilization still remains a great challenge though net appropriation resources for Decentralized Offices have steadily increased over the last decade. To attract more resource partners, close cooperation between FAO Headquarters and the Decentralized Offices is recommended and identifying potential demand of South-South and triangular cooperation will help for financial soundness.

Moreover, the Asia Group would like to emphasize its own efforts of cooperation between FAO and the Decentralized Offices of sister agencies such as IFAD and WFP in reducing operational costs and generating synergies and coordinated collaboration between the country and regions.

Having said this, the report also brings forward the issues on the location of some Regional and Subregional Offices in the context of cost efficiency and effectiveness. We would like to recommend that FAO considers various experts identifying the UN Women which also contains many factors mentioned from the Asia group for the location of other regional offices of key UN partners of the organizations for their close collaboration and cooperation.

Second, place the balance of price and convenience in terms of travel to and within the regions.

Third, low cost of living.

Lastly, there is a growing emphasis on the role and capacity of the Regional and Subregional Offices representatives in delivering their activities and providing more timely and relevant assistance to member countries as operational and the management's responsibility has been transferred from FAO Headquarters to the Decentralized Offices since 2010.

In this regard, the selection process of the Regional Office and Subregional Office representatives should be enhanced and the persons should be assigned to the most appropriate region or country considering their background knowledge and expertise and their relationship with concerned ministry or institutions of the country. In addition, competent technical staff and experts are also important factors in delivering the regional or national activities in exchange of expert expectations and needs. So appropriate compensation is necessary to secure sustainable employment with flexibility and clear remuneration in order to invite and keep them in the Regional and Subregional Offices.

Mr Luca FRATINI (Italy)

I would like to pass on the floor to Latvia as current president of the Council of the European Union.

Ms Elina GRINPAUKA-PETETENA (Observer for Latvia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States.

We welcome the Synthesis of Evaluations of FAO Regional and Subregional Offices and focus on country-level performance. We support the three recommendations contained in the report and Management's acceptance of these.

We note the Office of Evaluation's conclusion that progress has been made over time towards a more consistent model across the whole Organisation. This is key to FAO's delivery of results and we encourage management in building on improvements made.

With regard to the report's first recommendation, we fully support the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees recommendation to undertake an independent review of the types of Representation in countries with a view to developing a set of criteria. We look forward to reviewing this review in the Committees and Council.

We agree that the roll-out of Country Programming Frameworks is important in aligning the work of FAO's country offices with corporate strategic objectives and countries' own development plans. In line with Recommendation 2, we encourage FAO to ensure more systematic quality control, providing

the necessary support to country offices in developing results frameworks and gender mainstreaming plans, areas highlighted for improvement in the evaluation.

While we note that technical and financial capacity in Decentralised Country Offices has increased, we are concerned about the heavy reliance of Decentralised Offices on non-staff human resources and would be interested to hear more from management on planned measures to address issues highlighted in Recommendation 3, including ensuring the right level of skill mix.

We also note, however, that the original request was to provide a short synthesis document detailing “common critical issues” of the five Evaluations. We would welcome such a report, as reiterated by the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees.

Once again, we welcome FAO’s progress in this important area and thank the Office of Evaluation for providing the basis for strengthening further FAO’s decentralised country, Regional and Subregional Offices.

Mr Muhammad Hashim POPALZAI (Pakistan)

We align ourselves with the statement made by the Republic of Korea on behalf of the Asia Group and have some additional comments to offer.

We welcome this report which contains a synthesis of the five evaluations of Regional and Subregional Offices.

The report suggests that considerable progress has been achieved in terms of enhancements to the Decentralized Offices: process improvements; and increase in their technical and financial capacity. Despite this progress, challenges remain and more needs to be done. Consequently, the report is making three recommendations. We endorse all three of the recommendations for implementation and agree with the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees that for Recommendation 1, an independent review be undertaken and its findings be submitted, along with Management’s views to the 153rd Session of the Council.

Ms Mi NGUJEN (Canada)

Canada welcomes the synthesis of evaluations of FAO’s Regional and Subregional Offices and the three recommendations outlining the report. We support Recommendation 1 on the need to review the types of coverage of representation in countries and locations of Regional and Subregional Offices.

We take note of Recommendation 2 on priority setting. We welcome the call for stronger and earlier engagement from various levels of the Organization to improve the quality and effectiveness of Country Programming Frameworks.

However, we also see the value in recommending that monitoring and evaluation takes place on a regular basis to ensure that priorities align with corporate objectives and there is accountability, policy coherence and efficiency at all levels.

We support Recommendation 3 on technical capacities of Decentralized Offices. We see technical capacity especially on the cross-cutting teams imperative to ensuring that programme results are consistent and align with the corporate objectives of the Organization.

Finally, we also support the Joint Meeting’s reiterated request for a short document identifying common critical issues.

Sr. Luis Alberto ALVÁREZ FERMÍN (Venezuela)

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela agradece el informe presentado en su 149.º período de sesiones. El Consejo recalcó la importancia de un informe de síntesis relativo a las cinco evaluaciones de las oficinas regionales y subregionales orientado al futuro que se debía presentar a la Conferencia en 2015 por conducto del Consejo.

En ese sentido, consideramos pertinentes las observaciones realizadas en el informe las cuales son fundamentales para orientar los trabajos que viene desarrollando la FAO para erradicar el hambre y la pobreza en el mundo.

En principio, estamos de acuerdo en examinar el tipo y cobertura de la representación en los países y la ubicación de las oficinas regionales y subregionales. Si conviniera en avanzar, deberían examinarse un conjunto de criterios para hallar al proceso con miras a reforzar los servicios prestados a los Estados Miembros.

La Administración de la FAO debería adoptar más medidas para mejorar la calidad y la eficacia de los marcos de programación por países, así como su coherencia con las prioridades institucionales en todos los países. Para ello sería necesario un mayor compromiso y apoyo en un momento más temprano a distintos niveles en la Organización, con el objeto de aumentar los niveles de armonización y coherencia nacional e institucional de los programas que se llevan a cabo en cada país.

La FAO debería adoptar medidas para facilitar y dotar en mayor medida a las oficinas descentralizadas con los medios necesarios a fin de lograr el nivel de cualificación y la combinación de competencias deseables de sus recursos humanos, teniendo en cuenta el contexto local y seguir fomentando y apoyando sus esfuerzos de movilización de recursos con miras a reducir las desigualdades de una región a otra derivadas de la cooperación recibida de los diferentes países, como es el caso de la Cooperación sur-sur.

Finalmente instamos a la Conferencia a tomar nota en el informe las opiniones de la Administración y el informe del Consejo, ya que el mismo está en la orientación correcta.

Mr Juan Manuel CAMMARANO (United States of America)

We thank the Secretariat for the Synthesis Report. We can accept the three recommendations contained in document C 2015/10 which we view as useful in continuing to further the decentralization process as agreed to by the FAO membership in the IPA.

However, with regards to Recommendation 3, while we can support the deployment of the correct mix of technical expertise in the Decentralized Offices, we also encourage the FAO Secretariat to pursue this recommendation in the most cost-effective manner as possible.

In some cases it might be most effective to have certain technical issues addressed by staff at Headquarters which can then disseminate information rather than duplicating capacity at various Regional Offices.

As previously expressed, we do not support the request for another independent review such as those asked for under the Synthesis of Evaluations Report, as we question the time and cost implications, as well as expected outcomes and the value the Organization will gain from such a review.

We are open to independent evaluations but need to make sure that they will provide timely and useful information in a way that cost benefits.

Sra. Maria Del Lourdes CRUZ TRINIDAD (México)

Se agradece esta síntesis de evaluaciones y apoyamos los progresos en la mejora de la coherencia de los programas nacionales a través de la adopción de los marcos de programación por países.

No obstante, consideramos positiva la recomendación número dos, relativa a la adopción de medidas para mejorar la calidad y eficacia de los marcos de programación por países, así como su coherencia con las prioridades institucionales en los países.

Asimismo, apoyamos la recomendación 3 en cuanto a proporcionar a las oficinas descentralizadas de los medios necesarios con el fin de contar con recursos humanos competentes; todo ello para que apoyen en el logro de los objetivos de la institución.

Mr Gaafar Ahmed ABDALLAH OMER (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

There are valuable efforts made and huge amounts of money spent. However, I do believe that we can reduce the efforts and achieve cost efficiency with the money spent if we improve coordination, namely coordination between the offices and the ministries in the relevant countries, particularly the Ministry of Agriculture.

This can promote the design of projects which can then be submitted for adoption. This is one way of coordinating. There is yet another way of coordinating with the organizations dealing with agriculture, nutrition, and other organizations such as WFP, IFAD and others.

There are also local organizations dealing with these issues. Thus it would be beneficial to coordinate the efforts of all of these organizations which would improve the efficiency, reduce the money spent on these activities, and produce cost effective activities.

We believe that the Organization would bring about huge benefits through coordination with the Ministers for Agriculture and other relevant organizations. I believe the Regional Offices should promote their coordination with the Ministers for Agriculture in order to design some projects before their adoption.

Ms Cecilia NORDIN VAN GANSBERGHE (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

Thank you very much and also thank you to Afghanistan who as usual has a very firm grasp of the situation. I just wanted to say that this, it says synthesis of evaluations, but it is more of a sort of an evaluation on its own, and what we do in the Programme Committee that we have a plan of evaluations that we discuss, that Management proposes and we discuss and then we follow that plan.

This document was not in that plan and we were hoping for a short desk study and I really do think that this was our request and I think that that is something that would be very useful to all of us because what was produced here was useful if I listened to the views of Members, however it was not integrated into any plan of evaluations or documents.

So I do hope that we will be able to get this short study to identify critical common areas because I believe that could be very, very useful for our future work of structuring advice to FAO Management.

Mr Masahiro IGARASHI (Director, Office of Evaluation)

I think most of the questions are for the Deputy Director-General to answer because it's about the implementation and the conclusions of the Report's Recommendations in your hands, whether you call for an independent review or not, whether you send this to Conference or not. But I just want to thank you for your comments and will wait to see what we can do for the information needs that were expressed.

Mr Daniel J. GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General, Operations)

We appreciate very much the comments. As you have discussed not only in this session but in the earlier sessions as well, decentralization for us really has the sense of improving the results and impact of FAO's work at the country level in changes that can be identified, quantified and shown through evidence of changes in line with what we are hoping to achieve in the Strategic Framework and our Objectives.

The decentralization needs to be seen in that broader context as does the allocation of resources and the human resource skill mix and so on in light of that objective of improving our results and impact. All of these recommendations and the analysis in the document actually I think point to that, and we really very much welcome it.

The three Recommendations as inserted in the Management Response. We are looking forward to the Independent Review. With regard to CPFs and their improvement, that is in fact ongoing work in it relates to some of the changes that we have seen in the previous session and adjusting where at Headquarters that support goes. Also at the regional and subregional level, how they support countries, but primarily we are now in this current round of the new Country Programming Frameworks of which this year there will be over 50. All of those will be harmonized with the larger planning processes of the new Strategic Framework which they were not earlier on and I think we look forward to very interesting results in that regard.

We need to keep in mind of course that at the country level what we are planning is always a combination of interests and priorities of what we would like to achieve globally using our common objectives, outputs and outcomes together with what the governments and other UN partners are doing so that we are harmonized within the country.

Since almost all of the activities that are carried out in the country are funded by voluntary contributions, it also has to be harmonized with the source of funding that is not decided in the same way as the Regular Programme budget. So it is inevitably a complicated task to prepare a Country Programming Framework that is in fact useful for a multiyear period, but that really is the interesting part of the challenge and I think that is captured very well in the document.

With regard to the skill mix, we welcome that very much at the country and Regional Office level. We are, as we have been discussing at this venue and other governing bodies for a long time, moving much more towards cross-cutting issues rather than strictly disciplinary lines. The resource mix requires however, as it does at headquarters, highly qualified disciplinary specialists who are able to work in a cross-disciplinary manner and that is a challenge both in the Regional Offices as it is at Headquarters.

At the country offices, one of the key roles of the office is in fact coordination with others. We often chair the food security or agriculture or agricultural development meeting together often with donors, often on a rotating basis, and the Ministries that work on areas like nutrition of which there are many, not just Ministries of Agriculture. We also play a coordinating role together with others in the government on that, which is key.

Most of those resources at the country level, as I mentioned, are financed by projects with voluntary funding. Most of those resources are in fact national staff or in arrangements with local or national counterparts in research institutions, civil society, farmers' associations, NGOs and so on, together with other consultants and long-term staff and getting that mix of ideas is something that we hope we are doing better than we were in the past.

There is still a lot to be done to make that function properly and to be competitive in terms of what we can offer and I think we will get there probably over the medium term in taking more of a programme approach to how the resources are mobilized and how the individual pieces within that programme fit together as a more coherent whole.

In conclusion, we do see this synthesis as a very valuable snapshot of where we are in this process, very much a work in progress in all three of these areas because they are at the heart in fact of the wider reforms that we hope to achieve in terms of improving results and impact at the country level.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. Here are my conclusions on Item 7.

1. The Council welcomed the document on the Synthesis of Evaluations of FAO Regional and Subregional offices, as well as the views of Management on the recommendations contained therein. It noted that the full Synthesis Report was available from the Office of Evaluation.
2. The Council endorsed the document, and the three recommendations contained therein, and requested it be submitted to the Conference.
3. The Council recommended to the 39th Session of the Conference that, in respect of Recommendation 1, an independent review be undertaken and its findings be submitted, along with views of Management, to the 153rd Session of the Council (November-December 2015), through the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees.
4. The Council supported the request of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees for a further short document outlining "common critical issues" of the five Evaluations undertaken between 2009 and 2013 to be prepared for consideration by the Programme Committee.

Thank you. We have come to the end of today's business. The Council will resume its work tomorrow morning at 09.30 sharp.

The meeting rose at 19:24 hours

La séance est levée à 19 h 24

Se levanta la sesión a las 19.24

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Fifty-first Session
Cent cinquante et unième session
151.º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 23-27 March 2015
Rome, 23-27 mars 2015
Roma, 23-27 de marzo de 2015**

**THIRD PLENARY MEETING
TROISIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
TERCERA SESIÓN PLENARIA**

24 March 2015

The Third Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.43 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La troisième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 43
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la tercera sesión plenaria a las 9.43
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

Item 11. Assessment of Governance Reforms, including consideration of the Independent Review Report

Point 11. Évaluation des réformes concernant la gouvernance, y compris examen du rapport sur l'Examen indépendant

Tema 11. Evaluación de las reformas de la gobernanza, en la que se tomará en consideración el informe del examen independiente

(C 2015/25; C 2015/26)

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the Third Meeting of the 151st Session of the FAO Council to order.

The first item this morning is Item 11, *Assessment of Governance Reforms, including consideration of the Independent Review Report*. The documents before Council are the *Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms – Final Report* (C 2015/25) and the *Assessment of FAO Governance Reforms* (C 2015/26), which contains a table setting out proposed actions in response to the recommendations and suggestions made in the Final Report of the Review Team and a draft Resolution of submission to the Conference in June.

You will recall that in compliance with Action 2.74 of the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO Renewal (IPA), an Independent Review of Governance Reform was undertaken last year to carrying out an evidence-based assessment of progress in governance reforms and to identify areas for further improvement and adjustments. The final Report of the review was released on 31 December 2014.

Further to the request by the 146th Session of the Council in April 2013 that the Independent Chairperson of Council hold the oversight role of the Independent Review, informal meetings of the Regional Groups were convened to facilitate discussion among Members during the course of 2014.

Following the release of the final Report, a draft matrix was circulated to facilitate response by Members to the 16 Recommendations and “operational suggestions” contained in the Report.

During the course of two open-ended working group meetings held on 6 and 19 February 2015, Members provided clear and constructive input which led to a consolidated document which was subsequently submitted to the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees of 11 March, and is before this Session of Council today for discussion and decision before submission to the Conference for endorsement.

Following endorsement by the Conference, the proposed actions will be mainstreamed through the relevant Governing Bodies within the timeframe specified in the Assessment table.

Ladies and gentlemen, you therefore have before you two documents: document C 2015/25 which is the Report of the External Evaluation Team; and document C 2015/26 which comprises three sections: the ICC’s Foreword, a table setting out proposed actions, and a draft resolution.

Following deliberations by the Council, document C 2015/26 would be subsequently revised, if required, to reflect the recommendations of the Joint Meeting and Council prior to submission to the Conference.

I would now like to invite Mr Médi, who Chaired the Joint Meeting, to present the section of the Joint Meeting Report which deals with the Independent Review of Governance Reforms.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

I am pleased to be here with you today to present the outcome of the discussion of the Joint Meeting of the 117th Session of the Programme Committee and the 151st Session of the Finance Committee on the Assessment of Governance Reforms, including consideration of the Independent Review Report presented in document CL 151/5. My presentation is a short one. Do not look at the volume of the Report because a considerable amount of work has been done before it came to the Joint Meeting.

The Joint Meeting welcomed the Final Report of the Independent Review, and appreciated the Assessment of Governance Reforms and the effort of the Independent Chairperson of the Council and

the Secretariat in compiling the Assessment through Open-Ended Working Group meetings. The Joint Meeting noted that the Assessment of Governance Reforms fully reflected consensus reached in the Open-Ended Working Group with the exception of the proposed action for recommendation on the size of the Council, which could be more accurately expressed as follows: “there is consensus that the outstanding IPA action regarding the size and composition of the Council be suspended pending further consultation among Members to reach consensus on this issue”.

The Joint Meeting took note of views expressed on the access of Article XIV Bodies to the Governing Bodies and proposed that such Bodies approach the Independent Chairperson of the Council as needed on an *ad hoc* basis to review the inclusion of an item on the Provisional Agenda of the Council.

Finally, the Joint Meeting decided to submit a report to the Council for its endorsement to Conference.

CHAIRPERSON

I will now give the floor to the Secretariat. Mr Igarashi, Director of the Office of Evaluation, and Mr Gagnon, Secretary-General of the Council.

Mr Masahiro IGARASHI (Director, Office of Evaluation)

I will speak on document C 2015/25, the *Final Report of the Independent Review of the Governance Reforms*. At the 158th Session of the Council you were presented with a draft report of this Independent Review of the Governance Reforms, you discussed the document and provided guidance on a number of points.

Today I will only highlight the differences between the document that you have discussed before and the Final Report in front of you. The Independent Review Team has finalized the Report in response to your guidance.

First, in line with the concerns expressed by the Council, the Review Team further reviewed the mandates of individual Governing Bodies and ensured the coherence of the Report's analysis with the mandates.

Second, concern was expressed on the recommendation to bring in external expertise as undermining the trust dividend achieved. The Review Team clarified that this recommendation concerned only technical advice on results indicators and was only optional when the Council solves issues.

Third, concern was also expressed on the proposal to set up a process to decide upon a biennial priority theme as duplicating with the priority setting process, that the Governing Bodies are already engaged in. The Review Team therefore clarified the concept by calling this ‘biennial theme’ which is to be selected within identified priorities and to be discussed by all levels of Governing Bodies to ensure impact.

Fourth, reflecting views expressed on the issue of the size of the Council, the Review Team now recommends freezing the issue instead of closing it.

Finally, also reflecting the views of the Council, the Review Team revisited the role and the mandate of the Committee on Commodity Problems.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Mr Igarashi has summarized the content of the report and I would like to recall for Members the process that was followed. This Independent Review was foreseen back in 2007, when the Report of the Independent External Evaluation was published.

In the IEE report, there was a request that after six years the Council should assess the Governance Reforms, and this was translated in the Immediate Plan of Action by Action 2.74 which provides that “the Conference will assess the workings of the governance reforms”.

The Council at its 146th and 148th Sessions asked the Secretariat to make proper arrangements in order to implement the Independent Review which, as you know, took place during 2014. The process was strictly and essentially Members-driven and took place throughout 2014. Two reviewers were selected

and the Independent Chairperson of Council called informal meetings of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Regional Groups to oversee the review process.

A draft report came out in September 2014, which Council reviewed at its 150th Session in December 2014. Council provided comments which, as Mr Igarashi explained, were taken on board in the final report which was published in early 2015.

Following that, the Independent Chairperson of Council called two Open-Ended Working Groups, which were very well-attended, on 6 and on 19 February 2015.

In his letter of January 2015, the Independent Chairperson of Council explained that only the issues for which there was a clear consensus would go to the Conference in June 2015, and they are reflected in the draft resolution appended to document C 2015/26. All other issues would be mainstreamed through the standing Governing Body mechanisms, and would unfold during the period 2016-17 and be considered by the Conference in June 2017.

This matter was reviewed by the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees in March 2015. A number of recommendations were made which will be reflected in the document that will be submitted to the Conference in June. This document will also comprise the comments made by this Session of the Council, allowing the Conference to proceed with the assessment that was foreseen in Action 2.74.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

I would like to speak on one aspect regarding Recommendation 2 on Council's oversight function. We fully appreciate the significant work and consultation that has been undergone to get us to this point on the proposed responses to these Recommendations. However, I feel that Recommendation 2 deals with the importance of results-based information. At the moment, what has come out of the Open-Ended Working Group was a proposed action to partially accept the Recommendation. I feel strongly that Council should fully accept this Recommendation, so I would propose to change that to 'Recommendation accepted'.

In the Open-Ended Working Group there was a discussion about the issue of outside expertise. What I would propose is to also change in the proposed action, in the second paragraph that says "There is broad agreement that outside expertise should not be sought, although it could be considered as an option for specific matters".

What I propose to change is one single word: where it says "outside expertise should not be sought", I propose to change from 'sought' to 'required', so it would read "should not be required, although it can be considered as an option for specific matters".

I think that would be an accurate reflection of where we have come out on this matter. And importantly, having the Recommendation accepted is a strong signal that we all agree that this Council and other Governing Bodies really do need to be provided with results-based information to make good decisions and provide good guidance to the Organization. So I put my proposal before the Council.

Sr. David TROYA (Ecuador)

El Ecuador ha tomado la palabra para cederla a la Representación de Nicaragua que intervendrá en nombre del GRULAC.

Sra. Monica ROBELO RAFFONE (Observador de Nicaragua)

Realizo esta intervención en nombre de los países de América Latina y el Caribe. El GRULAC ha acogido con satisfacción la presentación del Informe final del Examen Independiente de las Reformas de la Gobernanza de la FAO, realizado en cumplimiento de lo establecido en el Plan inmediato de acción, como insumo necesario para que los Estados Miembros realicen la evaluación de dichas reformas en el año 2015.

El mencionado Informe del Examen Independiente reconoce que los progresos han sido considerables y que la casi totalidad de las medidas pertinentes del PIA se han aplicado.

Además, el informe señala que las definiciones de las responsabilidades y el flujo de trabajo de los Órganos Rectores están más claras, sus reuniones son más eficientes y el sentido de responsabilidad de la Secretaría ante los Miembros se ha reforzado.

Nos congratulamos que, como se indica en dicho documento, se ha restablecido la confianza entre los Miembros y la Secretaría, y entre los propios Miembros.

Con relación a las medidas pendientes del PIA, y a las recomendaciones y sugerencias realizadas por el equipo independiente para la mejora en ciertos aspectos de la gobernanza, el grupo de América Latina y el Caribe respalda el documento C 2015/26, que es el resultado del consenso alcanzado en las 12 reuniones del grupo de trabajo de composición abierta. Al propio tiempo, queremos reconocer el liderazgo del Presidente independiente del Consejo que facilitó a los Estados alcanzar dicho consenso.

Asimismo, respaldamos la precisión realizada en la reunión conjunta del Comité del Programa y del Comité de Finanzas respecto a la recomendación 4, mediante la cual se ajusta el texto al consenso alcanzado en las reuniones del grupo de trabajo.

Además, considerando la importancia que tienen los órganos establecidos en virtud del artículo XIV y su contribución para alcanzar los objetivos estratégicos y metas de la FAO, el GRULAC apoya la propuesta de la reunión conjunta (párrafo 10b del informe), para que tales órganos se dirijan al Presidente independiente del Consejo, según fuera necesario, y con carácter especial con miras a incluir un tema en el programa provisional del Consejo.

Finalmente, queremos señalar que esta evaluación de la reforma de la gobernanza coincide con la etapa de reforma que ha emprendido el Director General, y estamos seguros que la sinergia entre ambos aspectos contribuirá a tener una Organización más eficiente y alcanzar los objetivos de erradicación del hambre y la pobreza.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Afghanistan expressed its views on the independent Review Report of FAO Governance Reforms at the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees in King Faisal Room on 5 November 2014. In the 150th Session of the Council held in December 2014 Afghanistan spoke on the same subject on behalf of the Near East Group. We have nothing to add. We endorse the final report and would like to thank the two independent consultants, Dr Maxine Olson and Ms Nadia Hijab, for the good work done with the support from OED.

On behalf of the Near East Group, Afghanistan submitted written comments on the Matrix covering the 16 Recommendations and the 7 suggestions as stated in the Assessment of FAO Governance Reforms. The Near East Group took active part in the discussions of the informal OEWG on Governance Reform held on 6 February and again on 19 February. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Near East Group took part in your informal consultations with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Regional Groups on this matter.

Afghanistan has nothing more to add or subtract from the latest version of the Assessment on FAO's Governance Reforms. We accept it as it stands. We also agree with the text of the draft Conference Resolution on the Assessment of the Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms. We support suspending IPA Action 4.4 on the size and composition of the Council and IPA Action 2.100 on desirable qualifications of the office of the Director-General.

If, and I hope, the 151th Session of the Council agrees to recommend to the 39th FAO Conference a budget level, then item 2 of the draft Resolution (IPA Action 2.18) has to be removed and in the Assessment the language of the proposed action regarding Recommendation 3 has to be altered.

Thank you Chairperson for your personal contribution in this effort and we also wish to thank Mr Louis Gagnon and his able staff for helping you in bringing this matter to a fruitful end.

Mr Yohannes TENSUE (Eritrea)

Eritrea is taking the floor on behalf of the Africa Group. We welcome the Independent Report and thank the Independent Reviewers, especially for the 16 Recommendations and 12 'Nuts and Bolts' proposals. We wish to highlight the following.

We congratulate and commend FAO for having implemented 99 out of the 102 IPA Actions. We are convinced that all the Actions would have been implemented by the time that the evaluation was undertaken, if it was not because of the high sensitivity associated with the remaining three actions.

We note that there still exists lack of clarity around the scope of the Regional Conference functions. This is a cause for concern that needs urgent redress, given the increased role of the Regional Conference in the FAO Governance.

Recommendation 2, as one of the ‘Nuts and Bolts’ call on Council to consider engaging independent expertise regarding results-based information for oversight. We believe that more focus should be directed at building internal FAO capacity for sustainability instead of continuing to opt for external consultancies.

The most recent engagements have demonstrated that the Council still has a very important role to play regarding building consensus on the level of the budget to recommend to the Conference. In that regard, we find it difficult to support Recommendation 3, to close discussion on the budget level.

For Recommendation 4, the Africa Group propose that rather than close the discussions on the size and composition of the Council, Membership should suspend the recommendation and continue dialogue under the chairmanship of the Independent Chair of the Council, given the importance of the subject.

Regarding Recommendation 5, the Africa Group expects that all functions and activities of the ICC should be financed from the FAO Regular Budget as long as they are assigned and approved by a FAO Governing Body.

While Recommendation 7 indicates that some members could act as volunteers to track working methods and agendas, we consider that more information is required regarding such a volunteer group with implications within the FAO legal framework.

For Recommendation 12, the Africa Group propose that the Regional Conferences (RC) should have Drafting Committees derived from membership to prepare RC reports, follow-up and coordinate implementation of Regional priorities, in liaison with the Regional Conference Chair.

Regarding Recommendation 14, the Africa Group is not in favour of discontinuing MYPOWs for Technical Committees and Regional Conferences. We believe that they are still important tools for planning and future performance monitoring.

With these comments, the Africa Group endorses the report.

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

Italy would like to leave the floor to Latvia as current president of the Council of the European Union.

Ms Elina GRINPAUKA-PETETENA (Observer for Latvia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate country to the EU, Turkey, aligns itself with this statement.

First of all, we would like to thank the Independent Review Team for its thorough work. The Final Report of the Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms has been improved following the last Council, and its content is rich and useful.

The report has proved to be a good basis for constructive dialogue among the Member Nations, and with the Secretariat on the important issue of the continuous improvement of our Organisation's governance. This dialogue has been led in the context of the Open-ended Working Group on the Assessment of Governance Reforms (OEWG) convened by the Independent Chairperson of the Council.

Under the guidance of the ICC, whom we thank, and with the support of the Secretariat, the OEWG has been able to propose actions for each recommendation, which are described in the “table setting out proposed actions” of the Assessment of FAO Governance Reforms (C 2015/26).

As already stated, the EU and its Member States are strongly committed to the spirit of trust and confidence between FAO Members and with the Secretariat, leading to dynamic, effective and efficient Governing Bodies. That is why we can accept these proposals as the best possible way forward at present.

We are also ready to endorse the proposed resolution for the Conference. Rest assured that we are fully committed to continuing the dialogue and are ready to engage in further consultations where necessary to ensure that, together, we provide the best in governance for FAO, continuing to improve effectiveness, transparency and accountability for results of our Organization.

Ms María Laura DA ROCHA (Brazil)

Brazil would like to thank all those engaged in the process of reviewing FAO Governance Reforms, in particular you, Mr Chairperson, who personally called informal meetings, in order to achieve consensus on the responses to the Recommendations and suggestions made by the Independent Review.

The reform of FAO governance has been a long and challenging process and its successful outcomes rely on the engagement of all Members, evaluators and Management. We all agree that the ultimate goal of this process is to increase the efficiency, effectiveness and credibility of the Organization. Even though the implementation of this goal requires permanent actions, Brazil is of the view that this cycle of Reviews and Reforms, in particular the IPA, should be closed in order to avoid the risk of “paralysis by review”, as it is said in the document C 2015/26. The same applies for the establishing of other cycles of reviews in the near future.

Brazil has participated in the informal consultation process and, therefore, subscribes the content of the actions proposed in the Assessment. Brazil also aligns itself with the position stated by GRULAC including the one regarding paragraph 10 b) of the Report of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees. Nevertheless, we would like to emphasize that the consensus achieved on the suspension of two of the remaining IPA actions must be understood in light of a broader consensus according to which “a huge and necessary effort has been put in place, but now it’s time for implementation and delivery of concrete results”.

This being said, Brazil welcomes the Independent Review Report contained in document C 2015/25, supports the action proposed in document C 2015/26 in response to the Recommendations and suggestions contained in the Review and agrees with the text of the proposed draft for a Conference Resolution on this agenda item.

Mr Jianmin XIE (China) (Original language Chinese)

China would like to thank the Secretariat for the submission of the Report and the Assessment of Governance Reform. Since the end of 2013, the Independent Review Team, in response to the IPA requirement, has conducted a great amount of studies and evaluations on the functions of Governing Bodies like Conference, Council, Programme Committee, Finance Committee and their Joint Meetings, CCLM, Technical Committees, Regional Conferences, as well as Article XIV bodies.

The Chinese Delegation is of the view that this assessment is appropriate with 16 excellent Recommendations and we hope that the Review Team will further modify and complete the report and submit it to the Conference for consideration.

Mr Osamu KUBOTA (Japan)

We would just like to make a brief comment after listening to the Delegation of Australia. We totally agree to Australia’s view on Recommendation 2. The current wording “outside expertise should not be sought” is too strong, so we support Australia’s addition to modify ‘sought’ to ‘required’. With that, we can accept this Recommendation.

Ms Natalie BROWN (Unites States of America)

The United States adds its voice to those Delegations who have spoken favourably about the review process and particularly Europe for its efforts to facilitate discussion and consensus on the Recommendations.

Like Japan, we would like to lend our support to Australia's recommendation to change the word 'sought' with 'required'. I think everyone who participated in the Open-Ended Working Group will recall that in our discussions the concern about the language in the proposed Recommendation was that it undermined the expertise that exists in this Organization. I think saying that outside expertise should not be required makes it clear that when there are questions about issues, Members first want to seek the vast knowledge and experience of staff members here at FAO before turning to outside resources, and we believe 'required' conveys that much better than 'sought'.

Mr Kang Kook KIM (Republic of Korea)

The Republic of Korea would like to express our appreciation to the Independent Chairperson of the Council, the Secretariat, the Independent Review Team for their effort in preparing the final report of the Independent Review of Governance Reforms. We also commend the Open-ended Working Group on the Assessment of the Governance Reform for reviewing the recommendations and suggestions made by the Independent Review Team and proposing actions for each of the recommendations and suggestions.

With regard to Recommendation 1 on the review of global policy coherence and regulatory frameworks, which is in line with the key message 2 on FAO's international function, we support the idea of identifying a biennial theme to increase focus on the selected global issues. In addition, we recognize that Recommendation 4 on the size of Council has been revised from the previous report, and agree that the outstanding IPA action should be suspended to achieve a satisfactory solution.

While congratulating FAO's considerable progress in governance reform and keeping in mind that reform is an on-going process, we encourage FAO to proceed with appropriate follow-up actions to maximize impact of the government reform process.

Lastly, we endorse the draft resolution for submission to the 39th Conference.

Mr Vimlendra SHARAN (India)

At the outset, let me commend you for the hard work that you have put in and your leadership to reach this consensus, but I take the floor on the simple issue of Recommendation 2 where I would like to lend my voice in support along with Japan and the United States to the proposal from Australia.

I find that this Recommendation is made of two parts. One is a principle part of the Recommendation which deals with the critical requirement results-based information for Governing Bodies to exercise effective guidance. That is the main recommendation.

The other part is about the modality as to whether you should hire an outside expert or not and I think the membership differed on the modality part. When we put a partial acceptance of the Recommendation, it gives a feeling as if we are partially accepting even the main part of the Recommendation, which is not true.

So I would go along with Australia to take this as an accepted recommendation and change the word 'sought' to 'required' in the last sentence.

Mr Muhammad Hashim POPALZAI (Pakistan)

We would like first of all to appreciate the Secretariat for today's presentation and we would like to put on record our appreciation of the efforts of the Independent Chairperson of the Council in convening an Open-Ended Working Group for the review of the Final Report of the Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms.

The Open-Ended Working Group's review and discussions resulted in a consensus being reached for the implementation of the recommendations. This consensus is reflected in the second document before us, namely the Assessment of FAO's Governance Reforms.

This document has been reviewed by the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees and we endorsed the Joint Meeting's report.

M. Moungui MÉDI (Président du Comité financier)

J'ai suivi avec attention les interventions des Membres sur la revue de la gouvernance de la FAO et nous sommes heureux de savoir que le travail qui a été fait par l'ensemble des Membres sous le leadership du Président indépendant du Conseil a été bien accueilli. Je tiens à souligner combien le Président indépendant du Conseil a été efficace dans la manière de diriger les débats. Je crois que toutes les suggestions du rapport ont été acceptées telles quelles, y compris la recommandation révisée telle que proposée par la réunion conjointe.

Maintenant, il y a devant vous, Monsieur le Président indépendant du Conseil, la suggestion de l'Australie qui a été soutenue par beaucoup d'autres Membres. Il vous revient certainement de savoir comment l'intégrer avec les raisons supplémentaires apportées par l'Inde. Je pense que nous sommes prêts à aller dans la direction que vous voulez bien donner à cette discussion.

Cependant, je pense pouvoir dire que les consultants qui ont été recrutés pour faire ce travail ont également fait du bon travail. Nous avons suivi ces consultants de bout en bout et peut-être que dans le rapport de notre Conseil, il vous reviendra l'honneur de leur présenter les félicitations du Conseil, libre à vous, dans ce contexte précis. Nous restons donc ouverts pour écouter vos conclusions sur la proposition de l'Australie.

CHAIRPERSON

I want to thank all Members for the effort and time you put into this work. I remember when we started, we did not think that we were going to finish. But I did not want to delay the work and wait and you accepted my push.

The Regional Groups worked very hard and when they came to the Open-Ended Working meetings, they spoke as groups and the discussions were so friendly, open and focused to see that governing bodies now perform effectively and efficiently.

The comments made today go around with the discussions we have had and I can accept Australia's proposal because this is a very important issue, and it was supported by others.

Afghanistan, thank you very much for all of your comments and your work. You know that the issue of the level of the budget is like a moving target which you cannot shoot. Today, hopefully we will have a level of the budget and then we will change what you have suggested.

If in the next biennium we do not reach an agreement on that, we will have to go to the Conference. I think the best way is to leave the rule as it is now for the moment and see how it progresses because the Recommendation still allows Council Members to discuss the level of the budget. If it happens that you agree, that is good, but this should not entail that the Council has always to recommend to the Conference the level of the budget. If the Council failed to agree on the level of the budget, that would be not right.

I thank Eritrea for their comments but I think what you have submitted would call for another meeting of the Open-Ended Group.

I would like to make my conclusions as follows:

1. The Council welcomed the final Report of the Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms (C 2015/25), and expressed appreciation for the input made by the Open-ended Working Group and for the work of the Independent Chairperson of the Council in compiling the Assessment of FAO Governance Reforms table in document C 2015/26.
2. The Council took note of views expressed on Article XIV bodies contained in the Report of the Joint Meeting of the 117th Session of the Programme Committee and the 157th Session of the Finance Committee.
3. The Council endorsed the proposed Recommendations and Actions in Section II of the Assessment of Governance Reforms, including the amendment to Recommendation 4 proposed by the Joint Meeting, and decided to submit them and the draft Resolution in Section III to the Conference for approval.

4. The Council also decided that the following changes be made to the Assessment table: the proposed action under Recommendation 2 should read “Recommendation accepted” and that the word “sought” be replaced by “required” in the same section.

Those are my conclusions. Regarding the appreciation and acknowledgement to the two consultants, I mention that in my foreword to document C 2015/26.

**Item 15. Follow-up to the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)
(Rome, 19-21 November 2014)**

**Point 15. Suite donnée à la deuxième Conférence internationale sur la nutrition (CIN2)
(Rome, 19-21 novembre 2014)**

**Tema 15. Seguimiento de la Segunda Conferencia Internacional sobre Nutrición (CIN2)
(Roma, 19-21 de noviembre de 2014)**

(CL 151/9)

CHAIRPERSON

We now move on to item 15, *Follow-up to the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)* which was held in Rome from 19 to 20 November 2014. Please ensure you have document CL 151/9 before you.

I now invite Mr Jomo Sundaram, Assistant Director-General of the Economic and Social Development Department, to introduce this item.

Mr Jomo SUNDARAM (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Development Department)

I am pleased to introduce document CL 151/9 on the Follow-up to the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), jointly convened by FAO and WHO in November last year.

You will recall that the outcome of ICN2 was reported to the last session of Council in December 2014, right after the Conference. This document covers the steps made in following up on ICN2 since your last session. During this short period of time, various follow-up actions have been taken, both within and beyond the Organization, in response to the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and its companion Framework for Action.

Within FAO, action taken by the Secretariat include the following measures.

Designation of nutrition as a cross-cutting theme under Objective 6 in the reviewed Strategic Framework, with a dedicated Outcome in the proposed Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-17 aimed to further mainstream nutrition throughout FAO’s work, while enhancing support provided to Member Nations at country level;

Identification of priority activities to be carried out by FAO over the course of 2015 and during the next biennium in support of the ICN2 outcomes, primarily at country level, mainly in the following areas: (a) creating an enabling environment for effective action on nutrition; (b) sustainable food systems promoting healthy diets; (c) trade and investment for nutrition; (d) nutrition education and information; (e) mainstreaming nutrition in social protection; (f) mainstreaming biodiversity in nutrition policies, programmes and action plans;

Fundraising efforts through operationalization of the Action for Nutrition Trust Fund, in order to support governments in transforming the ICN2 commitments into concrete actions, by financing nutrition enhancing programmes and projects. FAO is also encouraging resource partners to contribute to the Fund through their regular funding cycles and other special measures. As with the funding kindly provided for the organization of ICN2, it is hoped that, generous voluntary contributions will also be made to help implement ICN2 commitments and recommendations to efficiently address the challenges of malnutrition worldwide;

Strengthening the Nutrition Division, through the allocation of additional resources and the creation of a Programme Coordination Unit, to enhance its capacity to perform greater tasks in terms of its expanded work on nutrition and its new planning and operation functions in support of the Action for Nutrition Trust Fund;

Ensuring regular reporting on ICN2 follow-up to the FAO Governing Bodies, including Council, Conference, Regional Conferences and Technical Committees.

Beyond FAO, follow-up activities undertaken collaboratively with partners have included the following.

The request made by the Directors-General of FAO and WHO to the Secretary General of the United Nations to arrange for the UN General Assembly: (a) to endorse the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Framework for Action; and (b) to consider declaring a Decade of Action on Nutrition from 2016 to 2025. To facilitate this process, FAO and WHO are working, in consultation with other agencies and stakeholders, on the substantive content of the proposed Decade of Action on Nutrition, with clearly defined activities to be carried out at international, regional and national levels;

Efforts made to improve UN System coordination and collaboration on nutrition, based on strengthening existing mechanisms. In this context, steps to enable the Committee on World Food Security to serve as the appropriate global forum on nutrition are to be further considered, in particular through the CFS Multiyear Programme of Work process;

In cooperation with other UN partners, FAO is working on the development of a coherent mechanism for monitoring progress on implementation of the ICN2 outcomes. It will also continue to collaborate with relevant partners for preparation of the annual Global Nutrition Report;

With a view to reflecting ICN2 outcomes into the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition has developed, with inputs from FAO, WHO and other UN agencies, a policy paper highlighting potential areas for inclusion of nutrition in the proposed Sustainable Development Goals, with specific nutrition indicators.

Finally, dedicated to “feeding the planet, energy for life”, Expo Milano 2015 will be used to promote and amplify the food security and nutrition messages of ICN2.

Mr Mafizur RAHMAN (Bangladesh)

Bangladesh is delivering this Statement on behalf of the Asia Group on Follow-up to the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2). The Asia Group would like to thank further both FAO and WHO for the successful completion of the ICN2.

We would like to recognize and appreciate the immediate actions taken by FAO in response to the Rome Declaration and Framework for action and guidance from the 150th Session of FAO Council. The Asia Group appreciates and welcomes the mainstreaming of nutrition within the Strategic Framework as nutrition has been included as a cross-cutting theme within the reviewed Medium Term Plan 2014-17. We support the steps to ensure the outcomes under Objective 6 on Technical Quality, Knowledge and Service. We expect that these outcomes will provide indicators and resources for overall technical leadership of FAO’s work on nutrition.

The Asia Group supports the initiatives taken by FAO such as creating an enabling environment for effective action on nutrition through technical assistance to countries; and strengthening the capacity development effort in mainstreaming nutrition in sectoral policies. We appreciate the collaboration initiated with regional champions like the Africa Union on nutrition and expect this kind of collaboration will be expanded throughout the globe in due course.

We appreciate the initiative to support countries in the review and update of their food and agriculture policies, strategies, investment plans and programmes with the aim of better integrating nutrition objectives for sustainable food systems promoting healthy diets.

It is in this initiative that we believe FAO has a prominent comparative advantage to other international organizations. As well reflected in the Recommendations from 8 to 16, in the ‘Framework for Action’, strengthening agriculture and food production, diversification of crops and establishing effective food supply chains could contribute to achieving healthy diets. We believe FAO can achieve its maximum performance when working based on ‘food based approach’ and ‘nutrition sensitive agriculture’ in tacking with nutrition issue. In the Implementation, Public Private Partnership is key to facilitate process.

The Asia Group finds a proposed action to provide countries with information and analysis to guide formulation and implementation of trade and investment policies supportive of improved consumption pattern and nutritional status with reference to principles for RAI. We appreciate the partnership already built up for mainstreaming nutrition into National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) for African countries and we expect that this initiative will be extended in other regions.

The Asia Group is very supportive of the initiatives to see how FAO will strengthen and expand its work in nutrition, education and information by identifying and promoting appropriate policies and options and packages tools aiming healthy diets. We are keenly interested to see how FAO can contribute countries mainstream nutrition in social protection and resilience building under Strategic Objectives 3 and 5.

We look forward to seeing the effectiveness of the school food and nutrition strategies and programmes to improve child nutrition by integrating nutrition education into sustainable school meal programmes and linking local agriculture. In this regard the Asia Group propose to give proper attention to locally produced food, fruits, vegetables and small fish which contain sufficient nutrients.

We further welcome the initiatives for establishment of a Nutrition Trust Fund and formation of a Programme Coordination Unit (PCU). We expect that all these initiatives will contribute to a better delivery in the field. We also welcome the initiatives of presenting ICN2 follow-up reports to Governing Bodies. We thank FAO and WHO for publishing the final report on ICN2 within two months in January 2015. We expect that UN General Assembly will endorse the Rome Declaration and Framework for Action and will declare a decade of action on Nutrition from 2016 to 2025.

The Asia Group strongly supports that CFS should serve as the appropriate intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder global forum on nutrition as it has the mandate on food security as nutrition.

We appreciated FAO's role in collaborating with UN Bodies and other international organization in the preparation of the annual Global Nutrition Report. However, we believe that the report on nutrition should be biannual in order to have a clear picture of changes in the nutrition sector..

The Asia Group welcomes the initiative of linking the ICN2 follow-up actions to Expo Milano and expects that it will reinforce coherence, synergies and alignments between two events for a sustainable food systems to promote healthy diets.

Finally, the Asia Group supports the ongoing and proposed actions contained in the document.

Mr Osamu KUBOTA (Japan)

We support the comment made by Bangladesh on behalf of the Asia Group. ICN2 was held last year and Japan recognizes that the implementation if the ICN2 outcomes is of urgent importance. In this regard, we welcome the initial follow-up actions made by the ICN2 Secretariat.

What we need to consider next is in what area FAO can contribute effectively to this broad agenda. We understand that the key to maximizing FAO's performance is identifying its focus, avoiding duplication of other international organization's mandates, and seeking collaboration with them. In this sense, selecting five areas directly related to FAO's mandate from the 14 sections of the Framework for Action with some directions is a good starting point.

At the same time, we would like to point out the following to enhance effectiveness of FAO's contribution to the nutrition issue.

Firstly, regarding the area "Nutrition Education and Information", in paragraph 17 it is said that "FAO will strengthen and expand its work in nutrition information and education." This sentence confuses us because the proposed Programme of Work and Budget we discussed yesterday under item 3 de-emphasizes nutrition education curricular development and some food composition work in paragraph 75(i). We would like the Secretariat to provide a clear explanation on this inconsistency and to clarify the role of FAO avoiding duplication of other organizations' mandates such as UNICEF.

Secondly, under the area "Sustainable food systems promoting healthy diet", we believe FAO can achieve maximum performance because in this Framework for Action the recommendations in this area are regarding local food production and processing, crop diversification and food value chains.

We expect FAO to take leadership in this area and request the Secretariat to envisage concrete direction of work and report it in the next follow-up session.

In addition, regarding the area “Social Protection”, we would like the Secretariat to provide more information on the field under which FAO has or does not have comparative advantage.

Lastly, we would like to clarify that the Decade of Action for Nutrition will be considered within the existing structure and available resources in accordance with the Rome Declaration. Therefore, we would like the Secretariat to explain the process of discussion on this draft declaration within FAO.

Mr Jianmin XIE (China) (Original language Chinese)

We would like to thank the Secretariat for this Report. China supports the declaration made by Bangladesh on behalf of the Asia Group.

Last year, FAO and WHO convened the ICN2, which was very successful. Our Delegation highly praises and appreciates the ICN2 outcomes. We support FAO and WHO in taking follow-up actions to promote that UN General Assembly accept the ICN2 outcome documents and also declare 2016-2025 as the Decade of Action on Nutrition. We are going to see Nutrition as an important item in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

We support FAO in designating nutrition as a cross-cutting theme under Objective 6 in FAO's Strategic Framework. We agree with the proposal to set up a Trust Fund for Nutrition, and we back up FAO's efforts to improve inter-agency coordination and collaboration in nutrition. In particular, setting up monitoring and reporting mechanisms so that we can see how parties involved can be accountable.

M. Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italie)

L'Italie voudrait donner la parole à la Lettonie, en tant que Présidente actuelle du Conseil de l'Union européenne.

Ms Elina GRINPAUKA-PETETENA (Observer for Latvia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate country to the EU, Turkey, aligns itself with this statement.

The EU and its Member States welcome the FAO report on the follow-up to the Second International Conference on Nutrition, held in Rome in November 2014.

The document before us outlines a number of steps taken after ICN2, within and beyond FAO, towards the implementation of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and of the Framework for Action. Having been the main supporters of last year's Conference, we wish to reassert our full commitment to its goals and recommended actions.

We acknowledge, in particular, the efforts made by FAO to promote and mainstream nutrition across its renewed Strategic Framework. We support the inclusion of nutrition as a cross-cutting theme in the proposed Programme of Work and Budget 2016-2017 and we are pleased with the prioritization of resources therein. We underline the need to reinforce FAO's capacity to work on nutrition, both in the field and in headquarters where the Organization's strength and coherence lies.

The establishment by FAO of the “Action for Nutrition Trust Fund” was endorsed by the Council at its last session in December 2014. We would like to know more about the prospects of such a Fund, particularly the actions FAO is undertaking to secure commitments from members. More generally, we would appreciate receiving more information on financial implications and sources of funding for the different measures outlined in the document.

The EU and its Member States wish to commend FAO for establishing concrete linkages with other UN organizations with regard to nutrition. We firmly support FAO's intention to work towards an enhanced coordination within the UN System; the High Level Task Force on Food Security, the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition and the Committee on World Food Security, as well as the Scaling-Up Nutrition movement (SUN), could be instrumental in this regard.

We also acknowledge concrete nutrition-related initiatives by FAO such as the support for the CFS Responsible Agricultural Investments recommendation on nutritional value of food, the development of dietary guidelines with WHO, the direct involvement in promoting school nutrition strategies and the good use of the opportunity offered by Expo Milan 2015 to amplify and disseminate the ICN2 messages to a broader public. In this regard, we would also like to express our general appreciation for the effective role of FAO in leading the UN/Expo Team as mandated by the UN Secretary General.

With regard to information on nutrition for consumers, we would like to point out that, in order to be consistent with the Rome Declaration, FAO should ALSO work in collaboration with research bodies on improving easy-to-understand nutrition information for consumers rather than on nutrition labelling, as it is proposed in the FAO report.

Future prospects in nutrition at the global level are of high importance to us. The FAO report makes reference to the actions jointly undertaken by FAO and WHO towards the endorsement of the ICN2 outcome documents by the UN General Assembly, a more prominent role of nutrition in the Post 2015 Development Agenda and enhanced collaboration among the Rome-based Agencies in establishing an effective monitoring mechanism on nutrition, also through the Global Nutrition Report. We would also appreciate information on joint FAO/WHO activities agreed upon at the latest WHO Executive Board, such as: creating a repository of examples of country nutrition plans; developing a UN global nutrition agenda; inviting Member Nations to register their commitments related to the FFA; and preparing a biennial report to the World Health Assembly on ICN2 follow-up.

As stated during ICN2, the EU and its Member States are concerned about the substantive contents of the proposed Decade of Action on Nutrition. We would appreciate hearing about the case that has been presented to UNGA, concrete actions that will be undertaken and expected outcomes.

Finally, we believe that the global nutrition governance architecture should be streamlined and clarified, in order to ensure maximum impact to our common fight against all forms of malnutrition. We encourage FAO to work closely with all relevant UN organizations, including the other Rome-based Agencies, in enhancing the effectiveness of coordination and cooperation, as well as the synergies with major nutrition initiatives, and in fostering an inclusive approach to ICN2 implementation.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Afghanistan is making this statement on behalf of the Near East Group.

The Near East Group appreciates the way FAO has moved swiftly and softly in preparing its response strategy to the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Framework for Action. The Actions intended over the next two years are reflected in the MTP 2014-17 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17.

The Near East Group wishes to make the following ten observations.

One, it supports the decision to make Nutrition as one of the five themes that would shift the global policy environment in FAO's mandate. This is paragraph 8 and 17 of the MTP.

Two, the Near East Group welcomes the mainstreaming of Nutrition across the Reviewed Strategic Framework. The six areas of work for Nutrition as mentioned in paragraphs 245 and 246 of the Programme of Work and Budget, especially the new outcome and Objective 6 for the qualitative improvement and better coherence of work on nutrition. We also wish to emphasize the synergy between Gender and Nutrition.

Three, the Near East Group appreciates the additional allocation of USD 3.3 million for nutrition in the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17, and we note that nutrition is at the top of the eight areas of emphasis.

This additional sum, though critical, is insufficient to respond effectively to requests for assistance from developing countries, especially from countries with a large number of undernourished people. The Near East Group therefore strongly supports the creation of the Action for Nutrition Trust Fund, which will enable FAO to respond promptly and effectively to requests received for assistance.

The Near East Group concurs with the objectives of the Nutrition Trust Fund as explained in paragraph 23 of CL 151/9 to analyze the creation of the Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee. This should provide strategic guidance and the Programme Coordination Unit to support the entire ICN2 follow-up activities within FAO.

Four, the Near East Group encourages FAO to advise and assist Member Nations in the formulation of nutrition-sensitive production systems as an explicit objective of the development strategies with the proper indicators for each level.

A key factor in this process is the degree of attention to be given to crop and livestock diversification, because diversification enriches the level of iron, zinc, and vital vitamins within the production system. Thereby it reduces the micronutrient deficiency of the population. Monoculture, especially for small-holders, is a setback for a healthy diet.

Five, as advocated by UNSCN, the Near East Group consider that priority should be given to making Nutrition as an integral part of the Agenda to mitigate the effects of climate change. This is because high levels of CO₂ reduce the essential nutrients of staple food crops – wheat, rice, maize, and soybean. Thus, CGIAR and the Nature Research Centre should pay careful attention to the work.

Six, nutrition, education, information and communication should remain high on the Agenda of the Member Nations to improve Nutrition. Yet, it should be aligned with the food habits of the community. One mechanism to make rapid progress in nutrition, education and advocacy is the creation of community-based nutrition clubs in rural areas, which have been successful in some countries, especially Viet Nam.

Seven, the potential impact of food trade on health and nutrition is an important piece of the equation for nutrition improvement at country level. This is particularly so for countries that rely heavily on imported food.

In addition, urbanization coupled with the rapid rise of middle class, especially in the middle income countries, are contributing to rapid changes in the mix of food imports. FAO should take special interest with regard to middle income countries because of such developments. It should also take greater attention to the link between food trade and nutrition, of course in partnership with WTO and Codex.

Eight, the fact of enabling environment at the country level in partnership with other stakeholders is a must. Particularly, the private sector should remain the core element for action for nutrition. In this connection, the Near East Group supports the idea mentioned in paragraphs 8 to 10 of document CL 151/9, but we wish to see the application at the country level through a dialogue with stakeholders.

Point nine refers to a multi-stakeholder forum for Food Security and Nutrition. CFS is a great place for dialogue on policy coherence in addition to Nutrition and exchange of lessons learned from experience. Therefore, the topic of nutrition should remain a standing item in the Agenda of the annual CFS Session.

Point ten, the Near East Group welcomes activities, actions in support of Nutrition beyond FAO as mentioned in section 3 of document CL 151/9. Namely, the endorsement of the two final documents by the General Assembly. We back up other UN Agencies for ICN2 – WHO, UNICEF, WFP and IFAD. Funding Nutrition readily affects agriculture programmes, policy dialogue from the High-Level Task Force and the ICN2 forum.

To maintain active partnership with these and other stakeholders, the concerned units in FAO need to sharpen their criteria for commitment. FAO should improve project and programme designs with visible nutrition outcomes, and produce guidelines for the promotion of investment in nutrition sensitive activities.

Equally important is the streamlining of nutrition in the future Country Programming Framework.

Mr John NORRIS (United States of America)

The United States supports FAO's ongoing work to mainstream nutrition, an area whose subtle complexity has caused it to be overlooked in the past. We, the Members of the UN, took on the

challenge through ICN2 to elevate nutrition and reinforce our commitment to eliminate malnutrition in all its forms.

It is an important step for the world to realize that sufficient food alone will not defeat malnutrition and that year-round access to diversified healthy diets is essential to accomplishing this goal.

Therefore, we support FAO's work to help countries create robust, inclusive trade environments that provide year-round access to foods.

Still, individual choices, supported by policies and regulations, are the catalyst for improving diets. In this regard, we fully support FAO's work in nutrition information and education from national governments down to the school and household level.

The United States recognizes the steps FAO is taking to ensure an inclusive approach among nutrition stakeholders in the UN System and support continued efforts to partner and engage with these and other stakeholders to ensure coherent actions on nutrition.

We encourage FAO to leverage existing monitoring mechanisms like the Global Nutrition Report launched through the Nutrition for Growth Summit where FAO also participated rather than reinventing new monitoring mechanisms or saturating governments with more reporting requirements.

The United States would also like to recall various requests for information on what a Decade of Action on Nutrition would look like, what the financial implications would be for the organization, if the anticipated funding sources have been identified, and how the Decade of Action will align with, and not duplicate or dilute, the Sustainable Development Goals. To facilitate this request, it may be helpful to circulate the concept note that was submitted to the UN in New York.

Finally the United States appreciates FAO's efforts to maintain momentum after ICN2. We encourage the Secretariat to continue its hard and much appreciated work and to continue providing these useful updates to the Council and its sub-committees. We look forward to further updates at the Conference in June.

Sra. Gladys Francisca URBANEJA DURAN (Venezuela)

Realizaremos esta intervención en nombre del Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe (GRULAC), y agradecemos la presentación del documento CL 151/9 referente al seguimiento de la Segunda Conferencia Internacional sobre Nutrición (CIN2) celebrada en Roma del 19 al 21 de noviembre de 2014.

Nuestro grupo regional acoge con gran satisfacción las acciones realizadas por la secretaría de la FAO conjuntamente con la OMS para el cumplimiento de las decisiones tomadas por el Consejo en diciembre de 2014 durante su 150.º período de sesiones.

El grupo de América Latina y el Caribe considera como un gran impulso a la Declaración de Roma y su Marco de acción, la designación de la nutrición como tema transversal en el Objetivo 6 del Marco estratégico revisado de la FAO, y el compromiso del Director General de seguir integrando la nutrición al trabajo de esta Organización con la finalidad de mejorar la asistencia que se presta a los Estados Miembros en esta materia.

El grupo de América Latina y el Caribe cree que la creación del Fondo fiduciario para la nutrición es una importante iniciativa que nos permitirá movilizar recursos financieros adicionales para promover sistemas alimentarios sostenibles para una alimentación sana.

Al GRULAC le complace la propuesta para el envío de oficiales de nutrición a las oficinas descentralizadas, y agradecería que el Consejo por medio del Comité del Programa pueda recibir información periódica sobre las actividades de la Unidad de Coordinación del Programa y del Comité Directivo del Fondo fiduciario que se especifican en los párrafos 24, 25 y 26 del mencionado documento CL 151/9.

El GRULAC respalda las actividades que realizará la Organización en 2015 y en el bienio 2016-17, relacionadas con los 5 apartados del Marco de acción que guardan relación directa con el mandato de

la FAO en materia de creación de un entorno favorable para la nutrición, sistemas alimentarios sostenibles, comercio e inversión, educación nutricional y protección social.

Nos parece apropiado el mecanismo de seguimiento de las decisiones del la CIN2 planteado en los párrafos 27 y 28 dentro de los órganos rectores de la FAO, y asimismo creemos importante el aporte que se dará desde las conferencias regionales de la FAO para seguir avanzando en las medidas recomendadas por el la CIN2.

El grupo de América Latina y el Caribe respalda que la Asamblea General de Naciones Unidas adopte el proyecto de resolución sobre nutrición que está siendo patrocinado por el Ecuador, mediante el cual se refrendan la Declaración de Roma y el Marco de acción, y apoyamos firmemente la declaratoria de un Decenio de acción sobre la nutrición, ya que esto va a contribuir a que el sistema de Naciones Unidas y los Gobiernos generen programas y acciones internacionales, regionales y nacionales coordinados y coherentes en su lucha contra la malnutrición.

Acogemos con satisfacción el trabajo realizado hasta ahora por la Secretaría conjunta de FAO y la OMS mediante la preparación de notas conceptuales y demás contribuciones a los debates en Nueva York con miras a la posibilidad de declarar el Decenio de acción sobre la nutrición. El GRULAC espera mayor información sobre estas actividades para tener un seguimiento sistemático en la materia.

El GRULAC alienta a los Estados Miembros a respaldar la declaración de un Decenio de acción y exhorta al Consejo para que se pronuncie en ese sentido, tomando en cuenta que el hambre, la malnutrición y la seguridad alimentaria son unos de los temas centrales en la agenda para el desarrollo después de 2015.

De igual manera, consideramos que las actividades promovidas por la FAO y la OMS para mejorar la coordinación en materia de nutrición – conjuntamente con el Comité de seguridad alimentaria mundial y el Comité permanente de nutrición – son fundamentales para una acción más efectiva que evite la duplicación de esfuerzos institucionales.

En ese sentido, consideramos positiva la elaboración del documento del Comité permanente indicado en el párrafo 36, que destaca los ámbitos en los que se podría incluir la nutrición, dentro de los 17 objetivos del desarrollo sostenible propuestos; por lo tanto, se recomienda su amplia difusión para conocimiento de todos los miembros.

El Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe quiere aprovechar esta oportunidad para desear al gobierno de Italia el mayor de los éxitos en la realización de la Expo Milano 2015, cuyo lema es “nutrir el planeta, energía para la vida”. Estamos seguros que al igual que otros foros internacionales relevantes, este espacio será propicio para promover nuevas sinergias y reforzar el compromiso político de todas las partes interesadas ante los desafíos presentes y futuros en materia de nutrición.

Reitera el GRULAC la disposición de sus países de compartir nuestras experiencias con todos aquellos que las consideren apropiadas, utilizando para esto las diversas modalidades de cooperación, en especial, la cooperación sur-sur y triangular en la cual nuestra región ha alcanzado resultados positivos.

Finalmente, el Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe anuncia con satisfacción ante este Consejo de la aprobación en enero de 2015, por los Jefes de estado y de Gobierno de la Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y del Caribe (CELAC), del Plan para la seguridad alimentaria y nutrición 2025, el cual fue preparado con el apoyo técnico de la FAO, e incorpora la nutrición como uno de sus ejes centrales de acción.

Ms María Laura DA ROCHA (Brazil)

Brazil wishes to express its deep appreciation for the continuous efforts of FAO to follow up on the Second International Conference on Nutrition. As we have expressed in previous occasions, we believe the endorsement of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and its Framework for Action is a great achievement to advance nutrition, but translating these commitments into concrete actions is a challenge to which we are expected to live up to. We need to build on this special momentum to further advance on the global agenda on nutrition. In this sense, we are pleased to note that much has been done by FAO since the last Session of the Council.

We welcome the mainstreaming of nutrition within the Strategic Framework and its inclusion in Objective 6 of the Organization. We strongly support FAO's role in the five sections listed in the documents, which are closely linked to its mandate and areas of expertise. We believe FAO can highly contribute for more coherent policies in agriculture and food systems to promote food and nutrition security, through technical assistance, capacity development and awareness raising activities.

Building the link between family farming, local food purchase and healthy diets has a great potential to improve nutrition, food security, income generation, all the while promoting a more sustainable food production. In this sense, we support FAO's activities in these areas.

As stated in the ICN2 Framework for Action, nutrition education and information are key elements to help address the triple-burden of malnutrition, through a holistic approach. School-based nutrition activities offer a large scope for FAO work, not only through school meal programmes linked with local agriculture, but also through the promotion of school gardens and nutrition-friendly school environment, among other actions. Just last week, the city of São Paulo passed a law which prioritizes the purchase of organic or agro-ecological food for the municipality's school feeding programme – which distributes around 2 million meals daily, a measure that will certainly contribute to better diets and enhanced nutrition for children.

Likewise, mainstreaming nutrition in social protection and resilience-building policies is essential, as it address the root causes of malnutrition, contributing to break the cycle of hunger. In this regard, the Purchase from Africans for Africa initiative mentioned in the document provides a valuable example on how to concretely advance on this agenda, joining the efforts and expertise of FAO and WFP.

Brazil would like to add its voice in support of the proclamation of a Decade of Action on Nutrition by the UN General-Assembly, which we firmly believe can contribute to keep nutrition high in the global political agenda and to gather international efforts to fulfil the commitments we set for ourselves in the Rome Declaration. We therefore welcome FAO and WHO's joint work in drafting a programme of action to further detail the objectives and activities to be carried out during the Decade of Action.

Finally, Brazil wishes to highlight the central role that FAO, together with WHO, plays in advancing nutrition and in the ICN2 follow up, based on its mandate, technical expertise and knowledge as well as its capillarity, through its decentralized offices. Moreover, FAO plays a leading role in the global governance on nutrition, together with the Committee on World Food Security. We believe a broad discussion with the participation of all Member Nations is urgently needed to further strengthen CFS so it can fully comply with its mandate on nutrition and provide an intergovernmental platform for following up on ICN2.

Sra. Maria Del Lourdes CRUZ TRINIDAD (México)

México, en adición a los comentarios expresados por el GRULAC, quisiera expresar los siguientes.

Es de suma importancia que las Naciones Unidas sumen esfuerzos para hacer frente a los múltiples desafíos que representa la malnutrición, por lo que las actividades de seguimiento de la CIN2 deben coordinarse entre la FAO y la OMS, cada Organización en sus áreas de responsabilidad.

Apoyamos las iniciativas de la FAO de apoyar a los países en la revisión y actualización de sus políticas, estrategias, planes de inversión y programas alimentarios y agrícolas.

El objetivo que se debe buscar con este conjunto de medidas es mejorar los resultados en materia de nutrición y optimizar las políticas y programas que buscan frenar y reducir la desnutrición, y promover la adopción de dietas balanceadas a base de productos frescos, sanos y provenientes de las regiones locales, con el objeto de incentivar la producción y el desarrollo local.

Por lo que se refiere a los programas de protección social, consideramos que éstos han demostrado su eficacia tanto para la reducción de la pobreza y las desigualdades como para contrarrestar los efectos de las crisis económicas. Los países con sistemas de protección social más avanzados y consolidados son los que han sufrido el menor impacto económico y social de la crisis y tienen más posibilidades de salir de ella.

Asimismo, la rendición de cuentas es un aspecto necesario para hacer un seguimiento y evaluación de las acciones realizadas y conocer si efectivamente las intervenciones que se han puesto en marcha han generado los resultados esperados.

Entre las actividades concretas que podrían impulsar la FAO y la OMS, quisiéramos mencionar dos:

a) Un sistema transparente y basado en evidencia para etiquetado frontal que permitiera a la población tomar mejores decisiones en salud. Varios sistemas de etiquetado actual realmente no han contribuido a mejores decisiones por parte de los consumidores.

b) Impulsar la promoción y adopción de medidas para regular la publicidad de alimentos y bebidas. Sin esta acción los esfuerzos por promover una alimentación saludable a través de educación e intervenciones en escuelas serán insuficientes y quedarán nulificados por las estrategias de promoción de productos y bebidas de baja calidad nutricional.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We would like to thank the Secretariat for the preparation of the Report under this item of the Agenda.

We would like to start by confirming our very positive assessment of the ICN2 outcome and of its final documents, as well as of the significant efforts that FAO and WHO have made for the success of this Conference.

We positively consider the measures taken by FAO to ensure follow-up action for this process. As we have already said, we welcome the fact of mainstreaming nutrition within the Strategic Framework of FAO.

We believe that introducing this element as a new cross-cutting theme within Strategic Objective 6 will effectively serve the cross-cutting work of the Organization.

An example of this sort of approach could prove to be the preparation of Voluntary Guidelines for the Integration of Biodiversity into the policy of Nutrition, adopted by the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in January this year.

We welcome FAO's attention to nutritional aspects of food systems and agricultural investment of standard settings in this area, especially within the Codex Alimentarius.

We would especially show our support for emphasis to be laid on education information in healthy diets, as well as our appreciation of activities with respect to social protection and the building of resilience.

We support the creation of a Nutrition Trust Fund within FAO. We also appreciate the coordination sections set up in the Secretariat for the ICN2 outcome by adding new specialists to Decentralized Offices. We expect that the Trust Fund Management will be intergovernmental.

We also agree with the idea of having FAO Governing Bodies provided with regular reports on the follow-up work to the Conference.

We are in favour of increasing the coordination role played by FAO in the follow-up action for ICN2. We support the Organization's aspiration to act as a leader in the joint system within the UN in coordination with WHO, as well as with other Specialized Agencies.

It is precisely FAO and WHO that are the intergovernmental knowledge organizations with a wide sphere of competence within Nutrition, which have been appropriately mandated by ICN2. We believe that they are the best placed structures for this work.

We also approve the proposal to have the United Nations General Assembly declare a Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025. We believe that this could serve as a comprehensive framework mechanism for a coordinated work within the UN System.

This sort of mechanism based on available existing structures and resources would allow us to best serve the complex problems of improper nutrition and malnutrition. It would permit us to involve all of the interested stakeholders and participants, including NGOs, business, and multi-lateral organizations.

Besides, the Decade of Action could support a high-level of international attention to be maintained on this theme.

This would also make it possible to properly plan the follow-up action to the ICN2. The process could be organized and it could be presented with a flexible timeframe for the Medium Term Plan.

To conclude, we would like to note that within the Committee on Food Security there was a debated mediation mechanism to try to identify the role to be played by the CFS on these issues. We are going to continue our interested participation in these discussions.

Once again, this indeed emphasizes the significance of the Rome platform on nutrition issues as a whole.

Ms Mi NGUJEN (Canada)

Canada welcomes FAO's actions to elevate the importance of nutrition, including prioritizing it across its Strategic Framework.

One important aspect will be how FAO supports the development of nutrition policies and programmes at country level. Given its focus on food and agriculture policies, it is critical to crosswalk to multi-sectoral nutrition policies under development in many countries.

We appreciate receiving regular updates on follow-up actions by FAO, including on how FAO is collaborating with other UN Bodies to provide consistent, clear, and coherent advice that takes into consideration the role of other UN Bodies given the multisectoral nature of nutrition.

Regarding the Decade of Action, we would appreciate hearing further views from FAO about what it considers to be the added value of the Decade, as well as concrete activities and expected outcomes.

Mr Vhangani Peter MAKWARELA (South Africa)

South Africa welcomes the Report presented to us and appreciates the opportunity for the Council to consider the ICN2 follow-up actions to provide any comments and guidance as deemed appropriate.

South Africa is equally concerned by the challenges and levels of malnutrition and obesity at both national level and the Continent of Africa. We believe that Member Nations can make meaningful inputs in the proposed FAO processes and actions.

In this regard, we propose that an area for discussion be created for interested countries or regions in the proposed Steering Committee under paragraph 24 of document CL 151/9.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

La Argentina interviene en aras de apoyar la declaración realizada por el GRULAC y reitera su sostén a los resultados de la segunda Conferencia Internacional sobre Nutrición, tanto en lo relativo a su declaración política, como respecto al Marco de acción adoptado.

Al respecto, la Argentina reafirma su convicción de que el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria posee mandato para ocuparse de este argumento.

Asimismo, la Argentina entiende oportuno que se avance la coordinación con las otras agencias de las Naciones Unidas, en particular con la Organización Mundial de la Salud, para evitar superposiciones.

En relación al Proyecto de resolución presentado por Ecuador en las Naciones Unidas para declarar un Decenio de acción sobre la nutrición – que está siendo tratado en estos momentos por la Segunda Comisión y la Asamblea General – la Argentina reitera su apoyo y compromiso con el mismo, el que está siendo otorgado a través de nuestra Representación Permanente en Nueva York.

Mr Jomo SUNDARAM (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Development Department)

Let me take this opportunity to thank all of you for your very warm support for the follow-up actions, particularly the actions which have been taken within FAO to make nutrition a cross-cutting theme, the prioritization of some activities, the support for the initiative on the Trust Fund, the strengthening of the Nutrition Division, as well as the expressions of desire for regular reporting.

Let me particularly emphasize that the Nutrition Division is one of the few divisions in the Organization which has been able to benefit from additional resources and this is very much appreciated. Nutrition has declined over the decades. The first Director-General of FAO was a nutritionist and there used to be a nutrition department. But, with your support, I believe that we are able to make a strong reversal of this unfortunate trend over the recent past. Let me also emphasize that much of the new resources for nutrition will not be in headquarters but will rather be in the field, and this is not only at the regional level but also at the subregional level, so your support for this emphasis and prioritization of the work is extremely important.

I want to emphasize how important it has been for the work of nutrition to be undertaken across the Organization. This is in line with the Nutrition Strategy we approved in 2012, but it also takes on a greater significance in view of the sum of the other new areas of work and the need to ensure that nutrition is not caught and stuck in a small silo and rather it spans the nature of the work. Many of you, for example, have referred to the need for diversification of food, have referred to the need for safe food, and a number of other matters which obviously are worthy of attention.

I also would like to express our great appreciation for your support for the work which has been done in following up for the Conference, including not only seeking endorsement of the Rome Declaration and the Companion Framework for Action, but also in a moment I will try to elaborate on the proposal for the Decade of Action on Nutrition.

The need for better UN System coordination is something which has been very much on our minds, and there have been a number of efforts also undertaken. I would say that this need had been felt even before the Conference itself, but I think what has been emphasized at the Conference is that the UN system has to work together and there are ongoing discussions on how to achieve this. Obviously, the UN specialized agencies feel a greater need. The specialized agencies such as FAO and WHO, and I would add the World Bank, feel a strong need to be accountable to all Member Nations. This is a less felt need perhaps with some of the other funds and programmes within the UN system and we are continuing to work on this issue. I promise to be able to continue to report on progress in this direction.

There is also the question of monitoring progress. I would like to emphasize that we have contributed a great deal to the Global Nutrition Report. However, the compilation of the Global Nutrition Report is undertaken outside of FAO and WHO, but we are major contributors. In fact, the WHO in particular provides most of the information on nutrition indicators which are available. FAO is a relatively minor contributor and it was through such an effort that we prepared the information booklet which many of you might have received during the Conference last year. It was a pocketbook which has been much appreciated and we are grateful that the people who participated in the Conference were appreciative of this.

If I may express that the guidance that you have provided is also very welcome. I would like to respond to some of the questions which have been raised for further information and, in particular, questions which involve matters beyond FAO. Let me just begin with one question on nutrition information. It is precisely from your own experience that you have provided very important guidance on what kinds of nutrition information is helpful in enhancing consumer choice and what kinds of information may not be so effective. It is precisely this kind of nutrition information and education more generally which we need to emphasize.

The question was raised I think by Japan whether we are de-emphasizing the curricular development work in the future, why then are we putting emphasis on FAO's education and information work in relation to nutrition. It is precisely because of the expressions which many of you have made that there needs to continue to be work, for example, in the school-feeding activities, in school gardens, as well as in other areas, in relation to nutrition education. Likewise, we need to better understand what kinds of information. We can have information which is of a very technical nature, for example, which is important for us to convey, but that information may not be very effective in guiding consumer choices, so how do we ensure that the information we provide is more effective in guiding the best kinds of nutrition decision-making by households, by families, and this is why your guidance is

important, but it is also why the continued efforts on nutrition education and information are very much required.

Let me move to the efforts which involve more than FAO itself. First, many of you have referred to the CFS and the expanded role of the CFS. For the CFS to be able to fill this gap for a multi-stakeholder forum, it has to move quickly in terms of taking seriously its mandate as far as nutrition is concerned. This does not mean that it will be the only forum for nutrition because many technical issues, for example, continue to be addressed in the World Health Assembly, and rightfully so. But as far as many of the other aspects which are not addressed at the World Health Assembly are concerned, it is expected and hoped that the CFS will transform itself in order to play this very important multi-stakeholder role which will involve Governments and other stakeholders, both civil society as well as the private sector.

I would like to emphasize that the future role of the Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN), if it continues to get the support from the UN system agencies, funds and programmes that it had in the past, will have to be redefined in the new circumstances. It is not intended to go back to what the SCN has done in the past. For example, under the leadership of the then Executive Director of the World Food Programme, Catherine Bertini, the SCN played an extremely important role in terms of being a multi-stakeholder forum. Now that the multi-stakeholder forum role will be played by the CFS, the SCN's role in that regard is certainly not going to be revived.

The question of the Decade for Action on Nutrition is a question which has come up for many of you, and I think it is very important to recognize that many of the Information Notes which have been provided thus far have been in response to specific questions which have been raised in New York. These are things which are all quite familiar to you, and we will be happy to share those Information Notes with you, but it is a continuing work-in-progress. Only after there is a mandate to prepare a proper concept note with FAO and WHO working together, and in continued consultation with the other Members of the Steering Committee for the ICN2, will a full-fledged concept note be prepared. There have been so far three informal meetings moderated by the Irish Delegation in New York, which have been extremely important.

I want to take this opportunity to express great support from some of the Delegations in New York for the work which has gone in this direction. However, I think it is important for you to be fully aware that there is also some resistance. Let me be candid about some of the areas of resistance because it is important for your counterparts in New York to be fully briefed. Just sharing the information from the Rome Declaration on Nutrition as well as the companion Framework for Action has not been enough. We have often had to reiterate some issues.

Very importantly, there is the tendency by some colleagues in New York to try to add new areas and, in particular, adding in new issues on which we could not get a consensus in Geneva and Rome before the Conference threatens to disrupt the process. So it is very important that we not bring in new issues which were not agreed to in the Rome Declaration. This is something which is extremely important. But there is also some difficulty that many of the people who are negotiating are not aware of what you were involved in negotiating for the Conference on Nutrition, so it is important for you to express and articulate this to your colleagues in New York so that they are fully aware of what has been agreed to and what may not be in the Rome Declaration because they were not areas on which there was agreement.

I would like to emphasize that besides the Members of the Steering Committee for the Conference we have also consulted beyond that, so there have been, for example, a number of very important national initiatives, as well as some with international consequences. If I may just mention two, Prime Minister David Cameron has set up a Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems recognizing that there has been perhaps a view which has looked at the nutrition problem without recognizing the significance of the agriculture and food system. So this initiative on the part of the UK Prime Minister has been extremely important in encouraging rethinking because there was an assumption in a very influential journal in 2013 that what are called nutrition-sensitive interventions, including what FAO is involved with in terms of food and nutrition, are only considered to be 20 percent as effective as what are so-called nutrition-specific interventions. The result has been a significant diminution of the importance

of food systems. This is a comment made by the Chair of the High-Level Panel of Experts of the CFS, Professor Per Pinstrup-Andersen. But this problem has not been rectified and there is this view that nutrition-sensitive actions are less effective than nutrition-specific interventions by a discount margin of 80 percent, which is a huge margin.

Similarly, I would like to emphasize that the USAID launched last May its Multisectoral Nutrition Strategy for the period 2014 to 2025. The last ten years of this period of the USAID Strategy coincides with the proposed Decade for Action on Nutrition, so obviously there is a need to work beyond just the UN system to engage with these many other initiatives which have taken place in order to have very good synergies.

I am pleased to report that both WHO and FAO have had excellent meetings with those concerned in order to enhance this work. If it is so decided, we will share this concept note when it is prepared with the Membership because it would really assist us if you could advise your counterparts in New York as to why this concept note is being developed in the way it is.

The other element which is important to respond to is that we are engaging with new partners, and not just the partners who are involved in organizing the Conference. For example, Director-General Li of UNIDO has expressed his organization's strong interest in food processing and we are now engaging with them to try to ensure that the food processing work which was previously largely done by FAO will be shared with them, precisely because they have a strong mandate in terms of development, of industrial development, and this compliments our work very well.

Another question which has come up is social protection and the complementarity of social protection. What we have learned from various experiences is that the much currently preferred form of social protection in terms of cash transfers does not always result in improved nutrition. Of course, people are no longer hungry if they have money to buy enough food, but they do not necessarily choose the best food for themselves. This is a very important challenge for us to address, which is why we have been looking at how various governments and other stakeholders have addressed this problem in order to ensure much more diversified and healthier diets than has been the case so far.

Finally, there has been an Information Note on the Trust Fund which we will be happy to circulate once again. I will call my colleague from the Technical Cooperation Department. They have worked very hard and closely with our Department in terms of preparing the Information Note, and that Information Note is available and we will be happy to re-circulate it for your information. Should any information be missing from the note, we would be happy to augment it as necessary. Thank you very much for your attention, and we hope we have been able to address the main concerns which have been expressed in your comments. And once again, I would like to thank you for your continued support for the work we are trying to do.

CHAIRPERSON

May I conclude item 15 as follows:

1. The Council took note of the measures taken in follow up to the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) and welcomed the progress made in response to the commitments of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the recommendations contained in the Framework for Action.
2. The Council expressed satisfaction with the follow-up action taken within the Organization, in particular the:
 - a) mainstreaming of nutrition as a cross-cutting theme under the reviewed Strategic Framework, with a dedicated outcome in the Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17;
 - b) identification of priority activities to be carried out by FAO during the period 2015 to 2017 in support of ICN2 outcomes;
 - c) establishment of the Action for Nutrition Trust Fund to support governments in transforming ICN2 commitments into concrete actions. In this regard, the Council encouraged resource partners to make voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund; and

- d) plans for regular reporting on ICN2 follow-up to the FAO Governing Bodies.
3. With regard to follow-up action taken in collaboration with partners, the Council noted with appreciation the:
- a) request made to the UN Secretary General for the UN General Assembly to endorse the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Framework for Action and to consider declaring a Decade of Action on Nutrition from 2016 to 2025; the collaboration between FAO and WHO on the substantive contents of the proposed Decade of Action on Nutrition, and looked forward to its proclamation by the UN General Assembly;
- b) efforts made to improve UN system coordination and collaboration on nutrition, through the strengthening of existing mechanisms;
- c) ongoing development by FAO, in cooperation with other UN partners, of a coherent mechanism for monitoring progress on implementation of the ICN2 outcomes efforts for identifying potential areas for inclusion of nutrition in the proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a view to reflecting ICN2 outcomes in the Post-2015 Development Agenda; and
- d) advocacy initiatives aimed at promoting and amplifying the food security and nutrition messages of ICN2 through Expo Milano 2015.

Sra. Gladys Francisca URBANEJA DURAN (Venezuela)

Como Usted sabe, leímos una Declaración que presentó todo el Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe, todos sus países, y expresamos en el párrafo 8 de esa Declaración el apoyo firme que deseamos que surja de este Consejo a la declaración de un Decenio de acción sobre la nutrición por las razones que expusimos en ese párrafo. No tengo necesidad de leerlas, pero si Usted nos pudiera repetir lo que leyó sobre el Decenio para saber si esa idea queda reflejada.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Thank you, Chair. I agree with your summary. I wonder if maybe I missed a part. This partnership with the IFIs is very important, especially so because the Investment Centre deals with the World Bank in development, regionally has been in development. I wonder if you would add a sentence there.

Mr Mafizur RAHMAN (Bangladesh)

Thank you, Mr Chairperson, for your summary. But we didn't hear anything about the preparation of the Annual Global Nutrition Report or that it will be annual or biennial as we proposed from the Asia Group. Would you have a suggestion on this part of the action?

Mr Jomo SUNDARAM (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Development Department)

I wanted to emphasize that the Global Monitoring Report is a joint effort involving many others. We do not have control over how frequently it is published. Part of the reason for having an annual publication is that the availability of new data is not regular. For example, a lot of the data which WHO or UNICEF makes available is accessible irregularly.

With annual reporting, you might be reporting data which is one or two years old, but sometimes it might be new. So annual reporting provides an opportunity for making available the latest information.

Ms Mi NGUJEN (Canada)

I would like to come back to your point regarding the Decade of Action on Nutrition in your summary. We welcome the joint efforts of FAO and WHO in refining the concept note that informs discussions in New York and look forward to receiving that. Therefore we feel that the last part about looking forward to the proclamation of the Decade of Action is premature and does not necessarily reflect the discussions in the Council that was interested in further information about the added value and concrete activities, cost implications and expected outcomes.

Therefore, we would ask that the summary better reflect the discussion and in particular not include that last part.

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

I would like to leave the floor to our current EU presidency, Latvia.

Ms Elina GRINPAUKA-PETETENA (Observer for Latvia)

The EU and its 28 Member States would like to support the remark made by Canada.

Sra. Gladys Francisca URBANEJA DURAN (Venezuela)

Disculpe, yo prefiero que Argentina, que también tiene intención de intervenir, lo haga primero y después interviene Venezuela.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

La Argentina interviene porque quisiera que se reiterara, en primer lugar, cuál es el lenguaje que ha propuesto la distinguida Delegación canadiense sobre este punto, para eventualmente después tomar nuevamente la palabra.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

With regard to the last point, the Decade for Action on Nutrition, we completely agree with the Council's report having to reflect the discussion. There was a diversity of views in the course of the discussions. Most people called for this decade to be proclaimed. We believe that what you read out at the outset was very balanced and it did in no way exaggerate the importance of the events presently taking place in New York. The decision is going to be made there.

We can only make a recommendation and once again I would like to say that your summary was well balanced. It will in no way stand instead of what New York decides. So we would like to retain your original summing up.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

Solamente para respaldar lo antedicho por la Delegación rusa y respaldar su primera versión, especialmente porque mi Delegación está siguiendo con detenimiento la negociación que se está realizando en sede Naciones Unidas, en la segunda Comisión y en la Asamblea General.

Y por lo que nos ha comentado nuestra Representante Permanente en Naciones Unidas, la discusión sobre la declaración de un Decenio de acción sobre la nutrición presentada por Ecuador está siendo tratada favorablemente y está avanzando de manera muy rápida; por lo cual, teniendo en cuenta lo que está sucediendo en Nueva York y lo que se ha escuchado mayoritariamente en esta sala, la Delegación argentina reitera su acuerdo sobre su primera versión y lo manifestado por la distinguida Delegación de la Federación Rusa.

Mr Mafizur RAHMAN (Bangladesh)

Two documents were endorsed at the ICN2 International Conference and while it is clearly mentioned that a request was sent to the UN General Assembly for declaring the Decade, we are now not taking the decision. The Council is only requesting to proclaim this Decade in the UN General Assembly.

So we are fully aligned with the statement made by the Russian Federation.

Sra. Gladys Francisca URBANEJA DURAN (Venezuela)

Aprovecho esta oportunidad para darle las gracias por la presentación del resumen que ha dado al Consejo sobre este debate del documento sobre la segunda Conferencia de Nutrición.

Simplemente, luego de la intervención de Argentina, teníamos entendido diera, tal cual informando a este Consejo, algunas informaciones sobre los avances del desarrollo del debate que se está suscitando en Nueva York en la segunda Comisión, y luego que le hice la pregunta, el replanteo para que me leyera el texto, me parece que ese texto (yo quedé en silencio), pero falta indicarle que el texto recoge bien la intención que debemos tener desde la FAO para seguir apoyando el avance de este debate.

Por ende, estamos de acuerdo con lo planteado por el distinguido representante de la Federación Rusa y por el Representante de Argentina.

Mr Jomo SUNDARAM (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Development Department)

Paragraph 17 reads as follows: “We recommend to the United Nations General Assembly to endorse the Rome Declaration on Nutrition as well as the Framework for Action which provides a set of voluntary policy options and strategies for use by governments as appropriate to consider declaring a Decade of Action on Nutrition from 2016-2025 within existing structures and available resources.”

Sr. David TROYA (Ecuador)

La Delegación del Ecuador toma la palabra solamente para recordar y aprobar el párrafo por Usted mencionado en primer lugar, señalando que este recoge lo ya aprobado en el último Consejo de la FAO en diciembre del año anterior y no se adelanta a ningún otro tema.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

We support the text that you read and which was endorsed by the Russian Federation, Argentina, Bangladesh and Venezuela.

Mr John NORRIS (United States of America)

I certainly understand the position of my colleagues. I would like to make a suggestion in the text that might accommodate everyone. If the sentence is as I had written it, please correct me. It says “the collaboration of WHO and FAO on the substantive contents of the proposed Decade of Action and looked forward to its declaration by the UN General Assembly”. I think that captures it.

Maybe as a suggestion if we could change where it says “and looked forward to its declaration by the UN General Assembly”. We could replace that with “and looked forward to its presentation to the General Assembly”?

Mr Jomo SUNDARAM (Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Development Department)

The Ecuadorian draft has already been submitted, I believe at the end of last year, and it is now under consideration. The President of the General Assembly appointed Ireland to serve as facilitator and the discussions are ongoing.

On the basis of the informals, we have been providing Information Notes. When we are requested to do so, we are ready to provide a concept note which was mentioned by several of you earlier. But that concept note will be requested only if there is support for the Decade of Action.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

Debo decir que sigo el debate con una gran preocupación.

En primer lugar, por algunas voluntades que parecieran surgir del plenario dirigidas a reabrir discusiones que llevaron finalmente al consenso que logramos en octubre del año pasado, y que conseguimos plasmarlo en noviembre durante la segunda Conferencia Internacional de la Nutrición, a través de la Declaración política y del Marco de acción.

En segundo lugar, también me preocupa mucho que, estando en un organismo especializado de Naciones Unidas, algunas representaciones desconozcan absolutamente lo que está sucediendo en Nueva York.

En Nueva York, se ha presentado la Resolución hace más de dos meses, está siendo discutida por todos nuestros países en la Segunda Comisión. Es imposible para mí entender cómo estando aquí sentado como Representante Permanente de la República Argentina, en un organismo especializado de Naciones Unidas, escuchar de determinados Representantes Permanentes un desconocimiento total sobre lo que sucede en nuestra Organización madre. Me preocupa mucho, porque si en este argumento sucede este tipo de cosas, no quiero pensar lo que puede suceder en otros argumentos.

Llamo la atención verdaderamente porque creo que es un asunto lo suficientemente grave, no solo por la sustancia de la nutrición, que es un tema que nos ocupa particularmente en la FAO, sino en cuanto al procedimiento de trabajo; es decir, estaríamos trabajando aquí, como si fuéramos una especie de agencia dislocada de todo el sistema al cual pertenecemos.

Ms Mi NGUJEN (Canada)

Thank you, Mr Sundaram, for reading again the part of the outcome document and that is why we could support the language that says to consider declaring the Decade for Action which was what was in the outcome documents of the ICN2. We would also like to say that we are following closely and are in touch with our Delegation in New York about these discussions on the Decade of Action and actually the questions that we posed today are views of the Council and not necessarily only the views of New York when we asked for further information about the added value and concrete activities, and we look forward to this concept note that is supposed to be developed.

We feel that to be coherent with what we are asking for, it is premature for the Council because it was expressed at Council already to look forward to the proclamation of the Declaration of a Decade when we are looking for further information and a concept note. So this is actually bringing more coherence with the process and ensuring that there is synergy between Rome and New York.

Mr John NORRIS (United States of America)

To my colleagues, I would just respond that I do not think that at this time the Council can say anything. At least, I have no direction from my colleagues from the capital or from New York on how those debates are going, and I would not like to influence those.

So I would say that, saying that this Council looks forward to the declaration may be premature given the fact that this Council has asked for more information on what it entails on numerous occasions.

So I would stand then to say that we should strike that sentence.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We have been listening to the points made by various colleagues. I would like to get back to the first point. We are not taking a decision in any way here that is going to be taken by the UN General Assembly. We are a different *forum* and have a different format for our discussions.

Secondly, it would be good if the report of the Council were to really reflect the discussion that took place. I did not hear anyone say here that they were against the Decade for Action.

We understand the concerns of our colleagues of the United States, Canada and the European Union but we could not go along with deleting this point. We could possibly put it slightly differently. We could say possibly that the Council “looks forward to the decision of the General Assembly on this issue”.

But at this juncture, we could not go along with doing away with this completely.

CHAIRPERSON

We do not have time to continue this matter, but if you agree I will read out a formulation which takes into consideration everyone’s views and also what is contained in the Rome Declaration.

I will read it from the middle: “The collaboration between FAO and WHO on the substantive contents of the proposed Decade of Action on Nutrition, and looked forward to its consideration by the UN General Assembly.”

I think that is acceptable. Thank you. So we have come to the end of agenda item 15.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

As you know, there are two side events at lunch time today. The first one is on Strategic Objective 1, *Help eliminate hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition* and immediately after there is another side event on Strategic Objective 2, *Make a culture of forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable*. Both events are in the Iran room and there will be refreshments available for participants in the foyer of the Iran room.

Also as I mentioned yesterday, Members are invited to visit the information booths on the Strategic Objectives in the Atrium.

Finally, yesterday the Independent Chairperson of Council announced that there would be after we were finished with the agenda this afternoon, a meeting of the Friends of the Chair. He mentioned that each region would be requested to identify three representatives, it being understood that the meeting would be open-ended. So you are kindly requested to provide the names of your representatives possibly at the beginning of the session this afternoon using the time available during lunchtime to conduct your consultation in that respect.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. We reconvene at 14:30.

The meeting rose at 12:40 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 40

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.40

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Fifty-first Session
Cent cinquante et unième session
151.º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 23-27 March 2015
Rome, 23-27 mars 2015
Roma, 23-27 de marzo de 2015**

**FOURTH PLENARY MEETING
QUATRIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
CUARTA SESIÓN PLENARIA**

24 March 2015

The Fourth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.44 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La quatrième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 44
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la cuarta sesión plenaria a las 14.44
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

- Item 16. Status Report on Antimicrobial Resistance**
Point 16. Rapport d'activité sur la résistance aux antimicrobiens
Tema 16. Informe de situación sobre la resistencia a los antimicrobianos
(C 2015/28)

CHAIRPERSON

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the Fourth Meeting of the 151st Session of the FAO Council to order.

We will now take up item 16, *Status Report on Antimicrobial Resistance*. The document before Council is C 2015/28, and not CL 151/10 as shown in the printed timetable.

Members will recall that this item is included on the agenda of this session further to a request made by Council at its last session when the Report of COAG was discussed.

I now invite Ambassador Cecilia Nordin, Chairperson of the Programme Committee, to speak on the section of the Report of the 117th Session of the Programme Committee which deals with the *Status Report on Antimicrobial Resistance*.

Ms Cecilia NORDIN VAN GANSBERGHE (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

It is always an honour for me to represent the Programme Committee, even though I would have liked not to have to deal with this item.

I do not want to contemplate a situation that looks like 150 years ago when people did not want to go into hospital because those were the places that you got sick. And as we all know, FAO works closely with WHO, and WHO is actually in advance of us because they have formalized the work against the antimicrobial resistance in resolution and they are presently discussing their plan of action. I hope that we can catch up.

We thought that the background document put together by Director Ren Wang and Dr. Lubroth was an excellent document clearly detailing the urgency of this pressing problem. If you have had a look at it, you know exactly what I am talking about.

We appreciated the leading role that FAO had taken within its mandate in the tripartite partnership with WHO and OIE, and we underlined that cooperation at all levels is vital. Information must be shared, common guidelines established, and participation in early warning, monitoring, and action systems take place.

Furthermore, we were of the opinion that the costs cited in the Report in human lives and also in economic costs were underestimated. Think about that. We were concerned by the lack of awareness, especially at policy level, and we suggested a risk management approach based on the information and analysis.

We strongly supported the adoption by the Conference in June of a Resolution on antimicrobial resistance. We suggested that the Resolution also include an undertaking regarding resources. And as was pointed out in our Joint Meeting on 11 March, values can be read from budget allocations. We also requested to be kept updated at least yearly of FAO work on antimicrobial resistance (AMR). Finally, as India quoted in our session, “no action today, no cure tomorrow”.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. I now invite Mr Ren Wang, Assistant Director-General of the Agriculture Department to introduce the Report.

Mr Ren WANG (Assistant Director-General, Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department)

The Secretariat thanks the Council for their interest in addressing antimicrobial resistance, and especially we would like to thank the Programme Committee for its strong endorsement.

Antimicrobial resistance is a growing threat, not only to public health, but also to livestock production, agriculture, food safety, and even future crop production. Major global challenges, such as food

insecurity, malnutrition, and more dynamic agricultural trade flows, and will be affected by the rising threat of microbes being multi-resistant against existing medicines.

The negative health, social, economic, and environmental impacts of AMR and the costs incurred at local and global levels are likely underestimated as baseline information. Treatment successes and failures, quantities in production and final use, are poorly captured as highlighted already by the Ambassador a minute ago. Some health impacts have been captured, however. Let me just give you a few figures. In the EU, there are 25,000 deaths per year; globally, 500,000 deaths per year. The United States healthcare cost is about USD 20 billion a year. The lost productivity for the United States is USD 35 billion a year. For the European Union wide it is 1.5 billion Euros per year. However, very little is known about the impact in other parts of the world, and AMR is a daily transboundary issue and threat.

The livestock sector's contribution to agriculture, as many of us are already familiar with, is over 40 percent. That is a global average with agriculture with a capital 'A' in the broad sense. The economic importance of the top four livestock products is USD 642 billion a year. Diseases erode efficiencies in production parameters and contribute to further economic expenditures through treatment therapies in terrestrial and agriculture production systems.

The impact of AMR for farmers, animal husbandry and the food industry where the loss of effective antimicrobial agents to treat sick animals cripples sustainable food production, and erodes family livelihoods. There are two drivers for acquired AMR associated with food production, especially in the livestock and agriculture sector. These are, first, excessive use and misuse of antimicrobials, and then the transmission of resistance in food-borne pathogens along the food chain, or contaminating the environment.

In May last year, the WHO World Health Assembly Resolution called for the development of a Global Action Plan on antimicrobial resistance and to strengthen the collaboration between FAO, WHO, and World Organization for Animal Health, the OIE, and World Health Organization, WHO, to combat antimicrobial resistance in the spirit of the 'One Health' approach. FAO has actively contributed to the development of the draft Global Action Plan which will be submitted for approval by the World Health Assembly in June 2015.

The draft Global Action Plan reinforces the need for collaboration on AMR between FAO, OIE, and WHO, and other intergovernmental organizations, partners, and stakeholders, and it calls upon FAO to support the implementation of a number of AMR prevention and control measures in food and agriculture. It is recognized that awareness of the AMR threat is poor, as we also heard from the Ambassador, especially at the policy levels, for which FAO hopes to undertake increased concerted effort in communication at national and sub-national levels beyond food and agriculture producing sectors only. Such communication of the threat needs to be based on science and involve baseline data, collation of information, and a subsequent analysis to focus on prevention strategies that can be featured by preventing infection, early detection, prudent use of antimicrobials, and prevention of transmission.

FAO has developed a Whole Food Chain Approach to minimize the risks of AMR emergence at a source and applies risk-based management in the prevention of spread of resistant pathogens at all stages of the primary food production to consumption continuum. The Approach is very much focused on enhancing capacities of national authorities and producers in value chain stakeholders. The five pillars of FAO's approach are based on enhancing capacities of national authorities, producers and value chain stakeholders, through: one, strengthening national policies and regulatory capacities in antimicrobial use, in agriculture particularly; second, AMR surveillance along value chains; third, improved awareness and advocacy on AMR; fourth, guidance and support on good animal husbandry, health, biosecurity, food safety, and hygiene practices, and fifth, promoting responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial drugs.

The Secretariat, in response to the 117th Session of the Programme Committee, would seek support from the Council to ensure that all relevant parts of the Organization, at Headquarters, regional, and the country levels, are actively engaged. Staff and the non-staff resources will be realigned and extra-budgetary funding hopefully will be leveraged within the parameters of FAO Strategic

Framework and interagency partnership. At FAO, AMR is a crosscutting topic and several departments and divisions are involved; these include Animal Production and Health, Agriculture, Food Safety, the CODEX Alimentarius Secretariat, and Legal Services. The Secretariat recognizes that AMR work requires improved coordinated interventions and policy work. FAO should continue taking AMR seriously but it requires financial commitment to develop knowledge to local players and other stakeholders and its work with the WHO and OIE.

The Secretariat was pleased with the support received by the 117th Session of the Programme Committee whereby AMR was considered of great importance and suggested that FAO consolidate its work, not only within the Organization, but also to maintain its engagement with relevant international organizations. The 24th Committee on Agriculture and the 150th Session of Council called on the Secretariat to prepare a report for this Council, as highlighted by the Chair, and a draft Resolution to be submitted to the 39th Conference in June of this year. The accompanying draft Resolution for the 39th FAO Conference is aligned with and compliments the World Health Assembly 2014 Resolutions and underlines FAO's support for the implementation of the Global Action Plan. FAO hopes that appropriate support will come available as soon as the resolution on the Global Action Plan is adopted.

The Rome Declaration on Nutrition in 2014 recognized that food systems need to contribute to preventing and addressing infectious diseases, including zoonotic diseases, and tackling antimicrobial resistance, and endorse a Framework for Action with recommended actions on food safety and antimicrobial resistance. The Council is invited to consider and provide guidance on the proposed FAO contributions and activities under the Strategic Framework and Programme of Work and Budget to address AMR in food and agriculture and to endorse the draft Resolution to be submitted to the Conference this year.

Mr Segfredo SERRANO (Philippines)

The Philippines is making this statement on behalf of the Asia Group.

We wish to express our appreciation to the Secretariat for the comprehensive report which provided extensive explanation on the threat of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and on the role that FAO and other relevant institutions may assume and are undertaking to address this issue.

AMR indeed consequently leads to negative impacts on livelihood and food security. The Asian region is considered one of the epicenters of antimicrobial drug resistance, in view of the increasing number of antibiotic-resistant species, including penicillin- and erythromycin-resistant *Streptococcus pneumoniae*. It has also been reported that antibiotics have been widely abused and misused in clinical practice and animal husbandry in most Asian countries.

In this light, various regional and national initiatives have, thus far, been undertaken in controlling and preventing AMR. For instance, the establishment of the AMR surveillance in the WHO Western Pacific region is a major step in providing critical information to health professionals and the public on the magnitude of the problem. On the other hand, the meeting of the WHO South-East Asia region last November 2014 in Jaipur, India, recommended a number of measures, including development of the time-bound action plans and undertaking operational research in AMR.

At national level, the issuance of an Administrative Order by the Philippine President in April 2014 established an inter-agency committee to formulate and implement a national plan to combat AMR.

Beyond the national and regional actions, international institutions like FAO have further significant roles to play in combating AMR. As indicated in the status report, there are now a number of important global events and documents highlighting the need to address AMR, including the Framework for Action of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition, the AMR resolution adopted at the 67th World Health Assembly, the publication of the WHO draft Global Plan of Action on AMR, to which FAO provided input, and the relevant Codex Commission guidance and codes.

We welcome the tripartite collaboration on AMR of FAO, OIE and WHO, together with public and private organizations, mindful of the fact that no one organization has all the responses to combat AMR, in view of its multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary nature.

We concur with the report's conclusions, including FAO being well-positioned to provide leadership in addressing emergency issues and threats to global food and agriculture such as AMR. The international community would certainly benefit from the enhanced and coordinated FAO role, for instance, in the sharing of information on AMR threats and approaches to prevention and control, among others.

Finally, we support the endorsement by the FAO Council of the draft resolution on AMR for approval at the upcoming FAO Conference in June 2015.

Mr Zoltán KÁLMÁN (Hungary)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Regional Group (ERG).

We commend the Secretariat for its report and draft resolution. The report takes a balanced approach to the risks and effects of antibiotic use and its inter-linkages to resistance. While noting that policies should be evidence-based, it highlights the costs of inaction for the global and national economies, for livelihoods in many countries and for our common efforts at poverty reduction. It makes clear that current research gaps do not detract from the compelling evidence that underlines the need for preventive actions, including in accordance with the precautionary principle.

The message is clear: we, the Members of FAO and the Secretariat must do all we can to minimise the threat of growing antimicrobial resistance by taking immediate actions at all appropriate levels. This will show the same sense of urgency in agriculture, aquaculture and animal health as WHO is applying to human health. The already existing OIE standards on prudent use of antimicrobial agents and on antimicrobial resistance should be supported. Priorities include strengthening global capacity to monitor the use of antibiotics and growing resistance in cooperation with OIE and its existing activities in this field, and helping strengthen national capacities to develop, implement and enforce regulations. The goal must be to promote prudent and responsible use in order to minimise the threat of AMR and, more importantly, to ensure effective and life-saving antibiotic drugs in the future, for both animals and humans.

Sustainable food production systems that encourage good agricultural and animal husbandry practices, including disease prevention systems and waste management, make it possible to minimise the use of antibiotics and are an important step to reduce the risks of AMR. Lessons learned should be shared by those countries that have shown that this is achievable without risking food security, or the profitability of the sector. FAO's expertise means it is well-placed to take a global lead in this area.

There has been substantial progress, including the guidelines and codes of Codex and OIE, as well as the World Health Assembly resolution and global action plan on antimicrobial resistance. We propose the following edits to strengthen the draft Resolution:

In the fourth paragraph of the preamble, insert "as well as the relevant agreed OIE standards" after the words "guidance and codes" so to also include a reference to what has already been agreed within OIE.

Given the urgency of the threat, the accepted approach of 'the precautionary principle' should be applied where evidence is still pending but where there is a persuasive case for limiting risks. We therefore suggest reflecting this in the final preambular paragraph, as well as in paragraph 1(c). The final preambular paragraph would then read as follows: "Strongly supporting the ongoing work by the Secretariat, in collaboration with Members and others, to assess the evidence of antimicrobial resistance in food and agriculture systems, identify knowledge gaps, and provide recommendations to Members based on sound evidence and on the precautionary principle where evidence is still pending and there is a persuasive case for limiting risk"

Paragraph 1(c) would read as follows: "take evidence-based urgent action at national, regional and local levels to mitigate risks posed by antimicrobial resistance in food, agriculture and the environment; and based on the precautionary principle where evidence is still pending and there is a persuasive case for limiting risk"

While monitoring and surveillance of AMR are important, so too are better monitoring and surveillance of the use of antibiotics generally, given their link to AMR. We therefore suggest adding a new sub-paragraph 1(b) "strengthen monitoring and surveillance of the use of antimicrobials in

agriculture, regulation of their use and compliance with those regulations by all stakeholders in cooperation with OIE and its activities in this area”;

With reference to Members, we suggest adding a new sub-para 1(c) (bis) “take actions to support the development of sustainable food production systems that prevent diseases, and promote good animal husbandry and management, biosecurity, hygiene practices and health”;

While the Status report mention the impacts on AMR of human behaviour, terrestrial and aquatic animal production practises, but also of plant production practices, there is no reference to the latter in the resolution. We suggest inserting in the paragraph (g)(iii) after ‘husbandry’ the words ‘plant production’.

In sub-paragraph 1(j) we propose to add the words ‘antimicrobial usage and’ before the word ‘antimicrobial resistance’.

With reference to FAO, we also suggest a new sub-paragraph 2(a): “actively support, in collaboration with other relevant partners, sustainable production systems that prevent diseases through good animal husbandry, management and practices, as an important means to combat antimicrobial resistance”.

We were concerned to learn during the Programme Committee discussion that such resources as the Secretariat is currently applying to this area are largely at the expense of other priorities in animal health. Helping tackle AMR should be a high priority and a core activity for the FAO Secretariat, and should be supported by some dependable resources from the regular budget, which would send an important signal of FAO’s commitment to helping members address this global threat. We call on the Secretariat to make proposals to identify sources for financing work in this high priority area, as well as on Members to support AMR-related FAO activities by voluntary contributions.

In conclusion, we look forward to a revised version of the resolution. Adopting it will bring the FAO Conference in line with the World Health Assembly and highlight the priority the Members and Secretariat give to tackling this growing global threat.

Ms María Laura DA ROCHA (Brazil)

There is no doubt that antimicrobial resistance poses a risk to human and animal health, and Brazil has been acting accordingly to prevent it. The Brazilian government, for the past four years, has taken important measures to prevent and contain AMR in food and agriculture. In particular, technical and scientific studies have been carried out, concerning inadequate or excessive use of antimicrobial substances. As a result, the Brazilian government took measures to control the use of such drugs. In certain cases, specific substances already in use were prohibited. And some drugs are simply not allowed to be introduced in livestock production.

In the international arena, Brazil has also been active. In FAO, Brazil took part in the deliberations regarding the topic of AMR during the 24th Session of the Committee on Agriculture, when it approved the idea of preparing a draft Resolution. Brazil is particularly pleased to note that the draft before the Council calls for a strengthened collaboration between FAO, OIE and WHO, according to the ‘One Health’ approach. It also urges FAO to support the implementation of a future Global Action Plan, in whose preparation, in Geneva, Brazil is also involved.

Brazil has, therefore, time and again, given proof, internally as well as in its multilateral action, of its engagement to fight AMR. As in all its multilateral interventions, Brazil would like to take this opportunity to express its understanding that any future action by FAO and its Members regarding AMR has to continue to be based on very sound scientific grounds, which is the only way to avoid the dissemination of arbitrary measures that would be harmful to food security and trade.

Brazil, therefore, welcomes the mention, in the present draft, to the essential role of the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius, with its emphasis on scientific knowledge. Brazil has always supported CODEX, and actively took part in the CODEX AMR Task Force, which produced important guidelines, approved in July 2011 by the Codex Commission.

Furthermore, Brazil is pleased to note that the proposed Resolution has not failed to stress that policy recommendations should be based on sound scientific evidence and risk analysis principles. For that

reason also Brazil particularly supports, in the present draft, the need to strengthen national capacity, in order to base public policies and actions on solid technical and scientific research and monitoring.

To be coherent with the principle that public measures and policies must be based on sound scientific knowledge and risk analysis, Brazil would like to propose a few changes concerning both document C 2015/28 and the draft Resolution itself. Brazil cannot agree, for instance, with what is stated in paragraph 10, as regards the adoption of “preventive actions on a precautionary basis”, since it believes that any measure should be based on scientific evidence and risk assessment. The adoption of such a concept could lead to arbitrary actions regarding third parties. In paragraph 11, the word “also” should be deleted, for the same reason, since science and risk analysis should be at the core of any measure designed to combat AMR. A document produced by FAO should not disregard this.

The document and FAO should be careful not to over-emphasize risks of AMR posed by livestock production to public health, especially in the absence of scientific evidence. FAO should, on the contrary, promote a more accurate assessment of risks, following a thorough discussion of the subject in the Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives and the Joint Expert Meeting on Microbiological Risk Assessment.

It seems also an exaggeration to use the term ‘biosecurity’, regarding the risks of AMR in agriculture. The term ‘biosafety’ would be more appropriate. After all, there are no grounds to treat issues related to public health, in the field of agriculture, as an international security threat.

For the reasons here presented, Brazil would like the words ‘biosecurity’ and ‘threat’ to be excluded from point 1(g) of the draft Resolution, and replaced, respectively by the words ‘biosafety’ and ‘risks’.

To conclude, Brazil welcomes, with the corrections proposed, the present document and Resolution, since we believe that it touches on many relevant issues that will help FAO and its members give an important contribution to address, in the field of food and agriculture, the present risk of AMR worldwide.

Mr Jianmin XIE (China) (Original language Chinese)

China would like to thank the Secretariat for providing the *Status Report on Antimicrobial Resistance*. We also support the statement made by the Philippines on behalf of the Asia Group.

We all know the application of antimicrobial drugs in agriculture is essential for food security and safety, animal welfare, protection of livelihoods, and sustainability of animal production. However, the resistance to antimicrobial drugs also constitutes a great threat to human beings and to food safety and the environment.

At the moment, AMR is becoming a global concern and is considered one of the most serious threats to public health worldwide. In recent years, the collaboration, and the government of China has also done a lot of work in this field, and in the future we will also strengthen the cooperation with FAO, OIE and WHO.

The cooperation among FAO, OIE, and WHO has been highly effective and great efforts have been made. At the request of the 150th Session of the Council, the Secretariat prepared this status report as well as the draft Resolution for consideration by the FAO Conference at its 39th Session.

China believes this report and the draft Resolution are very comprehensive and should be submitted to the Conference for consideration. We also hope that FAO will strengthen cooperation with WHO and OIE in information sharing, formulation of codes of conduct, as well as in early warning, monitoring and action systems.

So the cooperation should be further strengthened and we would like to receive a new report on the progress every year on the work of AMR.

Mr John NORRIS (United States of America)

First of all, the United States would like to thank FAO for putting this paper together, and should also recognize United Kingdom and Sweden for their leadership in the United Nations on this issue.

The AMR is a very important issue and warrants our full attention. The paper provides a good background of the issue, however there are some areas of concern with regard to this paper that we hope FAO could clarify and possibly correct.

First, under paragraph 7 part (ii), it is not clear what “non-therapeutic” means here. “Non-therapeutic” can refer to growth promotion uses of antibiotics, so it doesn’t make sense to say “reduce non-therapeutic use and phase out use for growth promotion.” In addition, we disagree that prevention is a non-therapeutic use of antibiotics. Disease prevention uses of antibiotics can help maintain animal health and welfare, prevention of disease is a therapeutic use of antimicrobials that is practiced in both human and animal health and veterinary medicine. Rather than a blanket reduction in use, encouraging prudent use of antimicrobials for disease prevention would be a better goal, and that is covered in the first part of the sentence.

Ionophores are described as antibiotics in the United States but are not in a medically important class of antibiotics (i.e., not used in human medicine). Ionophores are not called antibiotics in some parts of the world. Having the term ‘medically important’ (those classes of drugs used in human medicine) in front of the term ‘antimicrobials’ when discussing antimicrobials being phased out for growth promotion is important because, if we are basing decision making on science and risk, we would only be phasing out the use of drugs for growth promotion that have a human health impact or risk. Using the term ‘medically important’ would help make the statements more generally applicable internationally where different drugs are being classified differently. Otherwise, such a statement could assume a restriction of ionophore use in countries where it is classified as an antibiotic and not in other parts of the world where it is not.

Second, under paragraph 14, as we noted previously, we disagree that prevention is a non-therapeutic use. Prevention of disease is a therapeutic use of antimicrobials that is practiced in both human and veterinary medicine. The statement is too general to be accurate. It is not always true that prophylactic uses are administered at low sub-therapeutic doses. For example, in the United States, labels are for specific organisms at a dose that is shown to prevent infection. It is better not to use ‘sub-therapeutic’ and ‘non-therapeutic’ because these terms are vague and often misinterpreted.

Finally, under paragraph 17, the word ‘linked’ is too strong if implying cause and effect for this reference, which is a USDA-Agriculture Research Service paper. A more accurate statement would be: “Antimicrobial resistance has also been detected in environmental bacteria, in areas where antimicrobials have been used in agriculture, such as the finding of tetracycline-resistance genes in bacteria recovered from groundwater underlying pig farms.”

We would like to request consideration of these clarifications and corrections in the paper. But finally, as I said yesterday in my comments, we do support the Resolution as proposed to this Council. I think it is good work and a good step forward and thank you for your efforts on this paper and on the Council Resolution.

Ms Doojduan SASANAVIN (Thailand)

Thailand associates itself with the statement made by the Philippines on the behalf of Asia Group.

We welcome the *Status Report on Antimicrobial Resistance* and thank the Secretariat for providing scientific background information, as well as reviewing the FAO roles and activities to mitigate the global threat of AMR.

AMR is a complex issue and it is multidisciplinary. The use of antimicrobial drugs on crops, livestock, and fisheries is known by the producers who use it, but usually not known by the consumers. Due to the nature of asymmetric information and potential problems, we strongly support any future technical support that FAO can provide Member Nations on developing their national plans, strategies, as well as their collaboration for surveillance, monitoring, and containment of AMR.

To promote the responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial drugs and the adoption of good animal husbandry and health management, we encourage FAO to emphasize raising awareness, as well as capacity development on risk analysis incorporated with cost and benefit analysis of using antimicrobial drugs.

Thailand is in good faith to combat AMR that pose global threats to agriculture and food security, as well as human health. We support the fact that preventive measures should be based on scientific facts. The implementation of preventive measures shall not be used as a means for trade barriers or trade distortion.

Mr Vhangani Peter MAKWARELA (South Africa)

This statement is made on behalf of the Africa Group.

Antimicrobial resistance concerns us all, it is present in all parts of the world. The Africa Group wishes to thank the Food and Agriculture Organization for providing document C 2015/28.

We acknowledge the need to use antimicrobial drugs in agricultural production, however the benefits should not outweigh the possible negative impact on livelihoods and food security. We are concerned that resistant micro-organisms can withstand attacks by antimicrobial drugs rendering standard treatments ineffective, leading to persistent infections, the risk of spread to others and possible hastened loss of life.

Africa notes her own challenges in this regard, which often include cross border information sharing, insufficient laboratory capacities, and sub-optimal regulatory environments regarding the use of available medicines. More work needs to be done in our region to better understand and preserve the efficacy of antimicrobial drugs and possible transfers to wildlife and agro-ecological systems. To this effect we appreciate what has been done thus far by the FAO to address possible negative impact of AMR on global trade and economies of developed and developing countries; the inappropriate use of antimicrobial drugs in animal husbandry, crop production and aquaculture, especially in intensive production systems, as well as production losses to secure livelihoods.

We strongly support co-ordinated action in this area among FAO, the World Health Organization, the World Organization for Animal Health, governments, civil society and the private sector, who all need to work together to address AMR within the context of the 'One Health' approach. We commend WHO for calling for the development of a Global Action Plan on antimicrobial resistance.

The Africa Group takes note of the draft Resolution on Antimicrobial Resistance in food and agriculture to be submitted to the 39th Session of the FAO Conference in June 2015 as set out in *Appendix A* of (C 2015/28). It captures Africa's needs well and lays out the required actions by Member Nations and their partners. It furthermore mandates FAO, WHO and OIE to implement the Global Plan of Action. We support the submission of the draft Resolution for the consideration of the FAO Conference.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

La Argentina agradece a la FAO la elaboración de este documento relativo al rol de la Organización y sus asociados en relación a la resistencia a los antimicrobianos, así como la elaboración del proyecto de declaración para la Conferencia. Destacamos que este es un tema de gran preocupación para nuestro país, un tema muy importante sobre el cual hemos venido trabajando en vistas de adoptar recomendaciones para el uso de antimicrobianos, y en caso de considerarlo necesario, restringir o prohibir el uso de los mismos, principalmente en relación con su uso como promotores de crecimiento en animales de producción de alimentos. En particular, la Argentina está trabajando en el diseño de un plan integral de vigilancia de la resistencia antimicrobiana.

Sin perjuicio de ello, consideramos importante que cualquier tipo de trabajo en la materia que se desarrolle en el marco de la FAO se realice de forma abierta y participativa, de forma tal que todos los Miembros puedan presentar sus observaciones y comentarios, y se evite la duplicación de los trabajos que ya se vienen realizando en otras organizaciones internacionales, a fin de evitar situaciones confusas entre los aspectos abordados por una u otra organización.

En tal sentido, es especialmente importante que se respeten las recomendaciones en la materia ya adoptadas por la Organización Mundial de Sanidad Animal y por el Codex y se evite también la adopción de requisitos a la importación para los productos de origen animal sin justificación científica, que pueden convertirse en obstáculos al comercio internacional.

Destacamos que si bien coincidimos en la importancia de un enfoque multisectorial que abarque tanto los aspectos de la salud pública y de medicina veterinaria, se debe encontrar un balance justo que sopesa de forma equilibrada las reales causas de la resistencia antimicrobiana sin sobreestimar como causa principal de esta al uso de antibióticos en los animales de producción.

Por último, en materia de inocuidad alimentaria y sanidad animal, la Argentina ha rechazado la noción de principio precautorio, dado que la misma no ha sido receptada de forma expresa en el acuerdo de medidas sanitarias y fitosanitarias de la Organización Mundial de Comercio. Al respecto, la Argentina, prefiere mantener el lenguaje en el ámbito de las pruebas científicas.

Ms Desdra BASCOMBE (Trinidad and Tobago)

Trinidad and Tobago wishes to note that antimicrobial resistance has emerged as a legitimate global crisis, threatening human and animal health.

We wish to advise that in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) a series of interventions to increase awareness and knowledge of public and private stakeholders on AMR is being undertaken. For example, in January 2015 a three-day training workshop on foodborne diseases and AMR was conducted in Trinidad, as a collaborative effort of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the World Health Organization, FAO, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture and the World Organization on Animal Health. Through panel discussions and case studies, the workshop participants discussed how to design and implement AMR integrated national surveillance systems. The integrated surveillance of foodborne diseases and AMR within the region is central to the tracking of changes in microbial populations. This approach facilitates early detection of resistant strains of microbes of public health importance, and supports the prompt notification, investigation and mitigation of the associated risks.

We wish to highlight that a new regional institution in CARICOM for enhancing cooperation and effective action to develop and strengthen national and regional agricultural health and food safety systems is now operational. This institution is known as the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAFSA) and is based in Suriname.

In summary, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago notes the *Report on Antimicrobial Resistance* and supports the effective action by FAO to address this critical issue.

Mr Abdul Razak AYZI (Afghanistan)

Afghanistan is making this statement on behalf of the Near East Group. Let me first say, the Near East Group fully endorses paragraph 6 of the 117th Session of the Programme Committee on AMR.

AMR is a serious threat to global public health as new resistant mechanisms emerge and increasingly rapidly and in frequency and geographical coverage. The economic losses of AMR are enormous. The ADG referred to some figures in the United States and the EU, but I think the estimate is stated by World Bank which says that the losses probably are 1 percent of GDP and three times the expenditures on healthcare.

This is a universal loss. Proportionately, AMR affects developing economies more severely than developed economies because the farmer lacks systematic disease surveillance and his health infrastructure is very weak. Hence, antimicrobial use in low income countries requires a different approach than high income countries.

The Near East Group finds Section II, paragraphs 12-24 to be a balanced presentation of the threats associated with AMR. It also finds Section III is a good explanation of what FAO can do to mitigate the global threats from AMR. We feel both sections are well-articulated.

In view of AMR's multi-sectorial nature, collaboration between FAO, OIE, WHO and other regional health centres is crucial. The Near East Group is pleased to see that this important factor is being stressed in paragraphs 34 and 35 of the paper.

Paragraph 37 mentioned the contribution of AMR-related activity to the five FAO Strategic Objectives, but it would have been desirable to be a bit more specific in terms of actions and the resources committed to them during this biennium. One would assume that the main contribution that

FAO could make would be in the areas of advocacy, surveillance, early warning systems, improving the database, advisory services to Member Nations, and capacity building.

We also agree with the statement made by Argentina just a few minutes ago saying that care is needed not to misuse AMR in distorting or restricting global trade.

Finally, the Near East Group is quite willing to live with the draft Resolution as it stands here. However, since so many comments for changes were introduced to today, it would be a good idea to prepare a new draft for the Council.

Mr Jon E. JONASSON (Iceland)

I am speaking on behalf of Iceland, Norway and Switzerland which fully align themselves with the European Regional Group (ERG) statement and proposals.

Allow me to raise two additional points. First, the draft Resolution touches on a number of important measures to fight AMR but it does not touch upon how to address the challenge of possible economic interests in prescribing antimicrobials. It is important that persons having the right to prescribe antimicrobials have a key role in ensuring prudent use of antimicrobials. Consequently, minimizing economic incentives when prescribing those products should be addressed.

Secondly, we are concerned about the use of antimicrobials as growth promoters. The report points at both resistance and use, and the inter-linkages between the effects of usage on resistance. However, the draft Resolution merely points at awareness raising and monitoring. It neglects to address how sustainable production systems help avoid unnecessary use. FAO Members have a great responsibility to implement measures, such as phasing out antibiotics as growth promoters.

Finally, having listened to colleagues, allow me to reiterate the view of ERG and the suggestions for inclusions in the resolution regarding the necessity to apply the precautionary principles. This is reiterated as an important point also for the statement as ERG as a whole.

Sra. Perla CARVALHO (México)

Se agradece el informe presentado sobre este tema en donde se comenta que la presencia de contaminantes antimicrobianos en la cadena alimentaria, el medio ambiente y el agua puede provocar la aparición de resistencia en patógenos y bacterias. No obstante, consideramos que existe una variable en la forma en que los tipos de sistemas agrícolas y las infraestructuras y sistemas básicos influyen en el riesgo de transmisión de patógenos en animales y humanos.

En México, se le da una importancia relevante a la inocuidad de los alimentos y a las medidas tomadas en nuestros sistemas agroecológicos, así como a las normas y reglamentaciones de aplicación a los mismos, además de la realización de análisis de riesgos tanto en productos vegetales como animales.

Se destacan las mejoras en las prácticas agrícolas en la cría de animales y la gestión sanitaria. Por lo anterior, consideramos que se debe abordar toda la cadena alimentaria desde la producción primaria hasta el consumo de alimentos para reducir al mínimo el riesgo de aparición de resistencia a los microbianos. En ese sentido, se acoge la labor de la FAO en cuanto al asesoramiento científico que orienta las políticas de seguridad alimentaria y se respalda la labor de la Comisión mixta FAO/OMS y del Codex Alimentarius en la elaboración de directrices internacionales sobre inocuidad alimentaria, y en proporcionar ahora un marco estructurado en materia de resistencia a los microbianos dentro de este acuerdo tripartito FAO, OIE y OMS.

Por ello, México está de acuerdo en que se refrende esta resolución, siempre y cuando se tomen en cuenta los análisis de riesgo y las evidencias científicas para que esta iniciativa no se transforme en una barrera arancelaria.

Ms Lisa GUINDON (Canada)

Canada is strongly supportive of the proposed Resolution, which clearly shows the needed continuous efforts to collaboratively address AMR as a global issue. We fully recognize AMR as a complex, multifaceted, global public health issue with broad implications on human health, agri-food and environmental sectors.

Canada believes that collaborative measures can be put in place to mitigate AMR risk. Therefore, as noted by the Programme Committee, the proposed Resolution should also include resource considerations.

With respect to the need to take evidence-based urgent action to mitigate AMR risks, Canada recommends that Members implement the CODEX Guidelines for Risk Analysis of Foodborne AMR. Particularly, assessing and managing the AMR risk to human health associated with the presence in food and animal feed and the transmission through food and animal feed of AMR micro-organisms and determinants.

Canada notes that the draft Resolution urges Members to consider and support research and development to combat AMR and promote responsible use of antimicrobials in agriculture.

It is important to emphasize the need for research and development in seeking alternatives to antimicrobial drugs as part of good animal husbandry practices.

Finally, a number of Members have put forward new texts for consideration in the document and Resolution. Canada is unable to comment on such changes without consulting with the capital, and would therefore like to suggest that a separate consultation process be established in advance of the Conference.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

First of all, we share and endorse the statement made by the Representative of Hungary on behalf of the European Regional Group on this item.

We consider this issue of antimicrobial resistance to be highly topical and we feel that it could be placed on a par with the range of the most serious global threats and challenges facing humanity in the area of biosafety and biosecurity.

Our experts have highly commended the Report of the Secretariat. It plays a significant role in raising the level of information of the professional community and a broad range of partners regarding the depth and scale of the problem of antimicrobial resistance. I would highlight one of the arguments made in the Report regarding the importance of national strategies to combat antimicrobial resistance.

As of today Russian specialists consider that even partial implementation of the individual components of these programmes would give rise to tangible results thanks to optimized use of antibiotics in food production. In particular, through the observation and epidemiological analysis of the dissemination of strains of the microflora with antimicrobial resistance and the search for resistant genes in micro-organisms.

We will point out that in the Russian Federation such programmes are absent, even in medicine. We have reasons to think that the situation in most other Member Nations is not better. We are only at the start of the process.

In this regard, we feel that after the approval of the Global Action Plan to combat antimicrobial resistance brought forward before the World Health Assembly this summer, FAO acting in close coordination with the WHO and the OIE in the fields of its competence might develop a sort of roadmap to attract Members to this work in the context of the concept of 'One Health'.

As regards the areas of scientific activity considered in the Report, we believe that attention should be focused on studying the mechanisms of occurrence of antimicrobial resistance in micro-organisms in food production.

In this connection, the following areas of work are considered to be strategically important, namely: re-sensitization of bacteria to antibiotics, understanding the mechanism of development of persistent forms of bacteria, a search for narrow spectrum antibiotics, and lastly, the identification of new antibiotics produced by uncultivated micro-organisms.

Lastly, we feel that approaches that transcend traditional antibiotic molecules are promising ones. We note that the work in these subjects is a narrowly specialized applied type of work and it must be carried out on a sound scientific basis.

In this job, there should be a joint involvement of specialists in the fields of medicine and veterinary science.

Russia welcomes the strengthening of FAO's role in coordinating the work on antimicrobial resistance. Together with other countries in the European region, on the whole we endorse the proposed draft Resolution of Conference.

At this stage, we would also like to forewarn against attempts to encumber the Secretariat with the Resolution of tasks for which, as of today, unfortunately it has neither the capacity nor the resources.

We feel that the Secretariat might elaborate a detailed estimate for planned activities and related resourcing in taking decisions during the Council and Conference. Consequently, these activities might, be included both in the regular programme and be funded to a significant extent from voluntary contributions.

Mr Ringson J. CHITSIKO (Zimbabwe)

Zimbabwe aligns itself with the statement made by South Africa on behalf of the African countries.

It is clear to everybody the danger that antimicrobial resistance poses both to human health, the food chain, animal health and the environment in general.

I would like to observe that probably this danger is much greater for developing economies. For that reason, we would like to suggest that, since AMR occurs in this part of the world because of ignorance and lack of awareness, something could be done so that we have a planned programme of awareness in order to mitigate the spread and possible dangers accruing from AMR in the developing world.

Mr Osamu HASHIRAMOTO (Japan)

First of all, I would like to appreciate the Secretariat's work for drafting the Report.

We support the statement made by the Philippines on behalf of the Asia Group.

AMR threat is a matter of global concern. Japan has a strong concern about this problem internally too, and has been talking this issue based on the risk analysis principle consistent with the existing international standards.

We expect FAO's work on this issue to be undertaken in a coordinated manner with relevant organizations.

Japan can go along with submitting the draft Resolution to the Conference if submitted as it is on the table. However, if a lot of changes and additions are going to be made to the draft as proposed in this meeting, we have to review the new proposals in our capital in light of the complexity of the technical issues around AMR.

Sra. Gladys Francisca URBANEJA DURAN (Venezuela)

Vista la situación que se ha presentado en el debate de este tema tan importante para todos los países acá presentes, y tomando en consideración que estas diferentes visiones deben ser nuevamente analizadas y trasladadas a la capital para que nos entreguen sus opiniones al respecto, pensamos que la sugerencia presentada por algunos Miembros, entre ellos Canadá, para que pueda producirse la apertura de un proceso de consultas entre esta sesión del Consejo y la Conferencia. Eso sería lo más sano.

Y precisamente teníamos una observación que, aunque pareciera pequeña, no lo es para nuestros países. Esa se refiere al documento y más concretamente en relación al preámbulo, ya que observamos en el párrafo 11 de este preámbulo la indicación de países en desarrollo y de ingresos medios. Creemos que no es necesario particularizar entre países de ingresos medios y en desarrollo, ya que esta caracterización en base al ingreso no es apropiada para esta materia. Deben contemplarse las distintas situaciones de los países en desarrollo, cualquiera sea su ingreso.

Lo anterior es igualmente válido para el borrador de la resolución, en especial, lo expuesto en el literal 'h', donde debe reemplazarse países de ingresos bajos y medianos, por países en desarrollo.

Esa era mi corta observación al documento y respaldamos las inquietudes de los representantes y delegaciones que se han expresado.

Mr Gaafar Ahmed ABDALLAH OMER (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

We would like to begin by drawing attention to the importance of this Report, especially given the great deal of information in it.

This is a crucial issue since we are talking about food safety, food health, and that depends on the health of the animal and the safety of the food production. Therefore, we also need to tackle all the various scourges which may impair the health of the animal and the health of the food.

The crucial element is capacity-building in countries, helping them to adopt appropriate legislation that will assist them to prevent this problem. Besides, it should give penalties and deterrent measures while also offering support for appropriate use of antimicrobials.

That is also a vital area. There is also a need to raise awareness amongst the population at large, the farmers and livestock care.

In farming, very often there is an abuse of these products, which is the problem, whether it may be through vaccinations or for the treatment of a disease. So, it is important to recommend that these drugs are not too readily available.

There is a need to adopt certain criteria for the use of them, including an awareness of the real risks that can stem from their use. The use of such antimicrobials should also be monitored properly, so that products that are derived as a result of this use do not pose a threat to health.

There is also a need for a monitoring system at regional and national level as well as a coordination of efforts in order to ascertain where these scourges are coming from.

Thus, animal health and human health authorities must be given the most effective and the least dangerous means to tackle the problem. In this respect, FAO needs to cooperate closely with WHO and other relevant Agencies.

Sr. Oscar Gabriel PIÑEYRO (Observer for Uruguay)

Esta Delegación desearía manifestar que en el correr de la tarde hemos escuchado numerosas propuestas de modificación del texto del documento que se ha presentado. Seguramente, todas las delegaciones aquí presentes, tenemos presente que dada la importancia del tema que estamos tratando, este documento ha demandado un importante tiempo de preparación. En este sentido, esta delegación entiende que se evidencia con claridad que para poder tomar posición sobre los planteos o sugerencias u opiniones de modificaciones del texto que se han realizado, se requiere hacer consultas y/o contar con la asistencia de técnicos de los países en la materia. No podemos ingresar en decisiones sobre cambios de redacción del documento, sin un tiempo acorde para las consultas debidas.

En tal sentido, nos preocupa, entre otros asuntos que se han manifestado, la utilización de conceptos que no se han acordado previamente y que pudieran derivar en restricciones injustificadas al comercio internacional. Esta preocupación ha sido manifestada entre otras delegaciones, por la delegación de Argentina, al expresar su posición sobre el principio precautorio.

Asimismo, es necesario hacer referencia a que es necesario basarse en pruebas sólidas atinentes a análisis científicos como lo ha hecho Brasil.

Por otra parte, apoyamos lo planteado con Venezuela, en el sentido de que al referirse al desarrollo de capacidad de los países para tratar este asunto debe manejarse la amplitud de los países en desarrollo.

Esta delegación entiende que es necesario, por lo tanto, un proceso de consultas previo a la Conferencia, como lo han hecho otras delegaciones, para que de un modo abierto y participativo a todos los Miembros de la organización se puedan intercambiar opiniones al respecto.

Ms Cecilia NORDIN VAN GANSBERGHE (Chairperson, Programme Committee)

I must say I feel better now that I have listened to all of you because we read in the document that there is a lack of awareness. I feel that in this room awareness is particularly high. I have not heard any

speaker not talking about measures already being taken nationally and regionally, so I hope, since you are all people of a certain standing in your governments, you will be able to transfer this awareness to such areas and institutions that might not yet have fully understood the problems that we are facing by this global threat.

It was interesting to hear about the measures that have already been taken. We had Trinidad and Tobago talk about the national institutes that work together. I think what we said in the Programme Committee on exchanging information is very important. I think we can all learn from each other.

One point that was underlined repeatedly is coordination so that we tackle this problem in a coordinated fashion. I think we are doing this and we are looking to FAO to further support this work.

I also heard a very solid agreement on having a Resolution. There have also been calls for fine tuning the Resolution and I am sure our able Chair will assist us with that.

There were calls to include plant protection, the use and others, and I think we can sort that out. There were also calls for the resources to be dependable because we all understand that this work will not be concluded any time soon. We will have to change the way we work. I also heard the calls made in the Programme Committee about having a yearly report from FAO which would also be much appreciated.

Mr Ren WANG (Assistant Director-General, Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department)

Quite a few points that I was prepared to make or respond to have already been covered by Ambassador Nordin Van Gansberghe so I will try to be concise.

I very much appreciate the enthusiastic and solid support for a Resolution that we can present to the Conference and I especially appreciate Member Nations already taking measures and initiatives at a national level, such as the President of the Philippines presidential order to establish an interdepartmental agency combating AMR.

As raised by several Members that I feel should give priority, especially in terms of resource allocation, that I can respond to say AMR is an area of emphasis. It is a priority and we are in the process of aligning our programmatic resources to support it. In the meantime, we would really need to solicit voluntary contributions to enable us to carry out the work.

I very much agree with the Chair of the Programme Committee who suggested that we should, through a consultation process, consider how to incorporate the many comments and suggestions very specifically towards enhancing the draft Resolution. So we will follow the guidance of the Chair on how to proceed.

I would like, with your permission, to pass the floor to my colleagues, Mr Berhe Tekola, Director of the Animal Production and Health Division, and Mr Juan Lubroth, Chief Veterinary Officer of FAO, to respond to any technical issues raised.

Mr Berhe TEKOLA (Director, Animal Production and Health Division)

I will start with some of the technical issues. Regarding the concern from the EU related to the collaborative activities with OIE and other relevant institutions, I can assure you that we are working hand-to-hand and in consultation with OIE and other institutions daily. This is because of our wish not to reinvent issues but to stick to existing mechanisms and not to create other issues. We would all like to work and collaborate together.

Regarding security versus biosecurity, I can assure you that technically biosecurity is more sound and practical if we are to tackle the problem and the risk at the source. That means that, instead of managing the crisis, instead of focusing on the prevention of infections, we can focus on biosecurity and then make sure that hygiene and other issues are well addressed. If not, we keep on working on programmes and then all of the way up to prevention of transmission.

So at the beginning, we can really tap into it and then stack it at the source. So 'biosecurity' sounds better if you agree.

On Argentina's issue regarding the concern on duplication of efforts, again, as I mentioned earlier, please be aware that what we are doing is not a duplication of efforts. It is rather a collective duty because, apart from OIE, we cannot ignore today other actors like the private sector, NGOs and governments. So all are on board and working together, it is really to respond the right way of approach to the needy people on the ground. In a silo, it will not take us long.

Regarding the national strategy to combat the AMR risk mentioned by the Russian Federation, this is one of our strategies where we focus on the early detection, prudent use and the capacity-building of national or Member Nations in raising awareness and facilitating the way of detection, so it is really in our strategy and I can assure you that it is on the top of our agenda.

Finally, regarding the issue raised by Sudan on vaccines and drug availability, it is known that in developing countries it is not an issue of abuse of the AMR but rather the other way around. Lack of availability and inadequacy of drugs can lead to a search for counterfeit or adulterated drugs. That is the worst-case scenario in tackling the AMR issue.

Mr Juan LUBROTH (Chief, Animal Health Service)

Some issues that have come up that I think we would welcome very much a consultation between now and the Conference. I think the United States raised some issues regarding semantics of the way we are using 'prophylactic' or 'therapeutic' or, something that did not come up, metaphylactic use of antimicrobials.

I think that is one area where we need to sort out our language because if we do not understand each other, then the Resolution itself will not hold that much weight. We do see that animal health issues or health issues as a whole breach themselves from SO1 through SO5 most certainly.

During the 117th Session of the Programme Committee, we heard from Canada which called the antimicrobial resistance issue a transboundary challenge and would fit very much in line with what we have with transboundary animal diseases or transboundary plant pests, and therefore that squarely fits into SO5, knowing very well that SO4, SO3, SO2, and SO1 would benefit from the inputs that SO5 can make. So for consideration in that regard.

We do work, as Dr Tekola has said, under the tri-part particularly closely with the OIE. Just to correct my Director, communication with the OIE is not a daily communication but probably at least once every three hours there is some sort of back and forth between Paris and Rome. So it is extremely frequently for many different issues.

That said, we do see our role at FAO to be very much as a capacity-building body that takes the international standards whether it is IPPC, Codex or the OIE, and translate them to countries in need of guidance.

If your standard is one place and your country in another, how do you get from a lower level to progressively arrive at an international standard? That is what we are good at. We are also good at looking at Earth from 20,000 metres above and looking at trends. So this is what we bring to the table.

As far as duplication is concerned, we do not see it. We hear it a great deal from our Members that it is occurring, but I think it is rather complementarity. Sometimes that is called triangulation, when you have two different methods to look at the same problem. I think that is important and that the Membership would appreciate getting different views on a similar issue such as AMR.

CHAIRPERSON

I want to thank you for your constructive contributions on this scientific agenda item. Observations have been highlighted in the status report and I think the Secretariat has been able to clarify. It is my view that there would not be many substantive changes in the Status Report. On the other hand, several changes have been introduced in the proposed draft Conference Resolution for which, in my view, we will not be able to reconcile in this meeting, as we have also noted.

However, I propose to you that, in order to have a revised version of the draft Conference Resolution, that between now and the Conference, there be a consultative process among Members. If you wish, you may mandate the ICC to facilitate this. I wanted to hear from you before I make my conclusion.

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Let me conclude item 16: The Council welcomed the *Status Report on Antimicrobial Resistance* and FAO's engagement across different sectors within the Organization. In particular, the Council:

- a) welcomed with appreciation the effort of FAO to work within the tripartite partnership with WHO and OIE and technically contribute to the WHO led process in drafting the Global Action Plan with regard to antimicrobial resistance;
- b) agreed that AMR is of medical, agricultural and environmental concern because of its high social, economic and environmental impact;
- c) acknowledged the importance of curbing AMR, and understanding the prudent use and governance of antimicrobials especially at policy levels, and encouraged science-based risk management approaches;
- d) requested the ICC to circulate to all Members a revised version of the draft Conference Resolution contained in document C 2015/28 incorporating all the amendments proposed by Council Members, for review and finalization by the Informal Meeting of the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups regularly convened by the ICC, prior to submission to the 39th FAO Conference for adoption.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have two announcements to make.

Regional Groups which have not yet submitted nominations for the General Committee and the Credential Committee of the Conference, are kindly requested to do so before the Council considers the Arrangements for the 39th Session of the Conference tomorrow morning.

Nominations are still required from Asia, Africa, and GRULAC.

The Friends of the Chair will take place in the King Faisal room at the end of this meeting. I would invite the nominated representatives of each region and observers to make their way to the King Faisal room.

The first item on the Agenda tomorrow will be item 10, *Address by Candidates for the Post of Director-General*, which will start at 9:30. After this item the Council will proceed with the remaining items that were not discussed this afternoon.

I draw your attention to document CL 151/7 which sets out the procedure concerning the address to the Council by the candidate for the post of Director-General approved by the Council at its 139th Session in May 2010.

After the address, up to 15 minutes will be made available to Members of the Council representing the Regional Groups who may ask the candidate up to three questions through the Chairperson who will then give the floor to each candidate to respond for up to 15 minutes.

Given the time constraints, any question asked should address a single issue and not be broken down into sub-questions, and a maximum of two minutes will be allocated to each Regional Group which wishes to ask questions. These arrangements were outlined in the letter recently sent to Members of Council by the Chairperson of the Council.

The candidate will subsequently be allocated approximately 15 minutes to reply to the questions.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, now we move to the Friends of the Chair Meeting.

The meeting rose at 16:35 hours
La séance est levée à 16 h 35
Se levanta la sesión a las 16.35

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Fifty-first Session
Cent cinquante et unième session
151.º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 23-27 March 2015
Rome, 23-27 mars 2015
Roma, 23-27 de marzo de 2015**

**FIFTH PLENARY MEETING
CINQUIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
QUINTA SESIÓN PLENARIA**

25 March 2015

The Fifth Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.39 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La cinquième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 39
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la quinta sesión plenaria a las 9.39
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, I call the Fifth Meeting of the 151st Session of the FAO Council to order.

Before we start our proceedings this morning, I will briefly give the floor to the Secretary-General.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Thank you. May I remind delegates of the need to register for Council if they wish to be included in the list of participants of this session.

Item 10. Address by Candidates for the Post of Director-General**Point 10. Communications des candidats au poste de Directeur general****Tema 10. Declaraciones de los candidatos al puesto de Director General**

(CL 151/7; C 2015/7)

CHAIRPERSON

As agreed yesterday, we shall start this morning with item 10, *Address by Candidates for the Post of Director-General*. The documents before Council are CL 151/7 and C 2015/7.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in accordance with paragraph 1(b) of Rule XXXVII of the General Rules of the Organization, one nomination for the post of Director-General was received by the established deadline, that of Mr José Graziano da Silva from Brazil. Mr Graziano's *curriculum vitae* can be found in document C 2015/7.

Following the procedure adopted by Council at its 139th Session, which is set out in document CL 151/7, Mr Graziano da Silva will be invited to make a 15 minute address to the Council.

As agreed during the Informal Meeting of Chairpersons and Vice-chairpersons of Regional Groups held on 5 March 2015, and confirmed in my pre-session letter of 9 March 2015, Members of Council representing the Regional Groups will be invited to ask Mr Graziano up to three questions.

Given the time constraints, any question asked should address a single issue and not be broken down into sub-questions, and a maximum of two minutes will be allocated to each Regional Group which wishes to ask questions.

Mr Graziano will subsequently be allocated 15 minutes to reply to the questions. The Secretary-General will assist with the time-keeping.

I now invite Mr José Graziano da Silva to take the floor.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Mr Chairperson, Ministers, Members of the Council, Permanent Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is an honour to address you again this week, this time as candidate for re-election as FAO Director-General.

I would like to initially thank Brazil for presenting my name and also thank all the countries that have expressed their support for my candidacy.

In 2011, five others were contending for the position. Today I stand alone before you.

When I spoke to the Council the first time as a candidate in 2011, this is how I ended my speech, and I quote: "I will not be able to do anything except what we can do together". And this is how we got here and we did a lot together. And this is how I hope that we can continue our work in the future.

We started with a common vision: a sustainable world with food security and nutrition for all. This is not only our vision. It is also the cornerstone of the future we want.

Remember our central message from Rio+20: you cannot call development sustainable while millions suffer from hunger and extreme poverty, excluded from opportunities that should belong to all of us.

As a candidate in 2011, I proposed five pillars. The pillars included ending hunger, shifting to more sustainable food systems and making food management fairer.

To achieve these three goals, I proposed strengthening partnerships and South-South Cooperation, and concluding the FAO reform process.

I can say that we have made progress on all those fronts. With your backing and encouragement over the last 40 months.

As Director-General, I introduced a transformation agenda that built on previous reform to better enable FAO to serve its Members.

We elevated our previous goal from reducing hunger to eliminating hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. To reach this goal, we sharpened our focus around five strategic objectives.

We adopted a cross-cutting way of working to bring to countries the full expertise available in FAO and in its external networks.

We are using our Strategic Framework to bring Regular Programme and extra-budgetary activities closer together, to bridge the gap between emergency and development work, and to guide our partnerships. This is real culture change.

We are managing our human resources with a global view that a global organization should have. We want to recruit the best to work for FAO. And we want to keep the best at FAO. At all levels – director, professional and general service staff.

We are continuously increasing our efficiency. We found over USD 108 million in savings in three years. We implemented the Global Resources Management System. Next week we will deliver our first IPSAS results. This is delivering best value for money, I would say best value for your money.

We have put FAO at the service of the country- and region-led initiatives. We have now 15 regional initiatives.

We are responding to national and regional needs by strengthening our presence in the field and tailoring our skills-mix to specific needs, without weakening our global technical capacity in Headquarters.

All this, and more, is part of the FAO transformational change, which has only one objective: making FAO an Organization better prepared to help you respond to today's food security, nutrition and sustainable development challenges.

Your confidence in FAO has grown stronger, day-by-day, thanks to open and constructive dialogue, thanks to the fact that we are following through on our commitments and thanks to the results we are achieving.

With FAO's current size, much more focused but also much smaller than before after repeated budget cuts, I think that our main role is to share experiences, show that ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition is possible, and catalyze further investments to get there.

We will do that, we will consolidate our work so far and make the necessary adjustments to deliver even better. This can be seen in the Programme of Work and Budget proposal, which builds on our ongoing work, and adds focus to key areas such as climate change and nutrition.

Ladies and gentlemen, when FAO was created in the aftermath of World War II, ending hunger meant increasing food production. Climate change and sustainability were not part of the agenda at that time.

During FAO's lifetime, we have raised food output fast enough to provide 40 percent more food per capita for a population that has grown almost three times, from 2.5 to 7.2 billion people. This is an amazing achievement and FAO is proud to be part of it.

And now we need to shift to more sustainable and healthy food systems, for people and for the planet.

And even now, in this abundance of food, one in every nine people is still condemned by their hunger to social exclusion, frequent illness and premature death. Today, we need to ensure not only adequate and sustainable production, but also adequate access and distribution for all.

FAO is here to share lessons and help countries find the solutions that best respond to their specific needs. I am confident we will make further and significant progress.

If we continue to connect political commitment, increase investments, implement sound and inter-linked policies and programmes, and also work together at national, regional and global levels, we can do it.

In the past, this could have seemed as too many conditions, too many “ifs”. But not today.

We have already mentioned the changes inside FAO that make the future we want a real possibility.

There is also a lot happening outside FAO. The Zero Hunger Challenge is one example. Another one is the Sustainable Development Goals. FAO is an active part of these processes that build on and add to the momentum we already have.

Ladies and gentlemen, as you know, FAO is celebrating its 70th Anniversary this year. We have many accomplishments to be proud of so far. But ending hunger has still eluded us. And we cannot wait another 70 years for that.

The combination of vision, focus, trust and hard work has brought us far. Today, FAO is much better prepared to give the assistance the countries need. But we still have a long way ahead. So you can expect from me, from FAO, the same hard work, the same determination to continuously improve our support and deliver better results to achieve a sustainable world.

To conclude, let me say that I have been asked many times about the legacy that I want to leave for FAO. Legacy is not something that I like to talk about. It is something that we must work for. What I work for every day, what guides my every action is to increase FAO’s positive impact on the lives of the poor, showing that ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition is an attainable goal.

I thank you for your attention.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Mr Graziano da Silva.

The floor is now open for questions by representatives of the Regional Groups. May I remind Members that each Regional Group has two minutes to ask their questions for a maximum of three questions for each Regional Group.

I will give the floor to representatives of the seven regional groups in the following order: Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Near East, North America, Southwest Pacific.

Mr Mohammed S.L. SHERIFF (Liberia)

Liberia takes the floor as Chair of the Africa Regional Group. Before I start to ask the question, we would like to express our thanks and appreciation to the Director-General. Africa has endorsed His Excellency Professor José Graziano da Silva for a second term and we believe he deserves the second term. I also want to take this opportunity to thank him for the warm relationship we have had serving as Chairperson of the Africa Group and I wish him well and wish my successor a fruitful relationship with the Director-General.

We recognize the positive efforts he has made in the achievements of the Transformational Changes, including further Decentralization put in place under his leadership, and we also emphasize the need to ensure continuity in the strategic direction and leadership of FAO to enable the Organization to realize the full impact of the reforms that he has already started. We commend him and welcome the continuation of FAO's work to eradicate hunger in the continent by 2025. We therefore use this opportunity to endorse the re-election of Professor Graziano da Silva for a second term as Director-General.

As I said, Africa really does not have serious problems to raise here in this public forum because we have had a warm relationship with the Director-General. We have put all the issues forward to him and he is willing to work on them. However, as protocol demands, we want to ask one question. The Africa Group recognizes your continued effort in the progress of Africa's renewed partnership to end

hunger by 2025. Mr Director-General, what will be a vision and FAO contribution towards this progress in your second term? If you can make some reflections to tell us what will be the vision.

Also, Africa appreciates the efforts made during your first term on the issue of geographical representation and gender within the FAO. The Africa Group would like to encourage you to further continue your efforts to achieve a more balanced geographical representation. You will not do this alone, Mr Director-General, but together, yes, we can.

Mr Segfredo SERRANO (Philippines)

Just like the Africa Group, the Asia Group has endorsed the candidacy of our Director-General and we are grateful for his performance and for the reforms that he has instituted. We are also thankful that he has again offered himself for service for another term. May I request you to please give the floor to our coordinator of Asia Group, Indonesia.

Mr Tazwin HANIF (Indonesia)

As Chair of Asia Group, I speak on behalf of the Asia Group.

Mr Director-General, first of all we would like to reiterate the Asia Group Members' support of your re-nomination for Director-General of FAO. We welcome your statement today and share and support your vision for a poverty-free, hunger-free world. The coming decades need FAO more than ever before, leaner and more agile to meet the aspirations and needs of the teeming millions. We have only one question, Mr Director-General, which we think underpins whatever else you want to do and it is a question of finance. While extra-budgetary resources and partnerships are important, we think that over-reliance on them could be a double-edged sword with the potential of harming the Organization when used from a position of fiscal weakness. It is only when FAO is strong, vibrant, and capable can it dictate its own terms.

Our question thus is how do you as Director-General of FAO intend to leverage your position and influence National Governments, not necessarily and not only through representatives sitting here, to ensure that Member Nations, who do not blink an eyelid sanctioning trillions of dollars on fight over lands, ideology, and religion, do not shy away from the responsibility of strengthening the Organization to end poverty and hunger. In other words, what will you do to end this era of zero minimal growth?

Mr Zoltán KÁLMÁN (Hungary)

On behalf of the European Regional Group, I also would like to express our appreciation of the Director-General for the positive changes and implementation of the Reform and wish that this tendency continues in the next term as well. Our questions are as follows.

The first question is, what will FAO look like in 2019 at the end of your term, and how do you see the balance evolving between FAO's normative global public goods work and development activities?

The second question, how do you see the role of FAO in the context of the Post-2015 Agenda and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals?

And the last question, to achieve FAO's objectives, how will you motivate staff to consolidate and build up a reform, including the promotion of gender equity and more effective collaboration with other organizations, with particular regard to the Rome-based agencies and the CFS?

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

La Delegación argentina quiere expresar en nombre del GRULAC el aprecio por todos sus esfuerzos en llevar a cabo las importantes reformas de estos últimos años y por la continua colaboración y voluntad de diálogo que Usted ha demostrado con todos los Grupos regionales y en particular, también, en el caso nuestro con el Grupo de Países de América Latina y Caribe.

Déjeme recordar al pleno, que el GRULAC oportunamente endosó su candidatura en Roma y posteriormente esto fue refrendado por la CELAC.

En este momento, entonces, le solicito la palabra para la distinguida Delegación de Panamá, que en este momento ejerce la presidencia del GRULAC.

Sr. Gerardo VEGA BERRÍO (Panamá)

En nombre del Grupo de Países de América Latina y el Caribe, tal como lo ha señalado la Delegación de Argentina, nuestro grupo apoya la candidatura del Dr. Graziano Da Silva para Director General de la FAO, y queremos reiterarle nuestro apoyo y expresarle al mismo tiempo que continuaremos juntos por acabar contra el hambre y la inseguridad alimentaria que son una de nuestras metas principales.

Al mismo tiempo, queremos expresarle las siguientes preguntas:

Quisiéramos saber cuáles son los principales desafíos que estima enfrentará en su próximo mandato y qué instrumentos y políticas aplicará para superarlos, particularmente, en relación a la región de América Latina y el Caribe.

Nuestra segunda pregunta es la siguiente: desde su llegada a la FAO, la Organización ha mejorado su eficiencia e incrementado su cercanía con las regiones; ¿cómo piensa consolidar las mejoras alcanzadas? Estos son nuestras interrogantes y al mismo tiempo reiteramos nuestro apoyo y el deseo de continuar unidos para luchar por una mejor eficiencia del organismo.

Mr Saywan BARZANI (Iraq)

At the outset, I should like to reiterate our support for the re-election of the Director-General to his post for a second mandate. And I should like to ask you to give the floor to the distinguished Delegate of Sudan in his capacity as Chairperson of the Near East Group.

Mr Gaafar Ahmed ABDALLAH OMER (Observer for Sudan) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the Near East Group, I should like first of all to endorse the candidature of the Director-General for a second mandate. I should also like to express our endorsement for the reform process you have adopted in the Organization so that it becomes more responsive to the needs of Member Nations. We also support the substantial changes you brought about in the Organization which rationalized the activities of the Regional Groups and also contributes to the presence of the Organization in the field. We should like to commend the substantial achievements in this Organization through its partnership with the various financing and international organizations and through the partnership with the various organizations and countries within South-South Cooperation.

I would like to submit some questions. We would like to know more about your future vision as far as the partnership is concerned; the partnership of this Organization with other international and regional organizations tackling the issue of agricultural development in order to eradicate poverty and to improve the capacity to adapt to natural catastrophes and humanitarian crises, and to tackle the issues of food shortages, malnutrition and climate change?

Furthermore, we believe that, on the basis of statistics, 60 percent of the resources of the Organization are from voluntary contributions, whereas 40 percent are from assessed contributions. This is quite a clear financial position. Do you not think that this financial situation is risky as far as the Organization is concerned because how can this Organization tackle its activities while it relies on voluntary contributions and not on assessed contributions?

Finally, we would like to ask a question about the future plans to recruit staff from under-represented countries, particularly from Arabic-speaking countries.

Mr Doug FORSYTH (Canada)

On behalf of North American Region, we would like to express our appreciation to the Director-General for his efforts over the last four years and we look forward to working with him throughout his next term.

Last September, when speaking to the Committee on Agriculture, the Director-General had remarked about the many challenges facing agriculture. He specifically stated that emerging technologies, including biotechnology, are among the options to overcome these challenges. He also said that we must explore this using science and evidence, not ideology. Given these remarks, North America

would like to ask: What will FAO do under your guidance in the coming four years to explore the use of emerging technologies to increase agriculture productivity, enable farmers to earn better incomes, reduce agriculture's environmental impacts, and improve global food security? The United States will now pose the second question on behalf of the North American Region

Ms Natalie BROWN (United States of America)

Director-General, you have recently noted the changes of FAO's client base, with many Members now being middle-income countries that can receive assistance but also provide it as part of South-South Cooperation. Can you talk about your outreach plans to these countries, as well as outreach and how you intend to work with civil society and the private sector?

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

Thank you, Director-General. Let me first say that the Region is very appreciative of the Director-General's efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of this Organization. We share a good open working relationship with the Director-General and we look forward to maintaining that going forward.

In terms of questions to pose to the Director-General, I have three. Earlier in the week when discussing the Programme of Work and Budget, Australia made the comment that our sense is that there are still significant challenges in the transition to the implementation of the new way of doing things embodied in the Reviewed Strategic Framework.

Can the Director-General outline ways he intends to ensure the strong communication, leadership, and coordination between headquarters and the Decentralized Office Network to ensure that the whole Organization is equipped and motivated to contribute to the achievement of the Strategic Objectives?

My second question; could the Director-General please outline his plans for strengthening FAO's strategic leadership in global agricultural policy?

And thirdly Director-General, given it was identified as a critical issue in the recent evaluation of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific and the Subregional Office for the Pacific, could you please outline your views on ways to further strengthen FAO's efforts to assist the Pacific Island countries address their food security and agricultural development needs?

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, I now give the floor to Mr Graziano da Silva for another 15 minutes to respond to the questions raised.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

I would like to start thanking the Independent Chairperson of the Council for these two minutes to relax. As you know candidates are like fiancés and they are supposed to be a bit nervous, despite knowing, that at the end, they will all agree to say yes.

Let me start with Africa, saying that I am very glad to say that we achieved a very good relationship with African Countries. We need to look for more balanced geographical distribution. There is no doubt about it. We made little progress in that, and I also need to recognize that despite many efforts, we still have more than 30 countries not represented in our geographical distribution.

Most of them are Small Islands States, but also Arabic countries, and this is something that we will need special attention to solve in our next mandate.

Related to the renewed partnership for Africa, I think that the most important experience learned is the importance to work with Africa and African Union leadership. Under the African Union political guidance we achieved a lot of commitments, for example, to put an end to hunger by 2025. FAO also launched the African Solidarity Trust Fund at the request of African countries.

It is also important to work with Regional Organizations, in every region. I think that one of the successful experiences in Africa is to work with IGAD for example and also working with the African

Development bank and so on. We work with many other organizations around the world, including IGARDA.

We are, particularly, very happy to work with the Regional Economic Commissions. They are valuable assets that complement FAO's work in all the Regions. We have the best experience in Latin America with ECLAC, but we are also making great progress in our partnerships in Africa and Asia and other regions.

So strengthening these partnerships with Regional Organizations is one important way forward to improve our work in the region. I think that is also important to consider that Africa is much more present nowadays in the Organization, and we welcome this active role that the African Group has been playing all the time in the Organization.

Related to the question raised by Asia, Indonesia. Yes, I agree with this issue of relying on extra-budgetary contributions, it was the same made by the Near East Group. But that is what we have now.

Fortunately or unfortunately, this is what we have now.

We have taken some actions to increase non earmarked voluntary contributions. I think that is the main point, because when you have earmarked voluntary contributions this is the way donors may drive the Organization in a different course we have agreed on, with the full Membership. So for me this is the most important point. We are trying to encourage and we got very good results. We are trying to encourage countries to put the money in Trust Funds or to release their contribution without earmarking, or addressing one or more Strategic Objectives, but not precisely earmarking on this project or that project. And I think this is a way out of the dependency on the voluntary contributions.

I have also been pushing for more South-South Cooperation, which is a way to bring middle-income countries to contribute more to FAO. Countries can share their knowledge and the expertise they have available, and that is not costly, especially when we refer to neighbour countries. It is usually part of the policy of countries to collaborate with their neighbours in areas in which they have expertise. So this is another way out that I see to reduce the possible negative impact on over-dependency on voluntary contributions.

Related to how to put an end to the Zero Nominal Growth (ZNG), in my previous speech to you on Monday I highlighted that this damages the Organization. For 20 years, since 1994, we are facing this ZNG policy. I have been talking not only with you directly but also with governments in my visit to countries. We need to overcome this situation, because you ask more from FAO, we can do more but we need some relief. Now we are in the emergency situation that we need some relief. To recover to a better position to provide better assistance to the countries.

The third Group, Europe, I have listed six questions from Europe but I will try to go through them.

My vision on FAO 2019, first. I have already said that it is difficult in moments like this one to talk about four years more or five years more. We are in a very difficult moment. Everybody knows about the uncertainty the world is living, not only financial but also political. Of course, an Organization like FAO is affected by this uncertainty.

What I can say is that looking at the post 2015 agenda, I can see that the role of FAO will be bigger and bigger. Because we are now moving from the MDGs to the Sustainable Development Goals. In this approach, sustainability is crucial and it has a lot to do with FAO. It means more sustainable food systems, more sustainable crop productions, preserving natural resources, preserving forests, looking at fish stocks, oceans. So there are many things that are under FAO's mandate, including the issue of resilience. We will face more and more impacts of the climate change and FAO will be more and more requested to come in to complement the relief work that WFP does at a first moment, and to start to build the recovery programme and build resilience, which we all envisage as being a solution for this situation.

So what I can say is that FAO will be needed more in the future to assist the countries. What I do not see, or what I am not comfortable to say today is that we have in place all the financial support that we need to do everything that is expected from us. So, more and more, we will have to prioritize and to have this trade off, not doing this to do that. This is the result of a tight budget in a difficult economic

moment that I recognize that the countries are facing. So this is an important role for you to give the guidance, because it will not be Management, the Secretariat, that will decide about the priorities. It needs to be your presence and guidance to decide what will be included in the regular budget or what will not be included in the regular budget, because we cannot afford to do all the things that we would like to do.

Related to the normative work versus development, I think that this is a strange dichotomy. I remember at my first interview as Director-General elect I answered this question to the press and said that this is false. We need more and more to have an Organization that has its feet in the ground to have better normative work. We have been benefiting from these contacts at country level to improve Codex, our normative work, on climate change, on the IPPC. There are many examples that I could list in which we benefit from if integrating development work that FAO does with the normative analysis. It gives more substance, makes the normative work we do more concrete.

Post-2015 agenda: I have already said that I see there is a big role for FAO to play. We have been very active in supporting the Open Working Group on SDGs, now we are shifting to discuss the indicators. FAO is very active on that, too. We have been able to present our list of indicators, but also to call attention to the need to change focus on some areas, including the way we measure hunger, so it is not only from the supply side, and so on.

I think there is a great expectation on what FAO will do. I would like to highlight one important difference that I see. If you remember how we started the MDGs, the MDGs were mostly UN driven proposals. SDGs are country driven. From the very beginning the countries are there, they are pushing. What I envisage to do is to listen more to the countries and to help them to express what they really want FAO to give priority to. I think we are doing that. The emphasis that we are putting on food security and nutrition, “and nutrition” is very important, we are not talking only about food security anymore, we are always talking about food security and nutrition. This is the second goal of the SDGs, We also have the environment relationship and the resilience element in the SDGs, so there is a lot of room for FAO to work. We are doing that.

Motivate staff: I thank you for the opportunity to talk about that because I think that some of you do not understand what is happening outside.

Part of it is anxiety: we do not have a budget, we do not know what will be the cuts, if there will be cuts. Also there are upcoming elections for staff representative bodies in the next months. So there is a lot of dispute and anxiety going on.

But there is also let's say a fear about the future, and this fear about the future has to do with the fact that we are moving in the direction to implement the FAO we, collectively, want. The FAO we want is one that has the best people, selects the best people in an open and transparent way. That faces some internal resistance.

All change brings fears and internal resistance, you know that. It is like the fiancé, until you say the final yes there will be some people nervous. We are doing a lot of things. I think that the Finance Committee has recognized the importance of the changes in Human Resources, but I would like to list some of them that are very important, if the Chairperson allows me to take a few minutes on this.

We are implementing an assessment review for all D-level positions and also for our FAO Representatives. This is a test made by a team that works for the UN system and that gives us the profile about the management performance of the candidate, about their capacity for management, for HR management, finance management and so forth. We recognize that it is not necessary to be the best technical officer to be the best manager and unfortunately those things are not closely related. This is why we are implementing this. We are also implementing a merit based selection for the FAO Representatives, since 2012 we have 13 new externally recruited FAO Representatives, 36 new internal ones and 13 FAO Representatives transferred from one country to another.

So in this moment I can tell you that many of our FAO Reps are new in the post, following this new selection process. It was a very good result until now and we are monitoring their performance on a yearly basis.

We have also implemented a merit over seniority approach and this is one of the reasons why you heard the whistles outside. Until now seniority was a main consideration for General Service posts because it was a closed selection process only for internal candidates. We have now opened the Vacancy Announcements for all, so that everyone can apply.

Of course internal candidates will be given priority under the same conditions. FAO recognizes that internal candidates know the job, they will be in an advantageous position. We need to recognize people who have been working in FAO for a long time and we will do that. But this cannot be the only criteria. We want people that have two languages as this is needed for the UN context, just to give a small example of what we are doing.

Another point, we are trying to manage and redistribute posts from the administrative area to the technical area. This sometimes causes some tensions, especially when we abolish GS posts to establish P posts, but we see a benefit for the Organization in the long term if you can take a GS post that is not necessary anymore because we implemented the GRMS, for example, that brings more automation and opens the possibility for example to have more junior professional officers.

We have also, you remember, enhanced the PSSC. PSSC is the committee that makes the selection process for professionals in FAO. We use to have only one. That was a bottleneck for the selection process that could take 10 or more months. Now we have 11 PSSC at departmental and regional office level that multiply our capacity and speed the process. We now are able to end the selection process in five months, which is a reasonable time.

I would like to remind you that the change in the PSSC was a reason for a walk out one year ago, despite consultations which lasted for one year.

We took the decision to implement the PSSC change. This is the point. FAO is supposed to listen to the staff, to listen to the representatives, but we are not supposed to co-manage with the staff bodies. Listen to them does not mean allowing them to co-manage. Managing is my responsibility, with the team I have in place. I assume this responsibility and do not delegate it. This is why I move forward when we cannot agree, even after months of consultations as we did now.

This strike today is happening because we issued a circular after 3 months of negotiations. We decided to move ahead, not to put the Organization at risk.

Let me also tell you about the next change, one of the most important: our PEMS, performance evaluation. We decided to keep open this issue, to give another opportunity to the staff representatives to come up with proposals to improve it. I will give you 2 numbers just to let you know what I am talking about. Since 2012, the PEMS recognize that 95 percent of FAO staff are under the category of full achievement or exceptional achievement of their goals, 95 percent. Last year, 2014, only 7 staff members out of 2746 were considered as not achieving the goals. So that does not help at all to an Organization that needs to be merit based. We need to put in place an efficient and reasonable system for performance evaluation. And this is a next step and we might face resistance. Just to let you know what will be coming ahead.

Continúa en español

Let me move to Latin America. Muchas gracias por presentar esta posibilidad de hablar sobre los desafíos futuros. Yo creo que América Latina y el Caribe tiene una particularidad que es que la región que ha logrado el primero Objetivo de Desarrollo del Milenio. Y también la región en que la gran mayoría de los países han logrado alcanzar el nivel de países de ingreso medios con excepción de Haití que sigue siendo un problema específico de la región. La región va en progreso acelerado a erradicar el hambre hasta 2025.

El tema de la región ahora es la crisis. Para América Latina y el Caribe crecer es vital. Erradicar el hambre solo es posible con crecimiento, con distribución de ingreso. La región ha tenido un buen performance en los últimos años a esto respecto. Nosotros lo que estamos haciendo es tratar de apoyar los países en la subregión y insistir con los países que preserven ese approach que llamamos de la cobertura social con una base de distribuir los frutos del crecimiento. Yo creo que hemos logrado destacar la importancia de tener esa cobertura social y ahora mover más la atención al tema de

nutrición, porque Latinoamérica, como otras partes del mundo, y países de medio ingresos, tiene en el tema de la nutrición su gran desafío, la obesidad, sobre todo la obesidad entre niños crece a ritmo acelerado, desde Chile, un país destacado en tema de nutrición hasta los países caribeños. Así que eso es el nuestro reto.

Que voy a hacer para consolidar las transformaciones en la FAO... Bueno, hay muchas cosas que ya estamos implementando, sobre todo para consolidar el cambio hacia los cinco objetivos estratégicos. Tenemos ahora que tener un sistema de monitoreo y *feedback* para apoyar eso, y también hemos empezado a crear una estructura, por ejemplo, hemos nombrado directores nivel D1 para hacer el monitoreo de las iniciativas regionales y de los Objetivos Estratégicos, con la función única para eso y no compartiendo otras funciones.

Continues in English

Near East, I have already spoken about the partnership with the regional organizations when I answered the question of Africa and also of the voluntary contributions. What we will do to face the unrepresented countries, the Arab countries. I have visited this year some Arabic countries and I asked for support to improve our capacity of translation in the Arabic language. This is something that we need to do. I think that doing that we will also open a greater possibility for people from the Arabic countries to join FAO. I have been requesting personally in each of my travels some CVs to go to the selection process and I have always highlighted that we welcome the CVs but they need to go to the selection process. This is for everyone, not only for the Arabic countries. It is for all countries and is necessary for this merit base approach that we are implementing.

We have a problem with some specific Arabic countries in that the salaries they pay are above the salaries FAO pays. So it is not very attractive for some of the countries. We did not find good ways to solve this.

North America – Canada, what we are doing for new technologies. We did one seminar about agro-ecology and we are preparing another one on biotechnology. I always say that to face climate change we will need all the tools available, we cannot rely only on this or that. We know the tools that implemented the green revolution, basically fertilizers, chemicals and machinery are limited due to the impact of the climate change. We need to move faster with new technologies available, especially in areas of drought resistance, genetic material and so on, and FAO must be open for that. We want to be a neutral forum to discuss all these possibilities and we are working in that direction.

I am not sure that I understand the question made by North America strengthening FAO leadership on global policy on agricultural global policy. If you could clarify the question.

CHAIRPERSON

I think the United States question was in regard to your approach to the middle-income countries. Can you repeat your question please?

Ms Natalie BROWN (Unites States of America)

Our question was about outreach to the middle-income countries, and you spoke a bit about South-South Cooperation. Can you elaborate further on how you will work with these countries to better involve them not only in their own development but of that of their neighbours, and also the relationships with the private sector and civil society?

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Middle-income countries could play an important role in South-South Cooperation with their neighbours especially, and we believe that we will now need to start to move the country agreements we have with them to include South-South Cooperation and also to open the door for the countries that would like to have FAO's assistance on this as they also become donors in the international arena. We are improving our partnership with the private sector and civil society. We have signed more than 50 Memoranda of Understanding and Agreements with the private sector and some have produced very good results by now. As an example, there is a jam that you can buy in 'Eataly'. It is produced from cactus by a cooperative of women in Ethiopia and sold in 'Eataly'. This is only possible due to our

partnership with 'Eataly'. This is the kind of win-win solution that we are looking for with the private sector. Also with civil society we have a lot of partnerships now. I think that the success of the International Year of Family Farming relies very much on the work with civil society representatives who help us a lot on advocacy and in organizing events and so on. I believe that we need more private sector and civil society working with FAO in the future.

The last question from Australia on how we intend to assist the Pacific Island countries. You know that we have improved our office in Samoa. We have more technical capacity there, but not enough. In particular, the Pacific Islands are especially distant and involve difficult transportation conditions. So we are looking for a way to have a more decentralized approach at that subregional level. This is one thing that is on our agenda. Another is to have a quicker answer to face impacts like Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu because we believe that this will happen more and more. Our main difficulty in the region is due to the problem of distance and the fact that they are small islands is that they are not represented here or in Samoa. So, most of the time, communication is not easy in the region and we would need to improve that. I take this opportunity to answer another question about that.

If we want to have 'One-FAO', we need to improve our communication systems with the decentralized offices specifically and we need also to improve feedback from the country. Because communication is not one-sided only, it is two-way and we need to improve. Unfortunately, we do not have this in place now but it is something we are envisaging to do more and more. You have seen that our broadcasting system for FAO news is improving. We are now online and also using social media to communicate FAO's message. So I think that we are doing well, but we need to improve. This takes time and also more knowledge on how to improve but I think we are on good track.

So those are the list of questions that I noted. I apologize if I forgot some. It is part of the 'nervous fiancé' approach but I think you can forgive me because I hope we will have five more years to interact and to have an open and transparent dialogue on that.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Mr Graziano da Silva. Ladies and Gentlemen, item 10 is hereby concluded.

Item 8. Report of the 100th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (23-24 February 2015)

Point 8. Rapport de la centième session du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques (23-24 février 2015)

Tema 8. Informe del 100.º período de sesiones del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos (23-24 de febrero de 2015)

(CL 151/2)

CHAIRPERSON

We proceed now with item 8, *Report of the 100th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters*, which took place from 23 to 24 February 2015. The document before Council is CL 151/2.

I should like to invite Ambassador Lubomir Ivanov to present the report on behalf of the Chairperson of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters.

Mr Lubomir IVANOV (Vice-Chairperson, Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters)

The agenda of the 100th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters was rather short and included three items.

CCLM examined the 2014 Annual Report of the Ethics Committee summarizing the outcome of the two meetings held by the Committee during that year.

CCLM reported that the Ethics Committee was established on a trial basis in 2011 and that in 2016 relevant FAO Governing Bodies would have to determine as to whether the Committee should be established on a permanent basis.

CCLM looked forward to receiving detailed information on the experience made by the Ethics Committee over the past few years. So the Council is invited to take note of CCLM's review of the 2014 Annual Report of the Ethics Committee.

Moreover, CCLM also received a document entitled *Reform of the International Poplar Commission* describing a process underway to amend the Convention placing the International Poplar Commission within the framework of FAO or the IPC Convention. Clarifications were sought and provided. Plus, guidance was given on a number of issues.

CCLM will review again the proposed amendments before referring to the Council and Conference in 2017. On this item, our recommendation is to take note of the CCLM's guidance on the process of review and adoption of the proposed amendments to the IPC Convention set out in Appendix 1 of document CL 151/2.

At the last point, CCLM examined the document entitled *Correction of Errors and Editorial Adjustments to the Basic Texts*.

CCLM endorsed the proposal to correct the discrepancy between the Spanish version of Rule XXXIV, paragraph 13 of the General Rules of the Organization concerning the reimbursement of expenditures of the Chairperson and the Representatives of Members of the CCLM attending the Committee sessions and the versions of this General Rule of the Organization in the other languages.

CCLM endorsed a proposal that the Spanish version of that Rule be corrected, as it did not make reference to the Chairperson, unlike the other languages versions.

CCLM agreed to reconsider other possible adjustments to the Basic Texts at a future session, because it was unclear whether these were minor formal corrections or involved issues of substance.

Following on with the third Agenda Item, the Council is invited to endorse the inclusions of CCLM on the proposed amendments to the Basic Texts. I invite the Council to approve the Report of the 100th Session of the CCLM, and in particular, the proposed actions that I have just highlighted.

Finally, I want to draw your attention to something which was not on the formal Agenda, but this was related to the last session of the CCLM, which was chaired by Mrs Monica Martinez who you know quite well.

I just want to inform you that high appreciation was expressed for the excellent work done by Ms Martinez as a CCLM Chair. She received a well-deserved round of applause from the Members of the Committee. Regretfully, she could not participate in this Council session, but I am sure that the very positive assessment of her performance as a CCLM Chair is shared by FAO Membership.

Ms April COHEN (United States of America)

The United States takes this opportunity to thank once again Ms Mónica Martinez for her leadership as Chairperson of the CCLM.

Increased transparency has been a vital element of the ongoing reform process and we've seen the benefits in a variety of ways – from Secretariat interaction with members, to improvements in Human Resources, to the functioning of the governing bodies. Therefore, we were disappointed by the lack of compliance with the Financial Disclosure Programme (FDP) in 2014 (for FY 2013).

In various committees we learned about the obstacles to compliance related to the hiring and start date for the new Ombudsman and Ethics officer and the move to an automated financial disclosure system. Still, given the importance of FDP, we would have liked to see a greater effort to adhere to the programme rather than set it aside. With new systems in place, we look forward to full compliance for fiscal year 2014 and a report to the relevant Governing Bodies.

Mr Mohammed S.L. SHERIFF (Liberia)

Liberia takes the floor on behalf of the Africa Regional Group and wishes to express profound thanks and appreciation to the Independent Chairperson of the Council for the efficient manner in which he has and continued to chair Council for the past two years and wish him well for the next term.

The Africa Group takes the opportunity to express profound thanks and appreciation to the Chairperson of the CCLM, Ms Monica Martínez Meduño for successfully concluding her mandate as Chair of the 100th Session of the CCLM. Her able leadership made it possible for the Committee to reach consensus despite the many diversified views from the regions. Having worked with a great professional like you was a lifetime opportunity. We would like to tell you that you have left a legacy that would be cherished.

The Africa Group wishes to congratulate the secretariat for their serious efforts and sincere dedication. We have noted with appreciation the timely and efficient manner in which the agenda documents were posted.

The Africa Regional Group welcomes the comprehensive report of the 100th Session and in particular, for the frank and friendly environment in which the discussions were held.

The Africa Group acknowledges document CCLM 100/2 entitled *Ethics Committee – Annual Report 2014*, and therefore endorses the recommendation of the CCLM.

The presentation by the Ethics Officer/Ombudsman and the recommendation of the CCLM this year is hereby endorsed. We further welcome the recommendation that, at a later stage, further consideration should be given to further advantages and disadvantages of merging Ethics Officer and Ombudsman functions based on the practical experience on the Financial Disclosure and Programme, the implementation of the FAO Strategy on relations with the private sector and the *modus operandi* of the Ethics Committee.

On document CCLM 100/3, *Reform of the “International Poplar Commission”*, the Africa Regional Group was concerned about the extent and implications of the proposed expansion of the scope of the Commission to cover poplars and other related trees and associated genera, the relationship between the Commission and national commissions and other national bodies provided for in Article IV of the IPC Convention and the content proposed amendments in light of the criteria developed by the CCLM, the Council and the Conference, concerning whether the proposed amendments involved new obligations for the Parties. The Africa Group is very pleased with the reassurances that there shall be no additional obligations to the members or parties of any expansion and also welcomes the inclusion by the CCLM of COFO as other commissions in the work of the Internal Poplar Commission.

Following deliberations, the CCLM noted that the amendments would be refer to the Commission for adoption at a session to be held in 2016 and that the amendments would become effective upon approval by the Conference of FAO at the session of June 2017.

The Africa Regional Group welcomes the CCLM’s decision to again review the proposed amendments, together with further information on the deliberations of the Commission after the adoption of the amendments by the Commission in 2016.

On Correction of errors and editorial adjustments to the Basic Texts, document CCLM 100/4 Rev.1, the Africa Regional Group welcomes the proposal for the correction in the discrepancy identified between the Spanish version of Rule XXXIV, paragraph 13 of the General Rules of the Organization concerning reimbursement of expenditures of the Chairperson and representatives of Members of the CCLM to attend sessions of the Committee.

We also welcome the CCLM recommendation to reconsider the matter on corrections of clerical errors at a future session.

In conclusion, the Africa Regional Group endorses the Report of the 100th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters and we look forward to working with you.

Ms Makiko UEMOTO (Japan)

We appreciate the CCLM report, in particular the progress of amendments to the Convention Placing the International Poplar Commission (IPC) in the Framework of FAO.

We welcome the efforts for reviewing the existing IPC. However, the proposed amendments attached as Appendix I to the CCLM Report (CL 151/2) contain issues of concern. We seek clarifications such as those listed in the paragraph 11 of the CCLM Report.

We would like to highlight a few points of our concern.

First, we note that the scope of the proposed functions is significantly broadened compared to its original one.

Moreover, the proposed revision includes a number of tree species other than poplars and willows, which were the targeted species at the time of the establishment of the Convention.

We are afraid that the proposed amendments are likely to create another new international forestry-related forum, which is rather ambitious and is far from the intention of the original IPC. It is doubtful that such an enlarged Commission can be managed without any additional obligation for the Parties.

Second, there already exist other institutions and meetings, including the FAO's Committee on Forestry and Regional Forestry Commissions, which perform similar functions. As emphasized in the MTP and PWB, FAO needs prioritization and thorough analyses on emphasis and de-emphasis in its activities. In this context, we have pointed out the need for a careful examination on costs and outcomes when planning a meeting. The proposed reform does not seem to be efficient, as it could duplicate the work of existing instruments.

In conclusion, if the IPC needs to be reformed, we need further examination on how to reform it, including its functions, scopes, and activities, without any increase in the budget level. We believe that the COFO is the principal body to discuss the matter.

Unfortunately, this item was only introduced as information at the 22nd Session of COFO last year without substantial debate. Therefore, we propose to discuss this item first at the 23rd Session of COFO to be held next year.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

En primer lugar, la Argentina quiere hacer una mención y felicitar a la distinguida Presidenta del Comité, la Delegada de Ecuador Mónica Martínez, por el trabajo enjundioso importantísimo que realizó en la presidencia de esta Comisión; y en segundo lugar, también destacar la labor del distinguido Delegado de Uruguay en la misma.

En relación al documento que se nos presenta, solamente queremos hacer una precisión. La Argentina toma nota del mismo con beneplácito y en lo relativo al punto 3 "Reforma de la Comisión Internacional del Álamo", y a las enmiendas propuestas a la Convención, artículo 3º y artículo 4º, cuando se establecen e indican una serie de géneros arbóreos, y sugiere la posibilidad de incorporar junto con los géneros propuestos a ser considerados, un género de gran importancia en nuestro país y el mundo, como el *prosopis*. El género *prosopis* comprende 44 especies de gran importancia que abarcan tanto el sureste de Asia, África tropical y América (principalmente en zonas áridas y semiáridas) y tiene una alta variabilidad morfológica. ocupa territorios de gran diversidad climática y edáfica, y está demostrada su importancia desde el punto de vista económico y social así como restaurador de ambientes deteriorados

Si bien en el artículo 3º y en el artículo 4º de enmiendas propuestas a la Convención se establecen determinados géneros y posteriormente se habla de géneros relacionados, nosotros preferiríamos analizar la posibilidad de incorporar al género *prosopis*.

Mr Lubomir IVANOV (Vice-Chairperson, Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters)

On the first question, which was touched upon by the United States about the Financial Disclosure Programme, I think that the fears of setting this aside are not grounded in the sense that there were some delays, of course. We discussed that in detail at the CCLM session and it became clear that the

reasons are technical in nature and I believe that nobody is thinking about discarding the Programme. I believe that I have the privilege of having the Legal Counsel by my side, and Mr Tavares will add more clarifications if needed.

The issue on which most of the questions were focused was the amendments to the International Poplar Commission. I have to stress that, as mentioned already in what I said, and if you read the Report in detail, it is clear that it was a kind of an interim discussion, so we did not come to a conclusion about whether these amendments entail new obligations or not, which is a key aspect on which the CCLM has to make a judgment. We intend to discuss this again and we have plenty of time before the whole process reaches the Conference, possibly in 2017. And on the basis of more information that we expect, including on the financial aspects and on the scope and on the certain possibly administrative capacity needed, we have to make a conclusion when we discuss that further. This will be possible on the basis of the final shape that the amendments will take after the Commission session next year.

There was a mention of the interface with COFO, and the distinguished representative of Japan said that this was presented in June last year for information. This is not exactly the case because COFO discussed that and invited the Members to strengthen their agriculture and forest sectors by considering IPC Membership first.

The IPC Members were invited to strengthen their national commissions. Then the COFO encouraged, this has to be noted, the IPC Executive Committee to continue the IPC reform process. They also encouraged the IPC to seek additional members and broaden its scope to include equivalent species in different regions and include tropical and sub-tropical regions. Of course, finally, it was recommended to take into account existing networks, which was mentioned in the comments made by Japan. So, although this is not strictly a part of the legal procedure for approving amendments, I believe that COFO has been involved and it will continue to be involved in the dialogue related to the amendments.

On the list of species, this is not a matter for the CCLM, but we received clarifications that the species mentioned are just indicative. It will be part of making the whole process more flexible. So there will be a chance to include new species depending on the specific situation of the country and the National Commission, so the suggestions made by Argentina have to be done. But I think that if the amendments are approved, this will be done very easily. And this is part of the philosophy of the amendments to open the scope, inject more flexibility, and these species are not going to be mandatory for all the members, it is up to their judgment to do that. This is maybe the main argument of the Executive Committee when they made a judgment that no new obligations will be envisaged by the amendments.

And finally, I have to highlight one aspect which is important when we speak about the funding. One important aspect of the amendments is that voluntary contributions will be made possible, which was not the case so far.

LEGAL COUNSEL

I do not have any comments of substance aside from supporting the views of Ambassador Ivanov.

Regarding the IPC and the amendments to the International Convention, the negotiation is still ongoing. So Members will still have the occasion to propose changes to the text. The CCLM, in fact, made a preliminary review but it will again consider these amendments in future. The matter is before the Commission itself and, moreover, COFO will also review the amendments. So the possibility of expanding and clarifying the amendments is still open to Members.

I also wanted to respond to the observation made by the representative of the United States, to reassure her and indicate that we will resume the implementation of the Financial Disclosure Programme. We had a period where we had a change in the incumbent of the position. This may seem to some Members that it is not a proper explanation. But in fact it is and we can see that there were some delays in the implementation of the programme and that we shall resume its implementation.

And finally, I wanted to say that this last session of the CCLM was a very light one. But I want to put on record that we appreciated very much having worked with the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, who is here with us, and with the Members, throughout the biennium and that we will be glad to continue to do so in future.

CHAIRPERSON

Before I make conclusions on this agenda item, I would also like to join members of the Council in congratulating Dr Monica Martínez for her professional and excellent leadership during her three-year term as Chairperson of CCLM. I would kindly request the Delegation of Ecuador to convey our gratitude to Dr Martínez.

My conclusions for item 8 are as follows:

1. The Council approved the report of the 100th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters.
2. In particular, the Council:
 - a) noted the CCLM's review of the 2014 annual report of the Ethics Committee and recalled that in 2016 the relevant Governing Bodies of FAO would have to determine whether the Ethics Committee should be established on a permanent basis. It also looked forward to the future implementation of the Financial Disclosure programme;
 - b) noted the guidance provided by the CCLM on the proposed amendments to the Convention Placing the International Poplar Commission within the Framework of FAO (IPC Convention) set out in *Appendix I* of document CL 151/2 and noted that further negotiation would be required and that the CCLM would review again the draft amendments prior to referral to the Council and Conference in 2017;
 - c) endorsed the proposal of the CCLM that an editorial adjustment be made to the Spanish version of Rule XXXIV, paragraph 13 of the General Rules of the Organization.

Item 8 is now concluded.

Item 20. Working Methods of the Council
Point 20. Méthodes de travail du Conseil
Tema 20. Métodos de trabajo del Consejo
(CL 151/INF/5)

CHAIRPERSON

The next item on the agenda is item 20, *Working Methods of the Council*. The relevant document is CL 150/INF/5.

I call on the Secretary-General to inform us of initiatives taken to improve our working methods. Mr Gagnon you have the floor.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

To further improve services to Members, the following initiatives have recently been undertaken.

With the issue of the 2014 annual report of the Inspector General, the summaries of reports issued by the Office of the Inspector General are available online on the Members Gateway for consultation by Permanent Representations or persons nominated by them. This includes access to all reports issued in 2014 and early 2015.

An upgraded version of the 'iFAOpermreps' mobile phone application is now available for downloading. Details of how to download the App are given in the Order of the Day. The App comprises a link to the daily schedule of meetings, the internal telephone directory of FAO Staff, and the list of Permanent Representatives accredited to FAO, as well as a link to social media.

As of the last Session of the Council the Order of the Day is now distributed to Members through the Members Gateway in a convenient electronic format, with links to the relevant documentation.

Sr. Benito Santiago JIMENEZ SAUMA (México)

Agradecemos a la Secretaría los trabajos para actualizar la aplicación móvil de Representantes Permanentes, así como los esfuerzos para mejorar el trabajo de los Países Miembros con la Secretaría.

En esta ocasión, tengo una pequeña sugerencia. Es algo que vimos en la Comisión de Medidas Fitosanitarias. Cuando se aproximan las reuniones tenemos que bajar los documentos uno por uno; sería bueno tener todos en un solo archivo comprimido (por ejemplo zip file), para que los bajemos todos de una vez, en lugar de andar bajando uno por uno. Es algo que hizo la Comisión de Medidas Fitosanitarias que tiene muchos documentos para consideración. Eso es algo muy sencillo pero que nos ayudaría en nuestro trabajo.

CHAIRPERSON

I may conclude on this agenda item because I don't see any further speakers.

The Council welcomed the initiatives taken by the Secretariat to improve the methods of work of the Council, and encouraged further improvements.

Item 17. Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2015-16**Point 17. Calendrier 2015-2016 des sessions des organes directeurs de la FAO et des autres réunions principales****Tema 17. Calendario de los períodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores de la FAO y otras reuniones importantes en 2015-16**

(CL 151/LIM/1)

CHAIRPERSON

We now move onto item 17, *Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2014-16*. The document before Council is CL 151/LIM/1.

To avoid overlapping of meetings, FAO produces this calendar in close coordination with IFAD and WFP and through the web-based *Common Calendar*, which may be consulted by Members at any time through the Members Gateway on the FAO Home Page.

I shall now give the floor to the Secretary-General to provide details on the latest changes in the calendar of Governing Bodies. Mr Gagnon, you have the floor.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Subsequent to the request made by Members at the last Session of Council in December 2014 that Governing Body sessions be spread out to the extent possible, I would like to inform you that the Technical Committees were requested to consider moving sessions in 2016.

As a result, compared to the Calendar approved by the Council in December 2014, the Committee on Agriculture has been rescheduled to take place in September 2016, and the Committee on Commodity Problems a week earlier.

The 101st Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters, previously scheduled from 28 to 30 September 2015, has been rescheduled to 21-23 October 2015.

Finally, please note that the proposed dates for the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East have been rescheduled by one day. The dates now proposed are 18 to 22 April 2016, and not 17 to 21 April as previously announced.

The Council is requested to approve the proposed calendar of meetings for 2015 and 2016 with these amendments.

Ms Mi NGUJEN (Canada)

Canada takes note of the changes for the calendar and can support the calendar for 2015-16.

We would like to take the opportunity to notify Council Members of the dates of the Informal Regional Conference for North America which will be held on 21 and 22 March 2016 in Ottawa, Canada.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We would also like to thank Mr Gagnon for his presentation. We agree with the provisional calendar presented. We would like to refer not to the contents but to the form of the document. We see three religious holidays: Catholic Easter, Eid-al-Fitr, Ramadan.

We certainly support this, it just confirms the unity of our international Organization and in this connection, we would suggest that apart from the Catholic Easter, we should also have the Orthodox Easter by the Julian calendar indicated. That is the main holiday of the Orthodox Church and it is celebrated in Jerusalem, the Russian Patriarchate, as well as in the Georgian and Serbian Churches, and the peoples of many countries, such as Belarus, Ukraine, and many others are involved.

And this is one of the demonstrations of the significance of this Holiday. Indeed, Friday in New York headquarters is Good Friday and that is to be celebrated. And this is confirmed by the Resolutions of the Fifth Committee of the UNGA.

It would be appreciated if along with Catholic Easter, which we certainly support, it would also be possible to have the Orthodox Easter Sunday reflected in the calendar. This has no repercussions for the calendar, since it is a Sunday after all. In 2015 the date is 15 April, and 1 May in 2016.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

The intervention from Russia is duly noted. I have taken note of this decision by the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations; the Secretariat has no objections in principle to align with the practices followed in the United Nations.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. Let me conclude on this agenda item.

1. The Council took note of the following amendment to the Calendar for 2015: the 101st Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM), previously scheduled from 28 to 30 September 2015, had been rescheduled to 21–23 October 2015;
2. The Council also took note and approved the proposed amendments to the Calendar for 2016:
 - a) the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) had been rescheduled to take place in September 2016, and the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) a week earlier; and
 - b) the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East had been rescheduled by one day to 18-22 April 2016, instead of 17-21 April 2016.

By approving the calendar for 2015 and 2016, Council has decided that its next session will take place on 15 June 2015.

Item 17 is concluded.

Item 13. Council Multi-year Programme of Work 2015-15

Point 13. Programme de travail pluriannuel du Conseil 2015 -2018

Tema 13. Programa de trabajo plurianual del Consejo para 2015-18

(CL 151/6)

CHAIRPERSON

Let us turn to item 13, *Council Multi-year Programme of Work*. The document before Council is CL 151/6.

As agreed by the Conference, this planning tool is a standing item on the Council's agenda, and as such is a living document subject to continuous improvement.

Indeed, the document you have before you has been the focus of discussion during the informal meetings of the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups over a number of months and includes the consolidated input of the groups.

The Informal Meetings have proved to be a useful forum for discussing changes to this living document and I would like to suggest that this practice be continued. Any changes proposed to the

MYPOW today will be noted and tabled at the Informal Meetings of Regional Group Chairpersons that will take place between now and the next session of Council in June.

I now give the floor to delegates who wish to speak on this item.

Mr Dzulkifli ABD WAHAB (Malaysia)

May I request that the floor be given to Indonesia, the Chair of the Asia Group, to speak on behalf of the Asia Group?

Mr Tazwin HANIF (Indonesia)

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Asia Group on this particular agenda item. We would like first to thank the Independent Chair of Council and the Secretariat for preparing the document presented.

The Asia Group welcomes the revised draft Council Multi-year Programme of Work 2015-18. We consider the draft MYPOW should be a living document and an effective planning tool for the Council. It has proven its value in the past and we would like to see it firmly established within the work of the Council over the coming years.

We take note the effort made by the ICC and the Secretariat in synchronizing the calendar of FAO Governing Bodies meetings for 2015-16 with a view to optimising the planned sequence of the FAO Conference, Regional Conferences, Technical Committees, Finance and Programme Committees and Council.

We also welcome the new working methods on monitoring and evaluation of management performance, and believe that the presentation by the Secretariat on management strategies and policies and the informal briefing by the FAO staff representative bodies will give clearer and practical description on the work of the management, and thus give more precise information to the Council for an effective evaluation.

Having said this, Asia Group endorses the Council MYPOW for 2015-18.

M. Marc MANKOUSSOU (Congo)

La République du Congo prend la parole au nom du Groupe régional Afrique.

Puisque c'est la première fois que j'interviens au cours de cette session, permettez-moi, d'abord, de vous féliciter pour la manière dont vous guidez de main de maître les travaux de la 151^{ème} session du Conseil de la FAO, et je saisis également cette opportunité pour vous souhaiter une prompte guérison.

La Région Afrique tient également à remercier et féliciter le Secrétariat pour les efforts consentis dans l'élaboration et la présentation du Programme de travail pluriannuel du Conseil pour la période 2015-2018.

Le Groupe Afrique estime que le Programme de travail est un outil essentiel de planification du travail du Conseil au cours de la période indiquée.

La Région Afrique accueille favorablement cette version révisée et se félicite du fait qu'elle soit conforme à l'objectif général du Conseil, et les résultats qu'elle envisage permettront d'atteindre les indicateurs fixés.

La Région Afrique prend note des changements apportés à ce Programme et le Groupe Afrique attend avec intérêt l'exécution de ce programme aux fins de permettre à notre Organisation de bien mener son travail dans l'optique d'obtenir un monde libéré de la faim.

Ms April COHEN (United States of America)

The United States thanks the FAO Secretariat for providing the opportunity to review the Multi-year Programme of Work for the Council for 2015-18.

We thank the Members and the FAO Secretariat for considering revisions recently proposed by the United States. Whereas not all of our suggested changes were accepted, we believe the changes to the MYPOW proposed in Council document CL 151/6 will improve the functionality of the MYPOW by

making it clearer and better focusing the outputs and indicators, and adding more detail to proposed activities.

The United States encourages FAO to use the preparation of the MYPOW as an opportunity to examine its work plan in a structured manner as well as a chance to review working methods and practices at regular intervals.

We look forward to working with Member Nations and FAO management in the future to further refine the Council MYPOW.

Mr Olyntho VIEIRA (Brazil)

Brazil understands that the Revised version of the Council Multi-year Programme of Work, which covers the 2015-18 period, is consistent with the overall Objective for the Council, as summarized in document CL 151/6, paragraph 1. Its concise and focused format makes it a useful tool for planning and improving the work of the Council.

Our delegation would like to underscore the importance of making Council documents available at least four weeks before the opening of the correspondent session, in order for delegates to be well prepared.

Regarding the working methods in general, Brazil encourages the due consideration of provisions focused on measures, such as briefings and informal consultation meetings, to strengthen the links between the Secretariat and the Council Members.

Mr Zoltán KÁLMÁN (Hungary)

I would like to kindly ask you to pass the floor to the Delegation of Latvia to deliver a statement on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

Ms Elina GRINPAUKA-PETETENA (Observer for Latvia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate country to the EU, Turkey, aligns itself with this statement.

We welcome the Council Multi-year Programme of Work 2015-18 and take note of the changes compared to the version submitted to the previous Council session. We see the MYPOW as an excellent example of an effective management tool. It reflects the overall objective of the Council as well as the expected results of actions including the strategy and priority setting and budget planning as well as the monitoring implementation of governance decisions. It has proven its worth in the past. But as we consider the MYPOW to be a living document we expect the value to be repeatedly demonstrated and improved in the future.

In order to further enhance the usefulness and quality of the MYPOW, we request the Independent Chairperson of the Council to continuously evaluate the MYPOW and optimize and adapt it where considered necessary. In particular, we see potential for refinement of indicators and targets in section 'D' of chapter II and would welcome an improvement.

We believe that the presentations given by the Secretariat on management strategies and policies to the Council are extremely valuable and provide a welcome opportunity to exchange ideas and promote mutual understanding and trust. In addition we consider the informal meetings initiated by the Independent Chairperson of the Council as a useful platform for keeping a good dialog within the membership and would strongly like to encourage continuing this way.

We would like to underline the important need to monitor effectively the Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies for the next biennium with a view to optimizing the planned sequence of the Regional Conferences, Technical Committees, Finance and Programme Committees and Council. Also, wherever possible overlaps with meetings of WFP and IFAD should be avoided.

Finally, we endorse the MYPOW for 2015-18.

CHAIRPERSON

Let me conclude on item 13 as follows.

1. The Council reviewed and approved its Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2015-18.
2. The Council agreed that the comments and observations made by Members would be noted and tabled at the Informal Meetings of the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Regional Groups that would take place prior to the next session of the Council in June 2015.

Item 12. Arrangements for the 39th Session of the Conference (including tentative timetable - Recommendations to the Conference)

Point 12. Organisation de la trente-neuvième session de la Conférence de la FAO (y compris un calendrier provisoire – recommandations à l'intention de la Conférence)

Tema 12. Disposiciones para el 39.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia, incluido el calendario provisional (recomendaciones a la Conferencia)

(CL 151/8)

CHAIRPERSON

We shall now move on to item 12, *Arrangements for the 39th Session of the Conference (including tentative timetable – Recommendations to the Conference)*. The relevant document is CL 151/8.

At the 150th Session of Council in December 2014, it was agreed that:

- the theme of the General Debate of the Conference be “Breaking the Cycle of Rural Poverty and Hunger by strengthening Rural Resilience: Social Protection and Sustainable Agricultural Development”;

- the Chairperson of the Conference be from a Southwest Pacific Island State;

- the Chairperson of Commission I be a representative of a country not within the G77 and China Group, and the Chairperson of Commission II be from a country from the G77 and China Group.

Today Council is invited to: adopt the tentative timetable of the 39th Session of the Conference; propose candidates for Officers of the Conference as follows: Chairperson of the Conference, Chairperson of Commission I, Chairperson of Commission II, Three Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference, Seven elected members of the General Committee, and Nine members of the Credentials Committee.

Ladies and gentlemen, in keeping with regional rotation, the FAO Southwest Pacific Regional Group was approached with a view to nominating a representative from their region as Chairperson of the Conference.

I have recently been informed that The Honourable Le Mamea Ropati Mualia, Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries of Samoa, has been proposed as Chairperson of the 39th Session of the FAO Conference.

Can I take it that Council wishes to endorse this nomination?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, it is so decided.

Following consultations among the Regional Groups, the following proposals are now placed before the Council for endorsement.

Three Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference: His Excellency Claudio Javier Rozenwaig from Argentina; His Excellency Ambassador Serge Tomasi from France; His Excellency Ambassador Dr. Majid Dehghan Shoar from the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Chairperson of Commission I: Mr Luca Fratini from Italy.

Chairperson of Commission II will be announced tomorrow.

Seven elected members of the General Committee: Australia, Cameroon, Canada, China, Iraq, Nicaragua, and Slovakia.

Nine members of the Credentials Committee: Cuba, Eritrea, Indonesia, New Zealand, Oman, Republic of Korea, San Marino, Thailand, and the United States of America.

Are there any objections to these nominations?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

Let me state that the Southwest Pacific Region is very pleased and honored to have the opportunity to Chair the FAO Conference. Consistent with our region's intent to bring greater attention to the views and needs of the Pacific Island countries, we believe that it is timely and appropriate that for the first time a Pacific Island country will chair the Conference. As we have indicated on numerous occasions in this Council, other Governing Bodies, and in the FAO Technical Committees, FAO can play an important role in working with the countries in the Pacific to address their agricultural development and food security needs.

As unfortunately has been demonstrated in recent weeks, this is a region that is susceptible to extreme weather events and also to the impacts of climate change. But also importantly, this region is important in terms of global fisheries management and provides a vast majority of the globe's tuna resources.

The Honorable Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries, and Agriculture from Samoa is honored that his nomination has been endorsed by the Council. The Minister has indicated his wholehearted desire to take on this important responsibility and he has the full support of the Somalan Government. The Minister has already made a substantial contribution to the work of FAO. He is currently chair of the Southwest Pacific Agriculture Ministers Meeting. He played a prominent role in the recent International Conference on Nutrition as the Vice-Chairperson, and he has attended and participated in numerous Council meetings as an observer. So lastly, just to thank again the Council for the confidence shown in the Minister in taking on this important role.

Mr Osamu KUBOTA (Japan)

We have no objection to the nominations. But because this is the item related to the Conference, please allow us to ask one question about the agenda of the Conference, although we know that it has been already approved in the last Council.

I happened to look at the Report of the last Conference and in paragraph 68, in relation to gender policy, it is said that the Conference requested FAO to publish a Report on the implementation of the policy and of UN-SWAP standard and report regularly to Conference. These reports should include data on specific targets set out in the policy and the UN-SWAP Framework. I think this was already mentioned by the Delegation of Iceland when we discussed PWB. My question is that, looking at the agenda of the next Conference, it seems that there is no agenda item related to this matter. We are not saying to change the agenda, but we would like to know how this request will be treated.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

The report of the 38th Session of the Conference indicates that FAO should report regularly to Conference on this subject. This is not a standing agenda item of the Conference, so the Secretariat will consult and advise on the manner in which this report will be provided.

CHAIRPERSON

To conclude this item I will say that the Council Report will include the endorsed nominations.

Item 14. Status of implementation of decisions taken at the 150th Session of the Council**Point 14. Suite donnée aux décisions adoptées par le Conseil à sa cent cinquantième session****Tema 14. Estado de aplicación de las decisiones adoptadas por el Consejo en su 150.º período de sesiones***(CL 151/LIM/3)***CHAIRPERSON**

We now turn our attention to item 14, *Status of Implementation of Decisions taken at the 150th Session of the Council*. The relevant document is CL 150/LIM/3.

As foreseen in the Multi-year Programme of Work, the Council is invited to note the information on the implementation of decisions taken at its last session. In addition, document CL 151/LIM/3 also contains an update on the status of implementation of decisions taken at the 149th Session of the Council held in June 2014, for which actions had not been completed at the time of the 150th Session of Council in December 2014.

I would like to point out that due to the nature of work involved, which in some cases requires the attention of sessions which have not yet taken place, the status of some items is shown as “ongoing”.

I will now give the floor to delegations who wish to speak on this item.

M. Anthèlme RAMPARANY (Madagascar)

C'est un honneur et un plaisir de prendre la parole au nom du Groupe Afrique sur ce point 14 du document portant la cote CL151/LIM/3, relatif à la suite donnée aux décisions prises par le Conseil à sa 150^{ème} session, qui vient d'être brillamment présentée par le Secrétariat. En effet, ce document traduit au mieux les importants efforts menés par l'Organisation pour exécuter les décisions du Conseil, organe exécutif de la Conférence de la FAO.

Le Groupe Afrique, au nom duquel je m'exprime, note avec satisfaction que les décisions prises par le Conseil à sa 150^{ème} session ont été prises en compte par le Secrétariat. La présentation de l'état d'avancement de la mise en œuvre de chaque décision à travers un tableau synoptique permet d'avoir une visibilité plus claire et nette des actions menées au sein de l'Organisation. La structuration sous la forme “achevé”, “en cours” ou “pas encore commencé” nous permet de donner des statistiques sur l'état d'exécution desdites décisions.

Sur l'ensemble des 26 décisions prises lors de la 150^{ème} session, 22 ont été effectivement achevées, 4 sont en cours d'exécution. Au regard de ce qui précède et considéré sous un angle quantitatif, je peux noter que sur les 26 décisions prises lors de la 150^{ème} session, 84 pour cent sont complètement achevées, 16 pour cent sont en cours d'exécution. Ainsi, le Groupe régional Afrique attend avec beaucoup d'intérêt la mise en œuvre effective de toutes les décisions, notamment celles relatives au prochain Rapport annuel de la Réunion conjointe du Comité du Programme et du Comité financier en novembre 2015 sur les stratégies de partenariat avec les organisations de la société civile et le secteur privé.

Après avoir apprécié l'état d'avancement de l'exécution des décisions de la 150^{ème} session, ma délégation, au nom du Groupe régional Afrique invite tous les Membres du Conseil à adopter les informations contenues dans le document CL 151/LIM/3.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentlemen, my conclusions for item 14 are as follows: The Council took note of the status of implementation of decisions taken at its 150th (December 2014) and 149th Sessions (June 2014).

The item is concluded.

Item 18. Provisional Agenda for the 152nd Session of the Council (15 June 2015)**Point 18. Ordre du jour provisoire de la cent cinquante-deuxième session du Conseil (15 juin 2015)****Tema 18. Programa provisional del 152.º período de sesiones del Consejo (15 de junio de 2015)**
(CL 151/INF/2)**CHAIRPERSON**

We will move on to Item 18, *Provisional Agenda for the 152nd Session of the Council (15 June 2015)*. The relevant document is CL 151/INF/2.

This item refers to the Council session immediately following the Conference, which focuses essentially on the election of members of the Council Committees. The Council is therefore requested to consider the draft agenda for its next session and propose, if necessary, matters for inclusion.

I see no request for the floor.

This means that I can conclude that the Council endorsed the Provisional Agenda of its 152nd Session (15 June 2015).

Item 21. Any Other Matters**Point 21. Autres questions****Tema 21. Asuntos varios****CHAIRPERSON**

We can now move on to the last item on the Agenda, *Any Other Matters*.

As there were no requests to add any matters under this item when the timetable was adopted on Monday morning I take it that we can conclude item 21.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this brings us to the end of our substantial work for this Session of the Council, and this morning's plenary meeting. Before closing the meeting I would like to draw your attention to document CL 152/3, which contains nomination forms for membership of the Programme and Finance Committee and the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters. The elections for these Council Committees will take place at our next session on 15 June and nominations should be made to the Secretary-General of the Conference and Council by 25 May.

I will now pass the floor to the Secretary-General for some announcements.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I would like to remind Members of the two side events which will take place during lunch time in the Iran Room as follows: from 12.30 to 13.30 Side Event on Strategic Objective 3: *Reduce Rural Poverty*; and from 13.30 to 14.30 Side Event on Strategic Objective 5: *Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises*.

Please note refreshments will be available in the foyer immediately in front of the Iran Room.

Furthermore, I wish to invite Members to participate in the "Open House" in the Atrium. As mentioned yesterday, there are information booths on the Strategic Objectives in the Atrium for the whole week, which provide an opportunity to gather further information on the main results achieved under each of the five Strategic Objectives, as well as Objective 6. This afternoon from 14.00 to 17.00 hours, the "Open House" will provide an additional opportunity for Members to interact with the Strategic Objective teams in order to discuss progress on the strategic objectives and respond to questions.

Since we will not be meeting tomorrow morning, I wish to mention the two side events which will be held tomorrow Thursday 26 March in the Iran Room: from 12.30 to 13.30. Side Event on Objective 6.02: *Strengthening national statistical capacity for evidence-based decision-making*; and from 13.30 to 14.30 and Side Event on *The 2014 International Year of Family Farming: Legacy and Way Forward*. As per today's arrangements, refreshments will be served in the Foyer in front of the Iran Room. May I also remind you that additional information on all the side events is available on the Members Gateway.

CHAIRPERSON

I would like to conclude by making the following announcements. There will be no plenary meeting this afternoon, and the first meeting of the Drafting Committee will convene at 15.00 hours in the Lebanon Room. The second meeting of the Drafting Committee will convene tomorrow morning at a time to be announced.

The Friends of the Chair will reconvene tomorrow morning at 09.30 hours in the King Faisal room. Council will convene in a plenary meeting at 14:30 hours tomorrow afternoon to endorse conclusions on item 3.

I have another announcement to make. I received the nomination of His Excellency Godfrey Magwenzi from Zimbabwe as Vice-Chairperson of the 151st Session of the Council.

Does the Council agree with this nomination which was presented to me by the Africa Region Chairperson?

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Mr Hassan ABOYOUB (Morocco)

Morocco has not been consulted. I am sorry. Do what you can do, Mr Chairperson.

Mr Mohammed S.SHERIFF (Liberia)

We take this opportunity to thank you once again for all what you have done to chair this meeting. We, as the Africa Group, want to thank all the Member Nations for the consensus built and we have appealed to all Member Countries.

Africa is a continent with 54 countries. We have appealed to all of them and we again ask in this public forum that in the spirit of African unity, in the spirit of African awareness and in the spirit of working together for the benefit of Africa, all countries support the Chairperson of the African Union declaring this year in Addis-Ababa that Zimbabwe was elected as Chairperson of the African Union and we have that high respect for our continent. We therefore appeal to all Member Nations to accept and endorse the Vice Chairmanship of Zimbabwe.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. I take it that Zimbabwe has been endorsed. Thank you.

M. Hassan ABOYOUB (Maroc)

La délégation du Royaume de Maroc n'a rien contre la candidature du Zimbabwe. Le problème n'est pas le problème du Groupe Afrique. L'Ambassadeur du Zimbabwe, comme je l'ai dit dans la séance d'ouverture lundi, a dénié au Maroc le droit de profiter des privilèges que lui donne son statut comme Membre de l'ONU. Ce n'est pas un problème de consensus, c'est un problème de négation de droits et d'insertion de dispositions de Groupes régionaux qui n'ont rien à voir avec la FAO et le système onusien.

Donc, je voudrais Monsieur le Président, que vous notiez dans le procès verbal de cette réunion que la position du Maroc est dictée par la violation des règles onusiennes qui garantit à tout État Membre la même voix et qui garantit à l'État Membre de faire usage de tous les mandats et de tous les droits qui lui sont niés. Le problème s'est posé et c'est pourquoi je le réfère au Conseil parce que cela touche les règles de l'Institution, cela ne touche pas le Groupe africain. Je pose ce problème parce qu'on nous nie le droit de travailler normalement dans cette Organisation. Je me réfère à vous Monsieur le Président indépendant du Conseil, je n'ai rien contre la candidature du Zimbabwe, mais c'est un problème et un précédent très graves dans l'histoire de la FAO et de l'ONU, et je voudrais que tout le monde le sache.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for your remarks. I find it very difficult for me to include it in the report.

So I call the meeting to a closure for today and we meet tomorrow in accordance to my announcement which I made. Thank you. Have a good afternoon.

The meeting rose at 12:30 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 30

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.30

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Fifty-first Session
Cent cinquante et unième session
151º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 23-27 March 2015
Rome, 23-27 mars 2015
Roma, 23-27 de marzo de 2015**

**SIXTH PLENARY MEETING
SIXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
SEXTA SESIÓN PLENARIA**

26 March 2015

The Sixth Plenary Meeting was opened at 16.25 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La sixième séance plénière est ouverte à 16 h 25
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la sexta sesión plenaria a las 16.25
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

Item 3. Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 (continued)

Point 3. Plan à moyen terme 2014-2017 (révisé) et Programme de travail et budget 2016-2017 (suite)

Tema 3. Plan a plazo medio para 2014-17 (revisado) y Programa de trabajo y presupuesto para 2016-17 (continuación)

(C 2015/3; C 2015/3 Information Notes 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5)

CHAIRPERSON

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to the Sixth meeting of the 151st Session of the FAO Council.

We will now return to item 3, *Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17*.

Further to the decision to establish a “Friends of the Chair” on the budget level last Monday, I chaired an initial meeting on Tuesday afternoon. I then met individually with Regional Group representatives yesterday afternoon and subsequently chaired a second meeting of the Friends of the Chair this morning. A sub-group of the Friends of the Chair was then convened to fine-tune (i) the conclusions for this item; and (ii) the draft Conference Resolution on Budgetary Appropriations 2016-17.

I am glad to be in a position to inform you that after productive consultations, consensus has emerged on the budget level of USD 1,035.7 million, which is equivalent to USD 1,005.6 million at the 2016-17 budget rate of exchange.

Consequently, the Council is in a position to forward a draft Conference Resolution on Budgetary Appropriations 2016-17 for endorsement by the 39th Session of Conference.

Ladies and gentlemen, this brings us to the end of item 3.

I will now read out the conclusion on this item.

1. The Council considered the Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (reviewed) and the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 (MTP/PWB) and endorsed the recommendations of the Programme and Finance Committees and of their Joint Meeting.
2. Regarding the proposals to improve FAO’s financial health, liquidity and reserves, the Council:
 - a) encouraged the further active participation of the Secretariat in the UN Common System’s search for an optimum and practicable solution to the complex matter of the After Service Medical Cost liability;
 - b) requested the Secretariat to continue in its efforts to contain the costs of medical insurance, including through changing FAO’s cost-sharing arrangements of health insurance premiums between the Organization and plan participants;
 - c) for the 2016-17 biennium, recommended that the Conference continue to follow the previously approved approach of partial funding of USD 14.1 million towards the After-Service Medical Coverage past service liability.
3. Regarding the substance of the proposals in the MTP/PWB, and having considered the additional information provided by the Secretariat, the Council:
 - a) underlined the importance of continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization in the Medium Term Plan;
 - b) supported the proposed Programme of Work and noted that further clarifications would be provided by the Secretariat for consideration by Members;
 - c) appreciated the identification of proposed areas of emphasis, de-emphasis and savings and welcomed the proposed reallocation of USD 14.2 million to higher priority areas;

- d) welcomed the proposal to source an additional USD 6.1 million in 2016-17 to be used exclusively to strengthen the TCP programme in support to Small Island Developing States through extra-budgetary resources;
 - e) supported the organizational restructuring proposals and emphasized the importance of consolidation of decentralization efforts in order to reinforce the holistic work of the Organization;
 - f) appreciated the proposal for a more proactive and tailored approach in respect of middle-income countries;
 - g) encouraged the continued use of partnerships to enable the Organization to leverage its comparative advantages;
 - h) encouraged the continued review of capacity and location of human resources and skills mix for optimal delivery of the programme of work.
4. Regarding the budget level for 2016-17, the Council:
- a) welcomed the update of the cost increase estimates and the identification of areas for further savings and efficiency gains provided by the Secretariat;
 - b) agreed the funding of the proposed USD 6.1 million increase of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) by, on an exceptional basis, extra-budgetary resources in 2016-17;
 - c) agreed that the TCP appropriation in the PWB 2018-19 would be in line with Conference Resolution 9/89;
 - d) appreciating the transformational changes undertaken at FAO since 2012 had resulted in a more efficient and effective Organization, agreed on the importance of full flexibility for the Director-General in identification of unidentified further efficiency gains and savings;
 - e) recommended that Conference approve draft Conference Resolution CR x/15; and
 - f) noted that the budget level contained therein would allow full delivery of the Programme of Work.

Mr Luca FRATINI (Italy)

I would like to pass on the floor to Latvia in its capacity as current Presidency of the European Union.

Ms Elina GRINPAUKA-PETETENA (Observer for Latvia)

I am honored to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States.

First, we would like to thank you, Mr Chair, for your efforts to take the discussion on the PWB forward in the Friends of the Chair Group and through informal and inclusive consultations with representatives and observers of the regional groups. This has been very helpful in enhancing mutual understanding and identifying the key issue at stake.

We would also like to thank the Secretariat for the information and explanations they have so far provided in reply to our queries and look forward to receiving further clarifications for our considerations.

We appreciate the efforts that the Secretariat and FAO's Management have made since Monday to identify areas where further savings could be found. We note that, on the basis of the new proposal put forward this morning by the Secretariat, a consensus on the budget level was reached in the Friends of the Chair Group.

We are therefore ready, in a spirit of compromise, and despite the serious financial constraints that EU Member States are facing, to accept the revised budget level of USD 1,035.7 million.

Finally, we look forward to continuing to work together on FAO's programme of work.

Mr Jon E. JONASSON (Iceland)

I wonder if I could have an addition to 3(b) which covers an issue that was mentioned by many but no reply came from the Secretariat. But this is a cross-cutting issue, Gender. I would like to suggest a small addition to that paragraph.

At the end of 3(b), I would suggest to add: “including further information on how gender as a cross-cutting issue is reflected throughout the budget”.

I think this is not a controversial issue so I hope Members could accept to bring this on board your summary.

CHAIRPERSON

Let me read the whole thing so that Members can consider your proposal.

“3(b): supported the proposed Programme of Work and noted that further clarifications would be provided by the Secretariat for consideration by Members, including further information on how gender as a cross-cutting issue is reflected throughout the budget”.

Silence means it is accepted. Thank you for your agreement on conclusions for item 3.

Given that the Drafting Committee has completed its work on all other sections of the Report, a second meeting of the Drafting Committee will now take place in the Lebanon Room to review the conclusions I have just read out and the draft resolution on budgetary appropriations for 2016-17.

I should like to thank all the Members who took part in the Friends of the Chair negotiations for their willingness to reach this exceptional outcome.

The spirit of good will that prevailed enabled us to reach agreement on the budget level at this pre-Conference session of Council. I believe we can all feel a sense of satisfaction for having been able to reach this notable result.

We shall meet again tomorrow, Friday morning at 09.30 for agenda item 19, *Developments in Fora of Importance for the Mandate of FAO*, which is presented to Council for information.

Members of the Drafting Committee are invited to make their way to the Lebanon Room at 17:30 to review the draft report on item 3.

SECRETARY GENERAL

Ladies and gentlemen, I should like to take this opportunity to return to the question of the nominee for the chair of Commission II of the Conference.

I have been informed that Mr Mr Abdelbaset Ahmed Aly Shalaby from Egypt has been nominated as Chairperson of Commission II.

CHAIRPERSON

With this the meeting is closed.

The meeting rose at 16:46 hours

La séance est levée à 16 h 46

Se levanta la sesión a las 16.46

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Fifty-first Session
Cent cinquante et unième session
151.º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 23-27 March 2015
Rome, 23-27 mars 2015
Roma, 23-27 de marzo de 2015**

**SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING
SEPTIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
SÉPTIMA SESIÓN PLENARIA**

27 March 2015

The Seventh Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.42 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La septième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 42
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la séptima sesión plenaria a las 9.42
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen. I call the seventh meeting of the 151st Session of the FAO Council to order.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to inform you that the Staff Representative Bodies have requested to make a statement to this session of Council.

As this request has been approved by the Director-General, if the Council also agrees to this request, the representative could be invited to speak right at the end this morning's presentations and before the adoption of the Report. Are Council Members in agreement? I note that you are in agreement.

Item 19. Developments in Fora of Importance for the Mandate of FAO
Point 19. Évolution des débats au sein d'autres instances intéressant la FAO
Tema 19. Novedades en los foros de importancia para el mandato de la FAO
 (CL 151/INF/4)

CHAIRPERSON

Now we take up now item 19, *Developments in Fora of Importance for the mandate of FAO*, which is presented to Council for information only. The relevant document is CL 151/INF/4.

The Council will be given presentations on issues taking place in other international fora which are of relevance to FAO's mandate. I should like to ask the Secretary-General to read the list of presentations.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Council will be given presentations on:

- Global *peste des petits ruminants* (PPR) Control and Eradication Programme;
- Outcome of the Twentieth Conference of the Parties (COP20) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (Lima, 1-12 December 2014);
- Outcome of the Third Session of the Plenary of the Inter-governmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) (Bonn, 12-17 January 2015);
- Outcome of the Forty-sixth Session of the UN Statistical Commission (New York, 3-6 March 2015);
- Fourteenth World Forestry Congress (Durban, 7-11 September 2015);
- Third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) (October 2016); and
- Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board (SPIAC-B).

CHAIRPERSON

I would like to inform Members that following the completion of all the presentations I will open the floor for questions.

I will now ask our first presenter, Mr Berhe Tekola, Director of the Animal Production and Health Division, to present the first topic "Global *peste des petits ruminants* Control and Eradication Programme".

Mr Berhe TEKOLA (Director, Animal Production and Health Division)

The PPR conference organizing team thanks the Council for their interest in addressing global *peste des petits ruminants* (PPR) Control and Eradication Programme".

Peste des petits ruminants is a highly contagious disease of sheep and goats caused by a virus closely related to the rinderpest virus and is considered to be one of the most damaging livestock diseases in Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Since it was first identified in 1942, PPR has spread to around 70 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia, regions that are home to over 80 percent of global 2.1 billion sheep and goat, as well as to

more than hundreds of millions of the world's poorest people who depend on small ruminants for their livelihoods.

Eradicating PPR will help reduce poverty, and improve the food security and livelihood resilience of millions of poor farmers around the world.

In the Global Framework for the progressive control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs) Global Steering Committee in 2012, the FAO Council and the Committee on Agriculture and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), in the form of a Resolution of the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE in 2014, have all recommended the development of a PPR Global Control and Eradication Strategy.

The key objectives of the Global Strategy of PPR are progressively reduce the incidence and spread of PPR and ultimately eradicate PPR; and ensure that previously non-infected countries remain free from the disease.

The current PPR situation: about 66 countries have either reported infection to the OIE or are suspected of being infected. Of these, more than 60 percent are in Africa (including North Africa) the other infected countries being in Asia (South East Asia, China, South Asia and Central Asia/West Eurasia including Turkey) and the Middle East. Another 50 countries are considered to be at risk for PPR. As of May 2014, 48 countries in the world were officially recognised as PPR free by the OIE.

The Global Strategy has three integrated components: PPR control and eradication; strengthening Veterinary Services (VS); and prevention and control of other major disease of small ruminants.

There are three key tools required to make this campaign successful: the PPR vaccine and specific diagnostic tests, which are already available; understanding the Epidemiology, as to rinderpest the methodology is similar, but some differences are obvious but available; political will, this is what is not adequately addressed and assured, but for sure with your support it can be achieved.

Intervention approach: National, Regional and Global

The country level intervention is the key and critical one, where the lion's share of the battle against the disease takes place.

Transboundary Animal Diseases can't be tackled at national level in silo. Country programmes without Regional and Global dimension can't be achievable.

Therefore, at global level the existing GF-TADs governing bodies; the Global PPR Control and Eradication Programme (PPR-GCEP), to be established soon; the OIE and FAO PPR Reference Laboratories/Centres and the OIE and FAO Epidemiology Collaborating Centres will establish two global networks and the PPR-GREN platform will be set up; and the joint FAO/IAEA Division plays an important role in supporting laboratories at national and regional levels contributing to this global approach.

Why invest in an eradication programme?

Livestock plays a major role in world agriculture and contributes a global average of 40 percent to the national agriculture gross domestic product (GDP).

Over 75 percent of the world's one billion people living on less than USD 2 a day rely on crop and livestock farming for their survival.

Livestock, a rich source of protein and micronutrients, is often the only insurance against crop failure. Small ruminants, such as sheep and goats, represent a significant part of the global livestock industry, particularly in developing countries. They contribute to food security and nutrition, livelihoods, national economic development and the overall well-being of people.

Over 330 million poor farmers in Africa and Asia directly rely on sheep and goats for their livelihoods.

More than 1.7 billion sheep and goats, over 80 percent of the global small ruminants population, are in Africa and Asia.

PPR has dramatically expanded in the last 15 years reaching previously non-infected countries, such as China today.

Therefore, our strategy will be based on the knowledge and experience gained from the rinderpest eradication, as well as from other large-scale PPR control programmes such as in Somalia, the control and eradication of PPR is an achievable goal in half the time that took us to eradicate rinderpest.

The Global Strategy has developed nine regional roadmaps which provide countries with a common long term vision and create incentives for them to develop and earmark on national risk reduction strategies with similar programme objectives, milestones and timelines that support the regional support.

Partnerships with and between public veterinary services and other public and private sectors are crucial for the successful control and eradication of PPR.

The key benefits and beneficiaries are:

The livelihoods of hundreds of millions of poor farmers in large parts of Africa, the Middle East and Asia will be significantly enhanced through increased productivity and profitability by accessing global markets for small ruminant products needed to fulfil increasing global demand.

Some 5.6 billion rural and urban consumers will benefit from access to high quality food products such as milk, cheese and meat, and wool and hair.

Improved production and supply systems will result in reasonable and stable prices, increased incomes of producers and traders, and enhanced economic development.

More stable sheep and goat production systems and value chains will improve the resilience of poor farmers.

Women, particularly from poor farming communities, will have better control over small ruminant production making it an important resource for them to invest in improved nutrition and their children's education.

Improved animal health systems particularly through strengthening veterinary services and capacity at subnational, national and regional levels will enhance the control of other livestock diseases.

And finally, the investment is expected to be recovered within the first four to five years after the eradicating the disease.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to the next speaker, Ms Helena Semedo, Deputy Director-General Natural Resources, who will make a presentation on: Outcome of the Twentieth Conference of the Parties (COP20) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, which took place in Lima from 1 to 12 December 2014

Ms Helena Semedo (Deputy Director-General, Natural Resources)

I would like to provide a brief update of recent developments in agriculture under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and presenting the outcomes from the 20th Conference of the Parties, COP 20, which took place in Lima from 1 to 12 December 2014 and a way forward to Paris where we expect we will be concluding an agreement.

The negotiations are entering a decisive phase and the new agreement, which will come into effect in 2020, is expected to be adopted by the 21st Session of the COP. It will be held in Paris from 30 November to 11 December. The negotiations are nearly at a final stage. From now to Paris we expect to have three more global meetings to finalize the text of the agreement. Although we are still in negotiations, the text has 86 pages. Agriculture is in the text of the negotiations but we hope after agriculture will come up clearly on this process and in the text of the negotiation. However, the text of the draft negotiation includes a provision to ensure that food production is not threatened and sustainable development is recognized in the text.

In Lima, where I represented FAO, we drew attention to the relevance of food security and agriculture in the context of the Lima-Paris Action Agenda and the need to make all agriculture sectors more productive, sustainable and resilient in light of climate change. Our message was agriculture is part of the solution and, if we are not sustainable, we cannot assure the food security of the six billion people in 2015.

The Lima call to climate action detailed how parties can submit intended nationally determined contributions to be included in the agreement. It should be done by 31 March, but so far few countries have submitted their intended national contributions. In fact, we have the Global Agreement and we have the national contribution to this agreement, and FAO stands ready to support Member Nations to prepare ambitious new intended nationally determined contributions. FAO is supporting countries in integrating agriculture in the new INDCs, intended nationally determined contributions, and we consider that agriculture is a sector in which every country can contribute to the greenhouse gas emission reductions while at the same time improving living conditions and boost development. And at the practical level, the preparation of INDCs requires a sound understanding of the current state of the greenhouse gas emissions and FAO is helping the countries calculate the emissions of greenhouse gas and we consider this a major achievement.

One of the main outcomes of COP 20 was the Green Climate Fund. As you are aware, the objective is to mobilize USD 100 billion per year in financing climate by 2020. So far, the Climate Fund has received around USD 10 billion pledges, and the funds will be split between investment in mitigation and adaptation. FAO is in the process of being accepted by the Green Climate Fund. Our new Director of Climate NRC is now attending a meeting on the Green Climate Fund and we expect to be accredited in the next call for proposals maybe in June and then we can help the countries to apply for those funds.

What is the way forward for FAO, Paris and beyond? In order to reach an agreement in Paris this year, parties are concentrating on the high-level issues, negotiating the Global Agreement. But we have the land sector and other technical issues, as I mentioned agriculture. They have been deferred. FAO is currently considering options for how it can best assist member countries to prepare technical discussions post-Paris. Paris is only a milestone in all of this process. The agreement will be started by 2020 and will be approved in Paris. In 2020, we can always refine all the national documents and be sure that agriculture and adaptation are fully integrated in those documents. This is what FAO is intending to do and how we see our role onwards after Paris.

How will we support Member Nations? We will be supporting them fulfilling some obligations included in the Framework. Obligations will be reporting. They have to prepare a biennial update report and national greenhouse gas inventories; they have to prepare and implement the National Adaptation Plan and the National Mitigation Plan, and they have to define National Climate Policies. On the other side we have to enforce the capacity development at country level to implement the agreement and to report on those obligations.

I just came from a meeting in Turin where it was decided that the United Nations will be more concentrated now in the LDCs, in the SIDS, and in adaptation and in resilience as well, and we consider FAO can play a major role in this process.

CHAIRPERSON

I now call upon Mr Dan Leskien, Senior Liaison Officer on the Secretariat of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, who will speak on the: “Outcome of the Third Session of the Plenary of the Inter-governmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, held in Bonn from 12 to 17 January 2015”

Mr Dan LESKIEN (Senior Liaison Officer, Secretariat of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture)

I would like to provide a brief update of recent developments in IPBES, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, an intergovernmental body with currently 124 Members.

You will recall that IPBES, like the IPCC, the intergovernmental climate change panel, aims to provide a science-policy interface, a platform with the aim to improve and strengthen policy and decision making by providing the necessary scientific information.

The key function of IPBES is the preparation of assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services. However, capacity-building for that purpose, the development of science-policy tools and, in some cases also catalyzing efforts to generate new knowledge will be important to fulfill this function.

IPBES is hosted by UNEP. However, it is operationally quite independent, has its own Governing Body, the Plenary, a Bureau and a Multidisciplinary Expert Panel providing scientific and technical advice.

The idea of IPBES is to provide high-quality, credible scientific information to policy makers. The information, in particular assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services, shall be policy-relevant without being policy-prescriptive.

IPBES aims to achieve this through clear, transparent and inclusive consultation and decision-making processes, through transparent peer reviews and the careful selection of experts; and through collaboration with other bodies, such as FAO, which make important contributions in this area.

As reported to the Council in June of last year, IPBES adopted a so-called Collaborative Partnership Arrangement with UNEP, UNESCO, FAO and UNDP. In the meanwhile, the Director-General of FAO and the heads of the other UN bodies have approved this arrangement.

The four UN bodies and IPBES have agreed in the CPA on a number of ways in which they may collaborate. Each of them will obviously focus on areas which are of particular interest to them, through their expertise, by undertaking special tasks or by providing logistical support.

FAO's overall task clearly is to provide a perspective of the food and agriculture sector, its needs and its potentials.

The IPBES Plenary held its Third Session in January of this year and, among other things, took stock of on-going assessments and reviewed its current work programme.

Of particular relevance to FAO is the on-going thematic assessment of pollination and pollinators. FAO is contributing to this assessment with two resource people; it will also host the third authors meeting for this assessment at FAO headquarters in July of this year. This meeting will allow FAO to strengthen its role as IPBES partner and as an important player in the field of ecosystem services and biodiversity for food and agriculture.

Assessments of similar relevance, like the one of land degradation and restoration, and scoping exercises for invasive alien species and the sustainable use of biodiversity as well as a number of regional assessments will start this year and FAO will contribute to these assessments, as financial and human resources allow.

These assessments should not be done without FAO. FAO is a key provider of global assessments of the state of the world's genetic resources for food and agriculture. The Global Soil Partnership and its Technical Panel on Soils will launch a first report on the state of the world's soil resources in December of this year. Reports on the state of the world's biodiversity for food and agriculture and of aquatic genetic resources are under preparation in FAO.

FAO should be part of IPBES because it has a lot to contribute and to benefit and IPBES assessments will likewise benefit from the perspective FAO may provide.

But to make IPBES a truly multi-disciplinary forum, a forum in which all stakeholders have their say, and in which the voices of the different sectors, environment, food and agriculture, science and development, are taken seriously, more is required than the active participation of the four UN bodies.

It is unfortunately still the case that the vast majority of IPBES delegates come from environment ministries or authorities or related academic disciplines. But all the sectors and stakeholders, including agriculture, need to be part of the work of IPBES. To make IPBES assessments truly inclusive, to

make them credible for the different sectors and stakeholders and to make them a legitimate and consensual basis for action – all stakeholders have to be included.

Let me therefore close by inviting you and all Members of FAO to consider actively following IPBES, nominating experts for relevant assessments and taking part in sessions of the IPBES Plenary and its subsidiary bodies.

CHAIRPERSON

I now invite Mr Pietro Gennari, Chief Statistician and Director of the Statistics Division, to make a presentation on the Outcome of the 46th Session of the UN Statistical Commission, held in New York from 3 to 6 March 2015.

Mr Pietro GENNARI (Chief Statistician and Director, Statistics Division)

I am pleased to provide you with a brief report on the outcomes of the 46th Statistical Commission concerning in particular the decisions taken on the development of an indicator framework for monitoring the SDGs.

This follows the recommendations of the UN General Assembly in September 2014 which decided to use the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals as a reference document for identifying the list of indicators and assigned this task to the UN Statistical Commission on the basis of the consensus that this list should not be politically negotiated but selected instead by technical experts.

The Statistical Commission which is the apex intergovernmental body for the global statistical system met in New York from 3 to 6 March 2015. In its deliberations, the Commission recognized the enormous challenge of addressing a large number of targets, many of which embed several dimensions to be monitored separately.

In addition, it highlighted that for many targets, sufficient statistics are not currently produced and new indicators will have to be conceptually developed and data collections established.

There was a consensus that the list of global indicators should be limited in number and, at the same time, nationally owned in order to ensure sustainability, especially in developing countries.

In this regard, the Commission underlined the need to define an integrated architecture with multipurpose indicators that take into account the interlinkages existing between different targets. It also underlined the need to establish rigorous technical criteria for the selection of the list of indicators.

The Statistical Commission endorsed a road map for the development of the indicator framework according to a three-stage process. A preliminary list of indicators compiled by the UN Statistics Division on the basis of the suggestions from the UN Technical Support Teams would be submitted to the intergovernmental negotiations at the end of March 2015.

The Commission highlighted, however, that given the insufficient time available to conduct a proper technical assessment in this initial stage, the list may be substantially revised in the following months. A revised list will then be compiled in mid-July 2015 in time for the negotiations of the UN General Assembly.

The final proposal will then be submitted at the end of 2015 for final endorsement by the Statistical Commission in March 2016, taking into account possible modifications to the new development agenda adopted at the September High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly.

The Commission also established an interagency and expert group on the indicators as the platform designed to complete the development of the indicator framework.

The IEG will also guide the implementation of the approved indicators, review methodological developments and potential new data sources, review statistical capacity-building initiatives, and regularly report on progress towards the SDG targets at global and regional levels.

The IEG will bring together experts at national, regional and international levels. It will comprise about twenty representatives from national statistical offices on a rotating basis, and representatives of the international agencies and of the UN Regional Commissions. Other stakeholders, including representatives of the private sector and of the civil society, will then be invited to participate in these deliberations.

Over the past two years, FAO has contributed considerably to the discussions of the post-2015 Development Agenda, and the Report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals includes many of the targets regionally proposed by FAO.

Goals 2, 14, and 15 in particular are closely associated with FAO's vision and mandate, and FAO leadership in these areas is recognized at an international level. For other goals such as 1, 5, 6, 12, and 13, FAO could make important contributions.

FAO has also worked in parallel to refine a core set of potential indicators for the SDG targets that fall within its mandate and can also help monitor the FAO Strategic Framework. The post-2015 team has collected indicators proposed from across the technical departments through focal points nominated by the ADGs.

These were submitted to the Chief Statisticians who screened the proposal against a set of criteria and refined the listing consultation with technical focal points and the Interdepartmental Working Group on Statistics.

In this process, each indicator was substantiated by a methodological fact sheet detailing the definition of the indicator, its relevance, reliability, potential coverage, and comparability, its stage of development, and whether base line and target values can be established.

For Goal 2 in particular, the proposal has been jointly defined by FAO, IFAD and the World Food Programme with 14 indicators to monitor progress toward the eight agreed targets.

Additional information on current and prospective funding of these indicators is now being collected to verify their long-term sustainability. Some of these indicators are well established and they are part of the current MDG Monitoring Framework. Others need to be fully developed and evaluated against the possibility to be included in the future within the regular Programme of Work of the Organization.

A final executive decision is expected soon on the basis of the documentation collected. Appreciating that what gets measured gets done and that the indicators adopted in the context of the post-2015 Development Agenda will remain in place for the next 15 years, FAO has a unique opportunity to advance the Organization's broader Strategic Objectives in the Post-2015 process.

On one side, FAO can improve the statistical measures for hunger, malnutrition, resilience and small-holder agricultural productivity required to monitor SDG 2. On the other, FAO can strengthen a set of indicators that emphasizes the sustainable use and management of natural resources for hunger and poverty eradication across a number of other SDGs.

We have in front of us a unique opportunity to consider how the Organization can strategically position itself in the relevant forums that will define the new monitoring framework through 2030 and beyond.

CHAIRPERSON

I now invite Ms Tiina Vahanen, Deputy Director of the Forest Assessment, Management and Conservation Division and Associate Secretary-General of the Fourteenth World Forestry Congress, to make a presentation on the Congress, which will take place in Durban, South Africa, from 7 to 11 September 2015.

Ms Tiina VAHANEN (Deputy Director, Forest Assessment, Management and Conservation Division)

It is a pleasure to give you an update of the preparations of the 14th World Forestry Congress. You may recall that in Council Session in June last year, you heard the first update of the preparations of this Congress.

This is the 14th World Forestry Congress and the first time to be held in the African Region. The first Congress was held in 1926 and it has been held in all of the other regions in the world except in Africa.

We have the pleasure of having the Republic of South Africa as the host. They are responsible for organizing and financing the Congress. As the Congress is organized under the auspices of FAO, and the FAO Council selects the host country, the main responsibility of the Congress preparations are with the host country, South Africa.

FAO in turn provides administrative and technical support and we and the FAO Secretariat lead the preparation of the technical programme.

The World Forestry Congress is the largest and most significant gathering of the world forestry sector. It is not an intergovernmental forum but a technical forum. The participation is open to all countries, regions, sectors, public and private organizations, government entities and civil society. There is a registration process and fee but, other than that, participation is open to all.

The theme of the 14th World Forestry Congress is “Forests and People, Investing in a Sustainable Future”. This means investments not only in assets in forest industry or technologies but rather, and more importantly, investing in enabling environment, investing in policy and institutions and also investing in knowledge, in other words in human capital and capacity development and knowledge.

So investment in forestry is an investment in people and, in turn, an investment in sustainable development.

Around this major theme, investing in a sustainable future, we have six sub-themes. They go from looking at forest issues in socioeconomic development and food security; building resilience with forests, in particular in the context of climate change; integrating forests and other land uses; looking at the forest product innovations and sustainable trade; looking at the new innovations and techniques and the trends globally on monitoring forests for better decision-making; and last but not least, the ways on how to improve governance in the forest sector, at the local, national and global levels.

Here are a few highlights of what we will be seeing at the Congress in Durban in September. From FAO's side, we will be launching the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2015, where the most recent global forestry data will be revealed.

There will be a pre-Congress event on community forestry and forest products organizations. We will have an innovation and investment forum which is largely a forum for the private sector to engage. There will be international forests and water dialogue, looking at the issues of forests and water that can be sometimes quite controversial.

There will also be a wildlife forum to look at that issue and, again, a very particular issue in the south and Africa but also globally.

We will have a number of special events in addition to plenary sessions and sub-theme sessions. These special events are large plenary settings. They are on climate change, on wood energy, and forests for the future that is organized by youth together with FAO. We will also have a very special event focusing on forestry development in Africa.

This special event, forestry in Africa, is led by the African Union together with FAO. The African Union will also be organizing a specific African pavilion at the Congress. The African Union is committed to take the leadership and our FAO offices at regional and subregional levels, and particularly South Africa, are fully engaged together with Headquarters.

We have a strong leadership of the Government of South Africa in this particular event and of course the overall organization of the Congress.

Regarding the content so far, we have received over two thousand proposals or abstracts for papers, posters and videos on technical issues, and we have gone through a screening process where about 1,850 proposals have been accepted. These proposals are distributed all over the world, and this time particularly we have received many more inputs and proposals from the Africa Region than for previous congresses.

We have also received 220 proposals for events. These are normally, in UN jargon, the side events, but we want to avoid the word 'side' because these are part of the Congress. So these are events to launch initiatives or have networking events or demonstrate projects related to sub-themes of the Congress.

I am also pleased to announce that the Congress registration is now open. There is a dedicated website and it is an online system. I will provide the links to those websites at the end of the presentation. We are now circulating information around the globe to announce this opening of the registration.

There can be many outcomes that I expect. First the form of the outcome. Traditionally the World Forestry Congress has provided declarations, but this time we thought that perhaps in the plethora of many international meetings that provide declarations, we would rather want to present the outcome not in the form of a traditional declaration but rather as key messages to the global forestry community and beyond.

In terms of substance, we would expect that the Congress will strengthen the role of forests and forestry in sustainable development and, in particular, this is quite opportune as we heard from the previous presentations that the SDGs are about to be adopted around the same time.

The Congress is also a major opportunity to provide technical and scientific input through the UNFCCC COP21 in Paris.

We would also look at the World Forestry contribution to overall the post-2015 development agenda, including the operationalization and implementation of the SDGs. We hope that the Congress will provide a platform where knowledge is shared widely and in an innovative way.

The innovative way means that we hope this Congress is not a traditional congress where you have many PowerPoint presentations and panel after panel. We are looking at very new and modern techniques to engage participants in a dialogue that provides an opportunity for much wider participation than in other traditional congresses.

In the past, the congresses have attracted from three thousand to seven thousand people, so this is quite a big event. The Conference also provides an opportunity for creating new partnerships and networking and also updating colleagues in the latest innovations and knowledge.

At this time, the Congress has basically three main target groups. These are youth, women and local communities in addition to the private sector. We certainly hope that the youth, women and local communities are given a platform from which they can provide their views very thoroughly on global forest issues.

We would like to ask that Council Members promote wide participation in your countries and through your networks, and we look forward to a dynamic, interactive and technically innovative Congress in Durban. I would also like to specifically recognize the presence here of Dr Rampedi from South Africa, and the significant leadership that the Government of South Africa is providing to organize this Congress. We look forward to collaborating with them.

Here is some contact information on the websites and the focal points for the Congress. You will receive this by email and the information will be available on the Council website.

CHAIRPERSON

We now move to the next speaker and I welcome Mr Ren Wang, Assistant Director-General of the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department, who will make a presentation on the Third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (HABITAT III), planned for October 2016.

Mr Ren WANG (Assistant Director-General, Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department)

The Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, known as HABITAT III will be held in Quito, Ecuador in October 2016.

This will be a rare and a critically important opportunity to advocate and help to insure a sustainable food systems and nutrition for all our cities and urban population in the future.

The HABITAT conferences are held in bi-decennial cycles in accordance with the UN General Assembly resolution. The first Habitat Conference was held in Vancouver in 1976, followed by the second one in Istanbul in 1996. Quito will be the third Habitat Conference.

The upcoming HABITAT III will be the first UN Conference to be held after the Sustainable Development Goals are set, and is aimed to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable urbanization. The Conference will focus on the implementation of a “New Urban Agenda” building on the Habitat Agenda of Istanbul in 1996.

The “New Urban Agenda” will further expand on the proposed Goal 11 in the SDGs which is: “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”.

The outcome document is planned to be concise, focused, forward-looking and action-oriented. It will aim to provide a policy framework to assist national and local governments for sustainable development.

So what is the context in which this conference is being held?

By 2050 the world population is expected to reach 9.6 billion, of which 6.3 billion will be urban. Nearly 90 percent of the expected increase will be concentrated in low and middle-income countries in Asia and Africa.

This has a significant impact on the food systems. It will affect access and availability of food for the urban population, production capacity in rural, peri-urban and urban areas.

Let me highlight some notable challenges brought by urbanization in the context of food security and nutrition.

Natural resources Natural resources (e.g. productive land, water, forests) are diminishing, which is affecting food production in many areas and therefore the supply of diverse and nutritious food globally. Demand for energy to produce and transport food will only continue to increase. The added pressure of climate change on natural resources will threaten the sustainability of food systems.

Rural and Urban Development. Migration of human resources from rural to urban areas can potentially exacerbate problems with employment and overall quality of life in rural areas. Moreover, the majority of today’s food systems does not adequately support, and do not sustain equally, the participation and needs of all actors. Failing to develop alternatives or modernize current food systems can result in a serious problem for food security and nutrition across the world.

Diet. Dietary changes will come with urbanization in part because increasing income in urban context reflects on increasing request of high-protein and natural resource-intensive food, while the urban poor relies more on processed and nutritionally-lacking foods that are more convenient, more easily available and of lower price. Obesity and related non-communicable diseases are rising in many cities. Less time dedicated to food preparation will also impact food utilization. Food safety is strongly compromised by inadequate food production and supply chains in which food co-exists with non-food activities.

Urban Poverty and Related Food and Nutritional Insecurity Risks. The current trend toward expansion of poor urban areas and unplanned development is a challenge to the efficiency and sustainability of food supply and logistics systems. Food availability in urban areas largely relies on a well-functioning transition of food from production to consumers. Even if the country’s production and food supply is sufficient on average, some cities are not able to sustain a functional logistics system to bring food equally to the urban populations. Food stability can be seriously affected; many cities depend on foreign imports to meet their growing needs in staple foods. The rise in global food demand fueled by income growth and urban dietary patterns will trigger volatility in the global food markets. A demand or supply shock where the supply-demand is already tight will result in upward pressure on prices.

As we can see, while many cities are not considering food security and nutrition in urban development planning, the consequence of it became evident in the aftermaths of recent natural and human disasters as well as the 2007-2008 food price hike.

What are the implications of these issues for FAO?

In our current Strategic Objectives framework, urbanization is identified in all 5 Strategic Objectives as a key global trend and challenge.

FAO is the only technical agency in the UN system that has the responsibility to bring the issue of food security and nutrition to the table for the development of the New Urban Agenda, providing policy guidance and practical means of implementation in the field.

Typically, in urban development discussions, food is looked at simply as a basic need. It is often taken for granted and not incorporated as it should be in planning processes.

Over the last decade, FAO, in collaboration with IFAD and WFP, has voiced the importance of urban food security and nutrition and critically related issues of rural-urban linkages. This process of FAO engagement has been facilitated through the Food for the Cities Initiative which was established in 2000 in response to the COAG's 1998 recommendation to work on urban agriculture and related areas.

The way forward for FAO on this topic of urbanization has been twofold.

First, internally, by strengthening and consolidating FAO's commitment and work on relevant urban issues under FAO's mandate and strategic objectives through the development of a vision paper; a process which is underway at the moment.

Secondly, by responding positively to the invitation from the Executive Director of UN-Habitat to join the World Urban Campaign, which was launched for the lead-up to the HABITAT III conference; a concrete commitment to the process of HABITAT III and the development of the New Urban Agenda.

Preparation meetings for HABITAT III started officially in September of last year. FAO participated in this first Preparatory Committee meeting held in New York and is actively providing inputs to the UN System's contribution towards the New Urban Agenda. FAO will take part in the upcoming Prepcom2 which will be held in Nairobi in April this year, hosting a side event on the importance of city region food systems in the New Urban Agenda Framework.

CHAIRPERSON

Our last speaker is Mr Rob Vos, Director of the Social Protection Division, who will speak on the Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board".

Mr Rob Vos (Director, Social Protection Division)

The Council at its 148th Session requested FAO to seek more effective collaboration with Member Nations and partners on the areas of work related to social protection. In this context I am happy to brief you on the platform of which FAO is part called the Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board, SPIAC-B.

SPIAC-B is a coordination mechanism that aims to organize efforts of the entire international development community, both initiatives at the global and national levels related to social protection. The Board consists of about 30 international organizations, particularly UN agencies, bilateral development cooperation agencies, social partners of trade unions and employers' organizations, international NGOs and so on. The Membership is open. Here is the list of the current participants. If your countries are interested to participate in the Board, I would be happy to forward your request to the Secretariat.

The Board was established in July 2012 at the request of the G20 Development Working Group looking particularly at the need for more global coordination and advocacy on social protection issues and to strengthen the coordination of international cooperation at the national level in response to country-level demands. The coordination work taking place focuses on four areas of work. It is about raising awareness, how social protection can promote and forward the international development agenda through the UN System, the G20 deliberations and the current discussions on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. It further aims to reach better policy coherence, both within social protection programmes, systems, at the country level, but also in how all the agencies that are working in the areas of social protection come to more common approaches to seek stronger and more coherent social protection systems that are aligned with other areas of policies and, when it comes to FAO, where it

can be better aligned with food security, nutrition policies, and agriculture and rural development policies.

In that area, we are also looking at the common approaches of the international development agenda related to the social protection floors, which is the accepted agenda of the ILO Recommendation 202. That coherence should also lead to better coordination and support to countries in achieving a more coherent and holistic social protection system. The Board sets out to improve knowledge-sharing between the Members of the SPIAC-B as well as, more importantly, across all countries around the world.

The technical level that the work now has translated in three key areas of work of which most of the tools and instruments being developed are to be finalized in the coming months; first, the work taking place on harmonizing and synergizing data statistics related to social protection, integrating existing databases currently set up by the World Bank and the ILO, particularly coming to more common approaches that can also help countries identify better what is the coverage, what are the overlaps and what are the gaps in the availability and extension of social protection mechanisms and programmes. The second area of work is development of tools for diagnostics and policy assessments of the extension of social protection systems, and also the impacts that they have on poverty reduction, on income security, and what matters to FAO, also food security and nutrition. The tools also extend to providing mechanisms to improve policy dialogues at the national level, so there is a whole range of tools so that we have quality Inter-Agency Social Protection Assessment Tools.

The Board is also working on helping the mechanisms that were explained by my colleague Pietro Gennari in the context of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, specifically the indicators that pertain to social protection elements.

Most importantly, there are the targets proposed under the set of SDGs. Target 1.3 implements nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieves substantial coverage of the poor and vulnerable. That is the target that has been established by the Open Working Group. It will be challenging to find good and solid indicators to verify and measure the progress against this target, and SPIAC-B has come together to provide the technical support for that.

What is FAO's precise involvement here? I will mention three areas of work that we also bring under the SPIAC-B coordination. We are working with WFP in the context of the diagnostic tools developments, particularly to look at the coordination tools that can link to food security and nutrition as part of the harmonized policy, the diagnostic assessment tools. Within that, we are also looking at how we can better link social protection and food security through household surveys and also to coordinate in that area of work what we call the core diagnostic instruments that are part of the national dialogue and policy tools. We also promote through SPIAC-B the coordination at the country level for a joint programme with the ILO in extending social protection mechanisms in the appropriate ways to rural populations.

Finally, the From Protection to Production Programme we have together with support from the European Union is being implemented through the multi-agency agriculture and social protection in Africa, which encompasses a whole range of agencies. We work together to coordinate and promote through SPIAC-B, and we also, through that, implement at the country level the coordination in the countries for which the impact assessments have been taking place. As you can see, through these mechanisms, we engage with a lot of stakeholders and try to align the work we promote through FAO with our partners to promote the strengthening of social protection systems and their alignment with agriculture and rural development policies at the country level. I hope to be able to report more on this moving forward on the further outcomes of the implementation of the tools and a more concrete coordination that has taken place at the country level.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Mr Vos, and to all speakers I will now give the floor to delegations who wish to ask questions on the presentations.

Mr Osamu KUBOTA (Japan)

We appreciate the information on the outcome of the 46th Session of the UN Statistical Commission.

As we consider indicators for the Post-2015 Agenda are important, we would like FAO to provide updated information on FAO's work on indicators not only at the Governing Bodies, but also through other means in a more timely manner such as the website of FAO.

Ms Moshibuti Priscilla RAMPEDI (South Africa)

It is my pleasure to thank the FAO and its Members for granting South Africa the opportunity to host the 14th World Forestry Congress.

We wish to thank Ms Tiina Vahanen for the excellent report on the preparations. The report is testimony to the level of commitment by the Government of the Republic of South Africa, the FAO and the stakeholders. The World Forestry Congress has for many years given the global forestry community a forum to review, to analyze and share experiences on forests and forestry issues, including finding ways of addressing challenges and opportunities. We wish to continue with this tradition by presenting the 14th World Forestry Congress with a theme of *Forests and People: Investing in a Sustainable Future*. As stated earlier, we aim to show that an investment in forestry is an investment in people and in turn an investment in sustainable development.

With your support, the 14th World Forestry Congress will be inclusive. We invite people from all countries, sectors, civil society and the private sector to participate. We assure you of an affordable stay, good weather, natural beauty, world-class facilities and adventure, be it in the rich wildlife or diverse culture of South Africa.

Finally, we promise you a rewarding experience in defining a vision for the sustainable future of forests and forestry. We look forward to welcoming you to Durban in September.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

La Argentina agradece el documento elaborado por la FAO relativo a las novedades acaecidas en otros Foros de importancia para la Organización y, en particular, desea referirse a los resultados de la 20 Conferencia de las Partes de la Convención Marco de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Cambio Climático, presentado por la Directora General Adjunta, Sra. María Helena Semedo.

Al respecto destacamos, tal como hemos hecho en numerosos foros, que nuestro país reconoce la fuerte interacción entre la agricultura, la seguridad alimentaria y el cambio climático, por lo que consideramos que la forma en que estos tres elementos se articulan resulta no sólo de extrema importancia y complejidad sino que también reviste gran sensibilidad. Más aún considerando que el sector agrícola es el más vulnerable frente a la variabilidad climática así como particularmente importante para el logro de la seguridad alimentaria.

Recordamos en esta línea que en el actual contexto internacional, que reclama un incesante aumento de la oferta de alimentos para alimentar a una demanda creciente, la adaptación al cambio climático es el enfoque pertinente. Tal como hemos destacado, la mitigación en términos absolutos en el sector agrícola implicaría producir menos alimentos, enfoque no compatible con el logro de tal fin. Por ello, agradecemos el apoyo brindado por la FAO en alentar la adaptación del sector al cambio climático en el marco del foro competente para abordar estas cuestiones, es decir, la Convención Marco de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Cambio Climático, y conforme a los consensos alcanzados en el Órgano Subsidiario de Asesoramiento Científico y Tecnológico de esa Convención.

Sin perjuicio de ello, destacamos en relación al apartado II del documento presentado referido a los progresos realizados en la negociación del texto del nuevo acuerdo sobre cambio climático, que en el marco de la Conferencia de las Partes de Lima, desarrollada entre el 1 y 12 de diciembre de 2014, se presentó en anexo a la decisión adoptada una propuesta borrador de elementos para el texto de negociación producida por los Co-Presidentes del Grupo de Trabajo de la Plataforma de Durban, la cual no implicaba la existencia de acuerdo o convergencia sobre sus términos. En ese respecto, recién en la reunión de febrero 2015 en Ginebra se realizó una primera lectura del borrador referido mediante la cual las Partes insertaron sus opciones y modificaciones necesarias,

transformando dicho texto en una base de negociación que aún está sujeta a negociación en las próximas sesiones de la CMNUCC.

Por último, y sin perjuicio de las acciones que la Argentina se encuentra desarrollando en materia de cambio climático, deseamos aclarar, en relación con el apartado II 6) b), que en la decisión de Lima los países no fueron invitados a presentar compromisos tal como se destaca en este apartado, sino sus contribuciones nacionalmente determinadas, sin prejuzgarse su posible contenido y sin especificarse tampoco si las mismas serán o no parte del nuevo acuerdo. Asimismo, se invitó de manera general a las Partes a presentar sus contribuciones nacionalmente determinadas bien antes de la COP21 de diciembre próximo, y solamente a aquellos países preparados para hacerlo a presentar sus contribuciones nacionalmente determinadas en el primer cuatrimestre de 2015.

Si bien este documento se presenta sólo a título informativo, solicitamos, si fuera posible, incorporar una nota o eventualmente elaborar una versión revisada, que tenga en cuenta estas consideraciones que ha realizado la Delegación Argentina.

Sr. José Antonio CARRANZA (Ecuador)

Ante todo, quiero agradecer por todas las presentaciones que se han hecho muy importantes para el trabajo de la FAO y queremos solamente hacer un comentario con relación a la Tercera Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas sobre Vivienda y Desarrollo Urbano Sostenible. Y es el señalar que la Comunidad de Estados latinoamericanos y Caribeños cuya presidencia pro tempore la ejerce actualmente el Ecuador, reafirmó en su Tercera Cumbre de Jefes de Estado, que tuvo lugar en el mes de enero de este año, la importancia y los desafíos asociados a la definición de una nueva agenda urbana para la región, consciente del acelerado proceso de urbanización en América Latina y el Caribe y con vistas a la Tercera Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas sobre Vivienda y Desarrollo Urbano que tendrá lugar en mi país en octubre de 2016.

Con esta nueva agenda se busca profundizar la generación de políticas de vivienda y de desarrollo urbano resilientes que garanticen la equidad territorial, reviertan la segregación urbana, incorporen la gestión de riesgos, y contemplen la relación entre ciudades pequeñas, intermedias y metrópolis y fortalezcan la institucionalidad en la región. Todo esto con un proceso participativo que reconozca la diversidad. Igualmente queremos expresar la voluntad del Ecuador en colaborar también con la FAO en la preparación de la tercera conferencia.

Finalmente, queremos expresar que nos congratulamos con el hecho de que en el Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto de 2016-2017, que ha sido endosado por el Consejo, se haya incorporado como un tema prioritario el de la migración y la urbanización que consideramos un tema transcendental y fundamental en el trabajo de la FAO y el rol que tiene la Organización para apoyar a los países. Y este apoyo servirá tanto en la preparación de esta conferencia como en la implementación de sus resultados.

M. Marc MANKOUSSOU (Congo)

Le Congo tient également à féliciter tous les intervenants qui nous ont donné des informations utiles. C'est une bonne méthode pour informer le Conseil sur l'évolution de débats au sein des autres instances.

Je prends la parole parce que j'ai quelques questions à poser à ceux qui sont intervenus. Je tiens, pour la première fois, à féliciter d'abord Monsieur Tekola parce que je pense que la peste des petits ruminants est une question très importante au niveau du continent africain, de l'Asie et d'autres pays dans le monde. Mais j'aimerais poser une question peut-être utile, j'aimerais connaître, dans ce Programme, quelles sont les actions qui ont déjà été entreprises et quel est le niveau de collaboration entre la FAO et l'UE.

La deuxième question s'adresse à Madame Semedo, dont je loue également les grandes initiatives qui sont prises, notamment sur la question du changement climatique et du Fonds climat vert qu'elle nous a mentionnés. Ma question est celle-ci, j'aimerais obtenir quelques précisions sur ce Fonds, notamment sur les contributions, les bénéficiaires et les aspects d'atténuation et d'adaptation au

changement climatique. J'aimerais également demander qu'il y ait des mises à jour des informations sur ce Fonds pour nous permettre de le suivre.

La troisième question s'adresse à Madame Vahanen, qui a parlé du quatorzième Congrès forestier qui aura lieu en Afrique du Sud. Elle a indiqué que ce Congrès s'adresse à trois cibles, notamment les jeunes, les femmes et les communautés. Ma question est celle-ci, quels sont les mécanismes envisagés pour une participation active de ces groupes cibles que vous avez cités. Quels sont les mécanismes envisagés pour permettre aux jeunes, aux femmes et aux communautés de participer activement à ce Congrès.

Mr Ivan KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

First of all we would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing the document as well as the representatives of the various Secretariat bodies for their interesting and thorough presentations.

We have a number of brief comments to make on some of them. Firstly we would like to stress the importance of the work of FAO in conjunction with the OIE in implementing the Global PPR Control and Eradication Programme. We welcome this initiative. At the same time, we would also be interested in finding out about specific measures adopted by the meeting of the COAG and the 150th Session of Council to support this initiative, particularly in terms of the organization of the Secretariat when it comes to tackling the PPR programme.

In the context of the International Year of Soils, we especially highlight the decision to conduct an intergovernmental science policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services, thematic assessment of the scale of land degradation or restoration in cooperation with the Global Soils Partnership.

It would be desirable to reflect the results of this work in the report of the status of soil resources in the world which is being prepared by the intergovernmental technical panel of the GSP. We also think it is necessary to guarantee the coordinating role of the Global Soils Partnership in the multilateral work on soil issues.

We will now dwell on the outcome of the 46th Session of the Statistical Commission. We highlight the discussion by this body of the question of the development of an indicator framework for the Post-2015 Development Agenda. We especially welcome the joint contribution of the Rome-based agencies in preparing specific targets for the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

We highlight the key role of the FAO in fine tuning the indicators on the Sustainable Development Goal 2 as well as on other goals which are within its purview. The indicator framework on SDGs now being discussed in New York requires further work. According to the preliminary assessments of our experts, they still contain a number of provisions that do not enjoy consensus and are not fully consistent with international law, especially the law of the sea, or they may involve an unjustifiably narrow circle of participants.

This for example is the case for indicator 14.2 on the healthy oceans index. Taking into account the great significance of effectively tracking implementation of SDGs in the future, national statistical services should have a full picture of the origin of each indicator and compelling grounds for using such an indicator on a global level.

We would like to welcome the holding of the 14th World Forestry Congress in South Africa, in Durban, as well as the role of the FAO as a standing fundamental partner of the WFC host country. We feel that the WFC session will be a good opportunity for attracting international attention to forestry issues in the run up to the adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

In conclusion, I would like to express our support for FAO's work in the area of social protection. It is becoming especially significant in the context of the outcome of the International Conference for Nutrition.

Mr Berhe TEKOLA (Director, Animal Production and Health Division)

I thank you all for the support and the questions raised. Let me start by responding to the representative from Congo on the activities undertaken. Working groups have been established from

both FAO and OIE, and substantial and important contributions received from institutions like IAEA, where we have a joint division on the laboratory aspect, which we are working on.

In addition to that, the strategy and advocacy document has already been drafted. It is under discussion and will soon be shared with colleagues and development partners.

The Global Conference on the Control and Eradication of PPR will take place soon in the presence of both DGs and some ministers from invited countries. So I can say that we are on the right track to really make this conference and the forthcoming campaign sound.

Responding to the Russian Federation: with regard to the specific measures on COAG, particularly on the recommendation given, we are working in close collaboration with OIE and other partners in line with the recommendations. A Secretariat has still to be established. Where exactly is to be discussed and agreed with OIE, but there is a strong probability following the experience from our past eradication campaign that it will be hosted at FAO. This is to be verified and agreed with OIE.

Ms Maria Helena M.Q. SEMEDO (Deputy Director-General, Natural Resources)

I will start with the comments from the Ambassador of Argentina. We consider very pertinent your comments and considerations. In fact, the agreement is not finished. We have ahead three main meetings after the ADP meeting held in Geneva and we hope we will have an agreement. We cannot say which level of the agreement will be reached.

We fully agree with the comments you made regarding the INDCs and how the countries should present those contributions where probably will be considered as an annex of the global agreement. We will be revising the document so it will be decided by the Secretariat how will be the process of considering your comments on this document.

Suite en français

Sur les questions du Congo, en fait, le Fonds climat vert est un Fonds qui va financer les activités d'atténuation et d'adaptation du climat; il va appuyer des projets, des programmes, le renforcement des capacités et aussi les transferts de technologies. Le Fonds sera surtout adressé aux pays en développement et aux États insulaires.

Le premier "call for proposal" est prévu pour le mois de juin et nous sommes en train de tout faire pour que la FAO soit accréditée au Fonds d'ici là. C'est donc le premier appel de propositions qui sera fait au mois de juin et je pense qu'il y a quelque chose d'innovateur dans ce Fonds, il n'y aura pas de limites de financement pour les projets.

C'est surtout la capacité et la qualité des projets qui va définir quel sera le montant de la contribution du Fonds. Mais si vous voulez, nous pouvons partager avec vous d'autres informations un peu plus tard. Je pense qu'après le retour du Directeur de la Division du climat, de l'énergie et des régimes fonciers (NRC), il y aura plus d'informations à partager avec les Membres.

Mr Dan LESKIEN (Senior Liaison Officer, Secretariat of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture)

In response to the comment by Russia on the state of the world's soil resources report which is supposed to be launched in December of this year, let me just stress that talks are ongoing between the Chair of the International Technical Panel on Soils and IPBES. We hope very much that, through these talks and dialogue, the assessments that are currently being prepared under IPBES as well as the assessment that is being prepared by the International Technical Panel on Soils will be well coordinated.

Mr Pietro GENNARI (Chief Statistician and Director, Statistics Division)

I would like to thank the Delegates for their comments and support. In response to the intervention from the representative of Japan, I would like to confirm that information will be provided on the FAO website when the list of indicators is finalized. Now it is still under final review and it should be finalized soon.

Concerning the intervention from the representative of Russia, I would like to confirm that the indicator list that was presented is just a preliminary list, that a lot of work needs to be done in order to review this list and this is foreseen. We have a platform for engaging both international organizations and countries. As I mentioned, the interagency expert group on the indicators has been established and will start meeting from April to refine the initial list of indicators and come up with a much stronger and solid proposal for the intergovernmental negotiations.

Ms Tiina VAHANEN, (Deputy Director, Forest Assessment)

I would like to thank the South African Representative for their statement and to echo their invitation for strong participation in the World Forestry Congress to what we are also looking forward to as a great adventure as they were describing.

There was a particular question from the Representative of Congo asking what is being done to ensure the participation of the target groups which are particularly women, youth and communities. The FAO budget for the World Forestry Congress that is generously provided to us by the host country, South Africa, does not provide provisions for supporting participation of travel. However, we are in a serious process of fundraising and discussing with a number of donor countries as well as preparing sponsorship packages for the private sector. In these discussions that we have for these potential sponsors, we always highlight these target groups: women, youth and local communities.

I would also like to mention two of the special events, the pre-Congress events on communities and smallholder producers. So the local community networks are already engaged in the preparatory process that will hopefully increase their possibility to participate in the Congress.

Likewise, the International Student Association on Forestry is leading the preparations of the youth event and they have specific sponsorship programmes that they themselves have developed which we are also advocating.

Thirdly, the opportunity that we are using is that we actually have this in the cooperation agreement with South Africa that we would provide travel support from the existing FAO projects so that we can increase the level of participation and likewise we are encouraging member countries to use their bilateral projects and initiatives to actually sponsor participation, in particular of these target groups.

Finally, I take note of the comment made by the representative of the Russian Federation. Indeed, the World Forestry Congress is a great opportunity as a platform but also as of timing to discuss the global forest issues in the run-up to the discussions on the Post-2015 agenda.

Mr Rob VOS (Director, Social Protection Division)

Let me just thank the Russian Federation for the support expressed for the work FAO does on social protection, and rest assured that we will make sure that the follow-through on ICN2 will leverage that work further in the partnerships, including those developed through the social protection interagency board.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. This concludes item 19 of the agenda. The list of presentations will be included in the Council Report.

In addition, the power point presentations we have just seen will be posted on the Members Gateway at the end of this meeting.

Presentations on FAO's emergency response to the Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu and on the locust control situation in Madagascar

Présentations sur les interventions d'urgence engagées par la FAO après le passage du cyclone Pam à Vanuatu et pour lutter contre la menace acridienne à Madagascar

Exposiciones sobre la respuesta de emergencia de la FAO al ciclón Pam en Vanuatu y sobre la situación relativa a la lucha contra la langosta en Madagascar

CHAIRPERSON

Now, in view of the recent extreme weather conditions that recently struck Vanuatu, we will be briefed by the Director of the FAO Emergency Division, Mr Dominique Burgeon on FAO's support to the emergency response to cyclone Pam in Vanuatu. This will be followed by an update on the locust emergency in Madagascar.

Mr Dominique BURGEON (Director, Emergency and Rehabilitation Division)

With your permission, I would indeed brief the Council on a disaster which hit on the eve of the third World Conference on Disaster Risk Management and which therefore received international attention, as it illustrates the challenges the world, including small-scale farmers, is facing with the tremendous increase in the number of extreme weather events, many related to climate change.

I would like, in that respect, to quote the Minister of Foreign Affairs of France who addressed the opening session of the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction last week in Sendai, as the incoming President of the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Paris (COP 21), and indicated that 70 percent of disasters around the world are now linked to climate change, a doubling in two decades, he added.

Coming to Tropical Cyclone Pam (TC Pam), as you know, from 11 to 14 March 2015, the Cyclone swept through Vanuatu, Kiribati, Tuvalu and Solomon Islands, caused massive damage to agriculture and destroyed the main sources of income for thousands of people.

For Vanuatu, TC Pam is one of its most devastating natural disasters on record, affecting 166,600 people, primarily on 22 islands.

Initial Rapid Assessments (IRAs) undertaken in the country indicate high levels of destruction, destroying up to 100 percent of fruit plants, including coconut and other trees, as well as home vegetable gardens, with also significant damages to fisheries and livestock.

The need to restore and enhance the affected population's productive capacity for crops, livestock, trees and fisheries through the provision of resources and services, and to enhance agricultural economic livelihoods, emerged as a key priority.

Currently combined distributions of food assistance, agricultural packages and non-food items (NFIs) are ongoing by the international community. The immediate agricultural requirements of the affected households in terms of seeds and tools appear to be met, mainly through exchanges among islands or with support from neighbouring countries, including the French overseas territory of New Caledonia and FAO working to make sure the gaps are being met.

I believe it is important to highlight that since 2013, in the context of its resilience building agenda (SO5), FAO is leading the Pacific Regional Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC) which is providing direct support to national Food Security and Agriculture Clusters in the region and is currently working in close collaboration with the Vanuatu FSAC in the response to TC Pam.

In particular, FAO has been supporting the Vanuatu Food Security and Agriculture Cluster since October 2014 with staff deployment, training on preparedness and needs assessment and the development of a range of tools that are currently used during this crisis. The FSAC is fully operational under the leadership of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Within 48 hours of TC Pam's landfall, the FAO Subregional Office in Samoa deployed a technical needs assessment expert to Vanuatu to provide support.

In addition, FAO has made about USD 140,000 available through the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA), to support immediate needs assessment and to support coordination efforts through the Clusters.

A Flash Appeal has been launched on 24 March 2015. The FSAC is appealing for a total amount of USD 8.2 million for both food assistance and agriculture-related support. FAO is appealing for funds mainly to provide support for the rapid resumption of agricultural and livestock production as well as to support fisheries and continue to support its coordination work.

Following a call for proposals by OCHA, FAO has submitted a CERF proposal to support the rapid resumption of agricultural activities for 45,000 vulnerable rural people in Vanuatu.

I also need to express our appreciation to the European Union Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), which shortly before tropical cyclone Pam has approved a disaster preparedness project which will enable us to continue to work towards enhancing national and local capacities for integrating disaster risk reduction in agriculture in national services and community practices, thereby contributing to the resilience building of cyclone-affected communities in Vanuatu. Part of the funds has now been specifically reallocated to the TC Pam affected farmers in Vanuatu.

While urgent assistance has been provided, in-depth damage assessments have started to better understand the impact on different sectors, including the fisheries and livestock sector, and identify longer-term needs in the spirit of build back better. It is clear that the recovery of fruit trees, such as coconut, as well as root crops, will require more time to recover, and alternative sources of livelihoods will have to be supported as we are doing in Haiyan affected areas in the Philippines.

Regarding the other TC Pam affected countries, FAO is also providing Tuvalu with remote technical guidance on the needs assessments process, working in partnership with regional organizations, especially the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. Finally, FAO and OXFAM have offered assistance for needs assessment to the Kiribati Government.

If you agree Mr Chairperson, I will now move to the locust crisis that is still affecting Madagascar.

As I already informed you on previous occasions, for example during the 146th Council Session in April 2013, the locust plague, that is affecting Madagascar since April 2012, threatens the food security and livelihoods of 13 million people, of which 9 million depend on agriculture.

In response to the locust plague, FAO launched in December 2012, a Three-year Emergency Programme prepared jointly with the Ministry of Agriculture of Madagascar with a total budget of USD 40 million.

The Three-year Programme anticipated the need to conduct three consecutive locust control campaigns. In order to halt the plague, accompany the decline of the locust populations and return to a situation of locust recession where preventive control could be implemented by the national authorities.

Thanks to the timely support from resource partners including with resources invested by the Government of Madagascar itself, the first of the three locust campaigns was successfully implemented between September 2013 and August 2014.

The Programme is implemented in close collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, including the National Anti-Locust Centre and the Plant Protection Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture.

During the first campaign, more than 30 million hectares were surveyed, and locust populations were controlled by air on over 1.2 million hectares, without any major incident affecting human health or the environment.

This stopped the dynamics of the locust plague, the extension stopped and locust populations reduced. Large damages to crops and pasture were therefore prevented, in particular in the major rice baskets of the country. However, the work is not over. We are only half way.

Locust populations are still present in the country and since the start of the second locust campaign in September 2014, locust populations have been controlled on almost 300 000 hectares, mainly by air (more than 98 percent).

However, funds currently available are not sufficient to ensure aerial survey and control operations beyond end of April 2015, the second campaign indeed needs to continue until end of June in terms of treatments with surveillance activities needed until August.

The successful implementation of the second and third campaigns is essential to support the decline of the plague in order to ensure the return, in 2016, to a situation of locust recession USD 10 million are still needed to successfully implement the Three-year Programme, of which over USD 6 million are urgently needed to complete the second locust campaign beyond next month.

Failure to mobilize these resources in time would result in all investments made so far to safeguard the food security and livelihoods of 13 million people in Madagascar being at risk is not being lost.

Debriefing on Field Visit to El Salvador and Colombia (23-30 November 2014) by Senior Officials of Rome-based Permanent Representations

Compte rendu sur la visite de terrain effectuée en El Salvador et en Colombie (23-30 novembre 2014) par des hauts fonctionnaires de bureaux de représentants permanents sis à Rome

Informe oral acerca de la visita sobre el terreno realizada por altos funcionarios de las Representaciones Permanentes en Roma a Colombia y El Salvador (23-30 de noviembre de 2014)

CHAIRPERSON

I now invite representatives from the Field Visit to El Salvador and Colombia, which took place from 23 to 30 November 2014, to debrief the Council on the visit.

I welcome to the podium Her Excellency Gladys Francisca Urbaneja Durán, Ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to FAO, and Mr José Manuel Capitan Romero, Alternate Permanent Representative of the European Union to FAO, who will debrief the Council on this field visit.

Sra. Gladys Francisca URBANEJA DURÁN (Venezuela)

Nosotros mismos, las personas que cuidaríamos del medio ambiente, estaríamos en lo mismo, pero gracias al apoyo que nos han dado, que si no hubiera sido por ese apoyo, no estuviéramos hasta donde estamos comercializando productos mejores, a buen precio, de buena calidad. Si no hubiera sido con el apoyo de la FAO y del CENTA, nosotros estaríamos en lo mismo, vendiendo nuestros productos baratos, usando productos muy tóxicos, dañándonos a nosotros mismos, a las personas que consumen, al medio ambiente. Estaríamos en lo mismo, pero, gracias al apoyo que nos han dado, que si no hubiera sido por ese apoyo, no estuviéramos hasta donde estamos, comercializando productos mejores, a buen precio, de buena calidad y eso es gracias a Dios y a todos Ustedes.

Muchas gracias por todos. Esperamos sacar una buena producción con buenas prácticas agrícolas. Porque la idea es trabajar de la mano con ustedes, cada una de las cosas que ustedes hacen se ven materializadas en este proceso que nosotros estamos haciendo y que vamos cada vez con el impulso de ustedes, de ser más productivos y tener más alimentación para todos y que toda la comida, todo el grano llegue a la mayoría de poblaciones que, pueda ser versario y con eso poder combatir el hambre. Deverdad, muchísimas gracias.

Muchas gracias al apoyo técnico que nos ha brindado este pequeño video, que habla más que todos nosotros. Lo que nosotros venimos a decir acá es de verdad porque es una información aprobada institucionalmente que debemos traer cuando hacemos estas visitas de campo. Sería muy rico entregarles a ustedes gran parte de la labor de estos productores, de lo que estos beneficiarios directos nos han dicho, lo cual ha enriquecido este trabajo y esta visita de campo.

La visita estuvo preparada para visitar a dos países de América Latina y el Caribe, para El Salvador, un país de Centroamérica y para Colombia un país de Sudamérica. La visita como está establecido en la normativa que se prevé para ellas, contempló un trabajo de una semana excluyendo, por supuesto, los viajes que se tuvieron que realizar. Esto está establecido en el documento C 2011/3 sobre el Plan a Plazo Medio (revisado) 2010-2013 y en el Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto 2012-2013 en su

párrafo 164, que estas visitas de campo realizadas por los Representantes Permanentes nos prueban una muy útil, extremadamente útil dice el texto, a los Estados Miembros y a los Órganos del Gobierno para familiarizarnos con el trabajo de la FAO en el campo.

Estas visitas nos permiten obtener una impresión de primera mano acerca de los retos que están enfrentando las Oficinas Descentralizadas para soportar a los Países Miembros en sus actividades en función del desarrollo y de acciones humanitarias. Por supuesto, el resultado de esto que vamos a entregar a la oficina correspondiente que es la oficina de soporte de la descentralización y por ende quedará en manos de esta Organización es para que tratemos en definitiva, de mejorar y de cada vez hacer más esfuerzos para que el funcionamiento de estas oficinas sea cada vez mejor. Está previsto e institucionalmente establecido que sean cuatro países que se visiten en un bienio y que una semana sea la que se dedique a ello. De tal manera que, repito, se pueda mejorar la comprensión de la forma en cual la FAO opera en el terreno, producir un intercambio de información entre las oficinas de la FAO y los Representantes Permanentes en esos países visitados y en la región, y una importancia para la FAO para crear conciencia sobre su labor en el terreno.

La visión no tiene un mandato para la revisión de ninguno de estos programas que visitamos, ni sobre ninguno de los que se visitan de manera específica ni es una inspección para que los representantes nos convirtamos en elementos que efectivamente no debemos, digamos, activarnos de esa forma porque para ello está toda la institucionalidad al nivel de los países y a nivel regional. Esta visita estuvo enfocada a ilustrar los esfuerzos de la FAO en la implementación, repito, de ese Marco Estratégico Revisado y aprobado en la conferencia de 2013.

Los participantes de la misión fueron integrantes de cuatro regiones: por el Asia, el Consejero, representante permanente alterno por Indonesia, Sr. Tazwin Hanif, por el Cercano Oriente, Sr. Abdullah Na'Ami Qutran Al-Na'Ami, el Representante Permanente alterno de Yemen, por el GRULAC quien les habla, Gladys Urbaneja, Embajadora y Representante Permanente de Venezuela, por la Región Europea, el Señor José Manuel Capitán Romero, quien me acompaña y luego mi exposición continuará él, quien es Agregado Representante Permanente alterno de la Unión Europea y Cristina Grider, Ministro Representante Permanente de Suiza. Estuvimos acompañados, por Michael Ginsburg, Oficial de Programa de la FAO de la oficina de soporte de la Descentralización, quien se unió a esta sede, a la sede central, hace poco tiempo porque él se encontraba anteriormente en la oficina regional ubicada en Santiago de Chile y fue incorporado para que participara y asistiese a esta visita porque, la cual nosotros consideramos altamente provechosa, por el conocimiento que tiene del programa en la región y por reconocimiento de estos dos países.

Debemos resaltar de manera especial, la excelente labor de apoyo que nos brindó la Oficina de soporte de la descentralización para realizar esta visita, previamente contribuyó con nosotros por intermedio de videoconferencia, nos colocó conjuntamente con los países y oficina regional, preparó todos los materiales previos, un dossier, un compendio con toda la información político geográfica de cada uno de los países, su oficina descentralizada y los programas que lleva a cabo la FAO en esos países, y posteriormente hemos trabajado de la misma manera para hacer la evaluación de nuestra visita.

En El Salvador y en Colombia se llevó a cabo un programa similar porque contemplamos, por una parte la visita a la oficina de país y, por supuesto reuniones con los integrantes de esa oficina de país con los oficiales de programa y con reuniones interagenciales para que un poco nos ilustraran del trabajo que realiza la oficina con todas las agencias del sistema de Naciones Unidas en cada uno de estos países. Posteriormente, en ambos países luego de hacer esto, trabajamos en lo que específicamente era la visita de campo.

En el caso de El Salvador, estuvimos presentes en tres proyectos, uno referido a la agricultura familiar y su vinculación con los programas de alimentación escolar, entendiendo que estos programas contribuyen al esfuerzo que está haciendo el estado salvadoreño para incorporar el tema de salud y nutrición en la casi totalidad de las provincias y municipalidades; sin embargo, nosotros visitamos, por razones de tiempo ustedes entenderán, uno solo de estos proyectos. Seguidamente, nos trasladamos a vivir la experiencia de cooperativas que trabajan en función de lo que es un programa nacional también instituido mediante un convenio cuya firma vimos el mediodía de ese primer día entre el

Ministerio de Economía, el Ministerio de Agricultura y la FAO para contribuir con el desarrollo de agrocadenas productivas con un enfoque territorial sustentable.

Esas agrocadenas las estuvimos viendo entonces en los otros dos proyectos de manera muy nítida. Uno de ellos, es el proyecto para hablar con estas cooperativas con que ustedes vieron acá para producción de dos productos jocote y loroco que son dos productos, un fruto y una especie al parecer, pareciera más bien una flor de esa planta y esa especie se incorpora a alimentos, a quesos y el fruto se produce en mermeladas, jaleas y se está incluyendo el sentido de la calidad y la inocuidad a fin de que no solo sean nacionales sino que sea posible incorporarlos a mercados internacionales, dado la gran cantidad de salvadoreños que se encuentran en diversos países del mundo.

Y finalmente, en El Salvador, estuvimos mirando la experiencia de dos empresas productoras y comercializadoras de semillas de frijol, igualmente con énfasis en el tema de la calidad pero es importante el tema de la sociatividad y la productividad. Incrementar productividad y poder, como dijo el último de los expositores, poder hacer llegar esos frijoles de calidad, porque es semilla, es semilla de frijol para que se cultive el frijol, pase a ser, como todos lo sabemos, un alimento esencial de la dieta diaria de los salvadoreños. Y, en segundo lugar, pues estuvimos en Colombia, visitamos a Medellín, que es una ciudad ubicada en la provincia del Choco. Allí nos trasladamos hasta una población denominada Santo Domingo, en donde también estamos trabajando con productoras y productores en el mejoramiento de ese cultivo de semillas para la producción, con un enfoque agroecológico, con un enfoque de eliminación de la toxicidad con los productos que se utilizaban anteriormente, lo cual fue muy enfatizado por estos productores, pero lamentablemente apenas les damos unos segundos de las intervenciones que hicieron.

Y finalmente, estuvimos en la ciudad de Bogotá. En la primera mañana, a través del funicular, vimos espectacularmente esa ciudad. A las 11 hubo la reunión de todo el equipo que compone la FAO, la oficina de país. Posteriormente estuvimos participando toda la tarde de ese día con las áreas técnicas de cooperación, bilateral multilateral y con el sistema de Naciones Unidas, de tal manera que nos dio, de verdad, una amplia visión de cómo este esfuerzo de fortalecer estas oficinas regionales pueden conducir definitivamente y creo, lo creemos así los que hicieron la visita de campo, a que el enfoque que está dando cada uno de estas oficinas de su articulación con los gobiernos nacionales, regionales y locales con la articulación con la oficina regional y las oficinas subregionales, porque tenemos establecidos como todos sabemos ya, prioridades en las regiones. Y a su vez, con articulación interagencial en algunos casos, que hacen unos años que ya trabajan como una sola ONU.

Creo hemos visto el afianzamiento entonces, del enfoque de derecho, del enfoque de seguridad alimentaria y nutricional, del enfoque de fortalecer las agrocadenas productivas, del enfoque de fortalecer las asociaciones y cooperativas, de fortalecer la agricultura familiar, que en el caso de El Salvador ya es casi convertida en una ley y bueno creo que nos vinimos muy satisfechos con ese esfuerzo que está haciendo cada uno de los que lidera, cada una de esas oficina de país y sus equipos. Demás está decir, que cada uno de ellos ha definido su marco programa país con un compendio de áreas demasiado importantes para el desarrollo de esos dos países tan queridos por nosotros en América Latina y que hoy les trae José, por decir así, las conclusiones de esta visita.

Sr. José Manuel CAPITAN ROMERO (Unión Europea)

Yo quería profundizar un poco más en ciertos temas ya comentados por la Embajadora. Voy a comenzar presentando los puntos que más llamaron nuestra atención durante nuestra visita a El Salvador. El primer punto, la primera reunión que tuvimos cuando llegamos ahí, fue la reunión con la delegación de la FAO en El Salvador donde se nos explicaron las principales actividades que la oficina realiza en el país. Tuvimos la oportunidad de ver algunos muy buenos ejemplos de organización interna y manuales de procedimientos desarrollados por la oficina de El Salvador. Pensamos que valdría la pena que la sede los analizase como modelo a replicar en otras oficinas. Igualmente creemos que el proceso de descentralización está todavía en curso y que las oficinas descentralizadas necesitan de un continuo apoyo de la sede.

Otro punto que fue mencionado durante toda nuestra misión en ambos países, y aprovecho para comentarlo ahora, fue las referencias a la Cooperación sur-sur. Se nos explicó que el papel de la FAO en este tipo de cooperación ha sido facilitar el intercambio de experiencias exitosas. A modo de

ejemplo, recibimos explicaciones de un programa de alimentación escolar financiado por Brasil, que según nos dijeron, con muy pocos recursos está teniendo un gran impacto en El Salvador.

El segundo punto, que quería comentar en este momento, fueron las reuniones que mantuvimos con las agencias de Naciones Unidas. Durante la misión, tuvimos la oportunidad de reunirnos con diferentes agencias de Naciones Unidas que trabajan en El Salvador y como ejemplo de buena cooperación entre las agencias se nos presentó un programa llamado SANOS.

SANOS es un programa sobre nutrición y salud en el que colaboran la FAO, UNICEF, el Programa Mundial de Alimentos y la Organización Mundial de la Salud. Los representantes de las agencias piensan que funciona especialmente bien, gracias a la buena definición de la organización del trabajo y a la clara división de competencias. Comentaron también que en muchos otros casos, los programas no funcionan tan bien debido a esta falta de clara regulación y esto provoca que se creen problemas en la ejecución de estos programas.

Otro punto importante también mencionado durante la reunión fue el hecho de que, según ellos, trabajar juntos no se debe limitar solamente a programas o proyectos conjuntos, más importante sería el hecho de que las agencias de Naciones Unidas pasasen mensajes comunes a gobiernos con una sola voz, de esta manera las posibilidades de influir en las políticas públicas del país serían mucho mayores.

Finalmente, el tercer punto que quiero destacar, como ha mencionado antes la Embajadora, fueron las reuniones con los miembros del Gobierno. Pudimos observar que hay una estrecha relación entre el Gobierno de El Salvador y la delegación de la FAO sin lugar a dudas. La FAO está influyendo en las políticas públicas del país y como ejemplos, podemos mencionar la ley de seguridad alimentaria y nutrición y la inclusión del derecho de alimentación en la legislación del país. El Gobierno valora muy positivamente el trabajo de la FAO apoyando las políticas gubernamentales y se destacó como ejemplo de buena cooperación que algunos de los programas de la FAO se han convertido en políticas públicas. También se consideró muy importante el papel de la FAO en dar continuidad a ciertas políticas, a pesar de los cambios de gobierno, dos casos en los que la FAO ha tenido un papel fundamental han sido la ley sobre la seguridad alimentaria, como mencionaba antes y el programa de agricultura familiar.

Como áreas en las que la FAO debería continuar trabajando se sugirió que la ayuda a la coordinación entre diferentes ministerios en temas relacionados con seguridad alimentaria era muy importante como comentaba la Embajadora, tuvimos la oportunidad de ver un muy ejemplo de esto que fue la firma de un memorándum de entendimiento entre el Ministerio de Agricultura, la FAO y el Ministerio de Economía.

Para terminar nuestros dos días en El Salvador, visitamos varios programas, varios proyectos, concretamente tres, el primero como comentábamos antes fue un programa de alimentación escolar, basado en pruebas públicas a agricultores familiares y queremos destacar que el programa está teniendo aspectos muy positivos en diferentes áreas, como la mejora de la nutrición en los niños, el desarrollo de la agricultura familiar y la educación. Asimismo, merece la pena destacar que el programa está siendo una herramienta con la que la FAO se está implicando en el Comité Nacional de Alimentación Escolar, donde está presionando para la creación de una ley sobre alimentación sana. Aquí tenemos un ejemplo muy interesante de cómo la FAO puede trabajar o trabaja en el desarrollo de políticas públicas. Los otros dos proyectos que visitamos fueron el proyecto “Abro Cadenas” y un proyecto de producción y comercialización de frijoles. Con estos dos proyectos, la FAO pretende fundamentalmente tres cosas: por un lado dar capacidad técnica a los pequeños agricultores, lo cual fue valorado muy positivamente por los beneficiarios de ambos proyectos, como pudimos ver en los videos iniciales.

El segundo punto que merece la pena destacar fue la ayuda a la comercialización de esos productos. Se destacó como uno de los ejemplos de ayuda a la comercialización fue el apoyo que reciben los pequeños agricultores para realizar contratos de la exportación, un tema que sin la ayuda de la FAO, sería muy difícil para ellos realizar.

Y finalmente, otro de los principales activos que dan este tipo de programas es la ayuda para impulsar el cooperativismo entre pequeños productores con enormes beneficios. Finalmente, tras dos días en Colombia, perdón, tras dos días en El Salvador, nos trasladamos a Colombia y lo primero que nos llamó la atención nada más llegar fue que se nos presentaron dos Colombias podríamos decir: por un lado un país de renta media en pleno crecimiento y por otro lado un país con un conflicto armado prolongado que se ha convertido en una crisis olvidada. Esta realidad de Colombia determina las tareas de la FAO, cómo se desarrollan las actividades de la FAO en el país. Nos explicaron que fundamentalmente puede haber dos grandes bloques de tareas. Por un lado, un 60 por ciento del trabajo se centraba en proyectos de desarrollo y un 40 por ciento en proyectos de emergencia.

Yo quisiera comenzar por este segundo bloque, el trabajo de la FAO en proyectos de emergencia, aquí tuvimos también nuevamente la oportunidad de reunirnos con diferentes actores que trabajan con la FAO en este entorno de crisis, como ECO, la agencia monetaria de la Unión Europea, el PNUD y OCHA. Nos explicaron que ahora estamos en un momento clave en el proceso de construcción de la paz en Colombia y que las zonas rurales y la agricultura desempeñarán un papel clave en la consolidación de este proceso. Recibimos explicaciones sobre el papel de la FAO, qué está haciendo la FAO en esta situación de conflicto y se nos dijo que la FAO tiene una gran presencia, una grande y frecuente presencia en comunidades remotas afectadas por el conflicto, además de contar con una alta capacidad técnica en temas agrícolas, como todos conocemos. Muchas de estas comunidades remotas no son accesibles para el Estado a causa del conflicto armado y solo son accesibles para organismos internacionales como la FAO o para actores no estatales. El trabajo de la FAO en estas áreas, se basa fundamentalmente en recuperar los medios de subsistencia y aumentar la resiliencia. La FAO también está desempeñando un trabajo clave en estas zonas de conflicto ayudando a pasar de la transición entre intervenciones de ayuda humanitaria e intervenciones que contribuyan al desarrollo del sector agrícola.

Como decía el segundo bloque en el que trabaja la FAO es el bloque de proyectos en desarrollo, como comentaba también Gladys, recibimos una extensísima presentación por parte de todo el personal de la FAO en Colombia, de los numerosísimos proyectos que tienen en vías de ejecución. Una cosa que quería destacar es que el Gobierno de Colombia financia la mayoría de estos proyectos, lo cual demuestra la confianza que tiene el Gobierno en el trabajo de la FAO. La misión, tuvimos la oportunidad de recibir presentaciones por todo el personal de la FAO sobre proyectos de agricultura sostenible, nutrición, pesca, salud entre otros. Por destacar uno, entre los múltiples casos que se nos presentaron, quiero llamar la atención sobre un proyecto en el campo de la salud, a través de la cual se trataba de incorporar elementos de seguridad alimentaria en las políticas del Ministerio de Salud.

Para terminar con las presentaciones, los miembros de las misiones pasamos el mensaje a los colegas de Bogotá que siempre es importante que este tipo de proyectos contribuyan al desarrollo de políticas nacionales en seguridad alimentaria y nutrición.

Quería terminar la parte de nuestra misión con la visita que hicimos a Medellín con el proyecto Maná y quería destacar algunos puntos de este proyecto. Este es un proyecto que trabaja en alimentación escolar, en comercialización y cadenas de valor y en jardines familiares. El proyecto, un poco por contar un poco la historia, nació cuando el gobierno de la región de Antioquía pidió ayuda a la FAO para tener la asistencia técnica de la Organización para ayudar a pequeños agricultores a mejorar su producción. Y lo que es interesante destacar es que este proyecto ha servido para aumentar el interés del gobierno nacional colombiano por trabajar en temas relacionados con la agricultura familiar y en este momento se ve como un ejemplo a replicar en el resto del país. Otro dato interesante, es que este proyecto lo ofrece Colombia en su catálogo de cooperación sur-sur con terceros países.

Quería terminar nuestra presentación con una serie de observaciones y conclusiones que todo el equipo que ha participado de la misión hemos extraído en esta semana. El primero es que, el primer punto es que los Gobiernos de El Salvador y Colombia nos dijeron que apreciaban y valoraban muy positivamente la labor de la FAO. Vimos que las representaciones de la FAO en ambos países continúan trabajando y fortaleciendo su relación con el Gobierno. El segundo punto, clarísimo, es que el trabajo de la FAO está influyendo en las políticas nacionales de seguridad alimentaria. El tercer punto es que la misión tuvo la oportunidad de observar cómo la FAO trabaja en el contexto de una

crisis prolongada en el caso de Colombia y como trabaja en la construcción de resiliencia. Y, según todas las personas con las que hablamos, las intervenciones parecían muy adecuadas y eran muy valoradas por otros donantes. Como cuarto punto, queríamos decir que en muchos casos, el trabajo de la FAO es un poco lo que estaba explicando antes, se desarrolla en torno a un gran número de pequeños proyectos y creemos que es siempre importante tener en cuenta que estos proyectos deben ser proyectos pilotos y deben servir para propósitos mayores, como proyectos demostrativos o como medios para influir en las políticas nacionales.

Quinto punto sería que la cooperación entre las agencias de Naciones Unidas, vimos algunos ejemplos de buena colaboración y otros no tanto. Por ejemplo, observamos que había cierta competencia de recursos. Creemos que el papel del coordinador residente de Naciones Unidas y que una mejor regulación de las formas de trabajo, podría mejorar la situación.

Finalmente, nuestro último punto es que creemos que hay un espacio para mejorar la comunicación entre la sede y las oficinas descentralizadas, sin duda, y que hay que aumentar los esfuerzos para que las oficinas descentralizadas estén al tanto de las políticas y los productos que discutimos aquí en Roma.

Quería terminar nuestra presentación con una pequeña actuación musical que tuvimos la suerte de presenciar en nuestra misión y darles las gracias por su atención de mi parte y de parte de todos los integrantes de la misión. Los dejo con la actuación musical.

Sra. María Eulalia JIMÉNEZ (El Salvador)

Permítame unas breves palabras para agradecer el informe presentado por la Embajadora de Venezuela y por el Representante de la Unión Europea. Agradecimiento que quiero hacer extensivo a todos los miembros que participaron en la misión a mi país y a Colombia. El informe que nos han presentado reitera la importancia de estas visitas para que los Miembros de esta Organización conozcan de primera mano, digamos, cuál el trabajo que la Organización y todas las otras organizaciones de Naciones Unidas están haciendo en nuestros países.

En El Salvador, el trabajo que realiza la Representación de la FAO es muy importante, como aquí se ha dicho trabaja en forma muy estrecha con el Gobierno de El Salvador y nos ayudar a mantener esa continuidad que tenemos que realizar para que los programas y los proyectos que se realicen continúen a conseguir los resultados que nos hemos propuestos en el campo de la seguridad alimentaria, en la nutrición y en la erradicación de la pobreza. Con estas palabras, le reitero nuestro agradecimiento y nada más.

Statement by a Representative of FAO Staff Bodies

Déclaration d'un représentant des associations du personnel de la FAO

Declaración de un representante de los órganos representativos del personal de la FAO

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, as mentioned at the start of this meeting, I would now like to invite Mr Juan Coy, General Secretary of the Association of Professionals in FAO, to deliver a statement to Council on behalf of the Staff Representative Bodies.

FAO Staff Representative

We would like first of all to express our appreciation for having been granted the opportunity to speak to you today. These words are a joint statement by the Association of Professionals in FAO and the Union of General Service Staff, delivered on behalf of all the general service and professional staff around the world working for FAO.

The staff we represent are overwhelmingly hard-working, dedicated people, committed to FAO's mandate and intent on making a difference. FAO has been undergoing major changes over the past few years, with a new Strategic Framework, decentralization and the implementation of significant efficiency savings. The purpose of these changes was to make FAO more focused and effective, bring it closer to the people it serves and ensure that its resources are used more efficiently. Staff have played a

key role in bringing about these changes. Staff of FAO are committed to continue to work to make FAO more effective and to deliver what you, as representatives of our Member Nations, expect of us.

We believe we are key to the success of this Organization. Ultimately, FAO's Programme of Work, its services to its Members and the many global public goods that it provides will be delivered by the people working for FAO. To ensure that we deliver as effectively as possible, it is important that we are allowed to put our competencies and skills to the best possible use, where they are most needed and most likely to bring significant results, but also that we feel valued, respected and motivated.

Unfortunately, we cannot hide our concern over the current levels of staff morale and the status of the relationship of staff with the Senior Management of this Organization. At this point, many among us are beginning to fear the possible impact on the delivery of FAO's Programme of Work of dwindling morale and rising anxiety among staff, resulting from human resources policies that are not always well-conceived and well-implemented as well as from the tendency to disregard staff's concerns. Most of us are doing our best to motivate ourselves through our commitment to FAO and its mandate, our sense of duty and the pride we take in a job well done. But, unfortunately, we do not feel that we are being supported by FAO's Management and that we are being enabled to maximize our potential in the interest of FAO's mission.

We address you in a moment of difficulty and tension. The Union of General Service Staff called for a work stoppage this week and the Association of Professionals in FAO, for walk-outs. At the height of concerted action, on Thursday a large number of staff showed their discontent and called for dialogue. We wish to assure you that the Association of Professionals and the Union of General Service Staff fully share the same concerns and are wholly united in our requests to the Management of FAO.

We want to make it clear that we are not complaining about our conditions of service. Salaries or other material benefits are not the issue at stake. Nor are we concerned about change as such. It is not the first time that major changes have been introduced at FAO, and staff have always contributed with dedication and commitment. What we are concerned about is the environment in which we work and the way staff are treated, and the impact this may have on the continuity and quality of Programme delivery. We will not enter into any details of specific issues of disagreement with the Management of FAO, but only sum up what we are basically seeking.

We are seeking respect for our contribution to the Organization and appreciation of our efforts. We would like to feel that the competence, skills and hard work of staff are truly recognized by Senior Management. Instead, we feel that we are too often considered a burden or a cost, rather than an asset. We believe that this fundamental attitude has to change.

We are looking for transparent and equitable human resources policies that treat staff fairly and respectfully and provide opportunities of career advancement for deserving and hard-working staff. We regret to say that today staff at large does not perceive such fairness, nor is there sufficient trust among staff that human resources policies are designed and implemented in a transparent and equitable way. At the same time, staff are seeing the possibilities of advancement in their career narrowing more and more. Incentives to make an extra effort, to develop new skills or to take on new challenges are simply disappearing.

We would like to see a working environment free from fear and anxiety. Today, staff are increasingly worried about how human resources policies, that they fail to understand, or human resources management decisions, that are not seen as transparent, may affect them in unforeseen ways.

We are hoping for an effective and constructive dialogue with the Management of this Organization on all aspects of our conditions of employment and on matters affecting staff welfare. Staff and their Representative Bodies are desirous of contributing to finding solutions to the challenges faced by FAO within their sphere of competence. Today, we do not feel that our contributions and opinions are valued and given the consideration they merit.

We sincerely wish to see strong and effective Staff-Management relations, based on mutual respect, good will, open dialogue and a true desire to listen to each other and seek common ground in an environment where people can speak freely and openly. We believe that this will lead to better human resources policies and smoother implementation of them — in the interest of staff, the Organization

and the Member Nations. We are convinced that this is the way forward, if we are to truly deserve your trust.

We stand ready to do our part. Following an invitation from Management to meet, the Staff Representative Bodies of FAO have called off the strike and the planned walk-out for today to initiate dialogue. We hope that Management will appreciate our true intent and meet it with a favourable disposition, so that all of us together may inaugurate a new phase of harmonious collaboration.

Thank you for your kind attention.

**ADOPTION OF REPORT
ADOPTION DU RAPPORT
APROBACIÓN DEL INFORME**

CHAIRPERSON

We will now proceed with the Adoption of the Report. Please ensure that you have the relevant document before you: CL 151/Draft Report.

I now invite Mr Vimlendra Sharan, Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, to present the report.

Mr Vimlendra SHARAN (Chairperson, Drafting Committee)

It is my privilege to present to this gathering the Draft Report of the 151st Session of the Council.

The Drafting Committee met over the last two days to deliberate and finalize the report.

The sagacity, maturity, and flexibility shown by all members of the committee ensured that we reached a consensus on all the agenda items. The result of our efforts is before you in the form of document CL 151/Draft Report. I invite the Council Members to adopt the report in block.

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Mr Sharan. I would like to extend my appreciation to you and to the members of the Drafting Committee for the good work done.

It appears that the Report of this Session has been approved in block.

Any linguistic observations should be communicated in writing to the Secretariat in order to be included in the Final Report.

Does the Council wish to adopt the Report in block?

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. The Report of the 151st Session of the FAO Council is adopted.

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

I now invite the Director-General to address the Council.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Thank you, Your Excellency Wilfred Ngirwa, Independent Chairperson of the Council, Distinguished ministers, deputy ministers and senior government officials, Members of the Council, Permanent Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen, a historic Council comes to an end today.

For the first time FAO Members reached consensus on the budget level at Council. Congratulations.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

I am confident that, in June, Conference will confirm our proposed Programme of Work and Budget.

This consensus also crowns a successful Council and shows how far we have advanced.

On behalf of FAO, I want to thank you for your trust in the Organization and leadership.

I want to thank the efforts of our OSP Director, Mr Boyd Haight, his team, and all staff that helped provide the information to address in a timely fashion questions raised during the negotiations.

I also ask your permission to recognize the efforts of one man in particular. I must confess that I was concerned to learn that he was not able to attend the Programme Committee and Joint Meeting two weeks ago. Even while sick he still participated in our efforts and sent his comments in writing. Dr Ayazi, I would like to recognize you as an example of our personal effort to reach consensus and find a budget level that protects our Programme of Work. Thank you Dr Ayazi, and I hope you recover well.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Ladies and gentlemen, FAO will continue to work hard, every day, to continue to deserve your trust. I recognize the difficult global context and the little margin we had to negotiate. I want to thank all of you for your flexibility and readiness to support the consensus. We needed it.

We found an innovative way to ensure that Small Island Developing States (SIDS) receive increased FAO support to adapt to climate change. A trust fund is already being set up to receive voluntary contributions for SIDS. Our Technical Cooperation ADG, Mr Laurent Thomas, is preparing to immediately implement this trust fund. You have a leaflet in front of you that explains in more detail what we would like to do and hope this fund will have the cooperation of all our Member countries.

There is also an understanding that the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) budget will reach 14 percent in 2018-19. This is very important. It has to do with credibility: investing in your Organization to meet the goals you have set.

But regardless of the commitment to increase support to SIDS through voluntary contributions, we still had to cut any TCP enhancement from the regular program budget.

So consensus comes at a cost that, collectively, we were willing to pay. And we still need to find an additional USD 3 million in savings. Mr Haight already told me it will not be easy.

We have cut to the bone, as Mr Mehboob repeatedly alerts us, at some point the rubber band snaps.

And, once again, we will have to look at measures that affect staff, for the simple reason that most of FAO's budget is related to staff. There is no other way around it. It is either that or cut into our Programme of Work that we all agree not to do.

In this regard, I repeat my request that your Governments take this issue to the 5th Committee and General Assembly that examine the proposals made by the International Civil Service Commission.

I also welcome your proposal to prepare a non-paper on staff costs to share with their capitals. Hopefully, this will allow us to advance and avoid that we spend more time in the next biennium discussing staff costs again and again.

Ladies and gentlemen, at its last session, the Finance Committee has identified areas in which we should explore efficiency savings. We will look at all possibilities.

Three million in a one billion dollar budget might not seem like too much. But it is when it comes on top of 108 million found by FAO since 2012. And on top of a real budget reduction of nearly 30 percent in the past 20 years.

I am confident that we will have constructive dialogue from staff representatives, as you heard from them. UGSS, that represents General Service Staff, called off their strike yesterday. AP in FAO called off their walk out.

Let me say that Management never refused dialogue or left the table. At the same time, we acted on our responsibility to take the decisions necessary to modernize the Human Resources policies of this Organization. As I said before, we are open to consultations, but not to co-management.

Ladies and gentlemen, you did your part and reached a historic PWB consensus. Management needs now to find savings for the next biennium and I do not want to rush decisions. I believe that we will have the savings identified by the second semester, when we have the Finance and Programme Committees and Council. I hope we do not have to discuss this during Conference.

I appreciate the flexibility to adjust our Programme of Work to emerging challenges and the Sustainable Development Goals, as necessary. I ask you to keep this flexibility.

Please do not tie my hands with additional constraints that will have very little practical results and make our life more difficult. This time around Council has been able to find consensus that I am confident will be confirmed at Conference.

For those returning to your capitals, have a safe trip home. I look forward to seeing you again in Conference in June. For those based in Rome, our work continues on Monday.

I would like to end, once again, congratulating you for the consensus we achieved. I applaud you for that.

Thank you for your attention.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Mr Mohammed S.L. SHERIFF (Liberia)

This is a statement on behalf of the Africa Group. It is a singular honour for Liberia as Chair of the Africa Group of Permanent Representatives to take the floor on behalf of the Africa Region and its 54 Member Countries.

Before you adjourn this final meeting of the 151st Council, allow me to express Africa's gratitude to all for the positive spirit and cooperation shown, thereby making this a truly memorable session. Africa is particularly grateful for the spirit of work which has seen us agree on a Programme of Work and Budget that will allow FAO to continue delivering on its crucial mandate in the areas of food security and nutrition, especially also in our continent, Africa.

As stated by the Director-General, this is the first time in the 70-year history of the Organization that the Council has been in a position to recommend a Programme of Work and Budget to the Conference. Apart from the satisfaction we feel, together with all other Members in this room, for being the first to do so, it is for the Africa Group a particular pleasure to thank everyone and to see that this stellar achievement has occurred under the steady hands and wise guidance of a son of Africa.

Mr Chairman, we are proud of you and we thank you for the work you have done.

The achievements today at this Session of the Council once again underlines the justification of the Africa Group to have nominated you and the wisdom of the collective FAO Membership to have elected you to the position of Independent Chairperson of the Council in 2013. Over the past two years, you have set a new bar for the position of ICC and we look forward to your continued wise leadership of this body beyond the next Conference.

We also want to use this opportunity to wish a good friend of Africa with whom, as Chair, we have collaborated, that is Dr Ayazi, a speedy and quick recovery.

I want to thank all of you sitting up there. In particular, our incoming new dynamic Director-General for a second term.

Mr Mafizur RAHMAN (Bangladesh)

I have taken the floor just to thank all of you, all of us, and everybody. Particularly one-by-one, I would like to thank the Chairperson for a very nice and successful completion of this Council. I would like to thank the Director-General for his nice leadership. And we would like to thank all Members of the Programme and Finance Committees and also the Friends of the Chair and highlight that we have made a historical achievement: for the first time we could all agree to a Programme of Work and Budget level for the Conference. This is really a good achievement. I must say, this is the success of all of our efforts. We thank from Bangladesh all of you, all of us, for this consensus.

We would like to thank all the Members of the Drafting Committee, including the Chair as I think that this is also another achievement, that for the first time we adopted the report in the morning. Usually we do it in the afternoon.

We thank and appreciate the role of our colleague; I always say that he is “my boss”, Dr Ayazi. He is actually an institution of knowledge of FAO. We always look forward to working with him for his nice guidance and his role that contributes a lot.

Mr Chairperson, I would like to thank again you and also the Director-General. Both of you have a second term coming that will be definitely approved at the next Conference. We welcome both of you in advance.

Mr Chair, now I would like to point out one thing that is a citation from Bangla: *The moon has also a black spot*. If we see the full moon at night, we will see that there is a black spot in the moon. This is what happened during this Council.

I really have a deep concern about how the members of the general service reacted, how they demonstrated from outside of the Council meeting. That doesn't fit in very nicely. They could have presented their case in a different manner. In particular, when the Director-General was giving his address to us, just in that moment, we heard from outside noise that disturbed all of us. That is the blackest part of this Council.

We must respect all Members, we must respect the employees, we must respect the Officers, but the way they have provided it to us, to the Council, that actually I must say, for myself is personal, is not acceptable way. That is the black spot of this Council because this is the show of the Management; this is not the show of the Council. I'm sorry to say that that was not a very good way to present that demand. They can inform us in a different way.

So apart from this, everything is very nice. We are willing to complete this Council in a successful way, but to my mind, that was a black spot. Even then, from the Asia Group, we would like to thank all my colleagues, the Chair of the Council, Officers, those who have contributed a lot, for making this Council a successful one.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

First, we would like to thank the Director-General for his words. We are very happy to see that we have been able to live up to the IPA recommendation for this Council to recommend the budget level. We see this as an important step forward. It is an improvement in efficiency and hopefully we believe that this should become the established practice.

As we indicated in the Friends of the Chair process, Australia has demonstrated significant flexibility in joining the consensus on the budget level. We did this on the basis of our expectation that this budget increase of USD 30 million will support increased impact of FAO's work.

As we have stressed on numerous occasions in FAO Governing Bodies, we want to see FAO reclaim recognition as the preminent global food and agricultural organization. We have been seeing some significant changes in FAO in recent years and we fully support these changes. Change is critical if FAO is to address the many critics who have raised concerns about the effectiveness and efficiency of the Organization.

These changes are also required to enable FAO to adapt to a changing world and institutional environment in the agriculture and development arena. FAO has recently had a strong focus on cost-effectiveness and this is what Members demand. It is standard practice for all organizations, particularly in these challenging financial times, to have to operate under difficult financial circumstances, and 'cutting your coat according to your cloth' is an expression often used.

We are very pleased that the Organization has started to genuinely reprioritize and reallocate existing resources. This is a significant step forward, and again needs to become an established practice. Limited resources need to be allocated to their best possible use in the achievement of the Strategic Objectives.

As I said at the beginning of my intervention, Australia shares the spirit of good will and cooperation shown by all Members in joining the consensus on the budget level. We had expressed our confidence that the Management could continue to build on its excellent track record and find efficiencies and savings beyond those embodied in the draft Resolution that we have just agreed to.

But Australia has high expectations that the Organization will deliver strongly during the course of the period ahead and we will be working diligently to support the continued improvement in the achievement of impact and outcomes from FAO's work and we look forward to working with the Organization and other Members.

Mr Amr HELMY MOSTAFA KAMAL (Egypt) (Original Language Arabic)

On behalf of the Near East and North Africa Group I have the pleasure of expressing my thanks to His Excellency the Director-General. I would like to congratulate him for his new mandate as the head of this Organization, and for all the achievements during this session of the Council which has been a successful one

I would also like to congratulate the Chair of the Council and all its Members for the efforts made and their achievements.

Mr John NORRIS (United States of America)

It is with great pleasure that the United States endorses the report of this Council and joins consensus today on the recommendation of the budget level to the Conference. For the FAO Council to reach a consensus budget level is a historical achievement. This not only fulfills the IPA recommendation, but it shows how far we have come since the reform process was started in 2009.

We hope that this sets a positive precedent for future budget level recommendations coming from the Council. We are particularly satisfied because Conference can now direct its full attention to the Programme of Work to ensure that FAO is maximizing the impact of every dollar in this budget.

The integrated proposal of over USD 2.5 billion, the largest in FAO's history, will provide the funding necessary for FAO to meet its mandate in the next biennium. We commend the Secretariat for its excellent work which has attracted additional resources through voluntary contributions and encourage keeping up the good work.

FAO should consider this increase as evidence of the progress towards the new FAO that the Director-General has been building, and that more members are choosing to partner with FAO on work related to ensuring food security and nutrition.

We would like to highlight the work of the Independent Chair of Council, Ambassador Ngirwa, without whom we could not have reached this agreement on consensus. We also want to applaud the leadership of the Director-General and commend his management team.

These last few days have been long and difficult and we would be remiss not to credit the excellent spirit of cooperation and compromise from all the Member Nations that has made this momentous occasion possible. The United States looks forward to working with each of you throughout the remainder of this year and the coming biennium.

Sr. Gerardo VEGA BERRÍO (Observador de Panamá)

A nombre del GRULAC, queremos reconocer el éxito de esta reunión del Consejo y expresar nuestro agradecimiento al Presidente del Consejo, como a los miembros de los distintos comités que han participado por el consenso alcanzado durante esta reunión, lo que demuestra que hay objetivos comunes que cada día nos unifican más. Expresar al Señor Director General nuestro agradecimiento por la gestión realizada y desearle éxitos en su segundo periodo, reiterarle que nuestra región mantiene su compromiso de seguir contribuyendo para la mayor eficiencia del organismo y recordarles a todos que el éxito de la FAO es compromiso de todos.

Mr Majid DEGHAN SHOAR (Islamic Republic of Iran)

As Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran and currently Chair of the G77, I also wish to express my thanks and appreciation to our hardworking, wise Director-General. To him, all the best for his new term and other terms. And I thank also the Secretary-General, the Chairman, the Deputy Directors-General and their colleagues who have been very hard-working and helpful.

My thanks and appreciation is also extended to the G77 Members, EU and others because we are all together. We can reach our goal, the FAO goal, the UN goal, if we work together, think together, and smile together. We can plant beautiful smiles on the lips of poor farmers who badly need our honesty and our unity, who are looking forward to seeing us more understandable to their needs, shaking hands, either from the G77 or the EU or other groups. They love to see our unity. If there is a conflict, that is not a conflict, it is just my understanding.

Working with FAO for so many years, this means understanding. We can sort it out by sitting, talking and planning together. There are millions of eyes looking at what we are going to do for the needed food. Not only just food, as correctly mentioned by our Director-General, but sufficient, nutritious and safe food. Let's think about the big number of people with cancer and others suffering from unhealthy food.

Let's work together, smile together, and make God happy for our actions.

Mr Zoltán KÁLMÁN (Hungary)

I am taking the floor in my role as Chairperson of the European Regional Group. I would like to express our satisfaction that for the first time Council was able to make a recommendation to Conference on the budget level, in line with the FAO's IPA reforms.

On behalf of the European Region, I wish to congratulate you first of all, Mr Chairperson, for your able leadership throughout the whole session of Council and in the negotiations in the Friends of the Chair Group. Your guidance has proven to be essential to having an efficient and speedy Council and to reach a final compromise.

We thank the Director-General and his Senior Management team for their explanations and helpful approach in our deliberations about the budget level. I congratulate the Chair and the members of the Drafting Committee for their efficient work.

Last but not least, I wish to thank the whole Membership of FAO for their collaborative way of working together. We recognize that reaching the compromise required great efforts from all countries, but appreciate that all Delegations have demonstrated a focus on achieving results.

On the basis of this early consensus, we are committed to continuing to work together on the important issue of finalizing the Programme of Work.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

La Delegación argentina se suma, en primer lugar, a las declaraciones realizadas por la Presidencia del GRULAC y por la Presidencia del G77 más China. En particular, la Delegación argentina quisiera destacar el esfuerzo desplegado por el Señor Director General, por el Presidente independiente del Consejo, por la Secretaría de la FAO y por el Señor Boyd Haight para alcanzar este objetivo histórico de que por primera vez hayamos podido aprobar el PTP para el próximo bienio en el seno del Consejo y elevarlo a la Conferencia.

Asimismo, la Argentina desea remarcar y agradecer el espíritu constructivo y la voluntad política de arribar a un consenso por parte de todas las delegaciones. Tanto del seno del Grupo de Amigos del Presidente, como en las reuniones del Comité del Redacción y en todos los otros ámbitos en los cuales se discutió este proyecto, como en el Comité de Finanzas, y de Programa. En particular, nuestro agradecimiento a aquellas delegaciones que en aras del interés general y del consenso hicieron importantes esfuerzos para llegar a este resultado, sin por ello abdicar ni haber dejado de lado sus posiciones nacionales.

Creo que todos hemos transmitido un fuerte apoyo a la labor del Directo General para que Usted, Director General, pueda continuar con la orientación trazada en su segundo periodo.

Sra. Gladys Francisca URBANEJA DURAN (Venezuela)

Gracias al Director General por las palabras que ha indicado que nos orientan en función de lo que va a ser su actuación en el próximo periodo de gestión como Director General de esta Organización, para lo cual ha contado con el apoyo de todos sus Miembros y va a contar con ello en la próxima Conferencia. Agradecemos igualmente el trabajo realizado por Usted, Señor Presidente Independiente, junto a los Miembros de la Organización y muy especialmente a quienes desarrollaron el trabajo para concluir con este informe que hemos aprobado por aclamación. Me sumo a las palabras que han sido pronunciadas esperando que el Profesor Ayazi así tenga muy pronto su recuperación de salud para que podamos contar con su presencia, su acompañamiento y su sabiduría como hasta ahora ha sido.

Creemos que estas consultas para alcanzar este nivel de presupuesto que han sido históricas por el hecho de haberse logrado este consenso por primera vez y arribar a una conferencia sin obstaculizar toda la temática de la conferencia con esos largos encuentros hasta horas de la madrugada para poder llegar a un acuerdo; haber limpiado ese camino para que la conferencia se aboque a los temas fundamentales sustantivos para los que está prevista.

Valoramos positivamente, como República Bolivariana de Venezuela, la determinación de las esferas a las que, en ese presupuesto se propone prestarles mayor atención y las que, en cierta forma, quedarían sin esa atención especial. Creo que la determinación que se ha tomado es correcta. Creemos también que en las áreas en las que se debe seguir buscando ahorros, tal como usted lo ha dicho Señor Director General, pudieran ser presentadas a nosotros más adelante.

Acogemos con agrado esa propuesta de poder reasignar los 14.2 millones a las esferas, entonces, de mayor prioridad. Acogemos con satisfacción también que ese 14 por ciento de consignación neta en consonancia con la resolución 9/89 de la Conferencia, podamos arribar en un futuro próximo al logro de esa meta.

Respecto a la cuantía del presupuesto, reiteramos el apoyo, tal como ha sido dado por todos los Miembros, para continuar con políticas presupuestarias eficientes que permitan la inversión de los recursos en las áreas que hemos consensuado como estratégicas y prioritarias. La República Bolivariana de Venezuela respalda el trabajo de la FAO a través de sus cuotas pero también mediante el apoyo a proyectos de Cooperación Sur-sur y triangular. Es un ejemplo como nuestro país viene haciendo en la región y liderando en la región este apoyo. En el año 2013, aprobamos el programa ejecutivo con la FAO para implementar iniciativas de cooperación técnica triangular en los campos de la seguridad, soberanía alimentaria y nutricional y en la reducción de la pobreza en el marco de la Iniciativa de América Latina y Caribe Sin Hambre.

Asimismo, en los último 15 años, hemos otorgado respaldo político y financiero a iniciativas de Cooperación Sur-sur diversas, pero más recientemente podemos destacar el plan para la seguridad

alimentaria y nutrición de la CELAC 2025, el plan de erradicación del hambre y pobreza Hugo Chávez a ser implementado en la zona económica Petro caribe y el proyecto de Cooperación Sur-sur triangular para fomentar sistemas sostenibles de producción de arroz en África. Tenga en cuenta, Señor Director General, que la República Bolivariana de Venezuela va a seguir apoyándole para que tenga una gestión exitosa en el próximo periodo y felicitaciones a todos los Miembros del Consejo por este extraordinario logro.

Ms Mi NGUJEN (Canada)

Allow me on behalf of Canada to join others in expressing our deep appreciation for the Director-General's leadership in charging this whole reform process, as well as for your leadership, the Independent Chairperson of Council, for steering a process that looked daunting but that led to this positive and historical result.

I think that we have all shown within this Organization, both Members and Management, that we are talking the talk, hand-in-hand, and that we are actually embodying ourselves, that the governance is consolidating and that in these difficult times, even with less, we can do better.

So Canada is very much looking forward to continuing in this direction and finding new and innovative ways to do better.

Ms Tehmina JANJUA (Pakistan)

Thank you very much for being such a good Chair and for chairing the entire process so effectively. Your work with the Friends of the Chair and on the budget document and achieving agreement on the level of budget have been exceptional and we appreciate the effort that you put in personally and along with you, the Friends of the Chair did as well.

We welcome that it is the first time in the history of FAO that in the Council the level of budget has been agreed upon and that we have been spared the gruesome task of trying to discuss it at the Conference. So hopefully we will have an easier Conference, at least with the budget off the table.

Congratulations, Director-General, for all of your hard work, your direction, your leadership, and for making the necessary interventions and very important concessions where required to ensure that the Programme of Work and Budget was adopted by the Council.

It was a team effort. I appreciate the work that has been done by all of your colleagues who worked on the budget and we were able to provide the necessary documentation, information and figures which was required for the discussions to flow smoothly, as well to allow the Programme of Work and Budget to be adopted by the Council.

I think, as our colleague from Canada said, that in this meeting one of the most important items on the agenda among others was the Programme of Work and the level of the budget, and surely it was a daunting exercise but it has been achieved with great success, and I would like to thank you especially, Director-General, for your leadership in this regard.

We noticed that an important concession has been made in the TCP which allows for extra budgetary resources to be gathered for the TCP, especially at a time when we are dealing with climate change issues with regard to Small Island Countries.

We wish you all success and we also encourage all of our colleagues and our partners and the donors to contribute generously to your effort for finding extra-budgetary resources for achieving the required TCP this year.

For the next biennium, we will work with you and we welcome the possibility that at the next biennium, 14 percent of the net appropriations will be allocated to TCP. We will work with you in this regard and we hope that all of our partners would agree that this is a critical moment and that climate change is an issue which affects everyone, small and big. But it is the Small Island Countries that are definitely very affected. As a country that has been affected by climate change, we truly understand the difficulties that climate change poses.

I also believe that, now that we have achieved this important milestone at this Council, the Conference will have two important decisions to make, one to adopt the Programme of Work and Budget and secondly to welcome you back in that important chair where you sit and where you have shown repeatedly in your first term, and will continue to demonstrate in your coming term, your leadership. You have helped pull this Organization from a difficult stage into one where people look at FAO with great respect and with great possibilities that it can offer.

So all success to you, all success to FAO, and all success to all of our colleagues and staff of the FAO that work very hard to ensure that this Organization reaches the heights that it was destined to be.

As a knowledge-based Organization, the staff of this Organization makes important contributions because it is only this organization that can provide the kind of knowledge assistance that is required by developing countries in particular.

So we wish you all success and we look forward to the Conference.

M. Hassan ABOUYOUB (Maroc)

Je voudrais simplement saisir cette opportunité pour vous rendre un hommage appuyé et pour avoir inscrit dans les annales cette session du Conseil. Ce n'est pas une surprise pour moi, ayant eu le privilège et la chance de travailler avec vous pendant votre mandat en tant que correspondant permanent de votre pays dans ce Conseil.

J'en profite également pour saluer mon ami, le Directeur général et saluer son esprit d'ouverture et son pragmatisme qui ont permis de nous préparer les conditions favorables à une Conférence qui sera réussie. On va célébrer son second mandat, où j'attends avec impatience de continuer ce que mon Gouvernement a entamé avec cette Organisation dans le cadre de la coopération sud-sud.

Je me réjouis qu'une partie des projets que nous avons déjà lancés s'inscrive dans la philosophie des programmes à contribution volontaire qui vont compléter un petit peu ce compromis budgétaire que nous avons obtenu dans ce Conseil.

Et enfin, je voudrais saisir cette opportunité pour de nouveau exprimer mes regrets pour des incidents qui ont marqué aussi ce Conseil et je compte sur votre sagesse, Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Directeur général, pour nous aider dans notre Groupe régional à retrouver le chemin de la sagesse et à observer scrupuleusement les règles d'or et les disciplines qui gouvernent notre Organisation. C'est un des éléments qui participera, je l'espère, à une bonne ambiance lors de la prochaine Conférence.

Mr Olyntho VIEIRA (Brazil)

Mr Chairperson, it is my pleasure to start, as many other colleagues have already said, thanking you. Your leadership in this meeting is no surprise to us, as the Ambassador of Morocco said. We know you very well and it is always a pleasure being led by you.

We also compliment the other Members of the Council for the efforts made during this week and, of course, we commend the Director-General for his leadership, for his good work which proved that we can have good results if we have good work.

We recognize this good work that has been done and more than a compliment, it is an assent to you to continue in this line. Brazil supports your work and the approval of the budget was a very important proof in this sense.

Of course, all of the Members have had to make concessions and we know that many countries had very strict instructions and there was a huge negotiating effort to come to this point. I have no doubt this was achieved because we all respect and trust your work, Mr Director-General.

So this probably is the most important issue of this meeting, which had also many other important issues which were discussed. We should not forget that.

Congratulations and thank you very much.

Mr Osamu KUBOTA (Japan)

It is the first time to reach the budget level in this Council, so Japan takes this opportunity to express appreciation, as already done by the previous speakers.

Japan thanks the Independent Chairperson for his leadership in leading Council and the Friends of the Chair, and we also thank the Director-General and the Senior Management for all of their efforts.

Thanks to every country that showed a compromise. Japan is now in severe constraint and it was a tough decision for us, but we are very happy to be the Council making history in FAO.

Mr Luis COELHO SILVA (Portugal)

Portugal adds its voice to others in congratulating the Council, in congratulating you, Mr Chairperson, the Management and the Director-General for the outstanding results we achieved in approving these recommendations for the budget level.

We align with the statement made by Hungary as the Chair of the European Regional Group. Our country is doing tremendous efforts in these difficult times. However, we are joining this agreement which means our commitment to FAO and to the Programme of Work and Budget proposed by the management.

We are leaving this Council, but we assure that we will continue to work with all Members to eradicate hunger. This is our main goal and we will be ready to continue to do that.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, as we draw to the end of this Session of Council I would like to express my appreciation for the work of those who enabled the session to take place: those who wrote the documents, the translators and interpreters, the verbatim hub, the editors and reports office, the Secretariat which provides support before, during and after the session, the facilities group, the Security Guards and all the messengers. I thank them all.

We have come not only to the end of this session of Council, but also to the end of the last Council session of my 2013-15 mandate. This prompts me to look back over the work we have carried out jointly since I took office in June 2013.

I believe it is particularly significant that a series of productive informal consultations held during this Session gave rise to consensus on the budget level for 2016-17. So much so, that the Council has agreed to forward a draft Resolution on Budgetary Appropriations to the Conference for approval.

I suspect this exceptional outcome is due largely to the fact that we are now so used to working closely with each other, and also with management, to find workable solutions. This was particularly evident last year as we built up a good team dynamic in the Open-ended Working Group on the ICN2 Outcome documents, which in turn led to a successful International Conference in November.

The same team spirit permeated the Council's response to the Report on the Evaluation of Governance, which demonstrated how FAO Governing Bodies are more sharply focused on constructively addressing issues compared to the pre-IPA period. Decisions taken by the Governing Bodies are now being acted on.

The Independent Review Team reported that progress in governance reform has been considerable, and that trust has largely been re-established between Members and Management and among Members. I find this is particularly evident in the regular informal meetings I hold with the Chairs and Vice-chairs of the Regional Groups and I wish to recognize the support and engagement of all regions in this useful forum.

Personally, I have been in the privileged position of seeing governance reforms coming to fruition over the past seven years. Progress in this field has been particularly clear in the way Council and its Committees interact and complement each other's roles.

Indeed, I am particularly grateful to Ambassador Cecilia Nordin and Mr Médi Mougui for following issues closely as they were discussed and dissected in the Committees they chair so ably and then in

the Council. Likewise, Monica Martínez has constantly supported the work of the CCLM and Council despite being based away from Rome.

I would also like to pay my gratitude to my friend Friedel Cramer, an active and helpful member of the Finance Committee, who will be leaving Rome this weekend.

Furthermore, I am sure I speak in the name of all the Council when I wish Mr Abdul Ayazi a quick return to good health. Mr Ayazi is a point of reference for all of us and his absence is keenly felt.

Allow me to conclude by thanking the Director-General and the FAO management for being so responsive to the needs of Members, in keeping with the spirit of the IPA.

As my government has nominated me for a second term of office as Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council I hope we will be able to build on the progress made over the past two years in the coming biennium.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Before closing this meeting I would like to pass the floor to the Secretary-General for some announcements. Mr Gagnon you have the floor.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Thank you. I wish to remind Members of the two side events which will take place during lunch time in the Iran Room as follows: from 12.30 to 13.30 *Side Event on SO4 Enable Inclusive and Efficient Agricultural and Food Systems*; and from 13:30 to 14:30 *Side Event on FAO/IAEA Partnership for Food Security: High Impact of Nuclear Applications on the Ground*.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Mr Gagnon.

For all those travelling I wish a safe journey home, and a restful weekend to all.

The meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 13:35 hours

La séance est levée à 13 h 35

Se levanta la sesión a las 13.35



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