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Organization of the
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Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

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COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Fifty-fourth Session - Cent cinquante-quatrième session -
154.º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 30 May – 3 June 2016
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**Rome, 30 mai – 3 juin 2016
PROCÈS-VERBAUX DES SÉANCES PLÉNIÈRES DU CONSEIL**

**Roma, 30 de mayo – 3 de junio de 2016
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COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Fifty-fourth Session Cent cinquante-quatrième session 154.º período de sesiones
Rome, 30 May-3 June 2016 Rome, 30 mai-3 juin 2016 Roma, 30 de mayo-3 de junio de 2016
FIRST PLENARY SESSION PREMIÈRE SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE PRIMERA SESIÓN PLENARIA
30 May 2016

The First Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.36 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La première séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 36
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la primera sesión plenaria a las 9.36
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

CHAIRPERSON

Excellencies, Director-General, ladies and gentlemen, I call the first meeting of the 154th 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

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 also wish to draw the attention of the meeting to the declaration made by the European Union and its Member States which is contained in information document CL 154/INF/3. This document is available online and at the documents desk.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, 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, Members of the Council, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, it is an honour to open this Session of Council.

This week, you will discuss the Reports of the Regional Conferences; the coverage of our decentralized offices and the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15, among other important issues.

All the Regional Conferences recognized and appreciated the alignment between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and FAO Strategic Objectives.

They underlined the need for continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization.

Members also voiced their priorities for the next couple of years and started a process that will culminate with the adoption of the Programme of Work and Budget for 2018-19.

They approved to continue the ongoing Regional Initiatives, with the understanding that these initiatives still offer an excellent framework for addressing regional and national priorities.

As regards the coverage of FAO Decentralized Offices, the Regional Conferences recognized the need to update it and supported the proposed principles and general criteria.

They also agreed on the need to allow flexibility in this process.

We have taken note of the specific guidance provided and concerns expressed, in particular by the Regional Conference for Africa.

Furthermore, all regions welcomed and supported decentralization and stressed its importance to enable FAO to better assist its Members. They unanimously asked to continue improving this process. And we really have moved forward with decentralization to consolidate FAO as a global knowledge Organization with its feet on the ground.

Still on the Regional Conferences, I am glad to have seen the improved participation of the private sector and civil society organizations.

They made important contributions by providing governments with their analysis of specific challenges. They enriched the discussions in a qualified, sincere and mature manner.

This productive collaboration could already be noticed during the FAO international symposium on “The Role of Agricultural Biotechnologies in Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition” held last February.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) 2014-15 is the first to be produced under the reviewed Strategic Framework and the Medium-Term Plan 2014-17.

This document presents the work carried out, and the results achieved, by the Organization during the past biennium. It is evident that the changes we have made are starting to deliver concrete results.

I would like to highlight that almost 90 percent of the output indicators were fully achieved, with about 67 percent of the targets being exceeded, which means two out of three outputs.

The PIR also shows FAO achievements in the cross-cutting themes across the Strategic Framework, in particular gender. It shows that we have managed to mainstream gender across all the activities of the Organization.

As you know, we have ring-fenced USD 21 million of the Regular Programme budget towards gender.

We have met or exceeded 13 of the 15 performance indicators of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the UN-SWAP.

I met with the UN Women Executive Director twice: last year in New York and recently at the World Humanitarian Summit.

During both meetings we discussed our joint ongoing work and areas of expansion, including FAO support for the implementation of their Flagship Programming Initiative.

We both look forward to further deepening our partnership in the coming year, particularly in Africa, where women play a fundamental role in food security.

I want to take this opportunity to inform you that FAO will organize a Seminar on Gender in the second semester of 2016, during the Slovakian presidency of the European Union.

During my visit to Slovenia two weeks ago, I could see a new and interesting model of women’s territorial organization in rural areas, which covers most of the subjects that we are trying to improve in FAO gender work.

Furthermore, I am very proud to announce that FAO and the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) of India have decided to sign a Memorandum of Understanding. As you know, SEWA is one of the most important independent women’s organizations in the world, with 1.9 million of self-employed members.

I really look forward to seeing the realization of this partnership and its concrete achievements.

I am glad to say that FAO is meeting its commitment on gender issues.

We are reporting our achievements to you through the existing mechanisms and documents, as requested by Council last December.

Two weeks ago, the Programme Committee and the Joint Meeting welcomed our progress on gender, and our extensive reporting on this issue through the PIR.

The Programme Committee requested that due attention be paid to the gender component of upcoming evaluations of the Strategic Objectives and also requested a global evaluation of FAO work on gender to be presented to the Conference in 2019.

I fully support both these requests.

Gender is mainstreamed as a cross-cutting theme in FAO, just like nutrition, climate change and governance.

But, unfortunately, I have to say that the Governing Bodies have not paid enough attention to nutrition and climate change, as they have to gender. I hope this Session of the Council could be a starting point to correct this situation.

Excellencies, in terms of managerial procedures, the adjustments endorsed to the PWB 2016-17 are in place.

The SPL teams have been working to ensure coordinated and corporate support to Regional Initiatives and national strategic programmes.

This model has helped to break down internal silos in headquarters, to cut bureaucracy, to increase dialogue and interaction, and to perform in a more horizontal way.

Let me refer briefly to the assessment of the technical capacities of the Organization.

As requested by the Council, we will make sure that a relevant assessment will be ready for the next Conference. We presented some information to the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees on how we are moving ahead on this.

Let me stress that this is a complex matter.

We need first to define what we understand by technical capacities in all locations, headquarters and decentralized offices.

Let me announce today that we will present to the Programme Committee next November a road map, including a draft of the methodology and the types of indicators that will be used.

We will also present a draft report to Members at the beginning of next year.

Excellencies, I would like to remind you all that we will organize a special ceremony on 11 July, during COFI, to celebrate the entry into force of the Port State Measures Agreement.

As we celebrate this achievement, we also have to create the conditions for its implementation, including building national capacities.

But we need your guidance on how to move forward.

We would like to know what countries expect FAO to do, as the Agreement will enter into force on 5 June, in just six days.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my satisfaction with the fact that the recent G7 Declaration in Japan has highlighted FAO work on antimicrobial resistance.

I quote: “Good progress has been made to combat AMR including the adoption of the WHO Global Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance and relevant resolutions by FAO. But more needs to be done”. End quote.

I agree that much more needs to be done and take this opportunity to call upon Members to support us in this process with voluntary contributions, either financial or in-kind.

We are facing difficulties in hiring adequate people. Secondments would be appreciated.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me renew the appeal I made in the last Council Session: we strongly need to keep the level of extra-budgetary contributions to continue delivering our Programme of Work without further difficulties.

As you know, FAO has designed a strategic framework to be financed through an integrated budget and the voluntary contributions have slowed down since last year.

We have been working to diversify our sources. This is why I have established a Special Fund for Development Finance Activities, which was welcomed by the Finance Committee.

This Fund will enable FAO to partner easily with international financing institutions, particularly with global funds such as the Green Climate Fund and regional development banks.

The Special Fund is necessary because these global funds and development banks have different financing rules from our established donors.

It is my pleasure to inform you that, in the next COFO, we will announce a partnership on forestry with the Central American Bank.

This is the second agreement to be made by FAO with development banks, after the one with the Caribbean Development Bank, which we have just signed.

I have also managed to find additional resources by cutting administrative and bureaucratic posts in headquarters.

Since I took office, 235 administrative posts have been abolished as part of the Organization's transformational process, and 63 new technical posts have been created.

Excellencies, I would like to highlight four major issues which will be on FAO agenda in the coming months. I need your guidance on how to move forward on them.

The first one is climate change. All Regional Conferences highlighted this issue as a big challenge. FAO has been very active in the preparation of the next Conference of the Parties of the UN Convention on Climate Change, COP22, which will be held in Marrakech in November.

We have been working to reinforce the central role of agriculture and food systems within the framework of the Paris Agreement.

Most countries have included agriculture and food systems in their INDCs, particularly in reference to adaptation.

We need to know how best FAO can support its Members in implementing these commitments. How can FAO help to set priorities and redefine national commitments? What do you expect from our involvement in the COP22? What kind of assistance do you need from FAO?

The second area is nutrition, also a cross-cutting theme in the PWB.

As you know, we will organize a Technical Symposium on Nutrition next December. It will look at the status of the commitments agreed upon in the ICN2 and in the Decade of Action on Nutrition, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly.

I would like to hear from Members where we should concentrate our efforts on nutrition. And where FAO could best serve its Members in achieving our common nutrition goals.

As you know, the Decade on Nutrition requests FAO and WHO to lead its implementation in collaboration with the Standing Committee on Nutrition, which is now hosted at FAO. This is one area of concrete cooperation among the Rome-based Agencies.

The third issue on which I need your guidance is migration, which is related to our efforts to promote rural development and contribute to the eradication of hunger and extreme poverty in rural areas.

As you all know, the UN Secretary-General called for a high-level meeting in New York next September and invited FAO to participate.

When we set our priorities three years ago, migration was not seen at that time as a priority for our work.

Can I say in New York that the FAO Council asked for a revision of our PWB to include migration as a priority?

Would the Council agree to ask Members to commit to increasing voluntary contributions in this new area to be included in the PWB?

We will also explore synergies with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to avoid duplication.

I have recently agreed with the Director-General of IOM to strengthen the collaboration between the two organizations, to build on respective areas of comparative advantage and to promote joint action at country level.

The fourth area of work to which I would like to draw your attention is how FAO should move forward to support Members, especially developing countries, in monitoring and evaluating the progress of the SDGs.

Many countries have approached us to ask what to do.

The 2030 Agenda will require a tremendous effort in terms of providing statistics. FAO will monitor at least 20 indicators within the SDGs, compared with only two indicators for the MDGs.

This is an immense task, and we need to focus on the goals and targets where we can contribute the most.

How can we select and organize our focus areas in a way that responds to our core capacities and competencies?

FAO is undergoing a deep internal reflection process, but we need your inputs and guidance.

Also on SDGs, we have been in contact with our colleagues from WFP and IFAD to prepare the basis for a joint document to be presented in the next Council Session, as you requested.

The Rome-based Agencies will have some meetings at different levels in the next weeks to discuss the main points of this document.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have come a long way together since 2012.

We have established a new strategic direction for FAO. We have become a much more effective and efficient Organization. We have broken down the internal silos at headquarters. We have enhanced and reinforced our presence in the field. And we have been able to achieve all of this thanks to three things: transparency, mutual trust and consensus building.

I am committed to reinforce these in order to make this Organization even stronger to face and overcome the huge challenges ahead.

And I count on you in this process.

Before concluding, let me renew an appeal that I made in our last informal seminar.

Considering all the substantive challenges we are facing, I ask the Governing Bodies not to focus their discussions on internal issues, such as human resources, and leave aside the most important issues of our Programme of Work to be discussed in informal seminars.

As I said in the informal seminar, I will answer in writing all your specific demands and requests concerning internal issues.

Please consider the Directeur de Cabinet as the adequate entry point in the Organization to express your concerns and requests.

We have already sent a letter to all Members reinforcing the importance of this measure to avoid misunderstandings, as well as disruptions in our day-to-day work.

I would like to close wishing you a productive week.

Thank you for your attention.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Director-General, for your remarks. You have highlighted important issues that this Council will be discussing. And some issues are for Members who will continue to take it up at an appropriate time.

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 overview of documentation delivery for this session.

SECRETARY- GENERAL

The documentation for this session of Council includes 16 main documents, seven of which are Conference documents with three web annexes.

Nine documents were available on the Council webpage before or by the deadline.

The remaining five documents are reports of Regional Conferences and Council Committees which took place close to the deadline for despatch of Council documents, and were published as soon as they were available.

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 154/1; CL 154/INF/1 Rev.1; CL 154/INF/3)

CHAIRPERSON

The first item on the agenda is the Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable as set out in documents CL 154/1, CL 154/INF/1 Rev.1 and CL 154/INF/3.

Document CL 154/1 contains the Provisional Agenda which was distributed on 30 March 2016 to all Members of the Organization, together with the invitation to this Session.

Since our 153rd Session in December 2015, 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 10.1, *Invitations to Non-Member Nations to attend FAO Sessions* and sub-item 10.2, *Applications for Membership in the Organization* can be removed from the Agenda.

In addition, under item 16, *Any Other Matters*, following a request from the Republic of Korea, I propose that a sub-item be added regarding a proposal to establish a World Fisheries University, which will be for information only.

Finally, I should also like to propose the addition of a sub-item under item 7, *Report of the 161st Session of the Finance Committee*, namely: Appointment of a Representative of the FAO Conference to the Finance Committee, as one seat has become vacant due to the withdrawal of a member.

Is Council in agreement with this proposal, and the suggested amendments to the Provisional Agenda?

Thank you, the Agenda is adopted as amended.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

CHAIRPERSON

With respect to the Provisional Timetable, you have before you document CL 154/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 1 June. This should enable the Committee to finish its work in good time on Thursday, and so allow the Report to be adopted on Friday.

Does this draft Timetable, with the deletion of item 10, meet with the approval of the Council?

Thank you, the Timetable is adopted.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

CHAIRPERSON

I would like to draw the Council's attention to my pre-session letter of 13 May 2016, in which I proposed that the sections of the Joint Meeting Report concerning item 3, *Programme Implementation Report 2014-15*, and item 8, *Coverage of FAO Decentralized Offices*, be discussed respectively under items 3 and item 8, and not repeated when considering item 5, *Report of the Joint Meeting*. In this

regard, the references to the relevant paragraphs of the Joint Meeting Report are included in the Provisional Timetable.

I take it that the Council approves this approach.

Thank you. 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 Jón Erlingur Jónasson from Iceland, Ms Azulita binti Salim from Malaysia, His Excellency Elías Rafael Eljuri Abraham from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

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

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

For the Drafting Committee, the Regional Groups have proposed His Excellency Claudio Rozencwaig from Argentina as Chairperson, and the following countries as members: Argentina, Australia, Chile, China, Ecuador, Egypt, Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Liberia, Morocco, Pakistan, Russian Federation, United States of America.

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

May I suggest that, in line with our consolidated methods 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 enable 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 the 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 past sessions of Council.

Finally, 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. Regional Conferences

Point 4. Conférences régionales

Tema 4. Conferencias regionales

Item 4.1 Report of the 29th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa

Point 4.1 Rapport de la vingt-neuvième session de la Conférence régionale pour l'Afrique

Tema 4.1 Informe del 29.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para África

(C 2017/14)

CHAIRPERSON

We now come to item 4, *Regional Conferences*.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I had the privilege of attending two Regional Conferences during the first part of this year, when I was able to witness interactive dialogue and see first-hand how the Regional Conferences have increased their awareness of their role as Governing Bodies, and I believe this is reflected in the reports submitted to Council today, with regard to programme and budgetary matters.

The first item is Sub-item 4.1, *Report of the 29th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa*. Please ensure that you have document C 2017/14 before you.

I will now give the floor to His Excellency Mamadou Sangafowa Coulibaly, Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of Côte d'Ivoire and Chairperson of the 29th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa, who will introduce the report of the Regional Conference.

Excellency, you have the floor.

M. Mamadou SANGAFOWA COULIBALY (Président de la Conférence régionale pour l'Afrique)

C'est un honneur pour moi de prendre la parole au nom du Groupe Afrique à cette 154^{ème} session du Conseil de la FAO.

Les travaux de la 29^{ème} session de la Conférence régionale de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture pour l'Afrique se sont tenus du 4 au 8 avril 2016 à Abidjan, en République de Côte d'Ivoire.

Cette Conférence a été, de l'avis de tous, un moment particulier dans l'histoire de notre Organisation par l'importance, l'ampleur et la qualité de la participation. En effet, la Conférence a enregistré 426 délégués, dont 46 collègues ministres, provenant de 49 sur 54 pays membres, ainsi que d'autres institutions ou organisations partenaires représentées au plus haut niveau.

Je me félicite particulièrement de l'assistance mutuelle et du partenariat efficace entre la FAO et mon pays, la Côte d'Ivoire, lors de la préparation et durant la Conférence régionale.

En ma qualité de Président de la 29^{ème} session de la Conférence régionale pour l'Afrique, j'ai le plaisir de confirmer aux membres du Conseil de la FAO, que le Rapport final adopté et présenté exprime clairement les conclusions de la Conférence régionale. Le Rapport intègre aussi la déclaration des Organisations de la société civile, dont la participation à la Conférence régionale a été particulièrement pertinente et remarquable. Le Rapport présente également la Déclaration ministérielle d'Abidjan sur la sécurité alimentaire et les secteurs d'activité agricoles face au changement climatique.

La Conférence a attiré l'attention sur les défis liés à la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle dans les petits États insulaires en développement et a recommandé que la FAO aide ces États à améliorer la conception et la mise en œuvre de leurs programmes en matière de sécurité alimentaire, de nutrition et d'agriculture, et de leurs plans d'investissement, en intégrant le recours à des mesures concrètes et ciblées.

La 29^{ème} session de la Conférence régionale a accueilli avec satisfaction les mesures prises et les résultats obtenus en 2014-2015 pour traiter les priorités régionales, notamment dans le cadre des trois initiatives régionales approuvées par la Conférence régionale à sa 28^{ème} session, et s'est prononcée en faveur de la poursuite des initiatives régionales durant l'exercice 2016-2017, afin de mieux cibler les actions de la FAO sur les priorités de la région, à savoir: l'élimination de la faim à l'horizon 2025, l'intensification durable de la production et le développement des chaînes de valeur, ainsi que le renforcement de la résilience dans les zones arides.

La Conférence a analysé les tendances et enjeux dans l'alimentation et l'agriculture pour une action régionale et nationale dans le cadre des objectifs de développement durable en mettant l'accent sur les différents aspects qui devraient contribuer à orienter les activités de la FAO dans les années à venir, ainsi que les trois principaux facteurs qui guideront l'action de l'Organisation aux niveaux mondial et régional.

L'occasion nous a été donnée de discuter également de partenariats public-privé pour une croissance agricole inclusive et d'en déduire combien il était important de conclure des partenariats public-privé novateurs pour améliorer la productivité et stimuler la croissance dans les secteurs de l'agriculture et de l'alimentation.

Je présenterai les recommandations issues de ces échanges lors de la prochaine Conférence de la FAO en juin 2017.

Je soumetts aujourd'hui au Conseil les principales recommandations concernant les autres points pertinents de la Conférence, à savoir:

Les résultats et priorités de la FAO dans la région:

La Conférence régionale a recommandé à la FAO de continuer à améliorer les résultats et les effets de ses programmes grâce, notamment, à un meilleur ciblage des cadres de programmation par pays contribuant à la réalisation des objectifs stratégiques de l'Organisation et des Objectifs de développement durable; de renforcer les partenariats avec les États Membres, en collaboration avec des institutions sous-régionales, régionales et internationales, en fournissant des avis sur les politiques, en contribuant au renforcement des capacités et en s'appuyant sur ses travaux normatifs; de prêter un appui accru aux pays dans des domaines importants comme l'accès aux marchés et les systèmes agroalimentaires, la gestion durable et la gouvernance des ressources naturelles, le renforcement de la résilience en vue d'une gestion efficace des risques; rendre le secteur de la transformation de produits agricoles plus inclusif pour attirer les jeunes vers les secteurs de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture; et mobiliser des ressources financières du Fonds vert pour le climat, en partenariat avec les banques régionales de développement.

En ce qui concerne le Réseau de bureaux décentralisés, la Conférence régionale a reconnu le rôle central joué par le Directeur général à l'appui d'une décentralisation effective et a également reconnu les efforts qu'il a déployés pour contribuer à éliminer la faim et assurer la sécurité alimentaire et la nutrition en Afrique.

Elle a été informée de la nécessité pour la FAO de procéder à un examen de son réseau de bureaux décentralisés afin d'améliorer l'efficacité opérationnelle de l'Organisation.

Elle a approuvé les principes proposés en vue de la révision de la couverture des bureaux de la FAO, qui garantiront la mise en place d'un réseau plus souple, renforcé et plus proche des pays membres et des régions à desservir et contribueront ainsi à la réalisation de l'objectif commun de l'élimination de la faim sans affaiblir le réseau de bureaux décentralisés existant ni exercer, contre les pays et les régions, une discrimination fondée sur le degré de développement, et notamment sur l'état des liaisons de transport.

La Conférence régionale a recommandé et a rappelé à la FAO, conformément à son mandat et aux conclusions de la 27^{ème} session de la Conférence régionale pour l'Afrique en 2012, d'utiliser le critère de déficit vivrier, de donner la priorité aux pays à faible revenu ou à revenu intermédiaire et à déficit vivrier, et de maintenir tous les bureaux déjà en place en Afrique.

Elle a approuvé la proposition d'examen du réseau de bureaux décentralisés dans la région Afrique, sachant que cet examen doit être tel que le processus mis en route permette de renforcer les capacités du réseau.

La Conférence régionale a approuvé son Programme de travail pluriannuel révisé pour 2016-2019.

La Conférence régionale a recommandé que la trentième session de la Conférence régionale pour l'Afrique se tienne au Soudan en 2018 et a aussi pris acte de la candidature du Rwanda pour accueillir la Conférence régionale pour l'Afrique en 2018. Une décision du Conseil est sollicitée sur le choix du pays hôte de la 30^{ème} session de la Conférence de l'Afrique.

La Conférence régionale a également élaboré sur des questions liées aux politiques et aux réglementations, qui seront rapportées, conformément aux règles, à la Conférence.

Pour conclure, je voudrais réitérer ma ferme volonté, en tant que Président de la 29^{ème} session de la Conférence régionale de la FAO pour l'Afrique, de veiller au suivi régulier des réponses apportées aux recommandations et aux actions prévues jusqu'à la prochaine Conférence régionale.

Dans la paix, les États Membres restent mobilisés pour poursuivre leurs efforts et contribuer toujours plus à la réalisation des ambitions qu'ils partagent avec la FAO.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

M. Henry EYEBE AYISSI (Cameroun)

Le Cameroun a l'honneur de prendre la parole sur ce point 4.1 de l'ordre du jour au nom du Groupe Afrique.

Le Groupe Afrique se félicite de la parfaite organisation de la 29^{ème} Conférence de la FAO pour l'Afrique qui s'est tenue à Abidjan du 4 au 8 avril 2016, et saisit l'occasion pour remercier le Gouvernement ivoirien pour toutes les facilités mises à la disposition des délégués, ce qui a permis de tenir le pari de l'organisation.

Le rapport vient donc d'être présenté par M. Mamadou Sangafowa Coulibaly, Ministre de l'agriculture et du développement rural de la République de Côte d'Ivoire, qui a fait office de Président de la session, et qui lui est resté fidèle dans toutes ses articulations.

La Conférence a été hautement productive en termes de recommandations, qui sont toutes pertinentes pour le travail de la FAO. Pour respecter l'ordre du jour du Conseil, notre intervention ne reviendra pas sur la question relative à la couverture des bureaux décentralisés de la FAO dans la région Afrique, qui sera amplement traitée au titre du point 8.

Le Groupe Afrique se félicite de ce que les travaux de la Conférence se soient inspirés des cinq documents importants, résultant de réflexions à l'échelle régionale et planétaire que sont: 1) la vision de l'Agenda 2063 du cadre stratégique commun de l'Afrique pour une croissance inclusive et un développement durable; 2) la Déclaration de Malabo de 2014 sur la croissance et la transformation accélérées de l'agriculture africaine, en vue du recul de la faim en Afrique à l'horizon 2025; 3) les Objectifs de développement durable des Nations Unies dans le cadre du Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030; 4) l'Accord de Paris au terme de la Conférence mondiale des Nations Unies sur le changement climatique (COP21); et 5) la Déclaration de Rome sur la nutrition et le cadre d'action adoptés lors de la deuxième Conférence internationale sur la nutrition (CIN-2).

Sans revenir sur les détails de l'examen des principales questions ayant été traitées, nous demandons à la FAO de noter les priorités identifiées dans notre région et de les inscrire dans sa programmation.

M. Florencio DE ALMEIDA (Angola)

L'Angola prend la parole pour s'associer à l'intervention du Cameroun, qui est intervenu au nom du Groupe Afrique, pour remercier Son Excellence le Ministre de l'agriculture de la Côte d'Ivoire pour la présentation des conclusions de la Conférence régionale de la FAO pour l'Afrique, tenue à Abidjan en avril 2016; pour remercier également le Gouvernement de la Côte d'Ivoire des excellentes conditions

créées pour la Conférence et l'accueil de la délégation; pour féliciter le Secrétariat de la FAO pour les documents préparés et présentés, ce qui a facilité l'analyse du travail réalisé, l'évaluation de la position de la délégation sur les bureaux décentralisés ainsi que la définition de l'agriculture en Afrique pour le prochain exercice biennal; finalement, pour demander au Secrétaire de prendre en considération les conclusions de la Conférence régionale pour l'Afrique lors de la préparation du prochain Programme de travail et budget (PTB) de la FAO.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

Liberia aligns itself with Cameroon's statement made on behalf of the African Regional Group. Also thanks to the Honorable Minister for Agriculture from Cote d'Ivoire. We thank the Secretariat for the presentation and also the work on the decentralization paper and recognize the need to update the coverage of FAO offices in order to adapt to current development requirements and achieve greater flexibility, efficiency and impact in the implementation of FAO Strategic Objectives. Liberia fully supports the decentralization efforts of the Director-General.

The report as read by the Honourable Minister is indeed a true reflection on the decision taken in Abidjan at the ministerial meeting and also it took into account the ministerial decisions of the 2014 Regional Conference for Africa in Tunis for strengthening the capacity of the regional offices, in particular that of Accra.

We wish to underline some particular areas of the Report as was presented by the Honorable Minister. We support the principles for reviewing coverage of FAO offices that will ensure a more flexible and strengthened work closer to regions and serving all Member Nations. We further support the effective contribution to a common result of eradicating hunger without weakening the existing FAO Decentralized Offices Network or discriminating against any nation or region on the basis of population or state of development such as transport linkages or other infrastructural development. Africa has immense challenges in these areas and therefore cannot use these as a yardstick to deny Africa the opportunity to eradicate hunger in the continent. We all know Rome was not built in a day so Africa's rural network will be built as we progress.

On population, Liberia is a very small country with just a little over four million so that again cannot be used as a criteria if people are thinking in that direction. Liberia underlines the need for continuing in the strategic direction of the Organization and the alignment between FAO Strategic Objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals. We also take note of the emerging trends in the region and look forward to further analytical work by FAO to understand their impacts on food and agriculture in the region.

With these comments, Liberia fully endorses the Report.

Mr Mhutang SELEKA (South Africa)

This statement is delivered on behalf of the Africa Regional Group. During the 153rd Session of the FAO Council, held from 30 November to 4 December 2015, the need for a review of the Decentralized Offices Network was identified. It was also agreed that the review paper be submitted for review to the respective 2016 Regional Conferences and that the June 2016 Session of the Council would re-examine the matter.

Africa welcomed the review and broadly supported the supposed principles and criteria used for the review as this would ensure greater efficiency in the implementation of FAO Strategic Objectives. The April 2016 Regional Conference for Africa questioned one of the criteria used by the Independent Review of Decentralized Offices Network, namely that of transportation linkages. The Regional Conference for Africa indicated that this criterion cannot be used to guide the review process in the Africa Region but rather explore other logical sound and neutral criteria that FAO uses in making decisions guided by the fact that FAO interventions are at the national, regional and international levels.

Africa kindly submits the following decisions taken at the 29th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa for endorsement by Council: (1) Create the Subregional Office for West Africa based in a francophone country, in Côte d'Ivoire or Senegal, the location of which will be determined by the Director-General in consultation with the country's consent; (2) Additionally, the Council might wish

to reiterate the following principles, already stated by previous Council's resolutions or by some Regional Conferences, broadly supported the proposed principles and general criteria of the independent review of the Decentralized Offices Network for refining the coverage of FAO Offices while noting the view expressed by the Africa Regional Conference on the criterion on transportation linkages.

As a general principle, the creation of new offices or the support for upgrades that have been expressed in Regional Conferences would have to be implemented on a cost and neutral basis within funds to be identified from elsewhere and/or where possible on a cost-sharing agreement with the host government consent. Partnership and liaison offices and multiple accreditation offices with an FAO Representative located in another country are very valid options to optimize their cooperation with FAO.

Lastly, reaffirm the need to readjust to the coverage of the Decentralized Offices in a flexible manner and with no increase in overall cost of the Decentralized Network budget.

CHAIRPERSON

I will now pass the floor back to His Excellency Minister Coulibaly, and then to the Secretariat, to reply to the points raised.

I would like to remind you that issues regarding decentralization will be discussed under item 8 so I also request the Secretariat not to go into this issue.

M. Mamadou SANGAFOWA COULIBALY (Président de la Conférence régionale pour l'Afrique)

Je voudrais simplement remercier le Conseil, et particulièrement la région Afrique, ainsi que les différents intervenants qui se sont succédés pour soutenir les conclusions de la réunion d'Abidjan qui, comme je l'ai dit dans mon rapport, de l'avis de tous s'est très bien passée. Comme vous l'avez souligné, certains points feront l'objet d'approfondissement; je ne voudrais pas garder plus longtemps la parole, mais simplement remercier les différents intervenants pour leurs contributions.

Mr Daniel GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General Operations)

Just very briefly to thank the speakers and also the careful deliberation at the Regional Conference and to the others on this Decentralized Office review topic. We certainly appreciate your comments. I will respond during the discussion on item 8.

Item 4.2 Report of the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific
Point 4.2 Rapport de la trente-troisième session de la Conférence régionale
pour l'Asie et le Pacifique
Tema 4.2 Informe del 33.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para Asia
y el Pacífico

(C 2017/15)

CHAIRPERSON

We will now move on to Sub-item 4.2, *Report of the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific*. The document before Council is C 2017/15.

I would like to invite Mr Ismail Bin Haj Bakar, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industries of Malaysia, to present the report of the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific, on behalf of the Chairperson, His Excellency the Minister for Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry, who could not attend.

Mr Ismail BIN HAJ BAKAR (Representative for Chairperson, Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific)

On behalf of the Chairperson of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific, it is an honour and a pleasure for me to be here today and to have the opportunity to address the Council regarding the outcome of the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific, which was held in Putrajaya, Malaysia, from 7 to 11 March 2016.

The Regional Conference was attended by 193 delegates, including 13 ministers and 10 vice-ministers representing 44 Member Nations, plus 50 delegations.

The final Report includes a *Summary of the Main Recommendations* on programme and budget matters for the attention of the FAO Council and another on regulatory and policy matters for the attention of the FAO Conference.

With reference to the agenda item on the Report of the Meeting of the Southwest Pacific Agriculture Ministers in Papua New Guinea in May 2015, the Regional Conference requested FAO to reflect the priority recommendations of the Meeting of the Southwest Pacific Agriculture Ministers in future work, and provide follow-up support in the form of Technical Cooperation Programme projects and other relevant support.

Regarding the agenda item on *Results and Priorities for FAO in Asia and the Pacific Region*, the Regional Conference: underlined the need for continuity in strategic direction of the Organization and appreciated the alignment between the FAO Strategic Objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); supported continuation of the Regional Initiatives for the 2016-17 biennium to help focus FAO actions on priorities of the region; requested FAO to address the challenges facing countries in the region concerning nutrition and food safety: inclusive value chain development; food waste and loss; transboundary animal and plant pests and diseases, sustainable production and resilience in the context of climate change; and data and analysis for decision making, monitoring and evaluation; promoted ongoing work on Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS); took note of the emerging trends in the region concerning growth in food demand and widening inequality: the ageing agricultural workforce and potential labour shortages, increasing effects of climate change, and rapidly developing innovations in agricultural technologies, and looked forward to further analytical work by FAO to understand their impacts on food and agriculture in the region.

With regard to the Decentralized Offices Network, the Regional Conference recognized the need to update the coverage of FAO offices and supported the options recommended by the Secretariat for Asia and the Pacific for upgrading FAO country offices and creating additional country offices.

Regarding *Prioritization of Country and Regional Needs*, the Regional Conference: highlighted the challenges related to the adverse effects of climate change, frequent natural disasters, environmental degradation, increasing demands on land and water resources, changing demographics affecting the agriculture sector, and animal and plant pests and diseases; emphasized capacity-building, research and development, technology transfer, robust data collection and analyses, sound agricultural policies and strategies, infrastructure development and increased investment in the agriculture sector as key needs; stressed the need to increase sustainable agricultural production and productivity, reduce food loss and waste, and facilitate transparent, open and efficient trade of food to accelerate progress towards food security and nutrition in the region; emphasized the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Climate Change Agreement in guiding future actions in agriculture, food security and nutrition; recognized the important roles of smallholders, family farmers and fishers in contributing to food security and nutrition, and called for efforts to enhance the capacity to more effectively link with modern value chains.

Mainstreaming of gender equality and uplifting the quality of life in rural areas to retain youth in agricultural activities were also encouraged. The Regional Conference highlighted the importance of mobilizing investment and strengthening collaboration with partner organizations at global, regional and national levels. The value of regional sharing of knowledge, experiences and expertise, including through South-South Cooperation, was particularly emphasized. The Regional Conference urged FAO to continue decentralization efforts, whilst improving the technical capacity of the Organization.

On *Other Matters*, the Regional Conference: endorsed the Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) for the 2016-19 period to frame the work of the Regional Conference; encouraged regular and systematic review of the performance and efficiency of the Conference; and looked forward to receiving a report at its next session. Finally, the Regional Conference proposed to host the 34th Session of the Regional Conference in 2018 in Fiji.

Before I end my speech, once again, I would like to thank the FAO Regional Office for its support in ensuring the success of the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference in Malaysia.

On behalf of the Government of Malaysia, I wish to thank again all Member Nations and all the Representatives for their support and all those who came to Putrajaya for accepting our invitation and spending a few days with us. Last but not least, I wish to thank you, Mr Chairperson, for conducting this Council today and wish you all success in the deliberations.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

Australia welcomes the opportunity to meet with members of the Asia Pacific Region and would like to thank the Government of Malaysia for the warm hospitality offered to delegations who attended the meeting in Putrajaya from 7 to 11 March.

Australia supports the outcome of the Regional Conference and it appreciates the report. As Co-Chair of the Southwest Pacific Sub-Region Australia welcomes the focus on a number of key issues for the Southwest Pacific including recognition of the special challenges faced by the Pacific Island countries in ensuring food security and nutrition.

I will confine my remarks now to the three areas that Council has been requested to comment on and obviously pick up the issue of Decentralized Offices under item 8 later in our agenda.

First, in relation to the report on the Southwest Pacific Agricultural Ministers Meeting and the communiqué that was included for consideration by the Regional Conference, Australia welcomed warmly the inclusion of this material in the Regional Conference agenda. Australia hopes that the inclusion of the report and the communiqué assists in raising the Sub-region's profile and draws attention to its specific needs. We look forward to in future Regional Conferences, seeing more processes being put in place.

As endorsed by ministers from the Southwest Pacific and by the Regional Conference, Australia can fully support the idea of the need for Australia to reiterate the importance of FAO working closely with other regional and subregional partners in providing support to Member Nations on priority areas of work including; climate-smart agriculture, developing and implementing norms and standards related to food and agriculture, nutrition and food safety, and improving domestic market linkages and agricultural sector competitiveness.

Taking a step back and looking at the results and priorities for FAO in the region as a whole, Australia welcomes the recommendations on regional priorities made to FAO in this report and it appreciates FAO efforts to better address the issues that are relevant to the region.

Australia believes that if FAO can help to deliver on the priorities presented in this report, the region can better position itself in delivering on the food security and agro-food growth challenge.

We welcome FAO recognition through its work on Regional Initiatives, of the critical role of policy, governance, and institutional dimensions in successful programme implementation. We look forward to working with FAO to make these regional priorities a reality by increasing the strategic approach, focusing more strongly on higher priority issues for the region, and collaborating with regional institutions, the private sector and governments.

The expertise of FAO, particularly its normative work and technical capacity, is one of the critical enablers of growth, helping our government set the foundations of prosperity. It is important that the FAO supports the regional priorities to reflect this context. It is essential that genuine prioritization of FAO work continues; this will ensure the use of resources over multiple issues and activities is applied strategically.

We welcome the efforts to focus Country Programming Frameworks to meet country needs and the CPF provides strategic guidance for cooperation between the FAO and countries. As such, we would like to see a continuous improvement in the quality of the CPFs and an alignment between FAO corporate priorities, Strategic Objectives, the regional priorities with the CPFs. This is essential to make a substantial impact.

Australia welcomes and supports the reflections made at the ministerial-level session of the Regional Conference which included 13 ministers, ten vice-ministers and other high level delegates. The reflections highlighted the many challenges the regions face in achieving food security and nutrition. Australia will continue to provide constructive assistance to support the priorities for the region.

M. Suzelin RATOHIARIJAONA (Madagascar)

La délégation de Madagascar prend la parole au nom du Groupe Afrique sur le point 4.2 de l'ordre du jour.

Je voudrais tout d'abord féliciter le Président et les participants à cette Conférence régionale pour la qualité du travail accompli et pour la clarté du rapport qui vient d'être présenté.

La région Afrique exprime sa satisfaction sur le contenu du rapport qui prend en compte les principales questions relatives aux politiques et réglementations régionales et mondiales, ainsi que le Programme de travail et budget.

Nous nous félicitons également des énormes progrès accomplis dans la région concernant la réduction de la proportion de la population qui souffre de la faim, malgré le problème du retard de croissance qui touche près de 90 millions d'enfants, et le sérieux problème de l'obésité qui est présent dans toutes les sous-régions.

Il convient de souligner que ce rapport fait ressortir les principaux défis à relever dans la campagne «Défi Faim Zéro» lancée lors de la 69^{ème} session de la Commission économique et sociale pour l'Asie et le Pacifique, ainsi que l'appui à la mise en œuvre du Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030.

En ce qui concerne les Résultats et les priorités régionales, le rapport a insisté sur la poursuite des efforts engagés dans le cadre des initiatives régionales durant l'exercice biennal 2016-2017, en l'occurrence, comme il a été évoqué, l'appui à la campagne «Défi Faim Zéro», l'initiative régionale sur le riz, la croissance bleue et le développement de chaînes de valeurs qui intègrent la petite agriculture pour revitaliser l'économie rurale.

Concernant la question de la décentralisation et le renforcement des bureaux décentralisés, le rapport s'est félicité des avancées dans le processus, et a demandé à la FAO de poursuivre les efforts tout en améliorant la capacité technique de l'Organisation.

Mr H.K. SUANTHANG (India)

India has the honour to make this statement on behalf of the Asia Group.

We thank Mr Ismail Bin Haj Bakar for the detailed presentation of the report of the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific.

The report of the Regional Conference and the identified regional priorities have been discussed in the Programme Committee and form part of the report to be delivered by the Chair of the Programme Committee tomorrow. We will therefore keep this intervention very short.

The Asia Group welcomes the increasing importance of the Regional Conferences in FAO governance structure and considers it an appropriate mechanism for bringing the consolidated views from the regions and countries of the region to the various Governing Bodies here in Rome. The increased alignment of regional priorities with FAO Strategic Objectives is indicative of the increased synergies between the felt needs of the region and FAO delivery, both on policies and projects.

The deliberations in the region have clearly established a felt need for further strengthening of capacities at the regional and country levels. The Director-General in his address during the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees had outlined the steps already taken and proposed to be taken in this direction and we welcome this initiative.

In our view, strong regional, subregional and country offices can only add to the overall strength and delivery capacity of FAO and make it more relevant to the developing countries for achieving food and nutritional security.

We look forward to FAO working with Member Nations in the region over the current and next biennium to deliver upon the identified four priorities, which incidentally happen to remain unchanged and therefore are already work in progress. Over the next couple of years we wish to see these priorities becoming owned by the countries and getting integrated in the national policies and programmes.

Before ending, we would like to thank FAO, especially the FAO Regional Office in Bangkok, and Malaysia for hosting this eminently successful Regional Conference in March 2016 and look forward to an equally fruitful and engaging Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific in Fiji in 2018.

Mr Abid JAVED (Pakistan)

Pakistan aligns itself with the statement made by India on behalf of the Asia Group.

We would like to thank Malaysia for the excellent arrangements as well as the hospitality offered for the 33rd Session of the APRC. The meeting offered members of the Group the opportunity to have focussed deliberations on the important issues related to agriculture and food security of the region.

The Regional Conferences this year have taken place in the backdrop of several important international events. In September last year the world community agreed on the post-2015 development agenda. In November 2014 the Second International Conference on Nutrition adopted the Rome Declaration and the Framework for Action concerning the nutrition objectives for the future. These outcomes should form the basis for setting priorities for the work of this Organization, including the Regional Conferences.

The Asia-Pacific region continues to face some significant challenges including the dismal nutrition situation, particularly high rates of stunting and wasting among children, climate change, water scarcity, low agricultural productivity, and food losses and waste along the entire value chain. The region has a growing population, which would demand higher levels of food production from the same limited resources.

We are fully supportive of the implementation of ongoing Regional Initiatives during the biennium 2016-17. At the same time it is important that FAO and the Regional Office start focusing on other pressing issues that are critical for the future food security and nutrition of the region.

In this regard we would like to touch upon the following:

First, the implementation of the SDGs will be a complex undertaking for developing countries. It would require a review of existing national policies to realign them with the SDGs as well as develop the necessary linkages to ensure that all aspects of the Agenda 2030 are implemented. Countries would need support for capacity-building as well as finding innovative mechanisms for financing. FAO needs to support Members in the implementation of the SDGs related to its mandate, particularly SDGs 1 and 2.

Second, given the dismal nutrition statistics in the region, increased attention must be given to expanding the scope of the Zero Hunger Challenge being implemented by FAO. In Pakistan we have launched our own Zero Hunger and Family Farming Programme, which is inspired by the Brazilian model. We look forward to receiving support from FAO for its implementation. This point was also amply highlighted by our Minister during the 33rd APRC session.

Third, connecting smallholders to markets is crucial for promoting development and poverty eradication in the rural areas. It is also an important element for achieving SDGs 1 and 2. During the APRC, Members requested FAO support to address the challenges of integrating rural smallholders, fishers and herders into value chains. FAO should come up with a comprehensive programme for assisting countries of the region in connecting smallholders to markets. FAO should also collaborate with other Rome-based Agencies particularly IFAD which is also performing important work in this area.

Fourth, data collection is another aspect, which is lacking in many countries of our region. It is not possible to design effective policies related to agriculture and food security without accurate statistics. This is another area where FAO has a comparative advantage to assist countries.

Fifth, transboundary animal diseases as well as antimicrobial resistance (AMR) are serious emerging threats for the food security and nutrition of the region. There is urgent need for focussing on these threats through effective policy actions. FAO has an important role in this regard.

Sixth, the Organization has made efforts to develop mechanisms for engagement with subregional organizations such as SAARC and ASEAN. We support continuation of such efforts in the future as many of the issues have commonalities and subregional cooperation will facilitate in sharing of experiences and lessons learned.

Seventh, the International Year of Pulses offers the opportunity of promoting the important role which pulses can play for food security, soil conservation, addressing climate change and improving the health of people. The Asian region is the largest producer and consumer of pulses. However, pulses remain marginal crops in most countries. We believe that pulses should form one of the regional priorities in the biennium 2018-19. However, even before that FAO should assist countries in promoting pulses and improving their productivity.

With this, we would like to endorse the report of the 33rd Session of the APRC.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Afghanistan wishes to thank the Chair of the APRC for introducing the report in such a clear manner and also the Government of Malaysia for hosting the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific and providing excellent support for its success.

The one observation that Afghanistan wishes to make is the following: we note with appreciation that prioritization of country and regional needs (paragraphs 32-43) link well with the long-term needs of the countries of Asia and the Pacific. This strategic alignment is most welcome. The stress is on raising the productivity of crops, livestock and aquatic resources; expansion of agro-industry and increased value added through a better chain system.

Considering that the region of Asia and Pacific has no virgin land to develop for cultivation and that cultivation to marginal lands has reached its limits, the only options available are: increasing yields per hectare; intensifying cultivation; diversification on a highly selected basis, agro-processing and improving the value chain.

These measures can enable the region to feed its population with an adequate level of nutrition, which by 2050 is expected to have one billion more people added to its current population of 4.5 billion. These measures could also create job opportunities for young men and women in rural areas and deter the movement of people from rural to urban areas.

Opportunities for increasing yields are considerable. For example the average yield of pulses in Asia and the Pacific hardly reaches 1 000 kg per hectare while it is 2 000 kg per hectare in North America and I am told it is even higher in France.

With this observation, Afghanistan approves the report of the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific.

Ms Wimonporn THITASAK (Thailand)

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

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the Government of Malaysia for their wonderful hospitality during the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (APRC).

We encourage FAO to focus its work on the priorities identified by the Region, while customizing its technical assistance to meet the need of the Members Nations.

Among the priorities of the Region, Thailand, for example, would be interested in focusing the work on the implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement to promote sustainable fisheries, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) to linking small-scale farmers to markets, reducing food loss and waste, promoting self-sufficiency philosophy to eradicate hunger and reduce poverty, promoting agriculture adaptation to climate change, and improving statistics capacity to track the progress of SDGs.

Thailand will continue to support FAO work in the Region and will collaborate with FAO in preparing our next Country Programme Framework.

We look forward to the successful implementation of the priority issues. We also look forward to participating in the 34th Session of APRC in 2018.

Mr Osamu KUBOTA (Japan)

Japan aligns itself with the comments made by India on behalf of the Asia Group and we would like to make a brief comment to supplement the Asian comment.

First of all, as previous speakers we thank Malaysia for hosting this successful Conference.

Japan supports the regional priorities identified at the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific, in particular, value-chain development, food safety, nutrition, and transboundary animal and plant pests and diseases, and data analysis for decision making. We look forward to FAO further efforts and concrete actions in these areas.

We would like to highlight one point. As one of the regional priorities, the Member States of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific agreed to promote ongoing work on GIAHS. Since this initiative contributes to enhancing food security and livelihoods, building resilience of communities, as well as conserving and promoting knowledge and experience, we think that FAO should strive to promote this initiative not only in our region, but in the other regions as well.

Mr Jianmin XIE (China) (Original language Chinese)

We would like to express gratitude for the document submitted. We would also like to thank the Minister of Malaysia for his report and we endorse the statement made by India on behalf of the Asia Group.

China congratulates on the success of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific and appreciates the broad consensus reached on the agenda items of this Regional Conference. China also appreciates the work of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

We would like in particular to thank Malaysia for its hospitality and for the fine conditions afforded us at the conference. This is the first time that I have attended such a Regional Conference and it left a very good impression upon me.

As regards the priorities of the FAO in the region, China endorses the content of the report. It also hopes that in the future, the FAO will bolster its support for the priorities such as protection of the Global Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) and South-South Cooperation.

China is prepared to exchange its experience with the FAO and the other Member Nations in these important areas.

Mr Ismail BIN HAJ BAKAR (Representative for Chairperson, Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific)

I just would like to thank all Member Nations and countries that support our reports on the 33rd FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific and of course we would like FAO to take actions on interventions raised by Member Nations.

Item 4.3 Report of the 30th Session of the Regional Conference for Europe
Point 4.3 Rapport de la trentième session de la Conférence régionale pour l'Europe
Tema 4.3 Informe del 30.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para Europa
 (C 2017/16)

CHAIRPERSON

The next item is Sub-item 4.3, *Report of the 30th Session of the Regional Conference for Europe*. Please ensure that you have document C 2015/16 before you.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Hinrich Thölken, Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Germany to FAO, and Vice-Chairperson of the Thirtieth Regional Conference for Europe, to present the report of the Regional Conference.s

Mr Hinrich THÖLKEN (Vice-Chairperson, Regional Conference for Europe)

On behalf of the European and Central Asian countries, it is my pleasure to address the Council regarding the outcomes of the 30th Session of the Regional Conference for Europe (ERC) held in Antalya, Turkey from 4 to 6 May 2016.

The ERC was attended by 43 Members from the Region, along with 15 observer organizations; with 17 Members being represented at minister and deputy minister level.

The Regional Conference report is available as Council document (C 2017/16), which outlines the summary of the main recommendations that require, *inter alia*, the Council's attention, related to programme and budget matters. I will therefore limit myself to a short introduction and presentation of some of the highlights of the debates at the ERC.

With regard to the Decentralized Offices Network, the Regional Conference acknowledged its importance and broadly endorsed the principles and general criteria for reviewing the coverage of FAO offices in the Region.

The ERC further recommended maintaining the location of the Regional and Subregional Offices and suggested that the office in Uzbekistan be upgraded on a budget-neutral basis.

The contributions that the Government of Turkey continues to provide for the operation of the Subregional Office for Central Asia and for programmes in the Region were also acknowledged by the Conference.

Additionally, the Conference welcomed the fact that the Liaison Office in Brussels is scheduled to play a more active role in the relationship with the European Union and noted the clarification on the liaison function of the Moscow Office with regard to regional institutions located nearby, as well as clarification on the funding of FAO representatives in partnership and liaison offices, which will not come from assessed contributions of Members.

Regarding the *Results from the implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15 and update on the implementation of the PWB 2016-17*, the Conference welcomed the call by the Council for the FAO Secretariat to undertake an independent assessment of the technical capacity of the Organization, both at headquarters and in decentralized offices, to be presented to the Conference in 2017 and looked forward to a transparent process, including consultation with the Governing Bodies.

At the same time, it urged the Secretariat to consider the maintenance of technical capacity at FAO headquarters as a guiding principle for planning staff allocation.

The Conference also appreciated the increased collaboration between FAO headquarters and decentralized offices and looked forward to continued improvement of FAO organizational effectiveness including through more focused Country Programming Frameworks.

The Conference also supported the adjustments to the Regional Initiatives for the 2016-17 biennium to bring greater focus to FAO work on: (a) empowering smallholders and family farms in Europe and Central Asia, and (b) agrifood trade and market integration in Europe and Central Asia; as well as focusing attention on strengthening food security and nutrition, natural resource management including fisheries and forestry, and control of animal and plant pests and diseases and food safety hazards.

The debate on the priorities for FAO work in the Region noted the trends in the region concerning rural poverty and migration, farm structure, sustainability of food production and food systems, nutrition, and agricultural trade policy, and looked forward to further analytical work by FAO as a basis for guiding future work in the region. With regard to agricultural trade policy, the Conference supported the alignment of trade and sanitary and phytosanitary policies to meet World Trade Organization commitments.

The Conference further underlined the need for continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization and the importance of taking into consideration the trends and roles of fisheries and forestry sectors,

particularly their contribution to sustainable management of natural resources and the achievement of the SDGs.

It also agreed that recent important global developments will frame national and regional action and FAO work in food and agriculture in the future, including the SDGs, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the ICN2 Framework for Action, as well as the outcome of the Conference of Parties of the UN Convention on Combating Desertification.

The Regional Conference also endorsed its Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2016-19 and accepted that the reports from the two regional commissions, the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission and the European Forestry Commission, become an integral part of the ERC.

The Regional Conference also noted that the initiative on the establishment of a Eurasian Soil Commission should be reconsidered in view of the objective of restricting the number of Article VI and Article XIV bodies, and avoiding duplication of work.

Finally, the Conference expressed strong support for Slovenia's initiative to declare 20 May as "World Bee Day".

I would also like to inform the Council that the session of the Regional Conference was preceded by a consultation meeting of civil society organizations and a CFS multi-stakeholder dialogue.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Sr. Jaime HADDAD SÁNCHEZ DE CUETO (España)

Quisiera aprovechar esta oportunidad, como miembro del Consejo de FAO, para destacar que la FAO ha jugado un papel destacado en la consecución de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio.

La revisión de estos objetivos en 2015 ha confirmado la reducción de la pobreza extrema y el hambre en el mundo.

En estos momentos es necesario no escatimar esfuerzos y canalizar de forma eficiente los recursos de la Organización en aras a la consecución de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) de la Agenda 2030. Para el logro de los ODS serán clave el diálogo, la participación y la apropiación de sus metas por los países, ya que somos todos nosotros los responsables de implementar esta Agenda.

La FAO, dada su experiencia y su mandato en áreas como la agricultura, la nutrición, el medio ambiente, el cambio climático o el empleo sostenible, tiene un importantísimo papel a jugar en coordinación, por supuesto, con otras Agencias de las Naciones Unidas y otros agentes públicos y privados, para contribuir a la consecución de los citados ODS.

Asimismo, quisiera subrayar que España apoya las recomendaciones de las Conferencias Regionales de la FAO en relación al proceso de reforma de la red de oficinas descentralizadas, sobre el que quiero resaltar algunas cuestiones:

El proceso en marcha de creación de nuevas oficinas y refuerzo de las existentes es muy ambicioso, con el reto añadido de no implicar un incremento global de costes para la Organización y mantener al mismo tiempo una masa crítica de conocimiento en las oficinas centrales de Roma. La suscripción de acuerdos con los países sede, con donantes y beneficiarios, es la herramienta básica para lograrlo, de tal forma que no se detraigan recursos de los servicios centrales en detrimento de sus capacidades técnicas.

Las oficinas de asociación y enlace con un representante de FAO a nivel de país donante es una alternativa razonable para potenciar la cooperación y la asistencia que reciben los países receptores. El acuerdo de sede España-FAO firmado en abril de 2013, ha permitido la existencia de una oficina con sede en mi Ministerio, y ha demostrado la utilidad de este instrumento, afianzando el compromiso de España para continuar trabajando estrechamente con la FAO.

Quiero concluir felicitando a FAO y a los más de 30 países que han depositado sus instrumentos de adhesión al "Acuerdo sobre medidas del Estado Rector del puerto". Este Acuerdo entrará en vigor el

próximo 5 de junio. Se trata del primer tratado internacional de carácter vinculante dirigido específicamente a combatir la lacra de la pesca ilegal, no declarada y no documentada, y un magnífico ejemplo además de esfuerzo internacional en aras de la sostenibilidad de los recursos y de la conservación de la pesca como fuente de alimentos de un valor nutritivo incomparable.

Deseo lo mejor para el Presidente y todo el equipo de FAO en este segundo semestre de 2016, que se presenta con grandes retos en temas que creo sean de vital importancia para todos nosotros, como el Acuerdo de pesca ilegal ya mencionado, los actos de Nueva York entorno a la seguridad alimentaria, la celebración del Día Mundial de la Alimentación que este año tratará sobre Cambio Climático o el evento sobre la nutrición que se será preparado para noviembre.

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

First of all, we would also like to thank Mr Hinrich Thölken for the presentation of the work of the 30th Session of the Regional Conference for Europe. Russia on the whole supports the conclusions and recommendations from the recently concluded 30th Session of the Regional Conference for Europe.

We welcome the discussions of the Ministerial Roundtable on the issue of the influence of the Sustainable Development Goals on the Agriculture Sectors of Europe and Central Asia. Among the key SDGs, we highlight the fundamental goal of eradicating poverty, which is intrinsically linked to ensuring food security and nutrition and increasing the level of socio-economic development. It is important to direct the work of FAO towards resolving these issues. Besides, in the framework of its mandate we should include all three dimensions of sustainable development.

We are satisfied with the results of the activities of the Organization in the Region in 2014 and 2015. A comprehensive approach of the Secretariat in order to realise the Programme of Work and include the recommendations of the main FAO Governing Bodies have allowed the Region to reach an agreement on the priorities and to the goals clearly defined. We also believe that what was presented by the Secretariat is extremely important: the list of key areas of work for the future in the field of agriculture and the development of agrarian areas.

We agree with the relevance of the work to fight agricultural poverty, by assisting small-holders and scaling up production, as well as increasing productivity, promoting sustainable management of natural resources and sustainable agri-food systems. It is also essential that ensuring the nutrition needs of populations and stimulating trade of agricultural products are met.

Particularly, we support the realization of two Regional Initiatives: increase opportunities for small-holders and family farmers and the trade of agricultural products and market integration.

We appreciate the recommendation of the Regional Conference on the need to broaden the use of the Russian language in FAO also by increasing the amount of Russian publications. This goes hand in hand with the conclusions of the Independent Assessment of the Regional and Subregional Offices of FAO in the Region, which was presented in 2013.

We would also suggest that the Secretariat pay due attention to the quality of translations. We are in favour of a wide exchange of experience to address the issues that the countries are tackling in our Region. A wonderful format for this is a close cooperation among sub-regions and exchange of best practices between sub-regions are taken to account as for country realities.

We are committed to strengthen regional cooperation, including the integration in the Eurasian Economic Union, which will become an element of gradual growth for its Member States.

We believe that joint work to realise the 2030 Agenda opens new opportunities to achieve a comprehensive social economic development. This can bring beneficial cooperation throughout Europe and Central Asia.

Mr Abdul Razak AYZI (Afghanistan)

Afghanistan wishes to thank the Vice-Chairperson of the Conference and to make two brief observations on the Report of the 30th Session of the Regional Conference for Europe. Before that, Afghanistan wishes to thank the Government of Turkey for hosting the 30th Session of the Regional Conference for Europe in Antalya.

First, we commend the Ministerial Round Table on SDGs and their implication for agriculture development and rural transformation in Europe and Central Asia. The other five regional conferences had no ministerial round table on the SDGs. However, when they were discussing the agricultural trends and challenges, these were done within full cognizance of the 17 SDGs.

Afghanistan supports the content of paragraph 16 of the report of the Regional Conference for Europe, especially the points 'e', 'f', 'g', 'h' and 'i' of that paragraph.

Second, paragraphs 23 and 24 of the report discuss priorities for FAO work in Europe and Central Asia. Considering that the region consists of 53 countries with diverse level of development, natural resource endowment, institutional capability, market infrastructure, financial strength and cultural heritage, it would have been advisable to go deeper into priorities by sub-regions such as those for the countries of Central Asia and also for the countries located in the Caucasus. Unfortunately this does not come out of the report.

In this connection, we wish to express praise for the reports of the Regional Conferences for Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean in which priorities were distinctly listed by sub-regions.

With these two observations, Afghanistan endorses the report of the 30th Session of the Regional Conference for Europe.

Mr Hassan ABOUYOUB (Morocco)

Thank you, Mr Chairman, for giving me the floor which I take on behalf of the Africa group, and the rest of my declaration is in French.

Suite en français

Permettez-moi de saisir cette opportunité pour notre collègue et ami l'ambassadeur de la République fédérale d'Allemagne, Hinrich Thölken, pour la très belle présentation du rapport du groupe régional Europe et bien sûr joindre ma parole, ma voix aux collègues qui m'ont précédé pour également rendre hommage à la Turquie pour la parfaite organisation de cette Conférence et bien sûr féliciter le Secrétariat pour le travail d'accompagnement qui nous a permis d'avoir ce rapport dans d'excellentes conditions matérielles.

Comme vous pouvez constater d'après ce que nous avons entendu, ce rapport s'est particulièrement penché sur les conclusions du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale et a également traité la sécurité alimentaire et ses relations avec la nutrition et le changement climatique. Je ne peux que me féliciter au nom de mes collègues africains de constater que cette thématique ait été au centre de nos préoccupations lors de la 29^{ème} Conférence régionale de la FAO pour l'Afrique qui s'est tenue, comme vous le savez, à Abidjan en avril 2016. Je saisis l'opportunité pour féliciter le Ministre de l'agriculture, ami, de la Côte d'Ivoire pour cette merveilleuse présentation.

Pour ce qui concerne le premier thème, Son Excellence la Présidente du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire a fait part dans les mêmes termes à Abidjan comme à Antalya des progrès accomplis par le CSA au cours de ces deux dernières années et a souligné l'importance de ces résultats pour les Conférences régionales pour l'Europe et pour l'Afrique. Elle a bien sûr signalé l'approbation des principes pour un investissement responsable dans l'agriculture et les systèmes alimentaires, du Cadre d'action pour la sécurité alimentaire et la nutrition lors des crises prolongées et de ces trois séries de recommandations de politique générale, qui ont été formulées sur la base des rapports du Groupe d'experts de haut niveau.

De même, l'approbation du Programme de travail pluriannuel du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire pour l'exercice biennal 2016-2017, ainsi que la note d'orientation sur la manière dont devront être sélectionnées ces activités futures, constituent pour nous également un argument de satisfaction que nous voulions partager avec le continent européen. Madame l'Ambassadeur Amirah Dawood Hassan Gornass a aussi rappelé que le CSA avait décidé de placer les objectifs de développement durable au centre de l'agenda du Comité et bien sûr mis en relief le caractère universel du Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030.

À l'instar du Groupe Europe, nous ne pouvons que nous féliciter au sein du Groupe Afrique, du fait que les objectifs stratégiques de la FAO soient parfaitement harmonisés avec les objectifs de

développement durable définis dans notre Programme de développement à l'horizon 2030. Nous demeurons donc convaincus, Monsieur le Président, qu'outre les tendances et les enjeux globaux qui devraient continuer à inspirer les activités de la FAO dans les années à venir, trois principaux facteurs devront donc guider l'action aussi bien au niveau mondial que régional. Il s'agit notamment d'inclure dans nos stratégies et nos programmes d'action les décisions et recommandations émanant de la déclaration de l'Europe sur la nutrition et du Cadre d'action adopté lors de la deuxième Conférence internationale sur la nutrition, bien sûr, des 17 objectifs de développement durable, et enfin, de l'accord de Paris tel qu'il a été conclu à l'occasion de la Conférence mondiale des Nations Unies sur le changement climatique, COP21.

Pour ce qui a trait au second thème, nous nous réjouissons de constater l'identité de vue avec la Conférence régionale pour l'Europe, quant à la corrélation qui existe entre sécurité alimentaire, nutrition et changement climatique. En effet, nos deux Conférences régionales ont mis en relief l'incidence des objectifs de développement durable sur l'agriculture, la sécurité alimentaire et le développement rural. Elles ont par ailleurs rappelé l'importance et le rôle crucial des secteurs de l'agriculture, des pêches et de la foresterie dans la réalisation des ODD, ainsi qu'en matière d'adaptation au changement climatique et d'atténuation de ses effets. Elles ont enfin mis en exergue la responsabilité commune qu'assume l'ensemble des acteurs de la filière alimentaire dans ce contexte.

Si la Conférence régionale de la FAO pour l'Europe s'est félicitée que la nutrition et le changement climatique soient des thèmes transversaux dans le Programme de travail biennal 2016-2017, et que la FAO se soit engagée à aider les pays à réaliser les ODD - je vous renvoie à la page 22 du rapport - la Conférence tenue à Abidjan a également mis l'accent sur le renforcement de la résilience pour favoriser l'adaptation au changement climatique et l'atténuation de ses effets (cf. page 18 du rapport) et a mis aussi en exergue la nécessité de promouvoir l'utilisation et la gestion durable des ressources naturelles, afin d'agir sur les causes profondes de la sécheresse et du changement climatique et d'en atténuer les effets.

Le groupe européen à Antalya a mis l'accent sur l'importante contribution des légumineuses sur les plans de la sécurité alimentaire, de l'amélioration de la nutrition et de la protection de l'environnement, ainsi que de l'adaptation au changement climatique et de l'atténuation de leurs effets. Je ne peux pas manquer cette occasion, Monsieur le Président, de saluer au nom de mes collègues africains l'initiative européenne portée par la Slovénie et visant à proclamer le 20 mai Journée mondiale des abeilles. Le Groupe Afrique ne peut que soutenir cette proposition et saisir cette occasion pour rappeler à son tour l'importance cruciale de l'apiculture pour une agriculture durable et pour la sécurité alimentaire, et comme tradition culturelle millénaire dans le continent africain. Nous ne pouvons donc qu'inviter nos collègues membres du Conseil à soutenir cette initiative lors de la Conférence de la FAO l'année prochaine.

Pour conclure, Monsieur le Président, la COP21 avait intégré dans l'accord de Paris les secteurs agricoles comme piliers du développement pouvant être impactés par les changements climatiques. Les participants à la 29^{ème} Conférence régionale de la FAO pour l'Afrique ont pris note, quant à eux, des défis constants à relever dans le contexte du changement climatique et de la protection de l'environnement, et ont insisté sur la nécessité de mettre en place des stratégies appropriées de gestion des risques, notamment en matière de lutte contre les sécheresses, la pénurie d'eau et les feux incontrôlés qui menacent les espaces forestiers. Ils se sont prononcés également sur la nécessité de consacrer le lien entre le changement climatique et l'agriculture lors de la 22^{ème} Conférence des Parties que le Royaume du Maroc abritera à Marrakech en novembre 2016. Cette Conférence sera d'ailleurs le cadre idoine pour présenter la stratégie Triple A: Adaptation Agriculture Africa, que le continent compte proposer à la Communauté universelle avec le soutien, nous le souhaitons et nous l'avons déjà acquis, du groupe régional Europe.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Monsieur le Président, j'ai l'honneur de vous demander de bien vouloir donner la parole à la présidence de l'Union européenne pour une déclaration de l'Union européenne.

Ms Gerda VERBURG (Observer for Netherlands)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States and San Marino aligns itself with this statement. When I speak more often during this Council, I will do it on behalf of the EU Member States and San Marino.

The EU and its Member States welcome the Report of the 30th Regional Conference for Europe which was kindly hosted by the Government of Turkey in Antalya from 4 to 6 May 2016, although we feel there is a need for innovation in the drafting process in order to better reflect the outcomes of the discussion and remarks made by Afghanistan emphasize this need.

The importance of Regional Conferences is evident, particularly as regards reviewing and deciding on regional priorities and strategies in line with the new Strategic Framework, the establishment of Country Programming Frameworks (CPF) and the Global Resource Management System (GRMS). These instruments must contribute to an improved performance and impact of FAO at country level.

At the same time, it is of great importance to keep a critical mass of expertise within FAO headquarters to retain and improve FAO comparative advantage as a knowledge organisation. This must be a guiding principle for the planning of staff allocations. Another guiding principle is the cost neutrality of decentralizing technical staff with respect to the Regular Programme-budgeted resources devoted to the Decentralised Offices Network. For this reason, we call on the Secretariat to carry out the preparatory work for the independent assessment of FAO technical capacity, as requested by the Council, in a transparent manner and as soon as possible. FAO Members must be fully involved in defining the terms of reference for this assessment.

We support the priorities and major areas of work in the region, including control of animal diseases, plant pests and food safety hazards. In particular, we underline the importance of applying and implementing the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security as well as the CFS RAI principles. In this respect, we encourage FAO to give due consideration to the CFS products in all its present and future partnership agreements with civil society and the private sector.

We also welcome the focus on sustainable agriculture, including mitigation and adaptation to climate change, soil preservation, improved water-use management and sustainable land practices. Fisheries and forestry should also remain high on the agenda, especially in the context of the Agenda 2030 process. In addition, we consider it very important that FAO ensures mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment in all activities in the region and look forward to specific proposals.

In general, we agree with the current Regional Initiatives related to the empowering of family farmers including smallholders and the agri-food trade and market integration.

However, we wish to recall our reservations already expressed in Antalya about the trends in agricultural trade policy for our region that were described in the paper on the ERC agenda. Many countries in the region are either Members of the EU, or are in the process of accession to the EU or have agreements with the EU. This should not be underestimated. Regarding trade-related priorities for FAO activities in the region, we agree that it is important to align policies with WTO commitments. FAO work on trade-related issues in the region requires a cautious, neutral and balanced approach. For that reason, we believe that this Regional Initiative should be carefully assessed. The EU and its Member States would like to see more clarity from FAO on its priorities and work in the focus countries in this biennium. In addition, we would like the proposals for regional initiatives for 2018-21 to be presented early enough to the Regional Conference for its decision.

We support the consolidation of the decentralised capacities on a region-specific basis and will closely monitor the decentralisation process, including the managerial changes needed to balance the new Organization's architecture in order to fulfil FAO mandate. We also acknowledge Hungary's support for the operations of the Budapest office. However, before taking any decision on an expanded role for the Budapest Office, we need more information on staff appointments and transfers and their implications for accountability and the budget.

We would like to underline the importance of the assessment of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) and its contribution to FAO's work in the region, in order to determine whether the

objective of revitalising the ECA has been achieved. We are looking forward to discussing the outcomes of this assessment at the next ERC session in 2018.

Finally, we would like to draw your attention to the strong support in Antalya for the proposal of Slovenia to declare 20 May as “World Bee Day”, in order to raise awareness of the importance of bees and other pollinators for sustainable agriculture and food security.

Mr Jón Erlingur JONASSON (Iceland)

This statement is made on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The EU countries, Denmark, Finland and Sweden associate with the statement made on behalf of the EU.

We take the floor to support one particular issue. We feel that it needs to be voiced out clearly as it was mentioned in the EU statement. It is the implementation of the independent assessment of FAO’s technical capacity as requested by the Council.

This Council must request that the assessment be done in due time. FAO Members must be fully involved in the preparatory work when defining the Terms of Reference and in selecting the experts for this assessment.

Mr Hinrich THÖLKEN (Vice-Chairperson, Regional Conference for Europe)

I would like to thank all delegations who have taken the floor for their contributions to the discussion. Once again, I would like to lay emphasis on the importance of all the Regional Conferences and not only the Regional Conference for Europe for the FAO decision-making process. Last but not least I would like to encourage the Chair to take due note of the remarks that have been made by Member Nations.

Ms Maria Helena SEMEDO (Deputy-Director General, Natural Resources)

I would like to point out that the independent assessment of its technical capacity that FAO was requested to undertake is not an evaluation. It is an assessment, which is different by nature. The Director-General brought out this morning how complex this assessment is. We have already started working on the preparation of the assessment. The complexity lies in its scope. What are we really going to measure? The Director-General mentioned that the indicators will be shared with the Members in November, during the next session of the Programme Committee. We will prepare a meeting, in the form of an independent seminar, to be held at the beginning of 2017, in which the Member Nations will be associated.

Item 4.4 *Report of the 34th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean*

Point 4.4 *Rapport de la trente-quatrième session de la Conférence régionale pour l’Amérique latine et les Caraïbes*

Tema 4.4 *Informe del 34.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para América Latina y el Caribe*

(C 2017/17)

CHAIRPERSON

Let us now move on to Sub-item 4.4, *Report of the 34th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean*. The relevant document is C 2017/17.

I give the floor to Ms Mely Romero Celis, Under-Secretary of Rural Development, Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Nutrition of Mexico, to present the report of the 34th Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, on behalf of the Chairperson, His Excellency the Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Nutrition, who was not able to participate.

Sra. Mely ROMERO CELIS (Representante del Presidente de la Conferencia Regional para América Latina y el Caribe)

Es un honor dirigirme hoy al Consejo en representación de los países de América Latina y el Caribe para presentar las recomendaciones de la Conferencia Regional para América Latina y el Caribe que tuvimos el honor de hospedar en mi país, México, del 29 de febrero al 3 de marzo de 2016.

La participación de 32 Estados Miembros representados por 25 ministros y 13 viceministros de diferentes carteras, fortaleció el compromiso de erradicar el hambre y la pobreza extrema en la región, con el apoyo de la FAO, por supuesto.

La Conferencia Regional identificó los siguientes desafíos de política relevantes para la región: en primer lugar, la seguridad alimentaria y nutricional, por supuesto, congruente con los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio hacia los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible; en segundo lugar, la transformación del sector rural: desarrollo territorial rural, agricultura familiar, inclusión socioeconómica e innovación; y en tercer lugar, el uso sostenible de los recursos naturales, la gestión de riesgos y la adaptación al cambio climático dentro del nuevo Marco de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible.

Para enfrentar estos desafíos, la Conferencia destacó la importancia de la nueva Agenda 2030, materializada en los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS), el valor del Marco de Acción de la Segunda Conferencia Internacional sobre Nutrición (CIN2) y la relevancia del Acuerdo de París sobre Cambio Climático en la COP21.

En este contexto, reconoció la alineación entre los nuevos Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible y los objetivos estratégicos y el marco de resultados de la FAO, e instó a la Organización a seguir enfocando la aplicación del programa del trabajo en las prioridades de los países.

Señor Presidente, en el contexto de las temáticas mencionadas anteriormente y en relación a los Asuntos Programáticos y Presupuestarios, la Conferencia Regional invita a este Consejo a que examine y ratifique los siguientes puntos:

Primero, dar la bienvenida y valorar las acciones desarrolladas y los resultados alcanzados durante los años 2014 y 2015 para enfrentar los desafíos regionales, en particular, a través de las tres iniciativas regionales adoptadas por el 33.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional de la FAO para América Latina y el Caribe.

Segundo, continuar apoyando el Plan de Seguridad Alimentaria, Nutrición y Erradicación del Hambre 2025 de la Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños (Plan SAN CELAC) y los grupos de trabajo de agricultura familiar y género, los cuales cuentan con el compromiso político al más alto nivel de nuestros gobiernos.

Tercero, mantener y profundizar el trabajo en las áreas de Cooperación Sur-Sur y triangular la movilización de recursos; los Frentes Parlamentarios contra el Hambre; la reducción de pérdidas y el desperdicio de alimentos; la red regional de sistemas públicos de comercialización y abastecimiento de alimentos; y las plataformas de diálogo de políticas para la agricultura familiar y el desarrollo rural sostenible. Todas estas áreas, son fundamentales para la erradicación del hambre y la pobreza extrema en nuestra región.

La Conferencia invita también al Consejo a considerar el análisis prospectivo realizado por la FAO en América Latina y el Caribe y a valorar los cambios identificados en la planificación del próximo cuatrienio 2018-2021.

Asimismo, a respaldar como áreas estratégicas de trabajo para el bienio 2016-2017, a saber, i) apoyo a la Iniciativa América Latina y el Caribe sin hambre; ii) agricultura familiar y desarrollo territorial en zonas rurales, y iii) uso sostenible de los recursos naturales, la gestión de riesgos de desastres y la adaptación al cambio climático y los ajustes realizados a las Iniciativas Regionales.

Reforzar la implementación de las iniciativas regionales en materia de pesca y acuicultura, bosques, agroecología y diversificación de cultivos, son fundamentales para el desarrollo sostenible regional, así como atender las recomendaciones de los subsectores forestal, ganadero, pesquero y acuícola

aprobadas en las Comisiones Técnicas Regionales correspondientes, COFLAC, CODEGALAC, COPACO y COPESCAALC.

La Conferencia respaldó la importancia de la colaboración entre los Organismos Internacionales con Sede en Roma, y la promoción de mecanismos de seguimiento y coordinación para facilitar el trabajo conjunto.

También hizo un llamado a profundizar la colaboración de la FAO con CEPAL y la OMS para fortalecer el proceso de seguimiento de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sustentable en la región.

En cuanto a la oportunidad de actualizar la cobertura de las oficinas de la FAO en la región a fin de adaptarla a las tendencias y condiciones actuales, respaldó en general, los principios propuestos y los criterios generales para la revisión de la cobertura de la FAO impulsados por el Director-General.

En nombre del Gobierno de México, del Presidente de la República Enrique Peña Nieto, y del Secretario de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación, José Calzada Roviroso, en su calidad de Presidente de la Conferencia Regional de la FAO para América Latina y el Caribe, agradezco a los Países Miembros la confianza depositada y, reitero ante este Consejo, nuestro beneplácito con el direccionamiento estratégico de la FAO a nivel global y regional, y con la necesidad de seguir contando con la cooperación técnica de la Organización y la movilización de recursos necesarios para la implementación de las recomendaciones de la Conferencia Regional.

México se honra y felicita de participar en organismos e iniciativas como la presente, pues constituyen prueba inequívoca de que la cooperación, el intercambio y el compromiso multilateral son clave para atender y resolver los grandes problemas de nuestro tiempo.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Sr. Juan HOLGUÍN FLORES (Ecuador)

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

Primeramente agradecemos a la Subsecretaria Mely Romero Celis por la presentación de los resultados del 34.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para América Latina y el Caribe, a nombre de la Presidencia de la Conferencia Regional.

Los resultados de la LARC34 reflejan la consolidación por parte de América Latina y el Caribe de nuestros esfuerzos para erradicar el hambre en nuestra región en el último bienio. Falta mucho camino por recorrer pero creemos que estamos en la ruta correcta y esperamos que los esfuerzos de nuestros gobiernos sigan contando con el apoyo de la FAO, de las otras Agencias en Roma y del sistema de las Naciones Unidas para alcanzar ese fin.

Coincidimos con los principales resultados de la LARC34 delineados por la Subsecretaria Romero Celis, y coincidimos en que los principales mensajes emanados de nuestra región a la Conferencia son los relativos a reforzar las acciones regionales sobre bosques, recursos pesqueros, agricultura familiar, prevención de desastres y uso sostenible de los recursos naturales. Todo esto tomando en cuenta la perspectiva del cambio climático y el desarrollo sostenible, sin dejar de lado temas tan importantes para nuestra región como la nutrición y la cuestión de género.

Las recomendaciones recogidas en el informe por parte de las Comisiones Técnicas Subregionales y los resultados de las consultas Subregionales presentados en el informe, muestran la gran importancia que nuestros países otorgan al tema de la seguridad alimentaria, la necesidad de enfoques Subregionales en varios casos, pero a pesar de las diferencias de enfoque subregionales, prevalece la visión unificadora de una región comprometida con la seguridad alimentaria y la erradicación de la pobreza, por tanto respaldamos los resultados de las Comisiones Técnicas Regionales así como los resultados de las consultas Subregionales celebradas durante la LARC34 en este área del planeta.

Esta perspectiva regional se manifiesta en el Plan SAN CELAC 2025, con el que reforzaremos acciones concretas para lograr la erradicación del hambre en unos años.

Estos esfuerzos representan la contribución de la región para la consecución de la Agenda 2030 en materia de seguridad alimentaria. Para reforzar nuestras acciones, y como se mencionó en los trabajos de la LARC34, es importante contar con mecanismos de medición de resultados y estadísticas sólidos. En nuestra región las capacidades varían en este sentido pero estamos seguros de que contaremos con el apoyo de la FAO para reforzar esta tarea.

Quisiera resaltar dos cuestiones Subregionales que fueron abordadas en la LARC34: una es la cuestión de la sequía en Haití y la otra la del Corredor Seco Centroamericano. Estas cuestiones, exacerbadas por el fenómeno de El Niño y por el cambio climático, ponen en riesgo de seguridad alimentaria a una parte importante de la población en esos países. Los gobiernos en los países afectados están realizando todas las acciones a su alcance para atacar estos problemas y cuentan con el apoyo pleno de nuestros países, pero se requiere la cooperación de la comunidad internacional para reforzar estas acciones, con enfoques de resiliencia y desarrollo.

En nuestra región la Cooperación Sur-Sur es una realidad desde hace varios años. Como se destacó en la LARC34, existen muchos ejemplos en marcha de Cooperación Sur-Sur destinados a erradicar el hambre y la malnutrición. Nuestra región hace enormes esfuerzos de acuerdo a la medida de nuestras capacidades, reflejo de nuestra responsabilidad hacia nuestros pueblos. Esperamos seguir contando con la cooperación de la FAO y de la comunidad internacional para alcanzar las metas planteadas en la Agenda 2030.

Finalmente, a nombre de los países participantes, agradecemos al Gobierno, hermano de México, por la organización de la 34ª Conferencia Regional para América Latina y el Caribe, cuyos resultados sustantivos serán de beneficio de nuestra región.

Sr. Luis Fernando AYALA GONZALEZ (Chile)

En primer lugar, quisiera agradecer a la Señora Subsecretaria, Viceministra de Agricultura, Ganadería y Pesca de México, por su presentación, y también por la hospitalidad demostrada por su país al hospedar la 34ª Conferencia Regional para América Latina y el Caribe de la FAO. Y también, por supuesto, por la hospitalidad efectuada, como anfitrión, de su país.

Quisiera decir que apoyamos como país, decididamente, el informe presentado por dicha Conferencia.

Como lo señaló la Presidencia de la Conferencia, esta reconoció el apoyo de la FAO a los programas de agricultura familiar y de género en la región.

Como no puedo hablar por los otros países de la región, quiero compartir con el Consejo como la FAO trabaja en el terreno, mano a mano con mi gobierno en políticas y programas dirigidos principalmente a las mujeres campesinas, a las mujeres que trabajan en las faenas pesqueras y a las mujeres indígenas respetando su cultura y empoderándolas en los procesos de toma de decisiones. Con ello entendemos que la FAO cumple cabalmente el mandato que le hemos otorgado y esperamos que siga trabajando en este ámbito.

En la Conferencia también quedó de manifiesto que los temas que más nos preocupan como región, son el cambio climático y sus consecuencias y los problemas de nutrición en sus dos vertientes, la desnutrición y la obesidad, que muchas veces, es una desnutrición oculta.

Chile es un país que hace años erradicó la desnutrición y que hoy se enfrenta al problema de la obesidad y todas las consecuencias que acarrea en la salud de la población.

Como gobierno estamos comprometidos en una lucha frontal contra ella, con leyes innovadoras como son la que se acaba de aprobar sobre el etiquetado alimentario en los productos envasados, que garantiza que la población tenga conocimiento claro si el producto que está consumiendo es alto en azúcares, grasas saturadas, sodio y calorías. Hemos compartido esta experiencia con la FAO como un aporte a la lucha contra la malnutrición y esperamos que le sea de utilidad y la FAO pueda compartirla con otros países.

Finalmente, también quiero referirme a otro tema que fue ampliamente tratado en la Conferencia. Me refiero a la seguridad alimentaria. En la Conferencia hubo consenso que si queremos seguridad alimentaria tenemos que involucrar aún más a la pesca, la acuicultura, la agroecológica, la diversificación de cultivos y los recursos forestales. No sólo por los alimentos que el mar, la

acuicultura, la agroecológica y los bosques producen, que son saludables y ricos en nutrientes, sino que también por toda la población que vive, se alimenta y tiene su sustento económico en estas áreas productivas.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

Argentina se suma a la declaración de GRULAC realizada precedentemente. La Delegación Argentina agradece al Gobierno de México por la excelente organización de la Conferencia Regional de América Latina y el Caribe que tuvo lugar en la capital de ese País. A sí mismo, Argentina se suma y desea resaltar algunos de los argumentos que tuvieron particular acuerdo en la conferencia regional realizada en México.

En primer lugar, deseamos resaltar la importancia de la pesca, la silvicultura, la acuicultura y los bosques para eradicar el hambre y hacer frente a la inseguridad alimentaria. En la Conferencia Regional de América Latina y Caribe se habló de una política diferenciada en materia de pesca, silvicultura y acuicultura. En segundo lugar, deseamos destacar el amplio apoyo al proceso de descentralización en el terreno y a los principios y criterios presentados a los Miembros por la FAO. En tercer lugar, la Delegación de Argentina desea llamar la atención sobre el valor que se le otorgó en la Conferencia al tema como la nutrición y el cambio climático, haciendo especial referencia, en los Eventos Paralelos, al problema del Corredor Seco Centroamericano y al problema en Haití y a las inundaciones en América del Sur. Así como al tratamiento que se le dió a la cuestión de género y al empoderamiento de la mujer rural. Valoramos las iniciativas regionales presentadas en el 2016-2017 y en particular también deseamos destacar la iniciativa América Latina sin Hambre y el Plan CELAC.

Para Argentina es fundamental rescatar y subrayar las conclusiones de la Conferencia sobre el fortalecimiento de estrategias en materia de Cooperación Sur-Sur y triangular para apoyar el tema agroalimentario sustentable y reducir la pobreza. Por último, la Conferencia al referirse al tema de descentralización en su debates dió particular importancia a las capacidades técnicas en el terreno, a los fines de que el conocimiento que esta Organización pueda ser diseminado y pueda ser aplicado por los agricultores que los necesitan y que efectivamente se encuentran en el terreno.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and Gentleman, we have come to the end of this morning's plenary meeting. We will continue with the list of speakers immediately after the lunch break at 14.30 hours sharp.

Before we adjourn, I wish to inform Council that the European Regional Group has proposed the addition of Spain to the membership of the Drafting Committee. Are there any objections?

I see no objections. Thank you.

Finally, I wish to inform the Council that a request has been received from the FAO Staff Representative Bodies to address this session of Council. If Council is in agreement, I wish to propose that a Representative of the FAO Staff Bodies make a brief statement under Item 16, *Any Other Matters*, at the end of our substantive work on Tuesday 31 May.

Is Council in agreement with this proposal?

Thank you.

Council will continue with sub-item 4.4 this afternoon at 14.30 hours sharp.

The meeting rose at 12:31 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 31

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.31

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Fifty-fourth Session
Cent cinquante-quatrième session
154.º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 30 May-3 June 2016
Rome, 30 mai-3 juin 2016
Roma, 30 de mayo-3 de junio de 2016**

**SECOND PLENARY MEETING
DEUXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
SEGUNDA SESIÓN PLENARIA**

30 May 2016

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

Item 4. Regional Conferences (continued)**Point 4. Conférences regionales (suite)****Tema 4. Conferencias regionales (continuación)**

Item 4.4 Report of the 34th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean (continued)

Point 4.4 Rapport de la trente-quatrième session de la Conférence régionale pour l'Amérique latine et les Caraïbes (suite)

Tema 4.4 Informe del 34.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para América Latina y el Caribe (continuación)

(C 2017/17)

CHAIRPERSON

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, I call the second meeting of the 154th Session of the FAO Council to order.

We shall continue with Sub-item 4.4, *Report of the 34th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean*. I give the floor to Members who had already requested to speak this morning.

Ms Joy PERSAD-MYERS (Trinidad and Tobago)

The delegation of Trinidad and Tobago also expresses its gratitude to the Distinguished Under-Secretary for the presentation of the Report of the 34th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Trinidad and Tobago wishes to support the programmatic and budgetary issues reflected in the Report of the 34th Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean and specifically the adjustments to the Regional Initiatives for the 2016-17 biennium, in particular the Latin America and the Caribbean “without Hunger” initiative, and sustainable use of natural resources, disaster risk management and climate change adaptation.

Trinidad and Tobago also wishes to highlight the specific priorities of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) such as those in the Caribbean as reflected in the Samoa Pathway, and in the context of their particular characteristics such as their high food import bill and increased frequency of natural disasters and susceptibility to the impact of climate change. Hence, Trinidad and Tobago supports the call for greater emphasis to be placed on partnerships between different actors inside and outside of the subregion to build synergies, mobilise resources and maximise impact.

Trinidad and Tobago is committed to partnering with FAO to achieve the objectives of eradicating hunger and malnutrition as well as contributing to the development of sustainable agriculture in Trinidad and Tobago and the wider Caribbean subregion.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago continues to execute its development objectives for the agriculture sector, which are in alignment with FAO's Strategic Objectives. In this regard an Agricultural Stakeholders Planning Workshop was organised by the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries and the FAO Representation in Trinidad and Tobago in February 2016 with the twin objectives of launching the Ministry's Roadmap for the development of a National Agriculture Sector Plan (2016-20), and simultaneously identifying the priorities and indicative areas for collaboration under the FAO Country Programming Framework (2016-19).

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago wishes to endorse the recommendations of the 34th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Sra. Mónica ROBELO RAFFONE (Nicaragua)

Al sumarnos a la declaración realizada por Ecuador en nombre del GRULAC, queremos agradecer a la Subsecretaria de México la presentación de los resultados de la Conferencia Regional de América Latina y Caribe, los cuales respaldamos plenamente.

Así mismo agradecemos al Gobierno de México la organización de la Trigésima Cuarta Conferencia Regional, la asistencia y hospitalidad brindada a los países participantes, y a la Oficina Regional de Santiago, con la cual hemos compartido a través de videoconferencias los temas prioritarios de la región y los paneles temáticos. El alto nivel de participación de los Países Miembros en la Conferencia indica el nivel de compromiso de nuestra región con los nuevos desafíos y el avance hacia la meta establecida en los ODS, en particular con el tema de la adaptación al cambio climático, que en línea con el Objetivo de Desarrollo trece, demuestra una clara conciencia de la importancia de este proceso para el éxito de la Agenda 2030, que el Acuerdo de París desafortunadamente no ha podido resolver y que continúa poniendo en situación de vulnerabilidad a productores de pequeña escala, pescadores, silvicultores, agricultores familiares, mujeres, jóvenes, de los países tanto de ingreso bajo como de renta media.

Esperamos que estas prioridades sean efectivamente una guía para el accionar de la FAO en nuestros países, reflejado en un mayor compromiso de todos los países y la adopción de una estrategia sobre cambio climático que defina claramente sus objetivos y que aplique un enfoque basado en los derechos humanos. Por ello, la definición de una nueva iniciativa regional relacionada a la gestión de riesgo y la adaptación al cambio climático de cara a los ODS, y el apoyo de la FAO, en relación con la acción por el clima, nos parece tan pertinente como necesaria. Es importante resaltar que todas estas orientaciones emanadas de la Conferencia Regional deberán ser tomadas en consideración para la elaboración del próximo ciclo del Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto (PTP).

Igualmente queremos destacar el impulso que se está dando a la pesca artesanal y a la acuicultura, como un sector de gran potencial para contribuir a la erradicación del hambre y la pobreza en la región. Por ello, a los países centroamericanos nos complace la firma del protocolo de intención para la cooperación entre FAO y OSPESCA, Organización del Sector Pesquero y Acuícola del Istmo Centroamericano. Consideramos que esta coordinación de esfuerzo repercutirá en el establecimiento de una estrategia de promoción de política de integración de la pesca y la acuicultura, su fortalecimiento y reconocimiento como un sector estratégico para alcanzar la meta de erradicar el hambre en 2025.

Quisiera finalizar esta intervención agradeciendo tanto el trabajo de la FAO como el compromiso político de la región que nos han permitido avanzar con paso firme hacia el cumplimiento de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio, convirtiéndose este logro en estímulo para proceder hacia el reto de los ODS.

Sra. Eva María QUINTANA GONZÁLEZ (Cuba)

Cuba quiere agradecer las palabras de la Señora Celis por su presentación y nos sumamos a la declaración del GRULAC. Hacemos nuestras las ideas analizadas en la 34ª Conferencia Regional, donde se subrayó la importancia de profundizar el trabajo para alcanzar la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible, y se instó a la Organización a seguir enfocándonos en la región, en la aplicación del Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto y las prioridades de los países en 2016-2017.

Respaldamos plenamente continuar los esfuerzos y exhortamos fortalecer la estrategia de Cooperación Sur-Sur y triangular para la erradicación de la desnutrición y para apoyar el desarrollo de sistemas agroalimentarias sostenibles, así como la reducción de la pobreza rural en los países más vulnerables de la región. Así mismo, que se propicie espacios de diálogo político entre los países de la región para determinadas medidas concertadas que promuevan una mejor articulación en las actividades de adopción de la adaptación al cambio climático en América Latina y el Caribe dentro del nuevo marco de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS).

Sobre la política de género, agradecemos el apoyo de la FAO y felicitamos a los diferentes países que han alcanzado resultados en este ámbito y han emprendido programas para avanzar en la igualdad de género, como refrenda el Plan de Seguridad Alimentaria SAN CELAC 2025. Reconocemos la oportunidad de actualizar la cobertura de las oficinas de la FAO en la región, así como todas los importantes acuerdos tomados en la 34.º Conferencia, tales como la seguridad alimentaria y la erradicación del hambre, entre los más relevantes.

Mr Abreha ASEFFA (Ethiopia)

Ethiopia is honored to speak on behalf of the Africa Regional Group on Agenda sub-item 4.4.

First of all, we would like to thank the Distinguished Under-Secretary for the presentation of the Report, which clearly cast light on the salient points and conclusions reached. The Regional Conference dealt with important agenda items for the region.

In particular, the Regional Conference underscored that efforts need to be intensified in order to provide development opportunities to people suffering from extreme poverty in the region. It recognized the alignment between the Sustainable Development Goals spelled out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on the one hand, and the FAO Strategic Objectives and Results Framework on the other hand. In this regard, the Regional Conference urged FAO to continue focusing on the implementation of the Programme of Work according to country priorities.

The Regional Conference praised FAO to highlight the role of forests, fisheries, agriculture and climate change in tackling the following critical issues: food and nutrition, food security and facilitating trade. It further urged FAO to promote mechanisms likely not only to enhance inter-regional trade in agrifood, fisheries and agriculture products but also to facilitate links with consumers.

With regard to decentralization and decentralized offices, the Regional Conference recognized the expediency of updating the coverage of FAO offices in the region in order to adapt to current developments and requirements and achieve greater efficiency in the implementation of strategic objectives. The Regional Conference also endorsed the proposed principles and general criteria for reviewing the coverage of FAO offices in the region.

The Africa Regional Group is pleased to endorse document C 2017/17.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

First of all, I would like to congratulate countries of Latin America and the Caribbean for having produced a very good-quality report.

Secondly, I would like to lay emphasis on the fact that I fully agree with the subregional consultation results and priorities for the 2016-17 biennium as listed in paragraphs 48-50.

Thirdly, I would like to thank countries of Latin America and the Caribbean for taking seriously South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

M. Pierre Giulio LAUORE (Observateur de Haïti)

Je félicite les rapporteurs de la 34^{ème} session de la Conférence régionale pour l'Amérique latine et les Caraïbes pour la clarté et la qualité du rapport, et profite de l'occasion pour présenter mes remerciements aux participants à cette Conférence d'avoir pensé spécialement au cas d'Haïti qui a été abordé. Dans ce rapport, j'ai remarqué que certains pays membres de la CARICOM ont manifesté leur volonté d'appuyer Haïti dans le domaine de la sécurité alimentaire. J'aimerais que ces groupes pensent à travailler de concert avec les autorités haïtiennes, afin de bien définir les stratégies à mettre en œuvre pour aboutir à un résultat satisfaisant et une solution durable.

Sra. Eda RIVAS FRANCHINI (Observador de Peru)

El Perú se suma a la declaración del GRULAC. Además agradecemos a México y a la Oficina Regional de la FAO por el excelente trabajo que permitió lograr los objetivos de la Conferencia Regional. Asimismo, agradecemos a la Subsecretaria por la presentación del informe en calidad de presidencia de dicha Conferencia Regional.

Nuestro país apoya plenamente los resultados de la Conferencia. En primer lugar queremos destacar el compromiso de continuar trabajando en la dirección trazada por el Plan para la Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutrición, SAN CELAC 2025, expresado en la Conferencia. La seguridad alimentaria y la agricultura familiar son políticas prioritarias en los países de la región. El Perú viene aplicando políticas intersectoriales a largo plazo en estos temas, lo que nos ha permitido alcanzar resultados muy positivos en los últimos años.

Asimismo, deseamos resaltar los mensajes emanados de nuestra región para el bienio 2016-2017 en el sentido de reforzar las acciones regionales en materia de pesca, acuicultura, bosques, agroecología, diversificación de cultivos, prevención de desastres, uso sostenible de los recursos naturales. Todo desde una perspectiva que priorice el cambio climático y el desarrollo sostenible.

Nuestro país considera que es fundamental profundizar el trabajo en el terreno en materia de pesca, acuicultura y silvicultura a fin de aprovechar al máximo las potencialidades de dichos sectores, en el logro de la seguridad alimentaria, y el desarrollo rural sostenible. Y en el caso específico de los bosques, por su valiosa contribución en la adaptación al cambio climático. En esa línea, quisiera destacar el apoyo de la Conferencia Regional a las recomendaciones de la 29.^a Reunión de la Comisión Forestal para América Latina y el Caribe COFLAC, y de la 16.^a Reunión de la Comisión de Pesca Continental y Acuicultura para América Latina y el Caribe COPESCAL, ambas realizadas en el Perú. La COFLAC recomendó analizar la contribución económica y las externalidades de los bosques, incluidos los sistemas agropastoriles en relación a la seguridad alimentaria, la agricultura familiar y el desarrollo rural, así como impulsar el desarrollo de agendas intersectoriales que vinculen el tema agropecuario a las cuestiones forestales.

Por su parte, la COPESCAL recomendó entre otros impulsar la formulación e implementación de políticas de pesca y acuicultura que permitan reforzar el desarrollo rural territorial, acordando prestar especial atención al fortalecimiento de los sistemas de sanidad, inocuidad de los productos provenientes de la pesca y la acuicultura, los mecanismos de monitoreo, control y vigilancia para garantizar el uso sostenible de los recursos; así como el desarrollo de instrumentos para mejorar la resiliencia de las comunidades pesqueras y acuícolas frente al cambio climático.

Finalmente, recomendó el desarrollo de estrategias nacionales para incrementar el consumo de pescado y mariscos, incluyéndolos en los programas de alimentación escolar y las compras institucionales. La FAO viene ya realizando un importante trabajo en el terreno y esperamos que luego de la ratificación de las orientaciones contenidas en el informe, pueda profundizar sus acciones en todos los ámbitos identificados por la Conferencia Regional y de esa manera lograr alcanzar los objetivos de desarrollo sustentable.

Sra. Mely ROMERO CELIS (Representante del Presidente de la Conferencia Regional para América Latina y el Caribe)

Muchas gracias al Consejo, a su Presidente, a la FAO y por supuesto al grupo de América Latina y el Caribe por haber respaldado los resultados de esta 34.^o período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional en México.

No cabe duda que es un gran reto el que tenemos que afrontar entre todos para combatir la inseguridad alimentaria y el cambio climático. Se requiere cooperación entre todas nuestras naciones reconociéndonos diversos, pero con prioridades similares y reconociendo que necesitamos siempre el acompañamiento de la FAO en la tarea que tenemos.

Permítanme concluir solamente diciendo que México está muy agradecido por haber tenido el honor de hospedar esta Conferencia Regional. Sin duda los resultados son fruto del gran compromiso que existe entre todas las naciones por promover la seguridad alimentaria y por incluir siempre una perspectiva de género y de edad que nos permita sacar a nuestras naciones adelante.

Item 4.5 *Report of the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East*

Point 4.5 *Rapport de la trente-troisième session de la Conférence régionale pour le Proche-Orient*

Tema 4.5 *Informe del 33.^o período de sesiones de la Conferencia Regional para el Cercano Oriente*

(C 2017/18)

CHAIRPERSON

We shall continue with item 4.5, *Report of the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East*. The document before Council is C 2017/18.

I give the floor to Mr Karim Khalil, Counsellor, Alternate Permanent Representative of Lebanon to FAO, to present the report of the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East, on behalf of the Chairperson, His Excellency the Minister for Agriculture of Lebanon, who is unable to be with us today.

M. Karim KHALIL (Représentant du Président de la Conférence régionale pour le Proche-Orient) (langue originale arabe)

C'est un véritable honneur pour moi de prendre la parole au nom de Son Excellence Monsieur le Ministre. J'ai l'honneur de vous présenter un rapide résumé des résultats de la 33^{ème} session de la Conférence régionale pour le Proche-Orient, qui s'est déroulée à Rome du 9 au 13 mai 2016.

La Conférence régionale a réuni 153 participants, représentant 25 des 30 pays membres de la région, trois pays observateurs, deux autres pays non-observateurs, ainsi que des représentants de trois organisations internationales non-gouvernementales et cinq organisations intergouvernementales, deux organisations du secteur privé, trois organisations de la société civile, ainsi que des représentants de cinq organisations des Nations Unies. L'ordre du jour de la Conférence régionale couvrait avant tout des questions de réglementation et de politique au niveau régional et global, ainsi que des questions de programme et de budget, et je fais rapport aujourd'hui au Conseil afin de lui présenter les résultats clés de la Conférence régionale sur les questions de programme et de budget.

Pour ce qui est des Résultats et priorités de la FAO dans la région Proche-Orient et Afrique du Nord, la Conférence régionale a accueilli avec satisfaction les mesures prises et les résultats obtenus en 2014 et 2015 pour traiter les priorités régionales, notamment par le biais des trois initiatives régionales; s'est déclarée favorable à la poursuite des initiatives régionales jusqu'à la fin de l'exercice 2016-2017:

1) initiative régionale sur la pénurie d'eau; 2) la petite agriculture au service d'un développement ouvert à tous; et 3) renforcer la résilience pour l'amélioration de la sécurité alimentaire et de la nutrition, et porter une attention particulière à la sécurité sanitaire des aliments, au commerce agricole et aux informations sur les marchés. Elle a aussi dit attendre avec intérêt le rapport annuel de la FAO sur les résultats.

La Conférence a également pris note de la demande du Liban et de l'Égypte d'être des pays de référence pour les initiatives régionales au Proche-Orient. Elle a souligné combien il était important que les pays de la FAO disposent de statistiques et d'information fiables pour prendre des décisions, donner l'alerte rapidement et mesurer l'efficacité des interventions des pays et de la FAO. Elle a souligné également combien il était nécessaire que les pays apportent leur appui aux activités de la FAO et y adhèrent par l'intermédiaire des initiatives régionales afin de faciliter la mise en œuvre des politiques et des priorités nationales.

La Conférence prie instamment la FAO et les pays membres de renforcer le rôle des organisations non-gouvernementales et des organisations de la société civile à tous les niveaux afin de faire progresser davantage la mise en œuvre des initiatives et des programmes régionaux visant à atténuer l'insécurité alimentaire et les pénuries dans la région. La Conférence exhorte la FAO à œuvrer avec les États Membres en collaboration ou en partenariat avec les organisations à tous les niveaux pour mobiliser des ressources. La Conférence demande également aux États Membres de contribuer au fonds fiduciaire régional en vue de résoudre les nouveaux problèmes transfrontaliers qui concernent les pays en crise et qui se propagent à d'autres continents.

La Conférence demande instamment à la FAO d'aider la Somalie à mobiliser des ressources, à renforcer ses capacités nationales ainsi que sa résilience en matière de sécurité alimentaire et de nutrition, conformément à sa nouvelle stratégie nationale 2016-2019. Elle a insisté sur la nécessité d'assurer la continuité de l'orientation stratégique de l'organisation et de faire preuve de clairvoyance dans la planification stratégique afin de s'adapter aux évolutions et aux enjeux propres à la région. La Conférence a demandé une pleine cohérence entre les objectifs stratégiques de la FAO et les objectifs de développement durable (ODD) inscrits dans le Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030. La Conférence régionale convient que les décisions récentes à l'échelle internationale, y compris des ODD, l'Accord de Paris sur le changement climatique, la Déclaration de Rome sur la nutrition, le Cadre d'action de la CIN-2 et la Décennie d'actions des Nations Unies pour la nutrition 2016-2025,

guideront à l'avenir une action régionale et nationale, et les travaux de la FAO dans les domaines de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture.

La Conférence a pris note des évolutions constatées dans certains pays de la région sur les conflits et les troubles, ainsi que leurs effets sociaux et économiques, en particulier les déplacements forcés et les migrations. Elle a également pris note des évolutions constatées relatives à une croissance économique insatisfaisante, au chômage des jeunes, à la dépendance grandissante à l'égard des importations et l'exposition de plus en plus forte aux chocs des marchés, à un niveau élevé de malnutrition sous différentes formes, aux ravageurs et maladies transfrontalières des animaux et des végétaux, et à la sécurité sanitaire des aliments, et a déclaré attendre avec intérêt de nouveaux travaux d'analyse de la FAO qui orienteraient les activités futures dans la région.

Pour ce qui est du point relatif au réseau des bureaux décentralisés, la Conférence régionale s'est déclarée favorable au principe et aux critères généraux afférents au réexamen de la couverture de la FAO et a reconnu la nécessité de réactualiser la couverture géographique des bureaux de la FAO dans la région. Elle a pris note des progrès à accomplir en matière de renforcement du réseau des bureaux décentralisés et des efforts de décentralisation menés au moyen de modalités souples qui permettent de mieux répondre aux besoins de la région et des pays. La Conférence régionale a demandé à la FAO d'entreprendre une évaluation indépendante de sa capacité technique, conformément à la recommandation que le Conseil a formulée à sa 153^{ème} session, tenue en décembre 2015, en particulier dans les bureaux décentralisés, et a promu la création d'un bureau sous-régional pour les pays du Machrek au Liban et s'est félicitée de l'offre du Liban qui s'est dit prêt (sur les plans logistique, administratif et financier) à accueillir ce bureau conformément aux décisions pertinentes précédentes.

Nous appelons le Conseil à approuver les conclusions et les recommandations de la 33^{ème} session de la Conférence régionale pour le Proche-Orient, telles qu'elles figurent dans le document C 2017/18 (NERC/16/REP) et à les prendre en considération pour le développement et l'examen futur du Programme de travail et de budget ainsi que du Plan à moyen terme.

Mr Majid DEGHAN-SHOAR (Islamic Republic of Iran)

First of all, I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to all Regional Offices and the Member Nations for their active participation and fruitful collaboration during the meetings of the Regional Conference. I am pleased to endorse the report, in particular the results and priorities for the 2016-17 biennium.

As it has been pointed out by the Director-General during the opening Session of the Council and during the informal meetings held prior to the Session, sustainable agricultural development and the achievement of strategic development goals require that Member Nations have access to innovative, reliable, performing and fast systems for data collection, as well as for monitoring and evaluation.

As they stand now, statistical systems available in our countries are unable to provide reliable and reputable information. That is the reason why the Islamic Republic of Iran is hereby asking FAO to urgently provide technical support to the needy countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, to undertake the following actions: (i) Evidence-based policy making on the basis of timely, accurate, and verifiable data and information; (ii) Early warning capabilities based on included statistics for all elements of the supply utilization balance; (iii) Setting up of a marketing information system for agriculture and livestock as well as fish products. Its very purpose is to ensure efficient and updated market monitoring.

I would also like to bring out an issue that has been raised in all regions and many times in this Session: reducing food loss for hunger eradication purposes (800 million people live in hunger).

Proliferation of food loss during production, harvesting and post-harvest practices require action-oriented collaboration between FAO, as the United Nations food production leading agency, and the other specialized United Nations agencies dealing with this issue.

The Director General of UNIDO, Li Yong and the Director-General of FAO, José Graziano da Silva, signed a memorandum of understanding on 26 April 2016 which outlined potential joint activities. The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes such an initiative and urges FAO and UNIDO to start

providing technical support, in particular to the small landholders who are actually producing close to 70 percent of the food consumed worldwide. The technical support should primarily address the need for increasing productivity of the resources and for increasing crop yield, which is required in order to achieve Strategic Development Goal 2.

Mr Salah AL BAZZAZ (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the Near East Group, Kuwait would like to express thanks and appreciation to FAO for the good efforts made for the success of our Regional Conference for the Near East which was held exceptionally in Rome from 9 to 13 May 2016.

We would also like to express our thanks and appreciation to the Republic of Lebanon for having chaired the Regional Conference and for the good efforts made by the Lebanese Ministry of Agriculture to manage the Regional Conference so well despite the short time available to deal with technical and logistical arrangements.

We discussed with strong interest the following main topics: (i) The contribution of livestock to food security in the Near East and in the North Africa Region; (ii) The need both to increase investments in animal production systems and to enhance corporate governance veterinary services for effective animal disease control and for eradication of animal disease at the national, regional, and global levels; (iii) international cooperation. We urge the Organization to cooperate with the World Organisation for Animal Health, the World Health Organization and any other intergovernmental organizations concerned to develop strategies and work out plans in order to manage the risk of transboundary animal diseases; (iv) We call for the creation of sustainable systems for food of animal origin, especially those which focus on poor and rural areas, and for the improvement of their integration into the community; (v) We call on the Organization to support the new Regional Commission for Animal Health and Production to be established in the Jordanian capital, Amman.

With regard to fisheries and aquaculture and the Blue Growth Initiative, we call on the Organization to strengthen the proposal in order to establish a regional centre whose purpose will be to monitor the fish resources in the region and to provide technical assistance.

Likewise, in view of promoting added value for the fish supply chain in the region, we call on the Organization to work intensively in order: (i) to develop clear guidelines and plans in terms of evaluation procedures (to measure in particular the environmental impact of fish farming projects); and (ii) to support the technical capacity of Member Nations in the fight against fish diseases in the region.

In addition, we call on the Organization to support our region by organizing events and activities for the exchange of knowledge and experience, and for capacity-building activities aiming at developing the fisheries and aquaculture sectors and helping countries to assess the fishery resources both at national and regional levels.

We urge the Organization to better take into consideration climate change and environmental impacts when setting priorities in our region in the field of food security. From this point of view, and in light of the Sustainable Development Goals, we would like FAO to develop a clear strategy at the 22nd Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP22) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which is scheduled to take place at Marakkesh (Morocco) in November 2016, to begin preparations for entry into force of the Paris Agreement.

We call on the Organization to take the necessary action in favour of enabling small-scale farmers and women in the Near East and in the North Africa Region and to enhance the strategies and the programmes for sustainable agriculture in our region. Furthermore, a comprehensive national action plan should be developed, and technical assistance should be provided on the safe use of pesticides.

We urge the Organization to provide all capacities and expertise in order to activate the three initiatives on water scarcity and Blue Growth and enhance the resilience capacity. Support to small family farmers and investment in poverty reduction programmes should be provided in order to increase the opportunities to access markets and improve livelihoods, thus enhancing food and nutrition security in the region.

From this point of view, we would like to cast light on the important role that could be played by the Near East Regional Office in Cairo, in particular in the activation of these three initiatives in the near future.

We welcome the recent Regional Conference approval for the establishment of a Subregional Office in the Lebanese capital, Beirut, hoping that this office will contribute to strengthening the network of field offices in the region, which is essential to building the technical capacities of the countries in the region.

Finally, we welcome the Ministerial Declaration on Food Security, Stability and Peace (13 May 2016) which is of the utmost importance in particular in light of climate change but also in terms of improving the financial and technical coordination that supports the various agricultural sectors.

We wish that FAO would promote the Regional Office for the Near East in providing the necessary expertise in all disciplines that can be of benefit for our countries, taking into consideration the latest developments in food, agriculture and nutrition.

Last but not least, concurring with our colleague from the Russian Federation, we would like to draw attention to another important and sensitive issue for a majority of countries in the region, particularly the Arabic-speaking countries: the language balance. We call on the Organization to adhere to its policy relating to the language balance, reminding that Arabic is one of the official working languages of this Organization.

M. Karim KHALIL (Représentant du Président de la Conférence régionale pour le Proche-Orient) (langue originale arabe)

Je souhaite remercier tous ceux qui ont contribué au succès de la Conférence régionale pour le Proche-Orient, qui s'est tenue ici même à Rome, et je me félicite de toutes les observations faites par le Koweït et par l'Iran. J'espère que la FAO prendra très au sérieux toutes ces observations. Et pour conclure, au nom de Son Excellence le Ministre de l'agriculture du Liban, au nom des représentants des pays du Proche-Orient, nous souhaitons remercier le Directeur général de la FAO, Dr Graziano da Silva, ainsi que l'ensemble de la FAO, son personnel, ses experts, pour tout ce qu'ils font afin d'aider notre région à relever les défis auxquels elle est confrontée, ceux qui aident notre région à mettre en œuvre les trois initiatives dont je vous parlais.

Nous appelons l'Organisation à intégrer toutes nos remarques et observations, dans le travail de mise en œuvre du Programme de développement à l'horizon 2030 et nous souhaitons qu'il y ait une cohérence avec les objectifs stratégiques de l'Organisation.

- Item 4.6 Input from the Informal Regional Conference for North America*
Point 4.6 Contribution de la Conférence régionale informelle pour l'Amérique du Nord
Tema 4.6 Aportación de la Conferencia Regional Oficiosa para América del Norte
(C 2017/LIM/1)

CHAIRPERSON

We now move on to sub-item 4.6, *Input from the Informal Regional Conference for North America*. Please ensure that you have document C 2017/LIM/1 before you.

I will give the floor to Ms Mi Nguyen, Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada to FAO, to present the report of the Informal Regional Conference for North America.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Representative for Co-Chairperson, Informal Regional Conference for North America)

Canada is presenting on behalf of the FAO North American region. We were pleased to host the fourth Informal North American Regional Conference (INARC) on 21 and 22 March 2016 in Ottawa.

The meeting convened officials from the two countries in the North America region, Canada and the United States. The Director of the FAO Washington Liaison Office was also in attendance. It was also held with the participation of FAO leaders and specialists who joined us via videoconference. We are grateful for this participation and offer our sincere thanks to the Secretariat.

A written report of our meeting is available on the Council's website and provides a complete summary of the meeting, but I would like to highlight a few key considerations.

The INARC focuses on FAO work globally. Our views are designed to improve FAO results for all countries, and strengthen its global food security and nutrition work.

To begin, the INARC discussed FAO Strategic Framework, some of FAO past results, and the Programme of Work and Budget.

North America encouraged additional FAO emphasis on work related to: climate smart agriculture; nutrition-sensitive agriculture; animal diseases and pests; trade and food security and linking small farmers to agricultural trade networks; the impact of fishing agreements on small-scale fisheries; sustainable forest management and forestry governance; and mainstreaming gender equality in all areas of work at all levels as per the FAO Policy on Gender Equality.

As part of INARC's discussions on trade and food security, FAO officials presented on the flagship publication *State of Agricultural Commodity Markets 2015-16*.

Our region appreciated FAO greater focus on trade in its work, including pursuing projects in partnership with the World Trade Organization. We requested that FAO conduct more analysis and provide more guidance for Members on the relationship between trade and food security.

Experts from FAO also joined the INARC via videoconference to discuss the Organization's work related to global policy issues and processes such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris agreement on climate change. We appreciated their analysis of how the FAO can contribute to the implementation of these initiatives.

North America, like other FAO regions, encourages the FAO to bring further coherence in its work to reflect the Sustainable Development Goals.

We noted that the FAO Programme of Work is well aligned, and we believe that the FAO Strategic Framework does not require significant modification in this regard.

The INARC also discussed the FAO Symposium on the Role of Agricultural Biotechnologies held last February. FAO members welcomed this very successful event and our region wishes to stress the importance of maintaining FAO role's as a forum for dialogue.

We call on FAO to increase its efforts to share impartial, evidence-based information about biotechnology and its contribution to food security, nutrition and climate change, including by convening regional dialogues on the issue.

The INARC also considered FAO outreach with civil society and the private sector. We believe that better coordination and collaboration between governments, civil society and the private sector will assist FAO in achieving its Strategic Objectives and leveraging respective strengths, skills and assets.

The INARC stressed that FAO must work with civil society and the private sector to help countries achieve the SDGs.

The INARC also welcomed FAO work with the private sector and other stakeholders to commemorate 2016 as the International Year of Pulses.

North America's Regional Conference provided our countries' insights and views on FAO work with the intention of strengthening the Organization's results and improving global food security.

We thank the Members and Secretariat for their consideration of these views and look forward to working with you during the preparation of the Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and the next Programme of Work and Budget.

Ms Natalie Eugenia BROWN (United States of America)

I would just like to thank Canada for the warm welcome they gave the United States delegation in Ottawa despite the chilly weather there. I would also like to reiterate our strong appreciation for the excellent participation we got from the Secretariat during the INARC despite the time change. Every FAO official was very generous with their time in sharing the knowledge. That is extremely helpful to

us as we look at our priorities for the Organization and how we can best work with FAO to achieve the goals that we all share to eliminate hunger and poverty.

I would also like to appreciate FAO for continuing to take in the input from the North American Regional Conference in the development of the Programme of Work and Budget.

M. Mohamed MELLAH (Algérie)

Ma délégation intervient au nom du groupe régional Afrique au titre du point 4.6 de l'ordre du jour, relatif au rapport de la Conférence régionale informelle pour l'Amérique du Nord, qui s'est déroulée à Ottawa les 21-22 mars 2016. Notre groupe a pris note des informations communiquées dans le document C 2017/LIM/1 et saisit cette occasion pour exprimer à M. Gagnon et au Secrétariat du Conseil ses remerciements pour la disponibilité, la clarté et la qualité des documents qui nous ont été fournis.

Ma délégation félicite l'orateur pour son excellente présentation du rapport tout en remerciant le Gouvernement canadien d'avoir abrité cette Conférence. Le groupe régional Afrique se félicite des conclusions et des recommandations contenues dans ce rapport qui traite de thématiques importantes, notamment l'action de la FAO dans le cadre du Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030 et dans le domaine du changement climatique, le colloque sur la biodiversité, la biotechnologie et la collaboration de la FAO avec la société civile et le secteur privé.

À l'instar du groupe Amérique du Nord, le groupe régional Afrique appuie les priorités contenues dans ce rapport, notamment celles relatives à la lutte contre les maladies animales et les ravageurs présentant des risques pour la santé humaine, à l'encouragement de la collecte des données et de la recherche, au renforcement des capacités techniques, et au soutien aux organisations internationales telles que le CODEX et l'OIE.

Monsieur le Président, le groupe régional Afrique fait siennes également les conclusions et recommandations ayant trait à l'agriculture intelligente face au climat, en tenant compte de la nutrition et en fédérant des petits exploitants en réseaux de commerce agricole, aux incidences sur la pêche artisanale, à la gouvernance des forêts durable, et à l'égalité des sexes dans les domaines d'action à tous les niveaux, en application de la politique de la FAO en la matière.

Le groupe régional Afrique se félicite de l'importance accordée à la coopération entre la FAO et les institutions basées à Rome dans le cadre de la mise en place de partenariats efficaces à l'appui de la cohérence des politiques sur les ODD et des engagements internationaux en matière de changement climatique, en mettant en avant sa valeur ajoutée.

Le Groupe Afrique se félicite de l'action entreprise à travers une étude sur le lien entre commerce et sécurité alimentaire, ainsi que les travaux menés par la FAO en vue de définir et déterminer les contours des objectifs stratégiques de l'Organisation au regard des objectifs de développement durable.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

I shall be very brief. First, we want to congratulate North America for producing a very good report. Secondly, we wish to associate ourselves with the statement made by Algeria on behalf of Africa.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Representative for Co-Chairperson, Informal Regional Conference for North America)

Thank you very much and I wish again to reiterate our extreme appreciation for all the Secretariat's help in making good use of modern information technology and for a dynamic participation in the INARC, as well for your patience in receiving our final report and putting it on the website. We would also express appreciation for delegations who spoke and expressed support for our priorities. We look forward to working with all of you in implementing these.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. I want to congratulate all the speakers who presented the reports of the Regional Conferences.

Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to conclude item 4 as follows:

- 1) The Council examined and endorsed the conclusions of the five Regional Conferences and the Informal Regional Conference for North America, held between February and May 2016, as contained in their respective reports.
- 2) Concerning programme and budget matters, the Council:
 - a) welcomed the support expressed by the Regional Conferences for continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization;
 - b) appreciated the progress reported in 2014-15 and supported the endorsement of the 15 regional initiatives in 2016-17;
 - c) underlined the importance of the continued use and strengthening of strategic partnerships, including at regional level;
 - d) recommended that the outcomes of the Regional Conferences and the Informal North American Regional Conference inform the review of the Strategic Framework and preparation of the Medium Term Plan 2018-21;
 - e) welcomed the acknowledgment made by all the 2016 Regional Conferences for the need and expediency to update the coverage of the Decentralized Offices in all regions, and their support and guidance to the principles and general criteria identified by the Independent Review of the Decentralized Offices Network; and
 - f) appreciated the progress made by the Organization to decentralize roles and responsibilities and encouraged FAO to continue its efforts on decentralization while ensuring the adequate technical capacity at all levels.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Thank you, Chairperson, for your good summary. Could you please add a sentence on South-South and Triangular Cooperation?

Mr Salah AL BAZZAZ (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

We wish to add a paragraph on our focus on the language balance policy and to emphasize this strategy clearly.

Mr Majid DEGHAN-SHOAR (Islamic Republic of Iran)

Regarding the monitoring and evaluation of actions taken toward SDGs, an updated innovated system for data collection and analysis is required, as rightly mentioned by the Director-General, because all developing countries are needing that.

About food loss, which all Regional Groups emphasized, there is a need for collaboration between FAO and UNIDO, which could do a lot in South-South Cooperation as correctly mentioned by Afghanistan.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

Are we adding here anything about the comments that were made on the Report of the Regional Conference for Africa? Did you include the comments from Africa on your summary? Because I did not hear any reference to it. Have you included that or are you going to defer it to another portion?

CHAIRPERSON

Could you elaborate on which aspect you are talking of because that report was big?

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

(1) The position of African Ministers was that of strengthening the offices, not weakening the regional offices. (2) Africa did not support the cost sharing issue that was mentioned somewhere in some of the proposals that were flying around. (3) Africa did not support the co-hosting of country Reps. Those are three major issues that we strongly wanted to indicate in this Conference document.

CHAIRPERSON

As I indicated from the start of the meeting, this will be dealt with when we discuss the Joint Report of the Programme and Finance Committees. We will deal more with the issues of decentralization.

I think I do not have to read everything but I will try to go to those areas where we have incorporated new thinking.

(c) Underlined the importance of the continued use and strengthening of strategic partnerships, including at the regional level, South-South Cooperation and Triangulation, as well as monitoring for SDG implementation and food loss and waste;

(g) Appreciated the progress made towards dissemination with FAO publications in all languages.

Ms Gerda VERBURG (Observer for Netherlands)

Mr Chairperson, I am not sure whether I have heard point (f) of your summary very well. I think it was about the progress in decentralization in FAO. We are dealing with this topic and listening to the Ambassador of Liberia. I was wondering whether it is necessary to reflect it here or whether it is better to concentrate on item 8 when we are dealing with Decentralized Offices.

I have a two-fold proposal. Either please read again point (f) of your summary on decentralization or consider to delete it and to focus on the full topic under item 8.

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

This is just to second what the Netherlands has just said.

Mr Majid DEGHAN-SHOAR (Islamic Republic of Iran)

Thank you very much for your summary but I think the mention of food loss and food safety was missing.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, I corrected that one. If Members agree, point (f) of this summary will go under item 8.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

Mr Chairperson, you have handled the whole interventions in this area, all the speakers what they have said, so are you saying to us that our intervention or the intervention from Africa is not important at this time? You want to shift it somewhere and other comments will be taken onboard here? If that is the case then we will want our views reflected. We thank you for the cooperation.

Further to that, paragraph 18 of the Report of the Regional Conference for Africa recommended FAO “to continue to provide its knowledge and expertise to help Member States effectively address these trends”, talking about data collection, information systems and statistics to improve policies and strategies as well as M&E systems. I did not hear that so we are concerned.

CHAIRPERSON

Could I repeat what I said from the start that we have got a substantive Agenda item on Decentralized Offices Network, that is item 8. All issues which are more elaborated and given in my records or in my conclusions will go under that Agenda item.

So I will urge you, and I also turn to the Netherlands, that we leave point (f) here because we are not going into the details but it is just to give an overview of views expressed under the Reports of the Regional Conferences. I hope you all agree to the summary conclusions which I gave now.

Mr Salah AL BAZZAZ (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

We add our voice to her Excellency the Ambassador of the Netherlands because we addressed in many items the role of FAO in Decentralized Offices or country offices. Therefore we do not think it is useful to reiterate what we said when discussing the Decentralized Offices Network.

We would like to ask you, Chairperson, to convey the main highlights of our speech on behalf of the Near East region to the item on Decentralized Offices.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. This will be taken when we come to that agenda item.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

Ecuador desea respaldar su resumen, y sus conclusiones particularmente en cuanto al párrafo (f) relacionado a la descentralización lo consideramos muy relevante en ese tema ya que las Conferencias Regionales justamente han reconocido el aporte de la descentralización. Lo cual lo consideramos, como digo, muy relevante sin perjuicio de que más adelante se vuelva a tratar. Pero ya que las Conferencias Regionales lo han resaltado, es importante grandísimamente en ese tema.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

En este momento la Delegación Argentina quisiera proponer a usted y a los distinguidos colegas una moción que sería procedimental pero también sustantiva. En sus conclusiones, en el primer párrafo, utilizó que el Consejo examinó y refrendó las conclusiones de las 5 Conferencias Regionales, así como las conclusiones de la Conferencia Oficiosa para América del Norte, que figura en los correspondientes informes. Mi delegación entiende que si los Miembros del Consejo estamos refrendando las conclusiones de cada una de las Conferencias y hacemos referencia a los documentos e informes respectivos, no es para nada necesario reiterar en un informe de Consejo cada una de las conclusiones, porque en este caso tendríamos un informe del Consejo en este punto de 20 o 30 páginas.

Es decir, con todo respecto, si determinados países entienden que es muy importante alguna cuestión que se trató en la Conferencia de tal región o tal región, también América Latina podría entender que es importante que se viera reflejado el tema de pesca, silvicultura, agricultura, bosques - pero esto no sería posible. Estamos refrendando en bloque en el primer párrafo, todas las conclusiones de las Conferencias, y estamos remitiéndonos a los informes que tenemos en nuestras carpetas y que de alguna forma, nos están trayendo las conclusiones. Es decir, en este momento no entiendo desde el punto de vista de procedimiento cómo haríamos cada una de las regiones para reiterar las mismas conclusiones que están en los documentos y refrendarlas cuando las estamos ya refrendando en su primer párrafo.

Si alguien me pudiera explicar, cual es la intención de incluir las mismas cuestiones y temas que estamos refrendando para mi delegación, sería de alguna forma algo muy importante, porque entendemos que estamos entrando en una situación de redundancia muy grande y nos parece muy claro que si de alguna forma tenemos un chapón en primer párrafo que confirma y refrenda todas las conclusiones de cada una de las Conferencias Regionales, ello ya basta para no interferir o intervenir en cada uno de los temas nuevamente de las conferencias para incluirlo en su informe, porque si no esto va a ser interminable. América Latina va a tener muchísimas cosas también que incluir en sus conclusiones que han sido dichas en el plenario pero ya están en nuestro informe que estamos refrendando.

Mr Mostafa Kamal HELMY (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

Our delegation wishes to keep point (f) here because it tackles the recommendations of the Regional Conference on the necessity to promote Decentralized Offices and this would not deter us from discussing this issue again under item 8.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

Liberia takes the floor to re-echo here the issues discussed. We fully endorse what was said by Argentina in your opening statement.

Mr Chairperson, you clearly stated that we are endorsing all of the recommendations of the Regional Conferences. That is what you said. Therefore at this point you cannot claim that Africa's recommendations have not been endorsed.

Further to my intervention, the trends and issues in food and agriculture for regional and national action in the context of the SDGs is not decentralization. It is before decentralization and that within the aid. So I do not know where your selectivity is coming from, Mr Chairperson, and we ask that

Africa's position be considered or else we will raise these issues in the Drafting Committee and we do not want to delay the progress we are making. So it is better that we handle the issues now so that we can progress. Kindly address the issue of Africa.

CHAIRPERSON

Distinguished Members of the Council, I do take all of the issues raised here very seriously from every Member. For what I remember, I do not take issues only from a certain group, I am very impartial, and please agree with me that I take seriously the issues raised by Africa in the report.

My guidance is that when we come to the item on Decentralized Offices Network, that is where the substantive comments that you raised and that you wanted to see come out of the report will be reflected. If they are not there at that time, then you can repeat them as much as you want. But at this time, I do not agree with you.

Sra. Mónica ROBELO RAFFONE (Nicaragua)

En primer lugar, quisiera sumarme a lo muy lógico que ha sido expresado por Argentina. En segundo lugar, Usted presentó un resumen sobre los resultados de la Conferencia Regional y es bien cierto que uno de ellos es el tema de la descentralización.

Sin embargo, siendo que este punto va a ser tocado en el tema ocho, quiere decir que si aceptamos la propuesta de África, vamos a tener un informe en que las conclusiones se van a repetir en los dos apartados. Es decir, vamos a tener un informe con las mismas conclusiones, y es una cuestión de lógica y también de la forma en que vamos a presentar, digamos, los informes, no me parece que tiene alguna cabida, solamente una confusión que estamos creando. Por lo cual, nosotros no estamos de acuerdo en lo absoluto con la propuesta, y apoyamos el resumen que Usted hizo en su momento.

Mr Vimlendra SHARAN (India)

A very small intervention to say that we agree with your summary and ask for retention of point (f) because even if we go into the substantive details of Decentralized Offices under Agenda item 8, we think that not giving it a place under Regional Conferences would not be correct as that was an issue discussed and has been talked about by every Regional Conference.

So a mention of Decentralized Offices and the views expressed must be there and the substantive issues could be taken up under Agenda item 8.

Sra. Sarah EL HABTI (Marruecos)

Sólo para decir que la Delegación de Marruecos quería añadir su voz a aquella de la Argentina y apoyar el resumen inicial dado por Usted.

Mr Mhutang SELEKA (South Africa)

I think at the outset you made it quite clear that in view of the fact that there is a standalone item on decentralization, issues that pertain to that in a much deeper sense would be discussed under that item.

However, all other issues pertaining to the Regional Conferences besides that one will be entered. I think that your summary reflects all issues that were raised here but that were not part of a standalone item. In that regard, therefore, I think what you said, it is not a question of discriminating or leaving out someone else.

You made it quite clear that because of the fact that item 8 is a standalone item and the others in general terms are not standalone, and I think it is in that sense that you give a summation that includes all of them in a basket form. Therefore people should not feel bad because in any event they are still going to raise those issues when we come to item 8.

So I am therefore, through you, Chairperson, asking for the indulgence and understanding of delegates who have been speaking on these particular matters so that we can therefore be able to move ahead.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, South Africa. Through me, I accept your call for indulgence.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

While we do agree with our distinguished colleagues to push forward the issues that were mentioned earlier, we want to say to you that the regional and global policy on regulatory matters have nothing to do with decentralization. They are not in that block.

So there are two issues here that I raised. One, the decentralized issues that we talked about, we can accept to defer it to item 8. But not the issue about the regional and global policy on regulatory matters that has to do with paragraph 18 of the Report of the Regional Conference for Africa.

Where it says, "recommended FAO..." and then you have two points. If you read it you will understand what I am alluding to.

CHAIRPERSON

Could you please read the paragraph?

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

Under section II, Regional and Global Policy on Regulatory Matters, Part B deals with Trends and Issues in Food and Agriculture for Regional and National Action in the context of the SDGs.

The recommendation under paragraph 18 reads, "recommended FAO (i) to continue to provide its knowledge and expertise to help Member States effectively address these trends and issues in food and agriculture, in particular in the areas of: (a) value chain development; (b) youth employment; (c) information and communication technology and agriculture; (d) social protection; (e) trade-related policies and agreements; (f) data, information systems and statistics to improve policies and strategies as well as M&E systems; and, (g) resilience building for climate change adaptation and mitigation."

So you can then summarize it in comma, because for us in Africa data collection is a challenge, it is a very critical issue. Data information systems and statistics, and many other countries made also reference to that point.

This is not part of the item on Decentralized Offices like our previous statement that was made, and we can agree to defer that to that point, underlining that it would have the same magnitude as it is here or wheresoever you decide, Mr Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Liberia. You are correct from what you have read, but if the document is read well, these are matters requiring the attention of the Conference, not of the Council. The Council deals with programme and budgetary matters. So I think what is expressed here is an issue for the Conference. I hope you will understand me.

Mr Salah AL BAZZAZ (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

Mr Chairperson, could I request that you read out again what you read out earlier so that everything is clear? Could you please read it out again, paragraph by paragraph? Thank you.

Sr. Elias Rafael ELJURI ABRAHAM (República Bolivariana de Venezuela)

Voy a refrendar las intervenciones que han hecho los Embajadores de Argentina y Nicaragua y yo creo que realmente todo lo que aprobaron en las Conferencias Regionales ha sido refrendado en el informe que presenta el Presidente Independiente. Así que yo considero que no tiene ningún sentido que continuemos una discusión, porque si así como - yo no creo que desde ningún punto de vista exista ningún interés en discriminar a ninguna región.

Yo creo que todas las regiones hemos planteado una serie de cosas que consideramos, que de acuerdo a lo que se informa, están consideradas y están aprobadas en el informe, así que en consecuencia, cualquier problema adicional, por ejemplo en las oficinas descentralizadas, lo veremos en el punto ocho, y cualquier problema que tenga que discutirse, bueno se discutirá posteriormente, pero yo creo que es suficiente ese párrafo que está señalado en donde se refrenda todo lo que aprobaron las Conferencias Regionales. Así es que yo doy mi apoyo al informe que presentó el Presidente Independiente.

CHAIRPERSON

I will read the conclusions again.

One, the Council examined and endorsed the conclusions of the five Regional Conferences and the Informal Regional Conference for North America, held between February and May 2016, as contained in their respective reports.

Two, concerning programme and budget matters, the Council:

(a) welcomed the support expressed by the Regional Conferences for continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization;

(b) appreciated the progress reported in 2014-15 and supported the endorsement of the 15 regional initiatives in 2016-17;

(c) underlined the importance of the continued use and strengthening of strategic partnerships, including at regional level, South-South Cooperation and Triangulation, as well as monitoring for SDG implementation, including food loss and waste.

(d) recommended that the outcomes of the Regional Conferences and the Informal North American Regional Conference inform the review of the Strategic Framework and preparation of the Medium-Term Plan 2018-21;

(e) welcomed the acknowledgement made by all of the Regional Conferences for the need and expediency to update the coverage of the offices in all regions, and their support and guidance to the principles and general criteria identified by the Independent Review of the Decentralized Offices Network;

(f) appreciated the progress made by the Organization to decentralize roles and responsibilities and encouraged FAO to continue its efforts on decentralization while ensuring the adequate technical capacity at all levels; and

(g) appreciated the progress made towards dissemination of FAO publications in all languages.

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

I do not want to stand in the way of adopting a decision on this. I would just like to suggest a small drafting amendment which is to substitute “follow-up” for the word “monitoring” with reference to the SDGs in order to be congruent with the outcome of the negotiation process in New York.

So when you say “monitoring the SDGs”, please say “following up on SDG implementation”.

And with that, of course I will join your decision on adopting these conclusions.

Mr Salah AL BAZZAZ (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

You have referred to the fact that the Council “appreciates the progress made” with respect to dissemination of documents in all languages, and we had requested greater efforts in this area. So we insist on the fact that much more progress is needed on this specific point.

CHAIRPERSON

Let me go back to point (c), “underlined the importance of the continued use and strengthening of strategic partnerships, including at regional level, South-South Cooperation and Triangulation, as well as following-up on SDG implementation, including food loss and waste”.

And point (g), “encouraged continued efforts towards dissemination of FAO publications in all languages”.

Ms Gerda VERBURG (Observer for Netherlands)

I am speaking on behalf of the EU and its 28 Member States, including San Marino and Montenegro.

My proposal is to make it simpler. As I proposed the first time, let us not try to cover everything here since your first and second points were crystal clear. We endorsed the report and you told us that with

the report in hand, FAO should work *vis-à-vis* the future and also come forward with concrete, informed proposals for the next period.

When it comes to points (e) and (f) of your summary, I sincerely think it is easier and simpler also later on to reread the report, to delete these points here since we have a special item on Decentralized Offices. Not to create confusion that you have to read under two items and topics on it and also to keep the final report of this Council clear and concise as was meant by the Ambassador of Argentina and was underscored by others.

So my proposal is to delete here points (e) and (f) and to reflect this together with what was requested by Africa and the Near East Group under Decentralized Offices under item 8.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Mr Chairperson, we are satisfied with the last version of your summary. Please, let us close this item.

CHAIRPERSON

Netherlands, when you raised the issue I asked the Members if they wanted this point deleted from my conclusions, but they have responded already to you, and this will be for point (e). This is what I can say. I urge you please to accept the conclusions as I have read them now with the additional corrections last made by Brazil and Kuwait which I have included.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

I was just intervening to support the Netherlands' intervention. I just cannot see how we can include points (e) and (f) when we specifically said that we were not going to cover decentralization in any detail under this item.

I recall Australia, as part of our intervention, saying explicitly in response to your request that we would not talk about decentralization because there was a specific item on this. So I am a little bit confused because, as far as I understood, we did not have a detailed discussion agreeing to the criteria that is in the paper for that item because we are having a specific discussion on it later under item 8.

That is not to say that we have any issues with what is being proposed under that item. It is more a point of order in terms of the discussion here today and making sure that the summary reflects the discussion today.

So I guess I share the same position as the Netherlands on behalf of the EU as to why in this summary for this item we are now including two sub-items specifically on decentralization.

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

We do not think that including point (f) here is in the interest of well-conceived discussion on decentralization. We would recommend to deal in-depth on this issue when discussing item 8. So we fully align ourselves with what the Netherlands said before.

Mr Majid DEGHAN-SHOAR (Islamic Republic of Iran)

I repeat my request that you include food safety as it is very important for all of the region.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

Ecuador considera que es sumamente relevante la mención aquí de la descentralización, porque ha sido un criterio compartido por todas las Conferencias Regionales. Nos parecería bastante extraño que un informe con las Conferencias Regionales no se mencione el tema de descentralización, cuando son justamente esas Conferencias Regionales las que valúan el trabajo en el campo de la descentralización. Y consideramos de mucho interés de que se mantenga esa referencia aquí, y que como digo aquí y sin perjuicio de que se aborde de manera más a fondo detalladamente en los otros temas que además se refieren a cuestiones más específicas, aquí, las Conferencias Regionales han resaltado el rol de la descentralización. Más adelante, se lo hará de manera específica en cuanto a las oficinas.

Mr Godfrey C. MACGWENZI (Zimbabwe)

Mr Chairperson, I want to support your summary of the discussion this afternoon on this item. I think we should keep the items as they are. The Regional Conferences indeed have had a robust discussion on this item and we have to maintain that connection even in a light way as you have summarized it, then have a more substantive discussion later on.

We have to acknowledge that this matter was discussed by the Regional Conferences. We cannot run away from that.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

In my earlier intervention I was not inferring at all that the Regional Conferences did not discuss decentralization. In fact, we had a paper specifically about the coverage of the Decentralized Offices Network and so there was a discussion around that and I am not saying there was not a discussion.

All I am inferring is that at the start of this item, my recall was that the Chair specifically said there was another item dealing with decentralization and that we would hold over the discussion from the Regional Conferences dealing with decentralization for that later discussion under item 8. That is my clear recall. As a result a number of countries when they made interventions deliberately did not intervene in relation to the discussion about decentralization at their Regional Conference.

If I look at the Report of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific, the discussion around decentralization occurred under the one item dealing with decentralization. I guess I am just raising this because, as I understood it, at the start of the discussion the clear direction was that the discussion on this matter would come under item 8. I am not taking issue with the content that I disagree or agree. It is more the procedure around putting it into the Report under this particular item.

Mr Salah AL BAZZAZ (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

Why not add one sentence to your point (e), The Council expressed its satisfaction with regard to the coverage of Decentralized Offices and then we can add that the issue will be discussed in greater detail under the following agenda item.

Mr Abreha ASEFFA (Ethiopia)

Although the details will be discussed under Agenda item 8, I think it is right to stick to the points that you summarized.

Mr Vimlendra SHARAN (India)

At the cost of reiterating but I must say a time will come when somebody will want to read the Council's summary on Regional Conferences and at that time when you read a standalone summary of the Council on Regional Conferences and you do not find a mention about decentralization, I do not think that would be very fair. You could not then ask the reader to go to some other item to understand what FAO Council said about decentralization.

Moreover, I would like to draw your attention to paragraph 42 of the Report of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific which is beyond discussion of the Decentralized Office Network under paragraphs 30 and 31. It clearly says that "The Regional Conference appreciated steps taken to decentralize roles, responsibilities, authorities and resources and urged FAO to continue such decentralization efforts, while improving the technical capacity of the Organization".

Now this is distinct from the discussions which took place under paragraphs 30 and 31 and as we reported there. So I think it is fair to have a mention of decentralization in the Council Report summarizing Regional Conferences and do the substantive discussion under Agenda item 8. Not to mention it at all I do not think would be an accurate summary. I would urge that your summary as you read out be adopted by the Council.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Argentina)

Nada más que luego de esta discusión que está siendo, como decimos en español, una vuelta o una noria o rond point, y bueno sentimos un poco de cansancio sobre esto. La Argentina en este sentido

quisiera apoyar obviamente las conclusiones que Usted realizó; creemos que eran balanceadas y que recogían los puntos fundamentales de las Conferencias Regionales, refrendándolas además todas.

Tener esta discusión aquí sobre descentralización en un párrafo que Usted ha incluido, que es un párrafo muy neutro, yo he sido Presidente del Comité de Programa recientemente y el párrafo es neutralísimo, tener toda esta discusión de media hora o cuarenta minutos sobre este tema, habiendo leído las recomendaciones de las cinco Conferencias Regionales le diría que provoca un poco, como se dice en español, de hastío.

Mr Jianmin XIE (China) (Original language Chinese)

I have been listening to the interventions. I think the divergence is in the points (e) and (f) and I think it seems that everyone has their reasons behind it.

Could we add one sentence after point (f) to say that the detailed opinions or discussions will be elaborated under item 8 so that that point mentions that we talked about Decentralized Offices but more detailed discussions can be found under the conclusion of the item 8.

CHAIRPERSON

I think we can come to an end on this issue and stop going around in circles. I hear caution. I do not think that by having these two points (e) and (f) you are watering anything down from the discussion which will take place under item 8. Item 8 is on coverage of Decentralized Offices. Here the mention is on decentralization which is not the same as the coverage of the Decentralized Offices where we will be going deeper and you will note that when we come there that you have not lost anything and there will not be any repetition. May I urge you Members to accept this summary which I have read with some few changes which have been made by some Members?

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

I would like to recommend to consider the suggestion made by the Distinguished Delegate from China.

CHAIRPERSON

China, may we hear your wisdom. Can you repeat what you said?

Mr Jianmin XIE (China) (Original language Chinese)

I was suggesting to add one sentence in point (f) saying that detailed conclusion will be elaborated further under item 8.

CHAIRPERSON

I hope this now will be agreed and let me say from the start what China has proposed as a way out will go under point (e). In the order that the Drafting Committee gets the right signals, I will go back and read my conclusion for the third time and maybe the last time and I hope Members will agree.

(1) The Council examined and endorsed the conclusions of the five Regional Conferences and the Informal Regional Conference for North America, held between February and May 2016, as contained in their respective reports.

(2) Concerning programme and budget matters, the Council:

(a) Welcomed the support expressed by the Regional Conferences for continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization.

(b) Appreciated the progress reported in 2014-15 and supported the endorsement of the 15 regional initiatives in 2016-17.

(c) Underlined the importance of the continued use in strengthening of strategic partnerships including at regional level, South-South Cooperation and Triangulation, as well as follow-up on SDG implementation, including food safety and food loss and waste.

(d) Recommended that the outcomes of the Regional Conferences and the Informal North American Regional Conference inform the review of the Strategic Framework and preparation of the Medium Term Plan for 2018-21.

(e) Welcomed the acknowledgement made by all the 2016 Regional Conferences for the need and expediency to update the coverage of the Decentralized Offices in all regions, and their support and guidance to the principles and general criteria identified by the Independent Review of the Decentralized Offices Network, and noted that the matter would be elaborated under the relevant item.

(f) Appreciated the progress made with the Organization to decentralize roles and responsibilities and encouraged FAO to continue its efforts on decentralization while ensuring adequate technical capacity.

(g) Encouraged continued efforts towards dissemination of FAO publication in all languages.

Thank you, everybody.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

I thought you had read out previously under point (f) “technical capacity at all levels”. That was not in your summary then. I was just checking is it in or out?

CHAIRPERSON

It is there: (f) Appreciated the progress made by the Organization to decentralize roles and responsibilities and encouraged FAO to continue its efforts on decentralization while ensuring the adequate technical capacity at all levels.

Mr Majid DEGHAN-SHOAR (Islamic Republic of Iran)

Regarding monitoring, action taken toward SDGs and I have not heard anything about monitoring and evaluation toward SDGs which was emphasized by the Director-General which is among other things.

CHAIRPERSON

That was there before Brazil came in with a proposal. Maybe Brazil can elaborate?

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

Brazil has no issues with the expressions “monitoring” and “evaluation” when it refers to domestic monitoring and evaluation. But the sentence as it reads refers to partnerships and in that sense Brazil has proposed to use the General Assembly language which refers to “follow-up of implementation of the SDGs” so that there is no misinterpretation of who is doing the monitoring and evaluation.

Mr Majid DEGHAN-SHOAR (Islamic Republic of Iran)

All the developing countries, as Brazil was saying, need statistical systems and updated tools to monitor and evaluate action taken toward the SDGs. If monitoring and evaluation is national, that needs to be focused and capacity-building is needed in that sense.

CHAIRPERSON

Monitoring and following up.

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

I am sorry, I will not be able to follow that language. Monitoring is an exclusive competence of national governments. The sentence as it reads implies that the FAO partnerships will have a role in that which is not in following up with the outcome of the negotiations at the General Assembly. I do think the point made by the Distinguished Representative of Iran, however a quick fix, will not contemplate his point.

The sentence which refers to partnerships should stick to the notion of following up. Monitoring and evaluation is something totally different and if you wish to further elaborate on this we can have a separate discussion but I do not think at this stage we should be dwelling on such complex matters.

CHAIRPERSON

Iran, do you agree with Brazil?

Mr Majid DEGHAN-SHOAR (Islamic Republic of Iran)

I agree as he mentioned these are two separate issues. Separate issues we are all trying, by 2030, to achieve SDGs but for that one should be capacity-building as Africa was mentioning. Capacity-building in each country to monitor what is happening for them. Have they got any progress toward achievement? They need monitoring evaluation and a system of monitoring. The traditional system which we have is impossible to have a fast total collection interpretation for monitoring and evaluation.

CHAIRPERSON

Under item 6, the Report of the Programme Committee, we will be discussing the issue on the monitoring on the SDGs please.

Mr Mhutang SELEKA (South Africa)

Chairperson, I think you have made it much easier because I thought I was trying to be helpful because I saw the way both of them were coming from but I think that is a better position. I throw my weight behind it.

CHAIRPERSON

I thank you Members for this thorough discussion and for listening to my conclusions. I can say we have come to the end of Agenda item 4.

Item 8. Coverage of FAO Decentralized Offices**Point 8. Couverture des bureaux décentralisés de la FAO****Tema 8. Cobertura de las oficinas descentralizadas de la FAO**

(CL 154/6 Rev.1)

CHAIRPERSON

We now move on to item 8 on the agenda, *Coverage of FAO Decentralized Offices*, contained in document CL 154/6 Rev.1.

Please note that document CL 154/5, *Report of the Joint Meeting of the 119th Session of the Programme Committee and the 161st Session of the Finance Committee*, also refers to this item in paragraphs 6 and 7.

I invite Mr Dan Gustafson, Deputy Director-General Operations, to introduce the Report.

Mr Daniel J. GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General Operations)

I had been hoping to be very brief on this item and I hope I still can be. Yet, it is always and it had been in earlier situations complicated for us to discuss issues that on the one hand are treated in each of the Regional Conferences and then come up again as a separate item. Those of you who are here will recall we had the same difficulty in 2012, I believe. However, just to recap.

As the Zimbabwe Representative said, we have had a very robust discussion and I think very fruitful discussion in each of the Regional Conferences in some detail on coverage issues. In Latin America for example, one of the issues was the use of Liaison and Partnership Offices with a higher contribution from the host country in upper middle-income and high-income countries.

In the Asian Pacific Regional Conference, there was a discussion. So they came up with a proposal in the document to add an assistant FAO Representative for Micronesia, as we have done in four other countries to facilitate coverage in the countries in the northern part of that subregion given the huge distances and the difficulties among other things.

Each of the Regional Conferences had quite specific issues in the paper and quite specific issues in the discussion. Those conclusions are contained, as we have just seen, in each of the Regional Conference Reports. The proposed language now is to endorse the recommendations contained in those Regional

Conference Reports. I will not go into the detail in each of those, which has been covered in the Regional Conferences and in their conclusions. Then, we consider those recommendations to be adopted when that report is adopted by the Council.

Within that set of let us say proposals or options, a few of those require a decision of the Council.

Most of the rest are actions that can be taken within the purview of the Director-General taking into account the guidance from Members and the dialogue that we had at the Regional Conferences. The two issues that require Council's approval concern a new Subregional Office for West Africa and a new subregional office for Mashriq countries in Lebanon. If I could just go into those very briefly.

In the case of West Africa, there had been a separate West Africa subregional office for some years co-located in the Regional Office in Accra. In 2013, I believe this was merged into the Regional Office although the staff concerned, while not being strictly limited to West Africa, remain the team that focuses in their technical assistance in the West Africa region more so than those that have region-wide, Africa-wide responsibilities.

Nevertheless, in all Regional Offices and in all Subregional Offices, our staff and at headquarters likewise or in Country Offices, depending on the requirements and their specialization and so on, may certainly be utilized in any place. The geographic limitation is an orientation and not a barrier.

Now, the proposal is to create a Subregional Office outside of Ghana, outside of Accra, either in Côte d'Ivoire or in Senegal, as we have heard this morning in the Regional Conference from Africa paper. That will require your decision.

We would not expect that this, within the policy of being cost neutral, would imply additional PWB posts. There would be additional, one-time costs and we would hope that the host countries would be able to provide some support in terms of office space and so on, but that we will have to see.

So, the first decision concerns the recreation of a Subregional Office for West Africa, based – not co-located with the Accra Regional Office.

The second one is on the Lebanon Subregional Office, which is a new office altogether and this first was approved by the Regional Conference in an earlier Regional Conference in 2012.

I believe, and within the policy, that this would not likewise imply additional PWB posts. Yet, we are recognizing and grateful as the Regional Conference for the Near East considers the offer of administrative, financial and logistical support from the Government of Lebanon.

Those are the two decisions that we cannot move on without approval of the Council.

The other issues that came up in the Regional Conferences we will deal with as we go along to the extent that we can. There is, for example, a recommendation given from the Regional Conference for Europe to consider adding an office in Uzbekistan, provided again it is done within a cost-neutral basis and so on.

Each of the regions have those. We understand the sense of the Regional Conference and what is in the conclusions and we are taking all of those into account.

The only additional item or the additional instruction in the decisions for the Council portion of this paper relates to the point that Liberia and others have mentioned from the Africa Region. The point is not to consider the transportation facilities as a criterion as it had been proposed or discussed in the earlier decentralization paper as one of the areas that might be used in looking at a repositioning of offices.

There are no proposals on the table either from the Regional Conferences or in here for decision that utilize that criterion, but it is in fact mentioned here under this item. Again, it comes up in the paper coming out of the Joint Meeting.

But, in any case, the decisions are for the Council's approval. Those are indicated under 1A on the two Subregional Offices. We take into consideration all your discussion and all the conclusions and recommendations from the Regional Conferences to the extent possible as we go along.

CHAIRPERSON

This issue was discussed by the Joint Committee of the Programme and the Finance Committees, and I would like now to call upon the Chairperson who presided over that Joint Meeting, Mr Khalid Mehboob, to report on discussions held on this item at the last session of the Joint Meeting.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

I am pleased to report on the discussions on the Joint Meeting of the 199th Session of the Programme Committee and the 161st Session of the Finance Committee on the issue of coverage of Decentralized Offices.

The report of the Joint Meeting is submitted to the Council in document CL 154/5. The Joint Meeting recognized the need to update the coverage of FAO Decentralized Offices and reconfirmed support for the principles and criteria identified by the Independent Review of the Decentralized Offices Network.

It invited the Council to endorse the regional-specific recommendations, which were expressed by the 2016 Regional Conferences.

The Joint Meeting also stressed the need to continue pursuing efforts to consolidate decentralization, while emphasizing the importance of adequate technical capacity at headquarters and in decentralized locations. The mentioned report supported the creation of new offices and upgrades on a cost-neutral basis.

The use of Partnership and Liaison offices as well as multiple accreditation offices with an FAO representative located in another office was also supported. The Joint Meeting noted the viewpoints expressed by the African Regional Conference as reflected in its report.

In particular, the Joint Meeting observed that the criterion for the system of transportation might be used to guide the review process in Africa as well as the need for flexibility and adjustments to the Decentralized Offices coverage to respond to the many challenges posed by hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in the region.

Sra. Mónica ROBELO RAFFONE (Nicaragua)

Mi Delegación agradece al Presidente del Comité de Finanza la presentación del documento CL 154/5 y la presentación del documento CL 154/6, al tiempo que destaca la importancia de que el tema de la cobertura de la oficina descentralizada haya sido profundizado por conducto de la Conferencias Regionales, lo que vincula este proceso directamente con la visión y las necesidades de los países miembros.

Reiteramos la importancia de consolidar estos esfuerzos de descentralización en pro de una mayor eficiencia y fortaleza sobre el terreno, y en particular de actualizar la cobertura de la oficina de la FAO de conformidad con los retos actuales, tomando en cuenta que los cambios que se realicen deberán seguir asegurando el diálogo, el fortalecimiento y el apoyo a los gobiernos en función de las estrategias y prioridades nacionales.

A nuestro criterio, el reforzamiento de las oficinas descentralizadas de forma específica para cada región constituye a su vez el reforzamiento de las capacidades de la sede. Entendemos que el fortalecimiento de las oficinas descentralizadas repercute en la calidad técnica de toda la organización, tanto en la sede como en el terreno. Consideramos que la implementación de este proceso deberá ir acompañado de medidas que aseguren mayor sinergia en el terreno de los tres Organismos radicados en Roma, de cara a la agenda 2030, en la adopción de un enfoque integrado e integral, y lo que respecta a la seguridad alimentaria, la nutrición, la agricultura familiar, la gestión sostenible de los recursos naturales y la adaptación al cambio climático, reflejado en los programas nacionales así como identificados dentro de las prioridades regionales.

Consideramos válida la opción de establecer oficinas de acreditación múltiple o la Oficina de Asociación y Enlace, siempre y cuando cuenten con equipos reforzados, con personal técnico capacitado y recursos financieros sostenibles.

Finalmente queremos refrendar las recomendaciones del comité conjunto sobre este tema y en particular apoyamos la propuesta de crear una nueva oficina sub-regional para el África Occidental, así como la de establecer una Oficina Subregional para los países del Máshreq.

Ms Sri SULIHANTI (Indonesia)

Indonesia is delivering this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

First and foremost, we welcome the review made by all five 2016 FAO Regional Conferences on the coverage of FAO decentralized offices as well as this good report from the Secretariat on the same context.

We noted that each of the five Regional Conferences did acknowledge and agree to the fact that it is very important to review the coverage and the Decentralized Office Network of FAO Offices to ensure that it is in line with the current developments and requirements to achieve better efficiency and effectiveness. We noted that there are Regional Conferences which took up this issue in different ways but acknowledge the matter of their concerns.

On that note, we are also in line with the recognition by Regional Conferences for a need to update the office coverage and Decentralized Office Network. We acknowledge the importance for FAO to integrate its levels of action to become closer to Member Nations through decentralization of offices. Country presence is important for FAO to maintain and strengthen its dialogue and communication with Members.

However, we wish to appeal to this Council that creation of new offices or the support for upgrades would have to be implemented on a cost-neutral basis. We strongly believe that cost effectiveness must be taken into consideration.

Moreover, a complete picture of the reorganisation of the Decentralized Office Network and supporting information to confirm cost neutrality has not been presented to the Member Nations and therefore the Asia Group expects the Secretariat to provide the information in a timely manner including the estimated cost for this reorganisation and expected funding sources with appropriate breakdown.

We further encourage any cooperation optimization practice such as locating Partnership and Liaison Offices as well as multiple accreditation offices with an FAO Representative in another country.

In that respect, we wish to reiterate the importance of higher priorities for country offices to be given to low-income and lower middle-income economies.

Lastly, we encourage the Secretariat to continue consolidation of decentralization efforts, and enhancing capacity and internal control at decentralized locations, while maintaining the technical capacity at headquarters to achieve the delivery of programme of work.

Mr Mostafa Kamal HELMY (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

The Delegation of Egypt reads this statement on behalf of the Near East Group. We would like to confirm the following points regarding the Decentralized Network.

First, the Near East Group supports and welcomes the efforts of the FAO in conducting a study on the coverage of the Decentralized Offices in line with the last Session of the Council of the FAO held in December 2015. We suppose that the norms proposed are the appropriate basis to promote the work of these offices.

Second, our region confirms as well that these efforts should be targeted first. The promotion of Regional Offices in a way that meets the increasing challenges faced by many regions, on top of them the Near East Region that is suffering from many humanitarian crises that impacted negatively their food security and agricultural development. This requires the need to support the Regional Office for the Near East Region in Cairo as soon as possible and implement the recommendations of the Regional Conference held in Rome between 9 and 13 May 2016.

Third, our region supports fully the recommendations of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees, particularly recommendation 6 b), related to the support of Regional Offices in

order to meet their needs and challenges, and we support the need to implement this recommendation as soon as possible.

Fourth, the presence of two Subregional Offices of the FAO in the Near East Region in Tunisia and the UAE and the agreement to establish a new Subregional Office in Beirut is a very important, positive development to support the main Regional Office of the FAO in Cairo.

We believe that the work of these subregional groups or offices would not diminish the mandate of the Cairo office to the countries in need to support and due to the increasing humanitarian crises across the region, whether they are political or social, economic as well. We would like to confirm the need for the Near East Regional Group to more support in order to achieve its role as appropriately required.

Five, we would like to discuss the conclusions of this study on the technical capacities at the FAO headquarters and in addition to the upcoming studies that will constitute a basis in order to develop the technical capacities of the Organization.

Mr Jianmin XIE (China) (Original language Chinese)

I would like to thank the Secretariat for providing the documents. We support the speech by the Indonesian Delegation on behalf of the Asia Group. China agrees to the decisions made by the policy about the readjustment of the Decentralized Offices.

China reaffirms the strengthening of the offices in developing countries, especially their technical capacity. The work should be done in accordance with different levels of these countries for upgrading and readjustment. At the same time, these capacities should be in line with the request related.

We suggest FAO will give all around assessment. At the same time, information will be distributed on the upgrading and also the increase of these offices.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

El Ecuador quiere agradecer por la presentación del documento sobre la cobertura de las oficinas descentralizadas, que incluye las recomendaciones y decisiones emanadas de las Conferencias Regionales.

Al respecto, respaldamos que el Consejo haga suyas las decisiones de las Conferencias Regionales sobre este tema que, en general, respaldan los criterios generales y principios para la revisión de la cobertura de las oficinas descentralizadas. Apoyamos también las recomendaciones de la Reunión Conjunta de los Comités del Programa y de Finanzas, entre ellas la de perseverar en los esfuerzos para consolidar la descentralización, con el objetivo de promover una red de oficinas descentralizadas armoniosa y eficaz.

El reajuste de la cobertura de las oficinas descentralizadas, debería hacerse de manera flexible y, caso por caso, donde se ponderen las características específicas de las regiones y de cada país. En este contexto, los marcos de programación por países son instrumentos muy valiosos que deberían tomarse en cuenta, ya que ayudarán a entender y determinar esas características y necesidades.

En nuestro criterio los cambios que se realicen tienen que ir de la mano de un reforzamiento de la descentralización, en cuanto al fortalecimiento de las capacidades técnicas, un claro entendimiento por parte del personal de las nuevas oficinas del alcance de sus nuevas funciones y responsabilidades, una mayor capacidad de gestión y toma de decisiones, entre otros aspectos, a fin de garantizar una rápida y eficiente respuesta a las necesidades de las regiones y de los países.

Con esos comentarios respaldamos las recomendaciones de la Reunión Conjunta.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Monsieur le Président, je vous serais infiniment reconnaissante si vous vouliez bien passer la parole à la présidence de l'Union européenne pour une déclaration.

Ms Gerda VERBURG (Observer for Netherlands)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States, the candidate countries to the EU, Albania, Montenegro, Turkey, and on behalf of San Marino.

We thank the Secretariat for document CL 154/6 Rev.1 on the coverage of FAO decentralised offices. Consolidating the FAO decentralisation process deserves great interest and attention.

We agree with the four principles and the five general criteria proposed for the Council decisions in paragraph 2 for determining the coverage of FAO decentralised offices. In particular, we underline that this process should be cost neutral with respect to the Regular Programme budgeted resources devoted to the Decentralised Offices Network. For the sake of clarity, we suggest that the Council report includes a summary of the agreed principles and the general criteria for the review of the Decentralised Offices Network referred to in paragraph 2 a) of the document.

We would like to add that while consolidating the decentralised capacities, the technical capacities of FAO should be fully maintained at FAO headquarters, in order to fulfil FAO's mandate. We therefore suggest that maintaining technical capacity at headquarters should be a guiding principle for planning staff allocation.

We also note the importance of taking into account the UN's 'Delivering as One' approach in the decentralisation process and stress the importance of Country Programming Frameworks and their integration into broader corporate planning processes, as well as the alignment of all activities with the Strategic Objectives of the Organization.

Regarding our region, we are satisfied with the positive results concerning the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia. We recall that the Regional Conference for Europe has recommended not to change the location of the regional and subregional offices at this point in time. We appreciate that the Liaison Office in Brussels is scheduled to play a more active role in the relationship with the EU and its 28 Member States. However, as already stated in Antalya, before taking any decision on the options for change for Europe and Central Asia, we would kindly ask FAO to provide some additional information, in particular regarding which duties will be transferred from REU to other offices.

We are looking forward to regular reports and continuous evaluation to inform FAO headquarters and the Governing Bodies about the work done in the field so as to continue to improve the Organisation's efficiency.

Finally, we can go along with the proposal to establish a subregional office for West Africa, based in a francophone country. This could be either Côte d'Ivoire or Senegal, the location is to be determined by the Director-General, in consultation with the countries concerned.

Ms Wimopporn THITISAK (Thailand)

Thailand associates itself with the statement made by the Asia Group. We reaffirm the need for the adjustment of the coverage of the FAO decentralized offices to achieve greater efficiency.

For us, transportation linkages remain one of the important criteria among others. We are in favour of a cost-neutral proposal. Further, FAO should also explore potential gain and savings in terms of 'economy of scale' and 'economy of scope' when decide to adjustment the coverage and open a new office.

Thailand endorses the recommendation of the Joint Meeting on coverage of FAO decentralized offices.

Mr Mhutang SELEKA (South Africa)

This statement is delivered on behalf of the Africa Group. During the 153rd Session of the FAO Council held in November to December 2015, the need for a review of the Decentralized Offices Network was identified. It was also agreed that the review paper be submitted for review to the respective 2016 Regional Conferences and that the June 2016 Session would re-examine the matter.

Africa welcomed the review and proudly supported the proposed principles and criteria used for the review, as this would ensure greater efficiency in the implementation of FAO Strategic Objectives. The April 2016 Regional Conference for Africa questioned one of the criteria proposed by the Independent Review of Decentralized Offices Network, namely that of transportation linkages.

The Africa Regional Conference indicated that this criterion cannot be used to guide the review process in the Africa Region but would however explore other logically sound and useful criteria that FAO uses in making decisions guided by FAO interventions at the national, regional and international levels.

Africa kindly submits the following decision taken at the 29th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa for endorsement by Council:

One, create a separate Subregional Office for West Africa based in a Francophone country either in Cote d'Ivoire or Senegal, the location of which will be determined by the Director-General in consultation with the Councils concerned.

Two, additionally, the Council might wish to reiterate the following principles already stated by previous Council's resolutions or by some Regional Conferences:

- a) Broadly support the proposed principles and general criteria of the Independent Review of the Decentralized Offices Network for refining the coverage of FAO Offices while noting the view expressed by the Africa Regional Conference on the criterion with respect to transportation linkages.
- b) Reaffirmed the need to readjust the coverage of the Decentralized Offices in a flexible manner and with no increase in overall cost of the Decentralized Network Budget.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, that brings us to the end of this afternoon's meeting. Before we close, I will pass the floor to the Secretary-General for an announcement. Mr Gagnon you have the floor.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I wish to remind Members that the Side Event on "Practical Approach for Reducing Food Losses in the Context of Food Security: A Challenge for the International Community", jointly hosted by the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Holy See, will take place immediately after the closure of this plenary meeting, from 17:30 to 20:30, in the Green Room.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen the Council will resume its work tomorrow morning at 09.30 sharp. Thank you.

The meeting rose at 17:29 hours

La séance est levée à 17 h 29

Se levanta la sesión a las 17.29

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Fifty-fourth Session
Cent cinquante-quatrième session
154.º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 30 May-3 June 2016
Rome, 30 mai-3 juin 2016
Roma, 30 de mayo-3 de junio de 2016**

**THIRD PLENARY MEETING
TROISIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
TERCERA SESIÓN PLENARIA**

31 May 2016

The Third Plenary Meeting was opened at 9.35 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La troisième séance plénière est ouverte à 9 h 35
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la tercera sesión plenaria a las 9.35
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

Item 8. Coverage of FAO Decentralized Offices (continued)**Point 8. Couverture des bureaux décentralisés de la FAO (suite)****Tema 8. Cobertura de las oficinas descentralizadas de la FAO (continuación)**

(CL 154/6 Rev.1)

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, I call the third meeting of the 154th Session of the FAO Council to order.

We shall come back this morning to Agenda item 8, *Coverage of FAO Decentralized Offices*. I will open the floor to Members.

Mr Gennadiy GATILOV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

We would like to thank the Secretariat for having presented the findings of the Regional Conferences of FAO on the coverage of decentralized offices and for having prepared the report on this item.

We broadly endorse the proposal submitted to the Council on this item agenda, and in particular the general criteria for the establishment of the Decentralized Offices Network. Our assumption is that any possible decisions to review the coverage in the future should take into account the reality of the given region and subregions and also in consultation with the countries of these geographical groupings.

Regarding the European Region, we are satisfied with the current architecture of the FAO offices, including the Regional Office in Budapest and the Subregional Office in Ankara.

Regarding the recommendations of the Regional Conference of Europe, we agree with maintaining the current location of these offices and welcome the establishment of the Partnership and Liaison Office in the neighboring countries of Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, and also the culmination of the country office in Tajikistan.

We would note also, particularly starting in 2015, the excellent work of the Liaison Office in Moscow for the Russian Federation. We support the implementation of its liaison function using its administrative and technical capacity in this work with the Eurasian Economic Commission.

Mr Salah AL BAZZAZ (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

As we said yesterday, we support the adoption of the Regional Office in the region. We call for their strengthening as the development of capacity, the provision of the necessary expertise, and ensuring that the offices in the region are fully staffed, especially in the areas of nutrition competence.

We support the proposal from China calling for a strengthening of these offices with a periodic review to ensure that we are kept abreast of the needs and developments of the Member Nations. This will make it possible to prove the outcome of work and also improve communication amongst ourselves as representatives of the FAO Member Nations. It is important that the communication be promoted, and it is important that the regions be covered. We should not have to wait for a new Regional Conference to be updated on the activities in these countries and in the Regional Offices.

Mr Abdul Razak AYZI (Afghanistan)

First, Afghanistan supports the statement made by Egypt yesterday on behalf of the Near East countries. Our intervention is to raise five points for clarification.

Point one: the decision to open decentralized offices rests with the Director-General. That is what the Basic Texts say. However, for Regional and Subregional Offices, the approval of the Conference is required. For liaison and country offices, only the agreement of the concerned Government is needed. Therefore, the opening of the proposed Subregional Office for West Africa and the proposed Subregional Office for the Mashreq countries will have to be approved by the 40th Session of the FAO Conference in July 2017. Even if the Conference approves both proposals, it is unlikely to have any implication on net appropriation allocated to the Decentralized Offices Network for the biennium 2016-17. If I am wrong, I could be corrected.

Point two: our reading of the report of the FAO Regional Conference is a strong signal to FAO to strengthen its existing Regional, Subregional and country offices. There is no mention in these

reports of possible tradeoffs; that is the transfer of net appropriation for a decentralized network from one region to another as well as the transfer within the region among decentralized offices. On this basis, any transfer of staff from the active office to the proposed Subregional Office for West Africa and on the Cairo office for the proposed Subregional Office in Lebanon will be counter to the recommendations on decentralization as reflected in the Report of the Regional Conferences. We would appreciate if this point could be clarified.

Point three: the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees calls for the implementation of region-specific recommendations in strengthening decentralized offices on a cost-neutral basis. But what does cost-neutral refer to? Does it refer to net appropriation allocated in 2016-2017 to the entire decentralized network, which in this case amounts to USD 305 million? Or does it refer to net appropriation for decentralized office, region by region? If the former, then the transfer of net appropriation from one region to another would be possible. If the latter, cost neutral would apply only to net appropriation allocated to each region. In this case, it will be USD 103 million for Africa, USD 38 million for the Near East for the biennium 2016-17. We would appreciate clarification.

Point four: we subscribe to the general criteria guiding decentralization which was mentioned in the document that was submitted to all the FAO Regional Conferences, but noting that the criteria will be applied flexibly and will exclude the criterion of transport linkages as recommended by the Regional Conference for Africa.

Point five: we concur with the proposition that in the establishment of country offices, priority be given to low-income countries and lower middle-income countries. In fact, out of the 80 FAO country offices funded by the assessed budget, 56 offices are located in low-income and lower middle-income countries. The percentage of the 31 lower-income countries that are covered by FAO are funded from assessed budgets is 80 percent compared with 63 percent for the 49 lower middle-income countries and 34 percent for the 53 upper middle-income countries. It would seem to us that coverage is not the prime concern. The prime concern is to boost the capacity of the existing country offices, especially in low-income countries where there is demand for technical services of FAO, especially to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. We consider stronger country offices as a gateway to the success of FAO engagement at the country level.

Mr Abid JAVED (Pakistan)

We align ourselves with the statement made by Malaysia on behalf of the Asia Group and make some additional comments.

We should like to recall that last year the Independent Review of Decentralized Offices Network was considered by the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees as well as by the Council in November-December 2015, which, *inter alia*, (i) recognized the need to update coverage of FAO field offices to meet changing realities; and (ii) supported the principles and criteria to make changes to coverage.

One of the aspects which the Council was requested to consider was the need for FAO to review its Decentralized Offices Network to improve its operational effectiveness.

In this connection the Council requested that the Regional Conferences review the report and provide region-specific guidance.

The Regional Conferences in 2016, in reviewing the issue also (i) acknowledged the need to update coverage; (ii) broadly supported the principles and criteria identified by the Independent Review of the Decentralized Offices Network and (iii) made specific recommendations for their own regions.

We endorse the region specific recommendations arising from the 2016 Regional Conferences, as well as the conclusions of the Joint Session of the Programme and Finance Committees, particularly those relating to the use of partnerships and liaison offices as well as multiple accreditation offices.

Sr. Nazareno Cruz MONTANI CAZABAT (Argentina)

En primer lugar, la Argentina agradece la elaboración de los documentos sobre esta importante cuestión, la cuestión de la descentralización es sumamente importante para nuestro país.

Acogemos con beneplácito los resultados de las Conferencias Regionales. Es claro que ha habido un amplio consenso respecto a la necesidad de seguir actualizando la cobertura de las oficinas descentralizadas, y en este sentido la Conferencia para América Latina y el Caribe ha sido muy clara, esta es una necesidad para poder adaptar la red de oficinas descentralizadas a las tendencias y condiciones actuales con el fin de lograr una mayor eficacia en la aplicación de los Objetivos Estratégicos. En este sentido, la Conferencia para América Latina y el Caribe respaldó en general los principios propuestos y los criterios generales para la revisión de la cobertura de la FAO, impulsados por el Director General.

En este sentido creemos, como lo hemos señalado en otras ocasiones y en la reunión conjunta, que en gran medida los muy buenos resultados que se han demostrado en el informe sobre la ejecución del programa 2014-2015 tienen que ver precisamente con estos esfuerzos de descentralización y con la importancia de generar capacidad técnica en el terreno para poder llevar a cabo planes concretos.

Quisiéramos resaltar asimismo que en el caso de América Latina y el Caribe se sugirió como opciones válidas a considerar por los Estados Miembros las oficinas de acreditación múltiple con un Representante de la FAO ubicado en otro país o las oficinas de enlace y partenariado que garanticen un programa de cooperación con recursos más predecibles y de largo plazo.

Con estos comentarios la Argentina aprueba el documento en cuestión.

Mr Godfrey C. MACGWENZI (Zimbabwe)

I would like to thank the Director-General and the Secretariat for their responsiveness to the views and concerns of Member Nations. As a result, we have in front of us a document that all of us are almost happy with.

I would like to start my intervention by making just one small correction on the document CL 154/6 Rev.1. On point five, specifically regarding the African region, it says that “(...) The Africa Regional Conference indicated that this criterion cannot be used to guide the review process in the Africa region but rather explore other criteria such as population and others that FAO uses in making decisions guided by the fact that FAO interventions are at the national, regional and international levels”. I am afraid this sentence does not reflect what the Africa region said.

The Africa region does not believe that it is realistic to use population as a criterion because in Africa we have large countries and small countries. Rather, the Regional Conference for Africa made the following recommendation: “that FAO, in line with its mandate and the conclusions of the 27th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa held in 2012 in Brazzaville (Congo), uses the food deficit criteria in order to give priority to middle-income and lower-income countries dealing with food deficit and to maintain all countries and subregional offices already in place in African countries”.

I then move on to the decisions for the Council. We support the recommendations in point one, in particular the creation of the two subregional offices, one for West Africa and one for Mashreq countries in Lebanon. These two regions need to have those subregional offices. However, with respect to point two (under ‘Decisions for the Council’), I would like to express concern regarding two words in that sentence: the word “Council” and the word “some”. The full sentence says “Additionally, the Council might wish to reiterate the following principles, already stated by previous Council’s resolutions or by some Regional Conferences (...)”.

First of all the word “Council”. Yesterday, the Representative of Netherlands made a very good point. She said that it could be necessary to list the criterion that we are dealing with, in order to bring more clarity and coherence. I fully agree with her. In December last year, we produced a document that has been reviewed by the Council but has been then revised in such a way that the document sent to the Regional Conferences was not the initial one, with a different set of criterion listed inside as a consequence. That is the reason why it is of the utmost importance to agree on which criterion we are talking about. We cannot discuss documents that have not been considered before by our Ministers.

With regard to the word “some”, I have to point out that it is not used consistently with the Note on the Methods of Work of the Council. This note expressively requires us not to use words such as “few”, “many”, “some”. We cannot make decisions on the basis of recommendations adopted by “some”

Regional Conferences. Our decisions have to be made on the basis of an acceptance by all the regions. This is the best way to ensure they will be implemented.

Another comment is related to the way the resolutions from the Regional Conference for Africa are listed in the document, which is quite different from the one retained by the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees. Africa is hereby requesting that its resolutions are listed in the same way that resolutions from other Conferences are listed. What is good for the goose is good for the gander.

With regard to point 2(a), we have to express concern. It says that we “broadly support the proposed principles and general criteria of the Independent Review of the Decentralized Offices Network for refining the coverage of FAO offices, while noting the view expressed by the Regional Conference for Africa on the criterion on transportation”. I have to disagree. We did not reach consensus on this issue. I remember we had a debate on the issue of the participation of civil society. One region did not have consensus among its Member Nations in such a way that discussion stopped. We cannot accept or propose to adopt a recommendation for which one region has a different view, above all when the region we are talking about is made of 54 Members. If there is no consensus, we have to drop the point.

The next point I would like to mention is point 2(b). It deals with costs. When I came to Rome in 2014, I remember one expression which was repeated continuously: “Fit for Purpose”. In this regard, I remember that the Chief Executives of the three Rome-based Agencies wanted to create or to reposition their agencies in such a way that they could fight hunger and poverty wherever they are. This was not a catch phrase or a sound bite but something that they actually believed in. They are dynamic-focused individuals. I have had the pleasure of interacting with them individually and they are very progressive. To come back to the term “Fit for Purpose”, it means that we are creating an organization that is purpose-driven rather than budget-driven. This means that we first identify the purpose and then we look for the resources.

Africa has different interests and expectations from FAO. Some of our countries focus more on the normative work of the Organization. But for all Africa, FAO is involved in concrete work in fighting poverty and hunger in the region, which is concrete work. Taking the example of my own country, I would like to cast light on the fact that the RBAs are at the center of our strategy to combat the twin evils of hunger and poverty. This example illustrates how important it is to all African countries to have representation on the ground and explains why Africa did not support the issue of multiple accreditations. Wherever possible, we would be very happy to have FAO offices in our countries because it makes the difference between success and a lack of success in our fight against hunger and poverty.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

We want to thank Zimbabwe for eloquently putting those points which we have agreed upon as the Africa Region. All comments that we have discussed have been mentioned here. I also want to thank Afghanistan for the statements that were made. However, I would like to just make a few general comments.

One comment has to do with the Regional Conference for Africa that has clearly made a decision, and which Afghanistan has already underlined, on the capacity of the Regional Office in Accra. Forty-nine African Ministers met in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Today at this Council we only have maybe one-eighth of that number that took the decision in Abidjan.

So it behooves me as a Permanent Representative sitting in Rome to undo decisions that were taken by our political leaders in Africa, because of some micromanagement issue. Maybe FAO wants to micromanage Africa, or maybe because of some special interest in other areas but not in Africa. But I think I will eliminate those negative views. I will look in a positive direction, that FAO means well for Africa. And based on that, that is why Africa consolidated its support to re-elect the Director-General for the second term. So we believe that FAO will definitely listen to the voices coming from Africa to work along with the African countries.

And, as I was saying, the capacity of the Regional Office in Accra should be strengthened in line with the Ministerial decisions of the 2014 Regional Conference for Africa in Tunis. This is something we as the Africa Group will not compromise on in addition to all that has been said by Zimbabwe.

Two; to strengthen the Subregional Office in Addis Ababa due to the presence of the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), we also believe that you cannot take qualified staff from Accra and send them somewhere else and you call that strengthening their capacity. Even elementary students will understand that that is weakening the existing structure.

We need those existing offices to be strengthened further than what they are now. So if FAO means well to strengthen the Regional Offices, then it should not be thinking about taking staff members from one Subregional Office or from the Regional Office in Accra and send them somewhere else. Africa will not take it kindly because you would be undermining the efforts that our Presidents are making to fight the two evils of hunger and poverty.

The SDGs are challenges, they are ambitious, and we as African countries are doing our best to deliver on them to our people. And so if you want to work along with the Africa region, strengthen the capacity of those existing offices so that we will be able to deliver.

Thirdly; the capacity of the Subregional Office for technical support to countries in Central Africa should be strengthened and remain located in Libreville, noting the commitment of the Host Government to maintain its efficient level of support to the office. That was the decision that came from Abidjan.

Last but not least, the Ministerial Conference endorsed that the proposed subregional office for technical support to countries in West Africa be preferably located in a Francophone country. We want to thank FAO for having proposed the opening of that Subregional Office. It means FAO has the funding to undertake that.

So in all fairness, we want to see that we boost the capacity of lower-income countries to deliver on the SDGs and in no way, as Zimbabwe eloquently put it, for us in Africa to accept the criteria of population or the criteria of roadlink transportation.

As I said earlier in my intervention, the population issue is discriminatory. We do not want to discriminate against countries that have smaller populations compared to other countries. We do not believe that population should be used as a criterion. We want the idea or the thought of using population as a means of FAO helping those countries to get thrown out of these windows here. We should not consider it at all. Whoever proposed that was not thinking in the right direction for development.

So those two key points that were mentioned, population and road linkages, should be discouraged because, as we said, we have challenges with infrastructure in Africa. We tried to encourage investment opportunities in our continent but sometimes investors want to see road links set in place before they come in. Our governments have the challenge to improve communications but we cannot use that as a criterion.

So, we want to endorse the statements that were put forward by Zimbabwe, that multiple accreditation is also not productive. You may have someone fly over from Monrovia to Accra or from Accra to Harare. We have people flying overnight to go to places they may not know the context in which they are operating. You can do that in the most developed countries or maybe in other regions where the Director-General is very much familiar with, that could be possible. But in Africa we know the difficulties.

If you have multiple accreditation, they would focus basically in that area where they are spending much of their time, and disregard the interests of the national government of the other country. We would not want you to endorse that. We want you to have your offices present on the ground where you have your offices. Let your country representatives be there.

Last but not least, we want to use this opportunity to also ask the Management of FAO that when they are sending country representatives to Africa, let them send the best qualified ones, people who are

capable, who have the capacity to deliver, not people who are going there to learn or to have their CVs made up for other countries.

It happened to Liberia as an example. FAO submitted to me to submit to my government, but our Minister for Agriculture – who has worked for this institution for many years until she retired as a minister, she served FAO as country representative in many countries of the world, including the Southern African region, East Africa, the Latin American countries and so forth – she called me and she rejected the name. She said to me that the name I had sent to her did not have the qualification needed, someone who would come and help, not only to learn. He is coming to help, hit the ground, and start to run.

So she called the Director-General and told him to change that nomination. We do not want you to send someone that we have to reject because then it will show that we have rejected the person – it is not the person but it is their capability of delivering in post-conflict countries, where you need people coming in to start working on day one, not people who are coming in to learn.

People who have never worked in Africa do not have the experience to work in Africa. Please do not send people who are not qualified to work in Africa. We want qualified people, people who can deliver.

M. Carlos Alberto AMARAL (Angola)

L'Angola remercie la délégation de l'Afrique du Sud, qui a fait son intervention au nom du Groupe Afrique, et remercie également le Secrétariat pour la préparation du document qui nous a été présenté et qui a tenu compte des observations faites par les pays.

Étant donné l'importance du thème de la décentralisation, nous voudrions souligner les aspects suivants: appuyer la création du Bureau sous-régional pour Afrique de l'Ouest à installer dans un pays francophone; la nécessité de renforcer les capacités techniques des bureaux décentralisés; l'accréditation multiple ne devrait pas mettre en cause la prestation prioritaire des services de la FAO en Afrique, où toujours plus d'efforts sont requis pour relever les défis posés par la faim, la sécurité alimentaire et la malnutrition, et atteindre les objectifs de développement durable; et enfin, réaffirmer la nécessité de réajuster de manière flexible la couverture des bureaux décentralisés afin de s'assurer que l'Organisation serve tous les pays et régions.

M. Mamadou SOGODOGO (Mali)

Les propos du Mali ont déjà été pris en compte avec l'intervention de l'Ambassadeur du Libéria et nous l'en remercions. Nous n'avons donc pas d'autres commentaires.

Mr Khaled M.S.H. EL TAWHEEL (Egypt)

We take the floor to fully support the statements delivered by Zimbabwe and Liberia.

We are also interested in getting the answers to the important questions posed by Afghanistan. We believe that the creation of subregional offices is an enhancement to the host region, and we welcome their leading role.

However, we reiterate and we expect that the Organization will strengthen the Regional Offices at the same time, especially Cairo and Accra, to adequately respond to the demands and challenges as it was recommended by the Joint Meeting of the Finance and Programme Committees.

This means that the number of staff and the capacities would be strengthened to be of help to the host region, not the other way around. We think that this shall be duly reflected in your summary.

Mr Abreha ASEFFA (Ethiopia)

We support the views expressed by Zimbabwe and Liberia.

Mr Kahoro KINARO (Kenya)

Africa has spoken through Zimbabwe and Liberia, and we are supporting the statement made by Afghanistan.

As we recall, the Council gave an assignment with the Regional Conferences to deliberate on the Decentralized Offices Network. The Regional Conference for Africa that was held in Abidjan came up

with some recommendations which Zimbabwe and Liberia have elaborated to this Council. For example, the suggestion of strengthening the capacities of the country offices and the Regional Office for Africa, including the Subregional Offices in Africa.

Besides, the Conference recommended to this Council, as the Ambassador of Liberia said, that we will create more offices even in Africa if need be so that you start up more offices in the field. This way it makes it easier even to reach the citizens of the continent, who are suffering from poverty and hunger.

We also support the creation of the subregional offices in West Africa and the one that is coming up for the Mashriq Region.

M. Hassan ABOUYOUB (Maroc)

À son tour, ma délégation souhaite s'inscrire complètement dans le droit fil de ce qui a été exprimé par le Zimbabwe au nom du continent africain. Ceci a été explicitement exprimé aussi par le Libéria et je remercie l'ambassadeur Sheriff.

En effet, vous savez tous que le continent africain a ses spécificités; malheureusement, les gens qui ont établi ces critères ne sont pas des connaisseurs du terrain et ne sont pas au fait des déficits et difficultés que connaît le continent africain. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous exhortons les membres du Conseil à souscrire entièrement à ce qui a été dit par le Zimbabwe au nom de l'Afrique.

CHAIRPERSON

I have exhausted the list of speakers and I think we have had a good debate on this subject, which is very important for all regions. At this moment, I would expect to have a response from the Secretariat.

I would like to make sure that it is the view of the Council that the Regional Conference reports do reflect the views which have been discussed in the Regional Conferences.

As far as I am concerned, I do believe that such is the case.

However, I would like to get your opinion on this issue. Do you agree to say that the reports coming from the Regional Conferences do reflect the discussions which took place in the Regional Conferences?

I see no objection. As a consequence, any further issue raised in this regard and going beyond the scope of what has been discussed in the Regional Conferences will be put forward for debate.

The Council said this issue is raised for the regions to decide. Following that, the Regional Conferences attended by the Ministers who are also Members of the Conference have more competence to deal with this issue and in particular that each region has its own uniqueness.

It is thus acknowledged that the reports reflect the true decisions and/or guidance made in the Regional Conferences.

Mr Daniel J. GUSTAFSON (Deputy Director-General, Operations)

Thank you to all of the Members who commented. I hope I can do justice. Some of the questions are quite straightforward and some are more complex. Among the simpler ones, from Indonesia, certainly we would be happy to specify where we would take the funds from. Often, these are quite small. In the case of Asia and the Pacific, if we add as we hope to an assistant to the FAO Representative for Micronesia, it is not very much money. I think it could easily be accommodated within the overall budget of the region.

In the case of Europe, we look forward to adding an international FAOR in Uzbekistan. That would not be probably possible within the existing budget. Actually, I would anticipate that it would not be possible. It is a more difficult decision as highlighted in the Regional Conference Report. We would indeed have to cut something somewhere else and we would be happy to say how we do that, if we do that.

With regard to the question from the Netherlands on behalf of the EU on the Brussels office, indeed the proposal was to have the office be more active, but we would not anticipate moving functions from or adding functions. We would rather be more accurate in the functions that it does have. It is a very

small office at the moment and I think we need to find ways to have it be more active within the interaction with the European Commission and EU Members there. Yet, we would not anticipate transferring functions from other offices.

Afghanistan raises, as ever, a number of very good points. The Basic Texts do in fact specify that a decision to open a regional or subregional Office is up to the Conference. In discussion with the Legal Counsel, however, given the new nature of the Regional Conferences as Governing Bodies, we considered that if there is consensus of the Council on the two Subregional Offices, we believe that would be sufficient to go ahead, although this is a point that perhaps Antonio Tavares could clarify.

If there is not consensus of the Council or a decision to refer this to the Conference, that would also be up to you, of course.

The speed with which we could do this is also difficult to say given that it is contingent in both cases on a number of other decisions and contributions from Lebanon in one case and proposals from countries that may wish to host the two or host the Subregional Office for West Africa, which is not likely to be a very fast process in either case.

So we would prefer if the Council agrees to go ahead with those negotiations, rather than wait to begin that process for approval of the Conference.

With regard to possible trade-offs and transfers being counterproductive, as a number of you have pointed out, for the case of Lebanon and the Subregional Office for Mashriq countries, we would see this in the spirit also of what is in the Regional Conference. This would be an additional capacity rather than a transfer of capacity. It does not imply weakening the office in Egypt.

Nevertheless, as we all know and I pointed out earlier, the Director-General has the authority to move people around and it may not preclude eventually someone from Tunis moving to Cairo or Cairo to Lebanon and so on. Yet, the sense is very clear that it is additional capacity in that office.

In the case of Accra, it is a different story. As I mentioned earlier, there had been a West Africa office co-located in Accra that still exists in terms of technical capacity largely as a unit focused on West Africa. When the Subregional Office for West Africa merged with the Regional Office, there was no net gain or net loss in the capacity of Accra except to the extent, I believe, that there was a reduction in some administrative staff.

Likewise, moving that team to someplace else outside of Accra, we would not see as a loss or as diminishing the capacity of the Regional Office in that sense. I do not think it would weaken the Regional Office. It would move the Subregional portion, the West Africa concentrated team of the Regional Office to another location.

I think that the cost-neutral aspect is a bit more complicated. We have to remember, and this also applies to comments from others, that certainly the Director-General can propose in the next Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) other changes that would increase or decrease the proportion of the budget that goes between regions or between decentralized offices and headquarters and so on.

What we are talking about now from Management's side are the discussions from the Regional Conferences without, any adjustments to the PWB. There are no proposals as you have seen to adjust the PWB in this Council. So we are looking at cost neutral with regard to the current PWB, in the most simple sense.

Beyond that, the general sense again had been cost neutral within the larger decentralized office budget rather than region by region. I think this is what we would try and stick to within these proposals, in a general way.

As you will see, there could be cost savings in Latin America for example. Those could be applied within the region, as for sure the Regional Office hopes that they would be. But then, I think we would not want to rule out at this point transfer between regions at this point, although I should mention that I believe in all of the cases, the additional PWB staff that we would fund or assessed contribution funded staff that we were talking about is really small. The cost is not very significant in the sense, for example, of the Assistant FAO Representative or perhaps other national staff.

In any case, I hope we would also not take an interpretation too strict on that. We are in the process, as we continue to do here at headquarters, of reducing administrative posts and turning those wherever we can into more technical posts.

We have proposals in the works in the Corporate Services Department and others that will reduce the number of administrative posts at headquarters and I would hope that we would not rule out the possibility of using one of those eliminated headquarters general service posts to fund conceivably the Assistant FAO Representative in Micronesia.

We would not probably see it as quite that direct of a transfer. However, I hope that we would not preclude that use of administrative savings at headquarters not to strengthen conceivably some office. Nevertheless, the general sense is that we are talking about cost neutral within the overall decentralized offices budget.

Yes, we definitely agree that we would apply all this in a flexible manner. Each country, each region has separate characteristics and we need to see that in context. It is really impossible not to do it or to do it in any other way.

Low-income and lower middle-income countries are an absolute priority as stated in the document. Within the low income, the priority is the low-income food-deficit countries, as stated in the document.

Nonetheless, we move on to Zimbabwe's and Liberia's comments, in particular with regard to population and the criteria within that. We appreciate as all these issues were also raised, very eloquently in the Regional Conferences as reported in the Regional Conference Reports.

That Report is explicit in mentioning population. It was not our invention. It is in paragraph 24(e) when discussing transportation. It is population not in terms of eliminating the coverage of a country, but in allocating scarce resources.

For example, in Africa as elsewhere we have a number of countries with multiple accreditation where we are unlikely to be able to afford a fully-fledged Representation. At the moment, these are mainly the Small Island Developing States: Comoros, Mauritius, Seychelles. Swaziland is also in that category.

Sao Tomé and Príncipe and Botswana are also multiple accreditation that we have proposed to change by having a Programme Officer covering or in liaison with the Southern African Development Community (SADC), who we would also suggest be the FAO Representative. This was approved earlier in a previous Council Resolution and is in fact incorporated in the PWB.

So the population criterion is there, particularly with regard to the Small Island Developing States in Asia. Furthermore, we have it in the case of Maldives and Bhutan for example. That is certainly in the Pacific Island countries and in the Caribbean. We use multiple accreditation partly because of the criterion of population. Yet, it is not certainly to exclude coverage in any sense. It is more a question of resource allocation or better allocation of inevitably and permanently scarce resources. The point is where, what and how we would make best use of those scarce resources.

Then, surely with regard to the 'fit for purpose', we certainly could not agree more on this. However, it would have to be again, within a proposal, approved by you in the next PWB. At the moment, what we would be talking about would be the resource allocation within the existing PWB.

Besides, I think on the document and in particular about the decisions for Council under point 2, the Regional Conferences agreed in principle except for the Africa region. The others did not discuss in great detail the principles. More comprehensive discussion took place around the specific proposals and specific country situations. I consider it would be possibly too strong to go beyond the sort of general agreement broadly supported, the proposed principles and general criteria.

With reference to the transportation issue, the discussion of transportation has not come up concerning the road network— nor to countries, but only in the earlier decentralization coverage document as for the air transportation connections in regional and subregional offices. It was not related to road networks nor to country offices.

The only conference that looked at that in detail, as pointed out by you, was in fact the Regional Conference for Africa. As I mentioned yesterday, we do not have any proposals that would be based on that criterion of airport facilities. In fact, there are no regional or subregional offices move as you have seen in the proposals.

The only change in that sense would be the new Subregional Office in Lebanon. In reality, it would rather be a move of the Subregional Office in West Africa.

CHAIRPERSON

I think we have almost come to the end of Agenda item 8.

As I said, I need your understanding on the reports presented here which came from the Regional Conferences, and in particular on the issue we are discussing now and that was reflected in the reports, the FAO Decentralized Offices Network.

You have agreed that the contents on that subject in the Regional Conference Reports really reflect what was discussed there.

And further, I want to make a reflection that it is true what Zimbabwe said that document CL 153/14 Rev.1 was not seen by the Council. This was the document used by the Regional Conferences. But I think in the revision there were not so many changes, but some important issues which are arising from the Council.

Therefore, whatever we are saying regarding the criteria and the general principles is based on that document which was used by the Regional Conferences, that is CL 153/14 Rev.1.

With that, I want to conclude on this Agenda item. I hope you agree with me that I have seriously taken your concerns into my conclusions.

1) The Council recalled that at its 153rd Session it had agreed to re-examine the coverage of the FAO Decentralized Offices Network following consideration of the matter by the 2016 Regional Conferences. Taking into account the views of the Regional Conferences and the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees, the Council:

- a) recognized the need to update the coverage of the FAO Decentralized Offices and supported the principles and criteria¹ identified by the Independent Review of the Decentralized Offices Network previously supported by the 2016 Regional Conferences, as well as the Finance and Programme Committees, while noting the view expressed by the African Regional Conference on the criterion on transport linkages;

I would like to say on this first paragraph (a) that there was a question on what principles and criteria we are referring to. I cannot list all of the principles and criteria here, but I make reference to document CL 153/14 Rev.1, that was seen by the Regional Conferences and there are several paragraphs where this is being referred to.

- b) endorsed the region-specific recommendations arising from each of the 2016 Regional Conferences, including the creation of new offices or the support for strengthening of existing capacities on a cost-neutral basis, ideally on a cost-sharing agreement with the host government concerned;
- c) reaffirmed the need to readjust the coverage of the decentralized offices in a flexible manner and with no increase in the overall cost of the decentralized network budget;
- d) endorsed the creation of a separate Subregional Office for West Africa, preferably based in a Francophone country, with the location to be determined by the Director-General in consultation with the countries concerned;
- e) endorsed the establishment of a Subregional Office for Mashreq countries in Lebanon and appreciated the offer and readiness of Lebanon to provide logistic, administrative and financial support to host this office; and

¹ Refers to criteria contained in document CL 153/14 Rev.1.

- f) supported the use of Partnership and Liaison Offices, as well as multiple accreditation offices with the FAO Representative located in another office.
 - g) encouraged the Director-General to continue efforts to consolidate decentralization and enhance capacity and internal control at decentralized locations, while maintaining the technical capacity at headquarters and in decentralized locations to achieve the delivery of the programme of work.
2. With regard to the Africa region, the Council encouraged FAO to maintain all country and Subregional Offices and the Regional Office and to strengthen the capacity of the network, and noted the concern that multiple accreditation could jeopardize FAO service delivery in Africa.

This is the end of my conclusion.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

We agree with your summary on this difficult subject.

I would like to make two possible suggestions. Where you talked about criteria, you could use maybe just a few words to say that this criteria would be used flexibly, and that would take care of the point made by Liberia and Zimbabwe partially, not fully.

The second point is to clarify what we mean by cost neutral for which budget. The cost neutral applies only to the budget allocated to decentralized units for 2016 and 2017, not for future biennia.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us go back to point (a) in order to accommodate what has been proposed by Dr Ayazi and I think that Members will agree to:

- a) Recognized the need to update the coverage of the FAO decentralized offices and supported the flexible use of the principles and criteria identified by the Independent Review of Decentralized Offices – the other words remain the same.
- b) Endorsed the regional-specific recommendations arising from each of the 2016 Regional Conferences, including the creation of new offices or support for strengthening of existing capacities on a cost-neutral basis in this biennium – the other words remain the same.

Netherlands speaking as observer on behalf of the European Union, please.

Ms Gerda VERBURG (Observer for Netherlands)

Mr Chairperson, we could agree with your initial summary because we think that the reference to the document, when it comes to principle and criteria, is clear and from a higher abstraction level as the documents that were dealt with in the Regional Conferences.

In the Regional Conferences, as far as we understood, you made use of more specific regional focus that is needed there. We think that the principles and the criteria can be used as such in a way that is fitting to the specific needs of a region or a subregion.

We wonder what the term “flexible” means. How does it guide us? It is already something that can be in good communication and collaboration between the Secretariat or, as you read out, the Director-General and the regional countries that can be made ‘fit for purpose’ or tailor-made. So we wonder whether this addition is really helpful or how it will be interpreted by people reading the Report of this Council a few years from now. What is the message that we give here? What is the guidance?

Regarding the other proposal, we do not find it necessary as everything is until the negotiations for the next Programme of Work and Budget, but we can live with it.

CHAIRPERSON

My understanding on this use of “flexible”, I think that it has to be fitting to each region specific recommendations.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Flexible means – the way I interpret it – that the criteria should not be applied rigidly. You go to a region and say which are the elements of the criteria that suit Asia and which ones suit Africa.

That is flexibility and that will allow the Director-General the power to negotiate on a better stamp. That is what I mean.

CHAIRPERSON

I think I noted that the Ambassador of Netherlands was also concerned that the flexibility we are talking of. We have to have an understanding that it recognizes the region-specific recommendations which came from the Regional Conference. This is my understanding.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

I support the statements that have been expressed. For region-specific, we think the flexibility should reflect the direction of region-specific because, as Afghanistan said, which is of course the way we are thinking, the Director-General should have that flexibility or that opportunity without coming back to Conference or to Council to get a direct mandate to handle the situation, maybe based on the discussions that would come out of that specific meeting.

But the Director-General will have the opportunity or the flexibility to deal with the country-specific request based on the Regional Conferences that have been held.

Mr Mhutang SELEKA (South Africa)

I would like to support what the Ambassador of the Netherlands said. If you leave the word “flexibility” as such, then anybody can interpret it his own way. I think we therefore have to spell it out by qualifying it to say that it is in terms of the region-specific needs, or something along these lines.

Ms Gerda VERBURG (Observer for Netherlands)

We tried to understand and we are constructive. But as you already summarized in point (c), you said “make use in a flexible way”. So that is the first thing.

Second, in the Council document of last year you are referring to in a footnote all the principles and criteria are mentioned.

As far as we understood, for the Regional Conference, there were separate documents where there was a focus on the specifics of the region and we tried to understand what it means that we have flexible and tailor-made principles and criteria, and then we tried to understand the need for more flexibility. To use flexible principles and criteria tailor-made to the region or sub-region, to use them in a flexible way, what does it mean?

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

My short intervention is just to complement what the Netherlands as Presidency of the European Union has just again remarked.

What I want to say is that principles and criteria by definition serve to guide action, to orient strategies and they have necessarily to be used as principles and criteria. They are not rules, regulations, or strict norms. Their normative power lies in their ability to guide action.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

I would like to comment on the proposals made by Afghanistan, specifically on qualifying the budget-neutral principle. We do not agree with that in the 2016-17, that has never been part of the discussion. I think it is part of what we are talking about here with the criteria. This was always one of the core issues that it was budget neutral. There was not a time period specified around this. It was really looking at this idea that there are limited resources and we need to get the best bang for our buck. Clearly there is a need to reallocate resources that are available at the moment into those offices servicing those countries most in need.

Our preference is not to include any sort of qualifier there but to stay with the budget-neutral principle with no reference to a time period.

Mr Mostafa Kamal HELMY (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

First of all, I would like to support the summary you read on behalf of the Near East.

I would like to draw attention to the fact that the Near East region mentioned the importance of strengthening the Regional Office in Cairo. In light of the prevailing circumstances in the region, we note that there are two subregional offices, in Tunisia and in the United Arab Emirates, and it was agreed to establish another subregional office which would be in Beirut, Lebanon.

We believe that the establishment of these subregional offices is a positive sign of constrictive efforts to strengthen the capacities of the main Regional Office in Cairo. It is therefore important to make it clear that the creation of subregional offices should by no means reduce or limit the mandate foreseen for regional offices. It should strengthen these mandates and promote them. This is really important. The role of subregional offices is to strengthen the performance of the already existing regional offices and this needs to be reflected in the report of the Council.

CHAIRPERSON

I think we can now agree after hearing all of the concerns and the issues raised by Dr Ayazi and the response I got from the floor, as well as the issue raised by the Ambassador of Egypt. Let me read again.

a) Recognized the need to update the coverage of the FAO Decentralized Offices and supported the principles and the criteria² to be applied in a region-specific manner identified by the Independent Review of the Decentralized Offices Network previously supported by the 2016 Regional Conferences, as well as the Finance and Programme Committees, while noting the view expressed by the African Regional Conference on the criterion on transport linkages.

b) endorsed the region-specific recommendations arising from each of the 2016 Regional Conferences, including the creation of new offices or the support for strengthening of existing capacities on a cost neutral basis, ideally on a cost-sharing agreement with the host government.

We do not mention this biennium.

Mr Yaya Adisa Olaitan OLANIRAN (Observer for Nigeria)

Nigeria believes that introducing the word “flexibility” does not sound like double Dutch. It only makes things a lot more definitive.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. Now I conclude on this Agenda item. Thank you.

Item 3. Programme Implementation Report 2014-15

Point 3. Rapport sur l'exécution du Programme 2014-2015

Tema 3. Informe sobre la ejecución del programa en 2014-15

(C 2017/8)

CHAIRPERSON

We now move on to item 3, *Programme Implementation Report 2014-15*. Please ensure that you have document C 2017/8 in front of you, as well as CL 154/5, *Report of the Joint Meeting of the 119th Session of the Programme Committee and the 161st Session of the Finance Committee*, since paragraphs 3 to 5 are relevant to this item.

I will now give the floor to Mr Boyd Haight, Director of the Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management, to present the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15.

² Refers to criteria contained in document CL 153/14 Rev.1.

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

The Programme Implementation Report is FAO's accountability document. It informs the Membership about the work carried out by the Organization over the last biennium for all sources of funds. It is retrospective in nature, reporting on what the Organization has achieved in terms of programmatic results and financial performance compared to the targets set out in the Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15.

Last week we had the opportunity to provide a detailed briefing to Members on the results presented in the PIR 2014-15 to help improve your understanding of what has been achieved and the lessons learned. This information is contained in the main PIR document, C 2017/8, three web annexes, and the region-specific documents presented to the Regional Conferences over the last three months.

We have also published a short brochure to convey the main results, particularly at outcome level which is available at the documents desk. All of this documentation is also available on the FAO internet site at <http://www.fao.org/pir>.

Today I would focus briefly on the five innovations, the five firsts in the PIR 2014-15.

This is the first PIR under the Reviewed Strategic Framework and Medium-Term Plan 2014-17. It presents results against the results chain. It comprises five Strategic Objectives which are the development impacts of FAO work, the 17 outcomes which are changes in capacities needed at country level and globally to achieve these objectives, and the 48 outputs, what FAO delivers with results measured by indicators and targets.

It includes the sixth objective on technical quality, statistics, and the crosscutting themes on gender and governance which support the delivery of the Strategic Objective outputs and outcomes, and it includes four Functional Objectives and three special chapters that provide the internal enabling environment for FAO work which are measured by key performance indicators.

This is as first PIR using a robust monitoring and reporting methodology for results at outcome and output level. Outcomes reflect the changes needed at country or global level, enabling environment to achieve the Strategic Objectives.

Outcome indicators measure the number of countries that have in place the changes and required capacities to achieve the Strategic Objectives by degree of implementation. The measurement is based on sample surveys of 80 countries where FAO works. It is reported at five classes in the color coded bar charts that you find in the document and in the brochure that show the relative degree of implementation of the outcome indicators, that is high, medium-high, medium, medium low and low.

We also provide a comparison with the baseline of the outcome indicators that provides the number of countries that have moved up from one class to another between the baseline in 2014 and the end of 2015. This is provided in web annex 5.

The methodology and measurement for the outcome indicators was developed by the FAO Chief Statistician with analysis by our strategic programme leaders.

The outputs are FAO contributions in terms of processes, products, and services to the outcome expected changes, that is what FAO is accountable to deliver. The outcome indicators measure the delivery of results at country, regional, or global level as reported by our country and regional offices and our technical divisions, with the analysis and validation carried out by our strategic programme leaders.

In 2014-15, FAO delivered 88 percent of the planned outputs, that is FAO delivered the assistance to Members as we committed in the Programme of Work and Budget.

This is also the first PIR that reports on outcomes. The output delivery helped Members make progress on the actual changes expected, with 77 percent of the output targets met. FAO contribution to the outcome indicator progress was rated positive by 70 to 90 percent of the countries surveyed for each of the Strategic Objectives.

However, the measurement of outcomes indicators shows scope for further progress by countries with assistance from FAO to help achieve the Strategic Objectives, particularly in relation to national

strategies, policies, programmes, and governance mechanisms to address food security, nutrition, poverty, and resilience, sustainable production investment, food systems, and value change and data and information for evidence-based decision-making, monitoring, and evaluation.

You can see this on the preponderance of the medium and below outcome indicators' degree of implementation in the bar charts.

This is also the first PIR with integrated reporting on gender as a crosscutting theme. FAO work on gender aims for strengthened country capacity to formulate, implement, and monitor policies and programmes, providing equal opportunities for women and men.

FAO addressed gender issues contributing to the Strategic Objectives through support to policy dialogue, programmes, and capacity development at country level by over 200 gender focal points and experts in the organization. We have worked to develop gender-related statistics and we continue our advocacy for gender concerns at global level.

The progress is measured by three sets of indicators in the PIR. First, the 15 standards of the FAO gender policy on gender equality, of which we achieved 11. Secondly, on the UN system-wide action plan for gender equality where we have achieved 13 of the 15 performance indicators. And finally, there are gender sensitive Strategic Objective outcome and output indicators that show progress at the level of the Strategic Objectives.

We have dedicated USD 21.9 million in resources and appropriation resources in 2014-15 for gender work, 70 percent of this to deliver the Strategic Objectives. We look forward to the seminar on gender later this year as announced by the Director-General yesterday. Furthermore, building on the results reported in the PIR, we will elaborate further on achievements in FAO work on gender in a separate document for the seminar.

Finally this is the first PIR benefitting from improved means of delivery resulting from the transformational changes. We have achieved 30 of the 34 key performance indicators, that is 88 percent. We have more than 100 strategic partnerships in place under our new strategies for partnerships with the private sector and with civil society. We have a corporate planning, monitoring, and reporting system setup and implemented with the full participation of our country offices.

Our overall expenditure was USD 2.5 billion in full compliance with the IPSAS accounting standards and this includes an expenditure rate of 99.4 percent of the net appropriation and an increased proportion of expenditure in our field offices. The TCP project approvals increased in volume by 11 percent and delivery reached USD 125.8 million. And we achieved the USD 36.6 million in efficiency savings in non-technical areas as requested by the Conference.

In terms of lessons learned, I would like to highlight four main lessons. First the partnerships are key to achieving results at country level. This is not only the partnerships through agreements, but also our partnerships with voluntary contributions from you as Members which is greatly appreciated for delivering particularly at country level.

Secondly, the regional initiatives helped us to focus on country and regional needs and you have heard these needs expressed in the Regional Conference reports.

Third on outcome reporting, it is our first time and there are areas for improvement but it requires sufficient time to collect the information from stakeholders. Our target setting needs to be reviewed and the opportunities to improve measurement and align with the SDG indicators arise in preparing our next Medium-Term Plan for 2018-21.

Finally on output reporting, we learned clearly that country level involvement in setting targets improves the accuracy, as has been done for 2016-17, and also provides better information on the need for FAO assistance through our assessed and voluntary contributions.

In conclusion, this is a brief overview of the results of the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15 for consideration and endorsement by the Council.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to Mr Khalid Mehboob, Chairperson of the Finance Committee who chaired the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committee, to report on the Joint Meeting's discussions on the PIR Report 2014-15.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

I am pleased to report on the discussions in the Joint Meeting on the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15. As you have been informed, the Report of the Joint Meeting is submitted to the Council in document CL 154/5.

The Joint Meeting welcomed the document and considered that it provided solid evidence that the transformational changes made since 2012 have led to positive results by the organization. It was satisfied at the implementation of the Programme of Work 2014-15 and stressed the importance of major policy achievements in addressing hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Second International Conference on Nutrition.

The Joint Meeting welcomed the results delivered at country and regional level and encouraged continued efforts focusing on work under the regional initiatives. It also welcomed the success of the International Years of Family Farming and of Soils.

On consolidation of decentralization, the Joint Meeting was satisfied with the achievements in 2014-15 and looked forward to continued efforts. It appreciated FAO work in establishing and strengthening partnerships with countries, the UN, and other non-state actors, as well as the work and results under the crosscutting theme of gender, and valued the extensive and useful information provided on gender in the PIR document.

The Joint Meeting was satisfied with the Organization's increased efficiency and the identification of USD 36.6 million in savings and looked forward to continued attention to mainstreaming gender, further efforts in achieving balance in language services, and equitable representation and geographic distribution of staff.

Finally the Joint Meeting appreciated the improvements in the new format of the PIR document and looked forward to adjustment of indicator targets and further refinement of reporting on outcomes and outputs in the next PIR.

Sr. Juan HOLGUÍN FLORES (Ecuador)

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

En primer lugar, queremos agradecer la elaboración del Informe sobre la Ejecución del Programa (PIR) 2014-2015, el cual configura el primer informe que se elabora con arreglo al marco de resultados contenido en el Marco Estratégico Revisado y el Plan a Plazo Medio para 2014-17. Se trata de un documento sumamente completo, claro y que brinda información exhaustiva. En este sentido, creemos que representa un gran avance en términos de formato y contenido.

El PIR 2014-15 muestra claramente que los cambios que se han implementado en la FAO desde 2012 arrojan resultados muy positivos. En este respecto, acogemos con satisfacción los resultados de la ejecución del plan de acción del bienio precedente, en particular el hecho de que en el 88 % de los indicadores relativos a las realizaciones se logró alcanzar plenamente las metas previstas, de las cuales aproximadamente el 67 % se superaron. Asimismo, se obtuvieron alrededor del 72 % de los resultados relativos a las realizaciones a nivel nacional o regional.

Celebramos especialmente las labores de la FAO tendientes a que el hambre, la inseguridad alimentaria y la malnutrición mantengan una posición prominente en el programa de desarrollo, en particular, en el ámbito normativo mundial y, en este sentido, alentamos a que la FAO siga participando activamente en las cuestiones más relevantes de la agenda global, en particular en los preparativos para la 22.^a Conferencia de las Partes en la Convención Marco de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Cambio Climático, y apoyando la aplicación de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible y el Decenio de Acción de las Naciones Unidas sobre la Nutrición 2016-2025.

Somos conscientes de que la Agenda 2030 es ambiciosa y tiene como lema “no dejar a nadie atrás”. La consecución de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) por parte de los países requerirá un fuerte apoyo por parte de la FAO, focalizándose en aquellas cuestiones relacionadas con su mandato. Por ello, consideramos crucial el alineamiento de los Objetivos Estratégicos de la Organización con los ODS, en particular en relación con los indicadores.

Confiamos en que la FAO podrá brindar a los países la asistencia y capacidad técnica necesarias en materia de estadísticas y mediciones a nivel nacional y subnacional, en lo atinente a los indicadores de los ODS. Necesitamos ser más capaces de medir mejor los marcos conceptuales de manera oportuna, con buena desagregación y confiabilidad, esperando de ese modo poder reflejar los logros, así como las brechas que nos permitan avanzar. Si queremos medir eficientemente los ODS, se va a requerir de esfuerzos importantes en la transmisión de conocimiento para los países. Para ello podría ser útil la creación de una Red de Transmisión de Conocimientos en el ámbito estadístico, como el existente en la CEPAL. Para que podamos cumplir con las metas que se plantean es fundamental el fortalecimiento de los Sistemas Estadísticos Nacionales. Apostamos por una continuación y ampliación de los vínculos con la Comisión de Estadística de las Naciones Unidas para una cobertura completa de este trabajo. Respaldamos la propuesta expresada por el Director General referente a la exploración de nuevas técnicas y métodos, los cuales serán complementarios a la ya existente.

El GRULAC considera que uno de los factores claves para la obtención de los resultados positivos que vemos en el PIR 2014-15 ha sido el proceso de actualización de la cobertura de las oficinas descentralizadas. Dicho proceso, que ha recibido el apoyo de todas las regiones a través de las Conferencias Regionales, ha permitido incrementar la presencia de la FAO en el terreno, allí donde más se la necesita. Alentamos a la Organización a que profundice este proceso de descentralización en el bienio en curso y en el próximo Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto.

En este respecto, estamos convencidos de que el fortalecimiento de las capacidades técnicas en las oficinas descentralizadas es central para alcanzar cada vez mejores resultados y solicitamos a la FAO que continúe con los esfuerzos en este ámbito. Los programas y estrategias de la FAO, incluidos temas claves como cambio climático, nutrición, género, resistencia a los antimicrobianos, entre otros, requieren de la presencia de la Organización en el terreno y de capacidades técnicas en el mismo.

Esto ha sido señalado en reiteradas oportunidades por diversos países y regiones, así como por miembros de la administración que desarrollan e implementan programas de acción en diversos temas. Tal y como señalara el Director General en la última reunión Conjunta de los Comités del Programa y Finanzas, es necesario alcanzar una “conectividad reforzada” entre la sede y las oficinas descentralizadas, logrando el balance justo en función de las necesidades y en vistas a obtener los mejores resultados.

Como hemos mencionado en reiteradas oportunidades, la cuestión de género es central para nuestro grupo regional. La igualdad de género y el empoderamiento de la mujer deben estar en el centro de cada programa y estrategia de la FAO. En este sentido, nos complace ver que el tema género está incorporado en el Informe en cada uno de los Objetivos Estratégicos y en el Objetivo 6 relativos a los temas transversales, y saludamos los esfuerzos de la FAO para avanzar en este ámbito. En este sentido, alentamos a la FAO a que siga prestando atención a la cuestión de género en todos sus programas y estrategias.

Finalmente, el GRULAC quiere hacer un reconocimiento a la FAO por la prestación de asistencia técnica a la Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños, para elaborar y poner en práctica el Plan para la Seguridad Alimentaria, Nutrición y Erradicación de la Pobreza 2025.

Igualmente, destacamos las actividades de apoyo en temas como la agricultura familiar, la incorporación del enfoque de género, la red pública de comercialización y abastecimiento de alimentos, así como el fortalecimiento de la cooperación Sur-Sur.

Con estos comentarios, el GRULAC aprueba el Informe sobre la Ejecución del Programa 2014-15.

Mr Gennadiy GATILOV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

The Russian Delegation notes the excellent preparation of the Programme Implementation Report by the Secretariat for the last Biennium using the new Results Framework. We welcome the putting into

practice of the Director-General's concept of FAO as a knowledge organization with its feet on the ground. We appreciate the fact that 88 percent of planned outputs have been met, of those falling within the remit of the Secretariat. We agree that there is a need to ensure concrete effects of the FAO work in Member Nations. However, to date we are still not convinced that the system of monitoring the so-called organizational outcomes at the national level is fully reliable. When ensuring the monitoring situation on the ground, it is important to use verified information, especially information submitted by the governments of the relevant countries.

Given the approval of the new assessment system, we believe that 77 percent of outcomes being met is a decent indicator. In the future, we would like special attention to be paid to areas in which we are lagging behind, including Strategic Objective 4 on enhancing the efficiency of agricultural and food systems. We support FAO efforts to make a significant contribution to the SDGs and to help the implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. We approve the attention attached by the Organization to the theme of balanced nutrition. FAO should take specific measures to ensure follow-up work on the outcomes of ICN-2.

In this connection, we welcome the key role played by the Organization in the proclamation by the United Nations General Assembly of the Decade of Action on Nutrition. Another good example was the assistance provided by FAO to the Global Forum on Nutrition-Sensitive Social Protection Programmes which took place in Moscow in September 2015 under the aegis of Russia's chairmanship of the BRICS. The FAO standard-setting work, including the initiative, began in 2015 at Russia's behest to develop the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management. FAO should pay extra attention to promoting and disseminating the already existing tools.

Russia supports the costs adopted by FAO to expand cooperation with non-state actors whilst maintaining the intergovernmental nature of decision-making. We believe that there is substantial potential in FAO work with academia. A good example of this can be seen in the joint work on the Global Soil Partnership. Russia approves the FAO strengthening its ties with regional organizations. To add to the information contained in the report, we support greater cooperation with the Eurasian Economic Commission with which lately more than a dozen joint initiatives have taken place.

Speaking about the financial dimension, I would like to note that the six percent increase in voluntary contributions to FAO over the last biennium reflects a perceived increase in the Organization's efficiency. We welcome the fact that the Secretariat, without any negative consequences for the implementation of the work programme, has achieved efficiency savings of USD 36.6 million. Russia hopes that through the powers delegated to it, FAO Management will continue to ensure an optimal use of financial resources.

We recognize the importance of mainstreaming gender equality in the Organization's work. However, we do recommend maintaining a balanced approach to this cross-cutting issue without forgetting the priority areas for the FAO mandate. We believe that efficiency savings should not be a pretext for reducing the number of languages used during FAO meetings. We are grateful to the Secretariat for the efforts to ensure a linguistic balance within the Organization, including, through expanding the use of the Russian language. We welcome the increase in the number of Russian language publications, electronic documents, and terms available on the FAO portal. It is important to maintain and even step up this positive trend and we would like this to be reflected in the session's report.

M. Henry DJOMBO (Congo)

La République du Congo prend la parole au nom du Groupe Afrique et déclare ce qui suit.

Le Groupe Afrique a examiné avec une attention particulière et salue le Rapport sur l'exécution du Programme 2014-2015, rapport qui vient de confirmer que les réformes opérées depuis 2012 ont permis à la FAO d'obtenir des résultats positifs sur le Cadre stratégique révisé et le Plan à moyen terme 2014-2017.

Ainsi, le Groupe note que la mise en œuvre du Programme de travail 2014-2015 a permis de réaliser 88 pour cent des produits attendus et les Membres ont pu progresser sur 77 pour cent des changements escomptés. Il salue ces résultats et encourage le Secrétariat à tout mettre en œuvre afin de consolider les

acquis et à continuer d'œuvrer pour remporter le combat contre la faim afin d'aboutir à la 'génération faim zéro'.

Le Groupe Afrique souligne les progrès accomplis par l'Organisation dans la lutte contre la faim, l'insécurité alimentaire et la malnutrition, ces défis qui continuent de préoccuper la communauté internationale. Le Groupe Afrique se félicite des contributions significatives de la FAO au Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030, à l'Accord de Paris sur les changements climatiques et à la deuxième Conférence internationale sur la nutrition, tout en souhaitant que leurs résultats s'intègrent dans les programmes futurs de l'Organisation.

Le Groupe souligne que d'autres défis majeurs, qui nécessitent des réponses pertinentes, seront abordés dans le cadre des préparatifs de la COP 22 sur le changement climatique prévue en terre africaine, à Marrakech, de la mise en œuvre du Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030 et de la mise en œuvre de la Décennie d'action en faveur de la nutrition 2016-2025.

Le Groupe Afrique note que l'exécution du Programme de travail 2014-2015 a connu deux années internationales, célébrées par l'Organisation. Il se félicite des succès de l'Année internationale de l'agriculture familiale, en 2014, et de l'Année internationale des sols, en 2015, ainsi que de leur relation avec la sécurité alimentaire. Il encourage la FAO à les traduire dans les faits aux niveaux national et régional.

Il exprime sa satisfaction face aux résultats obtenus au niveau des pays et des régions et exhorte la FAO à consolider ces acquis par des actions plus ciblées.

La décentralisation est un outil essentiel qui permet à la FAO de travailler étroitement avec les gouvernements pour relever le défi de la faim dans les pays en développement. Le Groupe Afrique se félicite des résultats obtenus à cet égard et encourage l'Organisation à poursuivre ce processus dans l'exercice biennal en cours et le prochain PTB, notamment en ce qui concerne le renforcement des bureaux régionaux et autres bureaux décentralisés afin qu'ils puissent répondre aux besoins des États Membres.

Le Groupe Afrique reconnaît l'importance des partenariats, en particulier le rôle fondamental qu'ils pourraient jouer dans la lutte contre la faim. Il apprécie l'action menée dans le renforcement de partenariats stratégiques entre les États Membres, les organismes des Nations Unies, d'autres organisations internationales, le secteur privé et les organisations de la société civile.

Le Groupe Afrique se réjouit des efforts consentis et des résultats obtenus par l'Organisation sur le thème transversal de la parité hommes-femmes. Il encourage la FAO à continuer d'intégrer la question de la parité hommes-femmes dans ses programmes et ses activités, tout en mettant l'accent, conformément à son mandat, sur les thèmes transversaux tels que la nutrition et le changement climatique.

Le Groupe Afrique note avec satisfaction que durant l'exécution du Programme 2014-2015, le Secrétariat ait pu dégager des gains de 36,6 millions d'USD. Il salue l'application des normes comptables internationales pour le secteur public (IPSAS), ainsi que le caractère novateur et la modernisation de la gestion des ressources humaines. Cependant, le Groupe insiste sur l'importance et l'intérêt à accorder l'attention voulue à une représentation et à une répartition géographiques équitables du personnel.

Le Groupe Afrique apprécie les améliorations apportées dans la présentation du rapport sur l'exécution du Programme, notamment le traitement de la question de la parité hommes-femmes, demandées par le Conseil. Il souhaite qu'elles se poursuivent dans le prochain rapport.

Après ces commentaires, le Groupe Afrique approuve le Rapport sur l'exécution du Programme 2014-2015.

M. Dominique AWONO ESSAMA (Cameroun)

Le Cameroun soutient la déclaration du Congo, faite au nom du Groupe Afrique, et aimerait mettre l'accent sur certains aspects du document C 2017/8, Rapport sur l'exécution du Programme 2014-2015, qui a été présenté, et émettre quelques commentaires relatifs à la déclaration liminaire que le Directeur général a prononcée à l'ouverture de la présente session du Conseil.

Avec l'examen de ce rapport, nous entrons de plain-pied dans un nouveau cycle de planification pour le biennium 2018-2019, qui sera globalement influencé par les leçons apprises lors de l'exécution du Programme 2014-2015.

Selon ce rapport, la FAO a réussi à faire des avancées notables dans les domaines de la faim, l'insécurité alimentaire et la malnutrition; elle a soutenu notamment les pays en fournissant des avis techniques à ses États Membres lors des négociations concernant l'Accord de Paris sur le changement climatique et à respecter leurs engagements, en veillant à relier le changement climatique, l'agriculture et la sécurité alimentaire. Par ailleurs, avec l'organisation de la deuxième Conférence internationale sur la nutrition (CIN-2), la FAO a facilité la signature de la Déclaration de Rome sur la nutrition et le Cadre d'action y afférent par les dirigeants du monde entier, qui se sont engagés à mettre en place des politiques nationales visant à éliminer la malnutrition et à transformer les systèmes alimentaires de manière à garantir des régimes alimentaires nutritifs pour tous.

C'est aussi pendant cette période que l'Accord relatif aux mesures du ressort de l'État du port visant à prévenir, contrecarrer et éliminer la pêche illicite, non déclarée et non réglementée a été négocié. Selon les informations les plus récentes, ce texte a connu le nombre minimum de ratifications pour permettre son entrée en vigueur et le sujet sera abordé lors de la session du Comité des pêches en juillet 2016, ce dont nous nous réjouissons.

Dans le domaine des forêts, le soutien apporté par la FAO dans la préparation et le déroulement des débats lors du quatorzième Congrès forestier mondial a été déterminant pour que les questions forestières soient intégrées dans les programmes mondiaux concernant le développement durable.

Le développement des systèmes de collecte, de gestion et de dissémination des données statistiques est un axe prioritaire pour lequel la FAO a eu des résultats probants mais où les défis restent majeurs.

Les travaux de la FAO et de l'OMS à travers le Codex Alimentarius ont permis des avancées notables dans la normalisation et la sécurité sanitaire des aliments.

Il s'agit là de domaines de travail de la FAO qui restent toujours pertinents et pour lesquels nous souhaitons voir la FAO s'investir davantage dans les pays, notamment ceux en développement. Nous apprécierions, dans le contexte du nouveau cycle de planification, des efforts accrus dans les domaines du suivi de la mise en œuvre des ODD. Pour l'immédiat, nous souhaitons voir la FAO soutenir les pays dans leur préparation pour la COP22, qui se tiendra à la fin de l'année à Marrakech, au Maroc. Certains aspects de ce soutien consisteraient à développer une agriculture intelligente face aux changements climatiques, notamment: i) l'appui à l'élaboration des stratégies nationales d'adaptation de l'agriculture au changement climatique et ii) le renforcement de la résilience des petits producteurs aux effets néfastes des changements climatiques.

Avec l'expansion du phénomène des migrations, la FAO devrait s'investir dans la recherche de la corrélation entre développement et migration, afin de proposer des solutions qui faciliteraient la sédentarisation des populations.

En matière de gestion des ressources, nous notons des améliorations substantielles dans ce domaine. Il est vrai que la FAO est une Organisation de savoirs, c'est donc tout à fait naturellement que nous soutiendrons toute action tendant à positionner son personnel le plus talentueux partout dans le monde.

Pour terminer mon propos, nous souhaitons que la dynamique de transparence, de confiance mutuelle et de recherche, de développement du consensus qui s'est bâtie entre le Secrétariat et les Membres puisse se poursuivre.

Mr Abid JAVED (Pakistan)

Pakistan is making this statement on behalf of the Asia Group. We thank the Secretariat for this comprehensive and informative document, and also Mr Haight for his presentation.

We welcome the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15 and note that this is a first PIR produced under the FAO Reviewed Strategic Framework and Medium Term Plan 2014-17. It is a comprehensive presentation of achievements in the years 2014-15 and tells us how FAO performed after the transformational changes started in the year 2012. It will also form the basis for lessons learned for the current biennium as well as for the next Programme of Work and Budget.

Since the PIR is an auditable document, it provides quantitative and qualitative information on delivery targets and indicators of results of the Strategic Objectives and Functional Objectives of FAO as programmed in its budget for 2014-15 from all sources of funds. We note with satisfaction the implementation of the Programme of Work in the year 2014-15 and welcome the fact that FAO reached full achievement for 88 percent of the planned output targets and solidified the progress of Member Nations on 77 percent of the expected changes in the outcome indicators.

This is a commendable achievement and shows a high proportion of results delivered at country and regional levels.

In this connection, we also appreciate the establishment and standing of strategic partnerships with members and the United Nations system organization, the private sector and civil society organizations. We are pleased to note that over the biennium, FAO contributed to some of the major policy developments aimed at addressing hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition which keep these issues at the forefront of our attention.

We also appreciate the FAO contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the Second International Conference on Nutrition.

In this respect, it is satisfying to note that the FAO involvement resulted in (i) food and agriculture being at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and (ii) FAO Strategic Objectives being broadly aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

We look forward to the FAO continued engagement in these and other important policy issues. We appreciate the progress and the quality of the FAO technical, normative and standard-setting work, including the crosscutting theme of gender, and would encourage FAO's continued attention toward mainstreaming gender in the FAO programmes and activities.

In this regard, we welcome the recommendation of the Programme Committee, calling for an evaluation of the gender policy. We also welcome the Director-General's announcement on holding an informal seminar on the issue of gender.

We would also encourage Management to keep the Membership abreast of its work on gender through the existing multiple reporting mechanisms such as the Programme of Work and Budget, the Programme Implementation Report and Mid-term Review.

We support FAO's efforts to empower the decentralized offices, to increase the impact of its work and to integrate these offices more toward the implementation of the Strategic Framework. Whilst the achievements so far have been quite satisfactory, the period highlights five areas in Paragraph 320 where the Decentralized Offices Network requires reinforcement. All of these are important areas and this will enable the decentralized offices to respond to the various demands and challenges.

Although we appreciate the generation of efficiency saving of USD 36.6 million as well as the significant past savings, we need to be careful that any significant budget reductions do not have a negative impact on the operational capacities of the Organization.

Finally, whilst we find the document comprehensive and informative, it is rather long. Considering, we would request the Secretariat of looking into the possibility of having a more concise document for future periods.

With these comments, we endorse the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15.

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

If you allow me, I would like to request that you to give the floor to the Delegation of Bangladesh to deliver a brief statement on behalf of the G77 and China. Notwithstanding, if you indulge me in asking again for the floor later in the day in order to deliver a statement on behalf of my delegation.

Mr Mafizur RAHMAN (Observer for Bangladesh)

It gives me great honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the G77 and China. The G77 and China congratulates the Secretariat for the quality of the PIR report and would like to highlight the following points.

First, the G77 expresses its satisfaction at the implementation of the programme of work in 2014-15. It is remarkable that 88 percent of the planned outputs were achieved, which indicates that transformational changes undertaken at the Organization since 2012 have contributed to a extensive tangible results in Member Nations, a more focused and results-oriented organization, with satisfactory outcomes and results under the cross-cutting themes: governance and gender.

Second, we are glad that FAO has played a major role within the UN system and beyond to put global issues such as food security, nutrition and food safety at the centre of attention of the international community, as reflected in the relevant sustainable development goals. In this regard, it is of particular importance the role played by FAO and WHO in organizing the Second International Conference on Nutrition in November 2014, as well as the FAO contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Third, the G77 and China highly appreciate the efficiency savings of USD 36.6 million during 2014-15 biennium.

Fourth, the G77 and China encourages FAO to continue its strategic efforts with focus on critical areas of global importance in the current and next biennium by:

- i) Focusing on food security and nutrition in line with the SDGs, the outcomes of the Second Conference on Nutrition and the UN decade of action 2016-25. This work should respond to the increasing needs of developing countries and LDCs in these areas;
- ii) Providing technical support to developing countries to devise policies to achieve the SDGs relevant to FAO mandates as well as in building capacity to measure the progress in their implementation, especially in areas of statistics in which many developing countries have limited expertise;
- iii) Capacity-building in the areas of climate change adaptation including El Nino, the Zika and Ebola epidemics, animal diseases, antimicrobial resistance and others, which, if not taken very seriously, will have devastating consequences on food security and the eradication of poverty;
- iv) Strengthening regional and decentralized offices to respond more effectively to the increasing demands of developing countries and their particular challenges. We note in this regard that the Joint Meeting of the Finance and Programme committees has recommended intensifying efforts in promoting decentralization in the current biennium and the next PWB, including strengthening of the regional and other decentralized offices and look forward to the implementation of this recommendation;
- v) Providing technical support in preparation for the 22nd Conference of Parties of the UNFCCC in the Kingdom of Morocco, in which agricultural adaptation as part of solution for the climate change will be on centre stage;
- vi) While we note the progress in the implementation of the TCP, which is of particular importance to developing countries, we reiterate our call that the TCP budget be brought to a level of not less than 14 percent of total appropriations in the next budget as agreed at the FAO conference in June 2015;
- vii) We attach particular importance to South-South and Triangular Cooperation and encourage FAO to enhance its support to it as well as to facilitate the exchange and uptake of development solutions, innovations and good practices;
- viii) We expect that the Organization intensifies its work in addressing food safety and food losses and waste, in collaboration with other organizations;
- ix) Underscoring the importance of the traditional farming and intelligence of indigenous people, we expect that the Organization give more attention to work of GIAHS, which reflects the essence of the agroecology, and provide strategies to promote the integration of traditional knowledge and practices to effective adaptation measures with mitigation co-benefits to address climate change, access to markets for small holders, approach to women empowerment and platform to enable farmer's dialogue as well;
- x) Finally, we expect also that due attention is given to equitable representation and geographical distribution of staff as well as balance in language services.

With these comments, the G77 approves PIR 2014-15.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Afghanistan is making this statement on behalf of countries of the Near East Group.

The Near East Group welcomes the format of PIR 2014-15 which is aligned with the structure of the reviewed Strategic Framework and MTP 2014-17. Like its predecessors, the PIR 2014-15 is serving the FAO accountability to Membership and the FAO partners by explaining how resources made available to FAO were expended during the biennium, whether at outputs were produced as expected and what outcomes were generated by the use of outputs by Member Nations and other concerned stakeholders.

In a nut-shell, the PIR 2014-15 is a performance report. The Near East Group does not expect impact assessment from the PIR. Impact assessment, which normally is policy and programme-specific, is the product of independent evaluations and the PIR is not an evaluation report to assess impact.

The yardstick for measuring outputs and outcomes are a set of pre-established indicators. Web Annex 5 list these indicators and shows that progress achieved has been very positive indeed, both for the normative work of the Organization as well as FAO technical cooperation with developing countries.

Given the complexity of measuring outputs and outcomes, the Near East Group is satisfied with the validation process carried out by the FAO Chief Statistician and the Strategic Programme Leaders. Undoubtedly, there is room for improvement in sharpening the indicators.

The Near East Group supports the positive position adopted by the Joint Meeting on PIR. In particular, it wishes to underscore paragraph 2(f) of CL 154/5 on the strengthening of the regional and other decentralized offices to respond to their demand and challenges; 2(h) on gender; 2(i) on efficiency savings of USD 36.6 million; 2(k) on balance in language services; and 2(l) on equitable representation and geographical distribution of staff.

The observations of the Near East Group consists of four points and these four points do support the two elements mentioned in the box on page 5 of document C 2017/8.

Point one: the Near East Group notes that for the five Strategic Objectives, 22 out of the 34 outcome indicators and 31 out of the 50 output indicators performed above the baseline. Given the overarching nature of SO2, the number of outcome and output indicators falling below the baseline was somewhat higher in comparison to the other four Strategic Objectives. The reason for this is not explained in the report. But one can guess that it may be due to the large number of outcome and output indicators for SO2. In fact, out of the 34 outcome indicators for the 5 Strategic Objectives, 14 indicators or 41 percent of the total number of outcome indicators, relate to SO 2.

The Near East Group also notes good performance with respect to Objective 6, TCP, Functional Objectives 9, 10 and 11 and gender as a cross-cutting issue, which was further updated by the Director-General in his statement yesterday morning.

Point two: Considering that the vast majority of outcome and output indicators performed above or below the baseline figure, gives the impression that the process of target setting needs further improvement, including the sharpening of baseline figures.

Point three, progress in the implementation of the 15 Regional Initiatives has been encouraging, with good expectation of triggering actions in all of the five regions. Progress achieved had consisted of improving policy formulation, strengthening of public regulatory measures, improving data generation, capacity development and support to regional and subregional institutions. Valuable lessons have been gained from the implementation of the 15 Regional Initiatives at country level.

On the basis of this favourable performance, the Near East Group feels that the time has come for Membership to take full ownership of the 15 initiatives, including resource mobilization for further expansion of related activities at the country or subregional level.

In discussing regional priorities for MTP 2018-21, the Distinguished Member of India in the Programme Committee, Mr Sharan raised the question of an exit strategy for the current Regional Initiatives. The Near East Group wishes to support his valuable suggestion.

Ownership of existing Regional Initiatives by the Membership will enable FAO to launch new regional initiatives closely linked with the implementation of the SDGs. In this connection, the reports of the six regional conferences include priorities that are good candidates for new regional initiatives. The Secretariat could investigate further this matter further.

Point four, on TCP (paragraphs 309 to 328 of the document), the distribution of TCP resources by approval by regions (Table 5) and TCP delivery by Strategic Objectives (Table 8) are appreciated. But there is no table to show TCP delivery by regions.

Similarly, the section on Financial Performance (paragraphs 332 to 345 of the document) does not provide data on the biennial approval and delivery of extra-budgetary resources by regions. The Near East Group recommends that these features be covered in PIR 2016-17, including, if possible, an annex showing approval of delivery of extra-budgetary resources for low-income, lower middle-income and upper middle-income countries, and an annex which will show delivery for the top ten recipient countries.

With these comments, the Near East Group approves PIR 2014-15; supports the two points mentioned in the box on page 5 of C 2017/8; and congratulates the Secretariat for producing a valuable document.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, that brings us to the end of this morning's meeting.

Before we close, I will pass the floor to the Secretary-General for some announcements. Mr Gagnon you have the floor.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Delegates are reminded of the need to register for Council if they wish to be included in the list of participants of this session. The Provisional List of Participants will be available tomorrow morning at the Documents Desk and delegates are invited to check that their names and titles are accurate. Any corrections or amendments should be submitted to the Documents Desk for inclusion in the final list.

I also wish to remind delegates of the side event on *Greening Food Value Chains: Lessons from Ireland and Kenya, jointly organized by Ireland and Kenya*, which will take place in the Sheikh Zayed Centre from 13.00 to 14.30.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, we will resume our work this afternoon at 14.30 hours sharp.

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-fourth Session
Cent cinquante-quatrième session
154.º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 30 May-3 June 2016
Rome, 30 mai-3 juin 2016
Roma, 30 de mayo-3 de junio de 2016**

**FOURTH PLENARY MEETING
QUATRIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
CUARTA SESIÓN PLENARIA**

31 May 2016

The Fourth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.36 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La quatrième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 36
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la cuarta sesión plenaria a las 14.36
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

Item 3. Programme Implementation Report 2014-15 (continued)**Point 3. Rapport sur l'exécution du Programme 2014-2015 (suite)****Tema 3. Informe sobre la ejecución del programa en 2014-15 (continuación)**

(C 2017/8)

CHAIRPERSON

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, I call the fourth meeting of the 154th Session of the FAO Council to order.

We return to item 3, *Programme Implementation Report 2014-15*, and, as announced before our lunch break, we shall continue with the list of speakers as they appear on the screen.

Mr Jianmin XIE (China) (Original language Chinese)

We support Pakistan's statement on behalf of Asia, as well as Bangladesh on behalf of G77 and China. China appreciates the innovative format of the Programme Implementation Report 2014-2015, the detailed data and analysis. This is a high quality, and comprehensive Report. We support its approval.

I would like to emphasize the following three points. China notes that FAO mobilized USD 1.8 billion through the funding from South-South Cooperation, exceeding the target for the biennium. The share coming from middle-income countries has increased. We highly commend this trend. At the same time, we suggest that FAO should further capitalize on the funding from South-South Cooperation and give full play to its impacts so that more countries and regions will benefit from the outcomes of South-South Cooperation.

China also notes that FAO did not achieve its target in timely delivery of documents in required languages to Governing Bodies. At the 161st Session of the Finance Committee taken place recently, though most documents in English were delivered two weeks before the Session, some documents in Chinese were provided only three days before the meeting. I feel obliged to talk about the issue of language representation. China commends 35 percent increase of FAO publications in working languages as well as improvement in traceability of publication process. Meanwhile, we have noted that among FAO publications, including those funded by the Programme for Chinese publications, publications in Chinese take up only 3.7 percent, ranking the last amongst all languages. We are concerned and worried about this issue. This is detrimental to China's strategic cooperation with FAO in the views of press communication and publication. It will also negatively affect the dissemination of FAO knowledge and vision in the region where a large population speak and read in Chinese. FAO has always attached a great importance to its publications and knowledge dissemination; therefore, China calls upon FAO to pay attention to this issue. The power of language should not and cannot be ignored.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Je vous serais reconnaissante de bien vouloir donner la parole aux Pays-Bas en tant que président en exercice de l'Union européenne, qui fera une déclaration commune.

Ms Gerda VERBURG (Observer for Netherlands)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate countries to the EU (Albania, Montenegro, Turkey) and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

We welcome FAO continued focus on results and improving monitoring and reporting as demonstrated by the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15. We recognise the significant change and encourage the ongoing strengthening of results-based management at all levels across the Organization, including through the Country Programming Frameworks.

We recognise the achievement of having completed years of preparation in successfully delivering the FAO first IPSAS-compliant audited accounts, which received an unqualified opinion from the external auditor. We are also pleased to see that the USD 36.6 million of efficiency savings requested by

Conference have been achieved. We encourage FAO to continue to demonstrate value for money, which clearly helps to make the case for further support.

We congratulate FAO on having reached nearly 90 percent of planned outputs. At the same time, this also underscores questions related to the targets and indicators, which may need to be more specific in some cases. We agree with FAO that a number of milestones and targets for the biennium were set too low and look forward to this being amended as FAO builds on lessons learnt in results-based reporting. It would also be helpful to include information on how results are being used as a management tool.

Looking ahead to the next biennium's PIR, we encourage FAO to ensure all results framework indicators are SMART – or specific, measurable, with achievable, relevant and time-bound targets and baselines. Reflecting on the theory of change would help to make the link clearer between the FAO outputs and outcomes, and how this will lead to impact. This will contribute to the shift needed towards demonstrating impact – really communicating to the world the difference that FAO is making, beyond processes. We appreciate the challenges entailed in this, but some form of aggregation from results achieved at country and regional level, including from the highlights and examples provided, could help. In this light, we thank FAO for the overview document circulated last week that begins to address the need to communicate the FAO results in a more effective way.

It is helpful to have the results by region in the annexes but it would be even more useful to have this in a single document, with the overall results column then broken down by region. We welcome the focus throughout the report on gender mainstreaming, so essential in achieving the SDGs and 'leaving no one behind'. We commend the FAO work in supporting countries to produce sex-disaggregated data, for example, which has also helped to develop frameworks for more gender-equitable land tenure. We encourage the FAO progress through the Organization's gender policy as well as the UN-SWAP. We also recognise improvements in the gender balance of staff, with an increase to 45 percent at headquarters, and look forward to this also becoming more balanced across grades. We encourage FAO to promote this balance outside of Rome too, where the percentage of women in professional posts is still only at 21 percent. We hope that the successful progress in terms of the gender balance of professional staff at headquarters will become equally successful at decentralised level and across grades.

We support the FAO important work on statistics, so vital for evidence-based decision-making. FAO has an important role in delivering the Sustainable Development Goals and we are pleased to note the FAO contribution to establishing indicators for the monitoring framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Highlighting progress in the Programme Implementation Report on other substantive cross-cutting priority areas such as climate change and nutrition would also be useful. We note the greater focus also on developing more strategic partnerships to deliver results. It will be interesting to consider how jointly delivered results with partners ranging from civil society to the private sector, IFIs and other UN agencies will be reported. In particular, with clear scope to strengthen more systematic collaboration with WFP and IFAD to better deliver results together, we look forward to the joint-agency paper that we expect to be presented later this year.

Once again, we thank FAO for this important report. As a number of lessons have now been gathered, it would be useful to share these with UN and other international organisations and Members through an informal workshop. This would help to maximise the opportunities for collaboration and exchange to continue strengthening results monitoring, reporting and management in FAO and beyond, as we all strive to improve our results for better, more sustainable impact in field of food and agriculture.

Mr Jón Erlingur JONASSON (Iceland)

This statement is made on behalf of the Nordic Countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The EU countries, Denmark, Finland and Sweden align themselves with the statement made on behalf of the EU.

We appreciate the revised format of the PIR and find several improvements from the last report. The report contains useful information on the progress FAO is making in implementing its programme of work.

We commend some major achievements of FAO in the last two years contributing to increased emphasis on food security and nutrition globally, and for playing vital role in making food security a goal on the Agenda 2030 as well as for putting agriculture on the climate change agenda. We welcome and commend FAO's contribution to the fact that the Port States Measure Agreement will enter into force on 5 June.

We taken note of the fact that FAO has reached as much as 88 percent of the planned outputs. Also at the outcome level the reported progress has been good. In fact, for several indicators the delivery has been over-fulfilled. This may point to a need to review the targets and probably set more ambitious goals for the next PWB. We are glad to learn that the Organization has been able to save USD 36 million through efficiency gain and without harming the implementation of programmes.

The report marks a large step forward on the FAO reporting on gender equality and women's empowerment. The Nordic countries are very pleased to see that gender equality has been given substantial space in the report. Gender seems to be well anchored in all the Strategic Objectives.

We find the table on minimum standards for gender mainstreaming very interesting. It is encouraging to see that many of the objectives have already been achieved and that most of those partially achieved can be reached within 2017. We would encourage management to look further into how you can elaborate further on the minimum standards, with an explanation of what "achieved" implies.

Despite improvements in the quality of the reporting, there are still some weaknesses in the format of the PIR.

First, the report is not always easy to read. The Executive Summary is a useful guide, but in general it is difficult to grasp the full picture. The overviews of each of the SOs function well, although it takes a lot of reading to understand which indicators are linked to which goals. In addition you also have to guess what are outputs and what are output indicators.

Second, there is too much focus on what FAO is doing and too little about what is actually being achieved. To a large extent, the reporting is on outputs rather than outcomes. We understand that this is partially due to the short time-span of the reporting period – we are only in the second year of the implementation of the new Strategic Plan. We do, however, believe that it would strengthen the reporting to not only report on outputs and outcomes, but also provide insights into the actual impacts that FAO has been able to achieve and contribute to.

One of the fundamental problems with reporting on achievements is having proper baselines to measure against. At present, there is no baseline for the indicators, hence it is not possible to see development from start or from one period to the next.

We have on question for clarification that regards developments in human resources. We notice one particular trend, mentioned in paragraph 384 and Figure 9, were it is reported that the percentage of women in professional posts in offices outside headquarters has been and are significantly lower than in headquarters, and further more this percentage has been dropping since 2010. We would like to ask the Secretariat if they have any explanation for this trend.

Finally, for future reports we would like to offer the following recommendations:

1. The report could be made shorter and more readily understood. UNDP's report is for example far shorter, more stringent in the way goals, results and effects are presented – and easier to grasp. In addition, we suggest that more of the supporting material could be presented in tables and annexes.
2. Web annex 5 is a good foundation for a result framework, but it should be possible to see from the report where to find relevant information in the annex. The report itself does not show clearly enough which outputs are expected to give which outcomes – this is only found in the annex.

3. The report should include – or at least refer to – an explicit theory of change. Only this way it can be understood how the various outputs and outcomes are contributing to what we really are looking for, impact on the various Strategic Objectives.
4. The report should include an annex on the implementation of the minimum standards and the accountability framework of the gender policy.

Mr Ismail BIN HAJ BAKAR (Malaysia)

First of all, Malaysia wishes to align our intervention with the G77 and China as well as Asia Group's statement.

Malaysia welcomes the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15 and recognizes the first PIR produced under the FAO Strategic Framework which incorporates fight against hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition as pivotal part of the global sustainable development agenda. We further recognize the alignment between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the FAO Strategic Objectives.

We appreciate the effort made by the Secretariat to provide all Members the overview of the Programme Implementation Report, which was very informative. We acknowledge the FAO achievement for the past biennium of 2014-15 through the Programme Implementation Report.

We note that 88 percent of the output indicators were fully achieved, with about 67 percent of the targets being exceeded. We believe the commitments delivered by FAO to its Programme of Work must be lauded as it produced important and measurable impact at national, regional and global levels.

We hope that in the next Programme Implementation Report, details of the indicators achieved for example the list of policy processes and countries involved, to be included in the appendices for our reference.

Malaysia wishes to commend FAO for its achievement in efficiency savings of USD 36.6 million. In conjunction with that matter, we hope that FAO will continue giving special attention to bureaucracy, project management and budget monitoring to better implement each of its projects in the future. We encourage FAO to increase equitably representation of Member Nations in its work staff by giving special emphasis to under-represented and non-represented countries including Malaysia and the Asia Region.

With regards to the Asia Region, we acknowledge FAO focus of work in supporting the four Regional Initiatives. In addition to that, we hope that FAO will continue working with Member Nations, to establish Country Programming Frameworks, to facilitate collaboration on South-South Cooperation, to support save food campaign, and to develop capacity and transfer of knowledge for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals.

With this statement, we endorse the Programme Implementation Report for 2014-15.

Sra. Alba Beatriz SOTO PIMENTEL (Cuba)

La Delegación cubana apoya la declaración del GRULAC y la del G77 y China.

Queremos felicitar a la FAO por los resultados alcanzados en la ejecución del programa. La FAO ha sido y es una organización clave en la cooperación con los gobiernos y demás sectores que participan en la lucha contra el hambre, la desnutrición y por el desarrollo agrícola y la creación de capacidades. Su cooperación fue fundamental en el logro de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio y continuará siendo vital en el alcance de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible.

Queremos destacar como muy positivo que durante el bienio se aprobaron un total de 501 proyectos del Programa de Cooperación Técnica, lo cual es comparativamente superior al bienio 2012-2013. La cuantía de los presupuestos de los proyectos ha aumentado un 11 por ciento y el número de proyectos aprobados, un 8 por ciento. Es bueno señalar que el 68 % de las consignaciones presupuestarias aprobadas corresponden a proyectos nacionales.

Apoyamos el proceso de descentralización para alcanzar mejores resultados en el terreno. Entre las acciones emprendidas por la FAO en la región de América Latina y el Caribe, se destaca que en la

Tercera Cumbre de la Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños se prestó apoyo a la formulación, aplicación y posterior aprobación del Plan de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional de la CELAC mediante un proceso participativo e integrador.

Se ha respaldado el intercambio de experiencias y de conocimiento entre los países de la región, así como la promoción de la Cooperación Sur-Sur y Triangular, y la toma de decisiones basadas en hechos comprobados. Reconocemos que la política de género de la FAO está bien fundamentada y el informe recoge los avances con datos ilustrativos. Sin embargo queremos proponer que todos los documentos y propuestas sobre este tema se discutan en el marco de los órganos de gobierno.

Señor Presidente, la comunidad internacional tiene grandes retos para alcanzar los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible. No sólo debemos luchar contra los efectos del cambio climático, sino también contra los efectos de la desigual distribución de los recursos y los efectos de la guerra. La máxima de paz y desarrollo es cada vez más necesaria.

Entre los tres objetivos principales del mandato de la FAO está el impulso al progreso económico y social para todos y la ordenación y utilización sostenible de los recursos naturales. El sistema de las Naciones Unidas requiere acompañar a los países en desarrollo a alcanzar los ODS de manera flexible y dinámica. Sus programas en el terreno están llamados a responder a las necesidades específicas y al contexto nacional.

Los desafíos que enfrentamos los estados son enormes. 805 millones de personas aún padecen hambre crónica. Sin embargo, el mundo produce alimentos más que suficientes. Recuperar tan sólo la mitad de lo que se pierde o desperdicia podría bastar para alimentar al planeta. Los ODS 10 y 12 trazan pautas en este ámbito. Agradeceremos el apoyo de la FAO en esta área.

Por último, hacemos un llamado a los Estados Miembros a cooperar para cumplir el actual Programa de Trabajo aprobado para el período. Queremos respaldar nuestro apoyo al informe presentado.

Mr Won Chul JOO (Republic of Korea)

First of all, the Republic of Korea fully aligns itself with the statement made by Pakistan on behalf of the Asia Group. We would like to commend FAO Secretariat for preparing this comprehensive document before us, which is the first Programme Implementation Report produced under the results framework of the reviewed Strategic Framework and Medium Term Plan 2014-17.

We commend the FAO contribution to some of the major policy developments during the last biennium, namely the MDGs, SDGs, COP21, ICN2, and encourage its continued engagement in the fora related to its mandate.

We appreciate that FAO has achieved 88 percent of the output indicators and 77 percent of outcome indicators during 2014-15 biennium. These numbers reflect the effort of all FAO staff under the fine leadership of the senior management and the Director-General. However, we note with concern that some of the partially or not achieved indicators are related to important areas such as sustainable management of natural resources and capacity development support at all levels. In this regard, we encourage FAO to give more attention to indicators that are lagging behind to foster the achievement of the Strategic Objectives.

Moreover, we note that the geographic distribution of staff leaves room for improvement, as the number of countries that are equitably represented stood at 63 percent in December 2015, far below its initial target of 75 percent for 2014-15. We look forward to seeing the FAO increased efforts in this respect in near future.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Like others, we welcome the PIR 2014-15 which is the first to report on results. This is the first step in the right direction towards more effective results-based management. In particular, Canada is pleased with the FAO progress on capacity-building support for countries at international standard-setting bodies such as Codex and IPPC as mentioned in the PIR under Strategic Objective 4.

Under Strategic Objective 2, we welcome the FAO continued focused on work for combatting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, including efforts to implement FAO's instruments to prioritize this work such as the Port State Measures Agreement which will soon come into force.

In addition, Canada does recognize in the PIR FAO's work on sharing impartial evidence-based analysis on biotechnology and we would like to see more work done on this topic.

In regard to FAO's work on AMR, Canada recognizes the Organization's focus on this topic and, as reflected in the PIR, its cooperation activities within the framework of the FAO-OIE-WHO tripartite partnership under the 'One Health' approach.

As mentioned at the Programme Committee, Canada believes that FAO should use its Regular Programme budget for AMR initiatives given the importance of this topic for Members. Also mentioned at the Programme Committee on gender specifically, we welcome the effort to highlight examples of gender mainstreaming in each Strategic Objective and to report in further details in Strategic Objective 6 under outcome 6.3.

This is in line with one of the requests of the 2013 Conference that the PIR be improved to integrate an assessment of gender results being achieved. This report represents a big step forward. We can see that mechanisms are established to measure results and we strongly encourage ongoing investments to ensure that standards and targets are further met.

At the same time, like the statement delivered by Iceland, some reporting is a bit confusing. We do not agree necessarily that 11 minimum standards of the FAO gender equality policies have been achieved as it is reported when the summary of results show that, for most, they have been partially achieved.

There is an explanation about how you measured the progress status but we would encourage clearer reporting to provide a more accurate picture of the progress achieved. For example, minimum standard five provides a country-gender assessment as undertaken as part of country programming. The summary results shows over 66 percent of endorsed CPFs in all regions included a gender assessment in their situation analysis.

Over 66 percent is great progress. We just do not see why the conclusion is that the standard has been met.

We also welcome the announcement by the Secretariat today of a separate report that will provide further information about gender for the seminar that was announced by the Director-General yesterday. As many have said, the PIR could benefit from being more concise and strategic, and separate reports on other issues like gender will serve in making the PIR more digestible.

Lastly, we would recommend including some financial analysis against each Strategic Objective in order to understand where investments are increasing and decreasing. This would improve the deepening of understanding for members of the results achieved in the previous year.

Ms Wimonporn THITASAK (Thailand)

Thailand supports the Statement made by G77 and China and the Asia Group.

We would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing the informative and useful document showing FAO accountability. We are pleased with the achievement of FAO during the biennium 2014-15.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank FAO for technical assistance provided to Thailand in the last biennium. In particular the Port State Measures Agreement to fight with IUU fishing, climate change, and VGGT. It really had a positive impact at a country level.

We are glad to see that FAO tries to measure the outcome even though it is difficult to measure.

We encourage the Secretariat to continue and improve the outcome indicators of which the data were not available. We would suggest that indicators should be evidence-based and easy to measure and not take too much time and resources. We believe that reliable indicators will increase visibility of FAO, and help to attract donors to support the work FAO is doing.

Sra. Mónica ROBELO RAFFONE (Nicaragua)

Mi delegación se suma a la declaración realizada por Ecuador en nombre del GRULAC y por el G-77 más China. Deseamos agradecer la presentación del documento C 2017/8 y a la vez expresar la satisfacción con la ejecución del programa en 2014-2015, la cual se traduce en el alcance de la mayoría de las realizaciones previstas en el contexto de una mayor descentralización.

Agradecemos también las actualizaciones remitidas a través de las notas informativas, muy útiles para los miembros en un contexto de trabajo basado en el mutuo apoyo y plena transparencia.

El nivel de ejecución de la FAO en la región durante el bienio 2014-2015 con un promedio anual de 305 proyectos por un monto total de 144 millones de dólares, destinado principalmente a la asistencia técnica, demuestra el avance de forma sostenida tanto al nivel regional como en cada uno de nuestros países, y patentiza la importancia del Programa de Cooperación Técnica para los países en desarrollo, y la lucha contra la inseguridad alimentaria y por ende, la necesidad de seguir fortaleciéndolo.

Sobre los resultados alcanzados, mi delegación desea reconocer particularmente la implementación de las iniciativas regionales en el contexto del nuevo Marco Estratégico con un enfoque basado en resultados, mediante las cuales la FAO ha podido mejorar la especificidad, el impacto de su labor, especialmente a nivel nacional.

El trabajo realizado bajo las iniciativas regionales ha revelado importantes avances en la consecución de resultados, mostrando a la vez un nivel de flexibilidad para abordar los nuevos desafíos y tendencias a los que se enfrentan los países de la región. En particular el tema de la adaptación y mitigación al cambio climático, que requiere un compromiso político que vaya más allá del consenso alcanzado en París. En este sentido la FAO juega un papel fundamental en este necesario cambio de paradigma hacia sistemas agrícolas y alimentarios que sean más productivos e integradores y se adapten mejor al cambio climático.

Expresamos nuestra satisfacción y damos la bienvenida a los esfuerzos de descentralización finalizados a acercar la competencia técnica de la FAO al terreno, sin dejar de mantener una masa crítica de conocimientos especializados en la sede. Alentamos a que este proceso de actualización de la red de las oficinas se lleve a cabo asegurando una cobertura geográfica apropiada y adaptada a las tendencias y condiciones actuales.

Agradecemos los esfuerzos considerables y los resultados obtenidos por parte del Director General en la consecución de recursos mediante la obtención de ahorro por eficiencia sin afectar al Programa de Trabajo. El éxito de la medida aplicada para incrementar la eficacia ha permitido a la Organización seguir prestando los servicios que le han sido encomendados sin detrimento de su calidad.

Asimismo la gestión de los recursos humanos demuestra el cambio para la transformación, por lo cual recibimos con agrado los considerables progresos realizados en este ámbito. Queremos destacar el mayor nivel de compromiso asumido por los países mediante los fondos fiduciarios, la creciente solidaridad de la región, plasmada en una amplia Cooperación Sur-Sur y Triangular, la cual se ha convertido en una estrategia fundamental para apoyar la seguridad alimentaria, la mitigación de la pobreza y el desarrollo sostenible en la región.

Cito en particular el Plan de Erradicación del Hambre y la Pobreza de Petrocaribe ALBA, el Programa de Cooperación Triangular, Seguridad y Soberanía Alimentaria y Nutricional para América Latina y el Caribe SAN impulsado por Venezuela, el Programa Mesoamérica sin Hambre, un acuerdo que se ejecuta en los países centroamericanos, República Dominicana y Colombia, con el apoyo de la FAO y la cooperación del Gobierno de México.

Con esas consideraciones, mi delegación expresa su reconocimiento a los actuales esfuerzos de la Organización para lograr una mayor eficiencia en su trabajo, en lo cual están jugando un importante papel las medidas promovidas por el Director General y refrenda el informe sobre la ejecución del programa.

Mr Yoji MATSUI (Japan)

Japan aligns itself with the Asia Group comments delivered by Pakistan. Japan values FAO's efforts toward further development of a results-based organization, the high-level achievement of outcome- and output-level targets as well as the efficiency savings. This report will serve as a good basis for producing the revised Strategic Framework and new Medium-Term Plan.

The findings of this report should be carefully examined to identify the areas that require further improvement and to fully utilise the lessons learnt. In this regard, Japan would like to point out the following four issues.

First, it is necessary to look into the background for failing in achieving some outcomes and outputs. In particular, we would like the Secretariat to provide its analysis on why the outcome-level achievement of SO2 are lower than the other SOs as raised by the Near East group.

Second, some indicators extremely exceeded the targets. We think the Secretariat needs to verify the level of the original targets and, if necessary, adjust some of them, as pointed out by the Nordic Countries. Unmeasured indicators due to the lack of data should be reconsidered as well.

Third, one of the lessons pointed out the significance of partnership with strategic partners in assisting countries for establishing policy framework. In this connection, the 'Report on the Findings of the CFS Effectiveness Survey' submitted to the 42nd Session of the CFS held in last October also observed low familiarity of CFS's policy guidance instrument and CFS work in general. We consider that the lesson of the PIR regarding strategic partnership can be utilised to enhance effectiveness of CFS.

Lastly, another lesson suggested that the private sector-driven approach used for developing value chains and improving access to finance, is difficult to be scaled up and long-term intervention with the strategic partners is necessary, while a publication of Rome-based Agencies entitled 'Achieving Zero Hunger' highlighted a need for massive investment to ending hunger. In order to meet such huge financial need, we expect FAO to make efforts to collect experiences in establishing effective relationship with diverse donors, including the private sector. For the same reason, we also look forward to TCP's further catalytic role in mobilising additional resources.

Sr. Elias Rafael ELJURI ABRAHAM (República Bolivariana de Venezuela)

En primer lugar, quiero señalar el apoyo y la satisfacción al Programa de Ejecución 2014-2015 y dar un apoyo total a la presentación de Ecuador en nombre del GRULAC, documento donde se especifica claramente todo el apoyo a la descentralización y a la política de género.

Quisiera recalcar un punto que está en la declaración, que se refiere al cambio que estamos teniendo en relación con pasar de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio, que eran 8, y 48 metas, a los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible, que son 17, 169 metas y más de 200 indicadores. Como vemos, este es un reto realmente muy importante y sí nos ha costado poder parcialmente alcanzar las metas del milenio y han podido los países recopilar estadísticas que les permiten esto. Lo que está planteado en este momento es un reto muy grande, claro, para la FAO no son todos estos indicadores, pero la FAO está involucrada en una gran cantidad de ellos. Por eso, señalaba también la importancia de que para estos indicadores que corresponden a la FAO, como lo dice el documento, haya una comunicación muy estrecha con la Comisión de Estadística y las Naciones Unidas.

Así que quiero decirles que para poder lograr estos Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio es necesario en primer lugar que logremos potenciar el desarrollo de los sistemas estadísticos nacionales, porque de nada vale que tengamos una estructura en la FAO de primer orden si resulta que no hay información para llenar todo lo que se necesita para el cálculo de los indicadores. Así que si no tenemos un sistema de estadística nacional bien estructurado y los gobiernos le otorgamos todos los recursos necesarios, realmente vamos a tener grandes dificultades para hacer el seguimiento de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible.

Considero que este es un elemento muy importante que debemos tener en cuenta que por supuesto existe en países desarrollados donde el sistema estadístico nacional tiene una gran capacidad, por ejemplo Canadá. Con el sistema estadístico de Canadá, quizás se pueda ejecutar esto de una manera mucho más fácil de lo que podamos desarrollar toda otra serie de países que son países en desarrollo.

Mr Ornal BARMAN (Trinidad and Tobago)

Trinidad and Tobago wishes to congratulate the Director General of FAO on the overall achievement of the Organization as evidenced by the delivery of the results that were planned. Specifically as reflected in the Programme Implementation Report 2014-2015, approximately 88 percent of the output indicators were fully achieved, with about 67 percent of the targets exceeded.

Trinidad and Tobago supports the results-based approach in implementing FAO's Programme of Work and Budget, since this approach is participative and is based on needs assessments, regional priorities and FAO's comparative advantage.

Trinidad and Tobago acknowledges that the management of the financial and human resources of the Organization has played a key role in the accomplishment of the Organization.

We note that in terms of global policy development, food and agriculture are aligned to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and FAO's Strategic Objectives are consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Trinidad and Tobago wishes to express appreciation to the FAO for its support to Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in our quest for food and nutrition security; development of our agriculture sector; mitigating the effects of climate change; and ensuring plant and animal health and food safety.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago acknowledges the achievements of the outcomes and outputs under the strategic and functional objectives as measured by indicators and targets in the Programme Implementation report 2014-15.

Ms Sagung Mirah RATNA DEWI (Indonesia)

Indonesia would like to associate itself with the statement made by Pakistan on behalf of Asia group.

In line with FAO Strategic Objectives, Indonesia is currently drawing up an action plan for national and local level to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Matching the goals with Indonesia's National Medium-Term Development Plan 2015-19, the government has found much conformity in the indicators of the goals. Therefore, Indonesia is eager to participate in FAO's hard work in attaining the FAO Strategic Objectives.

We acknowledge that transformational change of FAO has benefited Member Nations. Through Regional Initiatives, each region could prioritize on their specific needs and challenges, recognizing that one size does not fit all. In the Asia Pacific Region, Indonesia has actively shared its experience on the implementation of Regional Rice Initiatives.

Indonesia also supports many FAO programmes implemented in Indonesia including the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, rice-fish system, Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS), and animal health management. Regarding the effort on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including inheriting and developing good farming practices, such as GIAHS initiatives, Indonesia is making an effort to develop its GIAHS sites. In this regard, we call support and capacity-building from FAO and other international organizations/resource partners in developing GIAHS in FAO member countries.

Accomplishing sustainable food systems is another issue in which Indonesia seeks support from FAO, particularly in reducing food loss and food waste.

Finally, on the issue of financial mechanism, Indonesia appreciates efforts that have been made and taken by the FAO in managing the resources to support the delivery of its programme of work.

Having said that, Indonesia supports the endorsement of the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15.

Ms Roberta Maria LIMA FERREIRA (Brazil)

Brazil aligns itself with the statement delivered by Bangladesh on behalf of the G77 and China, as well as with the statement read by Ecuador on behalf of GRULAC. We also welcome the remarks made by

the Gender Network on this important cross-cutting issue. Brazil believes that gender must be factored into all FAO programmes and projects.

We congratulate FAO for delivering well the first Programme of Work and Budget under the reviewed Strategic Framework.

Concerning the regional results for Latin America and the Caribbean, FAO has been of great help, ensuring the implementation of three regional initiatives, namely “Support to the Hunger-Free Latin America and Caribbean Initiative”; “Family Farming and Rural Territorial Development”; and “Improving National and Regional Food and Feed Systems”.

The three regional initiatives conform to the priorities defined by our 2014 Regional Conference, including (i) eradication of hunger, (ii) food security, (iii) malnutrition and extreme poverty, (iv) sustainable agriculture, (v) livestock, (vi) forestry, (vii) fisheries and (viii) the establishment of more inclusive and efficient food systems. These are not easy challenges and the countries have the main responsibility to address them at the national level.

I would also like to mention the work undertaken by Brazil in collaboration with FAO in the project called “Strengthening the school feeding programs in Latin America and the Caribbean”, which is part of the Hunger-Free Latin America and Caribbean Initiative.

We commend FAO for its support in the implementation of the CELAC Food Security and Nutrition Plan, which will help us to promote dialogue and to improve action in this field.

Brazil appreciates FAO’s work in mobilizing parliamentarians and its support to the development of national laws on Food Security and Nutrition. Since 2010, the right to food is duly recognized by the Brazilian Constitution.

Sr. Nazareno Cruz MONTANI CAZABAT (Argentina)

Argentina se alinea con las declaraciones efectuadas por Bangladesh en nombre del G77 y China y por Ecuador en nombre del GRULAC. Damos la bienvenida al Informe sobre la Ejecución del Programa para el 2014-15 el cual configura el primer informe que se elabora con arreglo del marco de los resultados contenido en el Marco Estratégico Revisado y el Plan a Plazo Medio para 2014-17. Creemos que representa un gran avance tanto en términos de formato como en el contenido.

Acogemos con satisfacción los resultados de la ejecución del Plan de Acción del bienio precedente en particular el hecho de que en el 88 % de los indicadores relativos a las realizaciones se logró alcanzar plenamente las metas previstas de las cuales aproximadamente el 67 % se superaron. Asimismo, se obtuvieron alrededor del 72 % de los resultados relativos a las realizaciones a nivel nacional por región. Estamos convencidos de que la actualización de la cobertura de las oficinas descentralizadas y la generación de capacidades técnicas en el terreno, ha sido clave a la hora de alcanzar los objetivos planteados.

En consecuencia, alentamos a la FAO a que continúe y profundice el proceso de descentralización, incluido el fortalecimiento de las capacidades técnicas, en particular en las oficinas descentralizadas.

Apoyamos el involucramiento y la labores de la FAO en aquellos temas cruciales para la agenda global. Destacamos en particular el rol de la FAO en la Agenda 2030 en el COP21 de París y la Segunda Conferencia Internacional sobre Nutrición. Alentamos a que la FAO siga trabajando en esta línea, incluida en la preparación del COP22 en Marruecos. Reconocemos la importancia del alineamiento de los Objetivos Estratégicos de la FAO, con los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible y alentamos a que la Organización continúe trabajando en este ámbito, en particular en relación con la alineación de los indicadores de dichos objetivos. Destacamos particularmente el rol de la FAO en dar apoyo a los países para que estos puedan implementar los ODS en particular en materia de recolección de datos y estadísticas.

La cuestión de género es de central importancia para nuestro país. En este sentido, reconocemos la importante labor la FAO en este tema, que ha sido incorporado en cada uno de los Objetivos Estratégicos y en el Objetivo número 6 como tema transversal. La igualdad de género y el empoderamiento de la mujer en cada estrategia y programa en el terreno son cruciales para luchar

contra el hambre y por la pobreza. Y éste no es sólo una cuestión de principio, sino una realidad que se puede constatar fehacientemente.

Para finalizar, destacamos la importancia de que la Organización mantenga sus esfuerzos en materia de multilingüismo, en línea con la resolución 5011 de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas de 1995, tanto en sus productos como en las diversas reuniones, resaltando la importancia de contar con la traducción de documentos y servicios de interpretación. Con estas palabras, Argentina endosa el PIR 2014-15.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

Liberia fully supports statements made by Congo on behalf of the Africa Region, and Cameroon also. Liberia associates herself with the statement made by the Chair of the G77. We express thanks and appreciation to the Secretariat for the detailed presentation of the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15. While we commend the FAO for achieving 88 percent of the planned outputs indicating indeed that transformational changes undertaken at the FAO under the strong leadership of the Director-General has yielded a high degree of tangible results in many Member Nations, we would like to encourage FAO to continue its efforts in this direction in keeping focused and determined to leave no one behind and to remain on the right trajectory in obtaining greater results for food security, nutrition, and the SDGs.

Moreover, we would like to underline the importance of resilience so that unexpected crises do not undermine the progress thus far achieved such as we experienced in the West Africa Subregion during the Ebola crisis. These new threats include but are not limited to the areas of climate change, droughts, El-Nino, Zika virus, Ebola virus, disease, animal diseases, antimicrobial resistance, and others. If not taken very seriously, the continent of Africa and other regions will have devastating consequences for food security and eradication of poverty.

We commend the Director-General for the efficiency savings of USD 36.6 million during the 2014-15 biennium. As stated earlier by other speakers, Liberia takes note of the role played by FAO within the United Nations system on global issues and also FAO's contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Liberia therefore underlines the need for continuity in this strategic direction of the Organization and the alignment between FAO Strategic Objectives and its Sustainable Development Goals.

The implementation of the TCP is also an area of particular interest to the Africa Region, and we therefore concur with previous speakers for the restoration of the TCP budget to a level of not less than 14 percent of total appropriation in the next budget as agreed in the FAO Conference in June 2015. Liberia requests FAO for technical capacity support for the Africa Region to measure progress in the implementation of the SDGs, especially in areas of statistics where many countries in Africa have limited expertise.

Considering that the issue of antimicrobial resistance is a particular interest to the subregion, as earlier mentioned, we want to thank the Secretariat for the preparation of the Five-Year Action Plan on the antimicrobial resistance in the documents that were presented to us during the informal briefing. Two years ago, as you may recall, the subregion of West Africa had a catastrophic epidemic that threatened the existence of three member nations, Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone, which became a real threat to the global world, leading many countries to close their borders.

Today we can say thanks to all the people, NGOs, FBOs, governments, the United Nations agencies, African Union, and many others, including FAO, for their support. But at this point we would like to especially thank the governments of the United States of America and the People's Republic of China for the unprecedented support given to Liberia during those critical moments. The President of the United States went beyond the call of duty by sending their 'sons and daughters' to Liberia and into harm's way to fight an unknown enemy called Ebola. Liberia is grateful to them. This dramatic situation in the subregion became an eyesore for all in the continent to have paid much closer attention to the importance of infectious disease control. This was an unprecedented global threat to human and animal health, livelihoods and our common efforts at poverty reduction.

Liberia will not forget the devastating impact of the Ebola virus disease and will therefore not relent to underline these threats wherever we are to speak. We note with interest that the Action Plan foresees four major focus areas related to public health – livestock, crops, and aquatic resources with impact on food security, nutrition, the environment, and sustainable development. We commend FAO for this Action Plan which advocates for a programme cutting across the Organization involving headquarters and decentralized offices fully embedded into the 2016-17 Programme of Work with clear milestones and expected results at global and country levels. This plan comprehensively covers the activities FAO was tasked with by Conference Resolution 4/2015.

Furthermore, we appreciate the related budget calculation, according to which FAO needs USD 2 million per year for five years to implement the Action Plan. In this context, we note that up until now FAO has secured USD 2.9 million extra-budgetary resources from the United States Agency for International Development, Ireland and the United Kingdom. In addition, we also welcome the initiated discussions with a number of other potential donors – Russian Federation, United Kingdom, France, and others – and hope other member countries can join this global effort to assist FAO.

Liberia takes the opportunity to sincerely thank the donors for their generosity and congratulate FAO for having achieved to secure these voluntary contributions. However, we have the following queries in this respect. First, we would like to know to what extent these voluntary contributions are earmarked for specific activities. And if so, whether these activities match with the FAO Action Plan on AMR? Second, we would like to know whether FAO has considered a Plan B for the funding in case the necessary amount of USD 2 million per year cannot be secured from voluntary contributions.

As a medical doctor myself, it is incumbent upon me to underline the importance of AMR in my subregion. We are not speaking on behalf of other regions. We are speaking on behalf of our people and that of the entire continent of Africa, as I said before, the Ebola crisis. Given the enormous threat which AMR constitutes for mankind, and in particular for the Africa Region where we are so vulnerable to so many epidemics as we recently saw again, as I said before with Ebola, we strongly believe that FAO should be prepared to complement the voluntary contributions with resources from the Regular Programme budget even if so small as a token to make sure the Action Plan on AMR can be implemented to the fullest extent possible. Conservative estimates suggest that without urgent action, the current 700 000 AMR-related human deaths per year will rise to 10 million by 2050 with accumulative loss to global GDP of up to USD 100 trillion by then. It is important that we take note and we begin to pay attention to AMR. There is a critical need to strengthen research and action in agriculture to address what the status report has noted as the widely recognized excessive use and misuse of antimicrobials as two of the major drivers for acquired antimicrobial resistance.

We therefore request this Council to mandate the FAO to find a way to allocate some resources from the core budget, even though we are talking about zero budget, to indicate to member countries the seriousness of FAO in addressing AMR. The Africa Region is vulnerable for many human and animal disease epidemics. We cannot sit in such conferences without highlighting these threats. We want to commend the tripartite partnership engagement with WHO and OIE for its strong and effective collaboration on AMR. We note the willingness of FAO to increase the FAO's technical support staff at country level. South Africa, like China, the United States of America and others, gave support to the AMR as I stated before.

At this junction we recognize the FAO Policy on Gender Equality and we welcome the Director-General's planned seminar on gender. Africa's first elected female president is from the Republic of Liberia, and we know the efforts she has made to mainstream the gender policy of our government. In this regard, Liberia supports a strong FAO policy on gender equality. The FAO Policy on Gender Equality was endorsed in 2013 and we believe the FAO can do more in achieving gender equality and empowering women, which is not only the right thing but it is the crucial ingredient in the fight against poverty and hunger as our dear Director-General once stated.

We note the high vacancy rate as presented in the Programme Implementation Report which suggests to me that FAO needs to trust and delegate more authority to the Human Resources Department to fill in those vacancies so that the Organization can fully deliver in all the Strategic Objectives and to pay a

special attention to the employment of more women in professional posts. We look forward to paying closer attention to the equitable representation and geographical distribution of staff.

Liberia would like to extend thanks and appreciation to Council Members for listening to these specific appeals to FAO for AMR and the other areas. And with these comments, Liberia endorses the adoption of the PIR report.

Mr Evgeny SOBOLEVSKY (Belarus) (Original language Russian)

The Programme Implementation Report 2014-15 attests to the successful work of FAO. Almost 90 percent of outputs and almost 80 percent of outcome indicators were received. We share the assessment of the Director-General. The Organization has duly delivered. The programme and the activities contain therein have had an important positive impact at national, regional, and global levels.

Also of great importance is what was annexed to the report, information on guaranteeing a language balance in the Organization. In the last biennium, in full alignment with previous decisions, progress was made in ensuring language diversity. It is particularly pleasing that the amount of Russian language publications is steadily growing and exceeded four percent of the total volume. We are convinced that to achieve the target of balance in language services, we still need further increases in the amount of Russian language documents in the e-repository and in the Russian terms in the FAO Term Portal.

Using Russian in the Organization every day greatly enhances effective collaboration between countries of the Eurasian Economic Union with FAO, significantly facilitating communication and exchange of experience at the expert level. We hope that the important work on achieving balance in language services will continue making a full use of languages in FAO initiatives.

Ms Elizabeth NASSKAU (Observer for United Kingdom)

In line with the statement made by the European Union and its Member States, the United Kingdom would simply like to reiterate Liberia's intervention, particularly on antimicrobial resistance (AMR). As the Deputy Director-General said in one of the Committee meetings, AMR represents a "silent tsunami". FAO has a critical leadership role to play on the global stage in addressing this "silent tsunami".

From this point of view, we look forward to continuing to work with FAO along with all other Member Nations to ensure that we raise awareness of this critical issue, the threat of which Liberia has so effectively highlighted. In addition, we support FAO in its work leading up to the high level event in the United Nations General Assembly to be held in September 2016 as well as at country level and beyond as FAO really steps up its work in this critical area. But if we fail to address, we really risk undermining the good work that we are carrying out in reaching FAO's objectives in achieving global food security.

Mr Mafizur RAHMAN (Observer for Bangladesh)

I would like to support my colleague from Liberia regarding the antimicrobial resistance (AMR) issue. He was right when he pointed out all the importance of the AMR issue. That is the reason why we hereby request that at least a small token money from the Regular Programme budget be used by FAO to work on the AMR issue. Depending completely on the voluntary contributions is a reputational risk for FAO. It would undermine its credibility. I am strongly supporting the proposal made by Liberia and supported by the United Kingdom.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

I think we have had many detailed comments, and I fully agree with a lot of them, but I still have a few comments.

First, I would like to thank Mr Haight and his team for the Report before us. Obviously it is part of the process of improving the sort of results-based information that both Management has for it to make informed decisions, but also it allows Membership to provide more informed guidance. We thank you very much for this Report. Obviously, as many have said, the first under the new Strategic Framework. As many of the comments have been made, there is appreciation for the valuable information in it,

obviously it is a continuous improvement process and so some suggestions that we would support for the next version to be considered, reflected and incorporated in.

We would like to thank the Director-General and congratulate him, the Management team and FAO staff for their significant contribution during the biennium. The list of outputs and contribution to outcomes is quite impressive as outlined in the document. I think it is clear that there is evidence that some of the changes that the Director-General has made in his tenure here are starting to have a positive impact at a country level and at a global level, so we would very much like to acknowledge that. At the same time, of course, we want to support him and encourage him to continue making the difficult decisions and pushing this Organization forward to increase the impact of its work.

I think we all would agree that there was some room for improvement and there was a need for some difficult decisions to be made. I think the Director-General and the Management team have made those decisions and will need to continue to push this Organization forward for it to regain that need to raise the premiere global, agricultural, and food knowledge Organization. I think we are seeing some positive progress in that direction and Australia would strongly encourage the Director-General and the Management team to continue down that path.

I think we have heard today there are all sorts of numerous issues and challenges facing countries around the world and clearly a desire for support to address those. I guess we would say, as Australia always has made a point to say, that FAO cannot be everything to all countries and all people and it does not have the budget nor the mandate to deliver against all of those. We would support the Organization having a clear framework for making decisions around the way it allocates resources and the things that it gets involved in and really to focus in on those few areas where it does have a comparative advantage and where it can actually make a marked difference. We agree that it is difficult, but is a necessary requirement for the Organization to make those difficult decisions as to where it can have the most impact for its limited resources.

Clearly there were some lessons learnt during the biennium and many of those are reflected in the Report. We would encourage Management to pick up on those as no doubt they will. I think a few of those have already been flagged by countries such as Japan and others around the importance of strategic partnerships and working with others, so we would stress those as well.

Lastly, just to say I will not be here in Rome myself in two years' time but we would hope that again the next version of this report will see a continued momentum down the path that we have seen already in terms of increased transparency and accountability of the Organization and obviously the desire to have an increased impact and outcome levels.

Mr Abreha ASEFFA (Ethiopia)

We join others in supporting Liberia on the issue of antimicrobial resistance (AMR). I think that AMR is a problem not only for Africa but for the whole world, so it has to be taken very seriously. We also urge FAO, as some of the colleagues suggested, that at least dedicated funds could be assigned in order to carry out the objectives of AMR.

CHAIRPERSON

We have had 27 speakers and this shows the importance of the PIR. It means planning through the activities of this Organization, and I am very happy that what Members have been fighting for, and which was one part of the reform of FAO regarding the reporting in a results-based manner, has now been accomplished.

This is the first step and looks to be good and we hope that all the suggestions that have been made by Members will go along to approve the second report.

Regarding antimicrobial resistance, the Programme Committee will be reporting on that. It was discussed by the Joint Committee. This was an update on FAO's work on microbial resistance. So I urge you that when we come to that, then we can have substantive recommendations there. And those who have already spoken on that issue, I hope they will not repeat their statements.

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

We greatly appreciate the careful reading of the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) and your very thorough comments on the achievements and the format. We used to say that we would think about what Mr Ayazi would say about what we are writing, but now we think about what everybody might say because you are reading the results much more carefully. We appreciate that.

We see this as a continuum in our Results Framework, what we have done in the past biennium, what we are doing in this biennium, and the lessons learnt feeding into the next biennium. So you will hopefully see gradual improvement both in our planning documents as well as in our reporting.

We also appreciate very much the guidance that you have been providing in your comments about some of the main issues. The Director-General had mentioned this in his opening remarks and we are listening very carefully to the importance that you are giving to the Sustainable Development Goals, to work on nutrition, on climate change adaptation as well as the effects such as transboundary diseases, on statistics and on areas of natural resources. So this is the kind of engagement that helps us to improve going forward.

I would like to speak just briefly about the reporting at the output and the outcome level. Let me say at the outset that we have to try to strike a balance between reporting on outputs, that is the accountability for what FAO delivers against the Programme of Work, and the outcomes which are about changes that are happening in countries that are somewhat beyond the control of FAO.

Several delegations have emphasized the importance of improving the reporting on outcomes and we would certainly agree, but this is a very difficult area to measure because there are externalities involved, changes that occur that are outside of the control of the Organization. We can report on those and you can see in the bar charts that there have been some slippages in some of the outcomes that are beyond our control. But, on the other hand, they are reality, and if we do not see capacities put in place at the outcome level, there is no hope of achieving our objectives. So I think we need to be true to that reporting.

We recognize the difficulty we have in measuring our baselines and also in setting targets at the outcome level.

As far as the outputs are concerned, we have already learnt our lesson from 2014-15. We engaged our country offices much more significantly in the middle of last year to set the targets for the current biennium, so we would hope that we will not see the same level of overachievement that we reported in the current biennium. That is not to say we will not see some variance. It is very hard, as they say, to set targets perfectly.

There was a suggestion by the European Union that we engage and share with other agencies on our processes. In fact, we have been doing this all along. We are members of the UN Strategic Planning Network which is a UN-wide group of UN experts on planning and monitoring and, in fact, in December 2013 we participated in their meeting on key lessons for developing the 2014-17 Strategic Plans and Results Frameworks and shared our experience and learned from them. There will be another meeting on a similar topic later this year which we will be participating in quite actively.

So we have this opportunity to share with our colleagues in the UN technical agencies as well as the funds and programmes.

The Chief Statistician presented our outcome assessment methodology at a meeting of the International Statistics Institute, a World Statistics Congress that was held in Brazil in July of last year and chaired a roundtable where measurement methodologies were discussed.

We have also had at a more technical level the opportunity to engage and, when it comes to sharing with members in the general public, my Deputy Director, Mina Dowlatchahi, made a presentation on statistics for food security and assessment of country capacities at one of the seminars organized at Expo Milano last summer which had, as many of you know, a very high level of participation from people throughout the world.

We are using opportunities whenever we can to share our own experiences and learn from others in measuring outcomes, as it is an area that is difficult. And I think it is important for Members – many of you have highlighted the importance of statistics and data measurement for the SDGs, and what we are learning will be of use as we move forward in preparing the next Medium-Term Plan and the relationship of our Strategic Objectives and their indicators to the SDG indicators.

There have some comments about the use of the voluntary guidelines that are coming out, particularly from CFS, and there are others that have come from FAO and the importance of ensuring that these are implemented particularly through partnerships. Working at the country level, working with non-state actors as well as governmental actors is important for getting some types of results, particularly in fishing communities or small-scale fisheries and so forth.

On the regional initiatives, the Near East and a few others have asked about an exit strategy and where are we going to do with these initiatives in the future. The current set which is the original 15 with some modifications that were made in the case of Latin America in particular will be implemented during the course of 2016-17. We will have the opportunity to gradually, in those cases where there is buy-in and interest, hand over and move on in the next Medium-Term Plan. We have listened very carefully to views on this matter in the Regional Conferences and listened again here today, remembering that regional initiatives are the way we have devised for addressing regional priorities but delivering on our outputs. They are groupings of outputs around regional priorities. So we need to ensure that, if a given regional initiative remains a priority in the region, we can also use it as a way to deliver on our outputs.

On gender, we appreciate the support for our reporting line. We look forward to the seminar later this year and to further elaborate on our achievements. The question came up from Canada, in particular about the minimum standards of the gender policy. In fact the reporting on these in terms of achievement is putting the standards in place. For instance if you look in the second paragraph of Box 1, which is after paragraph 222 in the document, we point out that when a mechanism to mainstream gender has been established, such as the one that was pointed out on country programming where gender assessment is undertaken as part of a country programming exercise, that process has been achieved. We are saying now that we have done it in 66 percent of the cases.

We are saying that a standard can be considered to be achieved when a mechanism is put in place. That is the measurement we have used and that is how we get to the 11 out of the 15 that have been achieved so far. Then we report on progress against those standards which you see in the table.

The question that was asked by Iceland I believe on employment of women professional staff in the decentralized offices – in fact the number of women has gone up by 42 percent but the number of professional staff has gone up by even slightly higher, 54 percent.

So we see since 2010, which is the period when you notice a slight percentage decline, the number of women in decentralized offices has increased from 61 to 87 on the professional staff but the number of men has gone up slightly more. Therefore the percentage of women has actually declined. We continue to try to bring in more female professionals in all locations of the Organization. I am not in a position to identify particular factors that may work for or against women going to particular duty stations but the effort is being made.

On the Technical Cooperation Programme resources, Afghanistan for the Near East, you asked that we report more by region. In fact, in the audited accounts of the Organization, we have in the past reported on both the approvals and the expenditure of TCP by country and by region. Now apparently that is not going to continue so we may need to find a way to report under IPSAS. We may need to find a way to bring that reporting in perhaps to the PIR.

On language use, we continue to try to increase the use of all languages, in particular those that are underserved, in particular Arabic, Chinese, and Russian, and to make the best possible effort to do so.

If I can now turn briefly to the final comments on the PIR format. We very much appreciate your feedback because, in the end, the report is meant for the Members. It is always a balance between details and high level so we have taken the approach this time of giving you the details which are in the official documents but also producing a more high-level brochure. We would hope to do this in the

future so that the main messages get out more clearly, but recognizing that we do have an obligation to report at a certain level of detail.

I do not want to raise too many expectations for the PIR for 2016-17, which is going to report against the same Results Framework that we had for this PIR. That is reporting on the same outcomes and the same indicators because it is a four-year framework. The main improvement, as I mentioned earlier, will be in the targets of the outputs and we will certainly make efforts to improve our collection of information on the outcomes.

Here we may be trying out an approach that focuses more on the change that takes place at outcome level rather than on setting Outcome targets because what you see in the bar charts for each objective is the level of implementation of a given indicator, and that provides some very useful information on where there is a need to have more or less intervention in a given type of indicator at outcome level. That may be one of the innovations that you see in the next PIR against the same framework.

When it comes to preparing the Medium-Term Plan 2018-21, as was discussed by the Programme Committee, we have the opportunity to sharpen our outcomes and indicators. I think this is where you are really going to see some significant change, making the indicators more SMART, as the EU said, although it is difficult sometimes to do that at the outcome level, and also to improve the theory of change and the connection between the outputs that FAO produces and the outcomes, the changes that happen at country level. So we are striving for improvements in the format.

Mr Chair, as you mentioned the AMR issue, perhaps you would take that under the Programme Committee item.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Mr Haight, for presenting the report, as well as responding to the issues or questions which were raised. I understand that the Secretariat is hoping to get more clear and precise indication from Members where they need more efforts to be put.

I can now say that we have come to the end of item 3 and I would like to make my conclusions as follows:

1. The Council welcomed the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) 2014-15 and noted that transformational changes undertaken at the FAO since 2012 had led to delivery of positive results by the Organization within the reviewed Strategic Framework and Medium Term Plan 2014-17.
2. The Council:
 - a) expressed overall satisfaction at the implementation of the programme of work in 2014-15 and underlined the major policy achievements aimed at addressing hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition;
 - b) welcomed FAO's contribution to global policy making, notably through the Second International Conference on Nutrition, the UN Climate Change Conference and the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate, Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing;
 - c) welcomed the success of the International Year of Family Farming in 2014 and the International Year of Soils in 2015 and their linkage to food security;
 - d) welcomed the high proportion of results delivered at country and regional level and encouraged continued efforts focused through the Regional Initiatives;
 - e) underscored the importance of FAO's work on climate change, and on statistics for evidence policies, and looked forward to continued focus in this regard in the current and next biennium
 - f) was satisfied with the achievements in 2014-15 in relation to efforts to consolidate decentralization, and looked forward to further efforts in this regard in the current biennium and the next PWB, including strengthening of the regional and other decentralized offices to respond to their demands and challenges;

- g) appreciated the establishment and strengthening of strategic partnerships with Member governments, United Nations and other international organizations, the private sector and civil society organizations, and continued efforts in this regard;
- h) expressed satisfaction at increased efficiency including identification of USD 36.6 million in savings;
- i) highlighted the importance of undertaking further efforts in achieving balance in language services;
- j) appreciated FAO's work on statistics, noting its vital role for evidence-based decision-making and for delivering relevant Sustainable Development Goals, as well as FAO's contribution to establishing indicators for the monitoring framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- k) stressed the importance of paying due attention to equitable representation and geographical distribution of staff;

(This is a Conference resolution)

- l) commended the positive trend in gender balance in FAO staff, particularly at headquarters, and looked forward to similar improvements at decentralized level; and
- m) appreciated the improvements shown in the new format of the PIR document, and looked forward to adjustment of indicator targets and to further refinement of reporting on Outcomes and Outputs in the next PIR.

3 With regard to the cross-cutting theme of gender, the Council:

- a) expressed satisfaction on FAO's work and results under this cross-cutting theme, and looked forward to continued mainstreaming of gender in its programmes and activities; and
- b) welcomed the Director-General's decision to hold an informal seminar dedicated to gender in 2016 and to elaborate further on FAO's work and achievements on gender in a document for the seminar.

4. The Council appreciated the positive trend of mutual trust and collaboration between the Secretariat and Members, and looked forward to its continuation.

5. The Council endorsed the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15 and recommended that it be submitted to the Conference in July 2017 for approval.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

We thank you for your conclusions. I just want to note here that we did not hear any reference to our appeals. Indeed, the Programme Committee will be dealing with the AMR issue, which we agreed, but probably there is some notation in there making reference to what has been expressed on AMR in the upcoming intervention by the Chairperson of the Programme Committee.

Secondly, we also highlighted the high percentage of vacancies existing and we call upon the Director-General to delegate more authority. We are not dictating to the Director-General, let me be clear on that, we are only encouraging him so that those vacancies can be filled, taking also into account the gender issue in the professional areas, which is also important.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Mes capacités à suivre ont été limitées à un certain moment sur le point qui était relatif, je crois, à la décentralisation, celui qui précédait la création des partenariats stratégiques. Est-ce que vous pourriez relire ce point-là, s'il vous plaît?

CHAIRPERSON

I want to say to the Distinguished Delegate from Liberia, I am here to guide you. But if you want something to be included, then it is up to the Members to accept and agree upon the information which you think is needed. We are going to deal with AMR under the Report of the Programme

Committee. Issues of vacancies and Human Resources, we are going to deal with them under the Finance Committee. All these issues are contained in the documents.

I ask you to accept the fact we are contributing to the issue of AMR under the substantive item which is soon coming. It is the same on this issue of high vacancies. They are all in the reports which will be presented by the Chairs of the Finance and Programme Committees. That is my advice.

Now I will repeat what France has asked me to read: (g) appreciated the establishment and strengthening of strategic partnerships with Member governments, United Nations and other international organizations, the private sector and civil society organizations, and continued efforts in this regard.

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

For point (g) we completely agree with your summary but we would suggest adding at the end a mention of the scientific community. This is a very important partner of FAO and we often suggest that we could include academies and the scientific community in relation to the approach you suggest and with which we completely agree.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Mon point était d'entendre le paragraphe juste avant celui des partenariats stratégiques que vous nous avez rappelé. Ce doit être le point f).

CHAIRPERSON

(f) was satisfied with the achievements in 2014-15 in relation to efforts to consolidate decentralization, and looked forward to further efforts in this regard in the current biennium and the next PWB, including strengthening of the regional and other decentralized offices to respond to their demands and challenges.

Let me check something with Russia. Did you say “academia and the scientific institutions”?

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

I think that just mentioning academia will cover it.

CHAIRPERSON

(g) appreciated the establishment and strengthening of strategic partnerships with Member governments, United Nations and other international organizations, the private sector, civil society organizations, including academia, and continued efforts in this regard.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

I accept that my intervention will be addressed at the appropriate time. Unfortunately, my presentation was made ahead of that, because I have already spoken with the Chairperson of that Committee.

I will be going to an urgent meeting and I may not even be here when the discussions are held. However, I just wanted to say to you I have read all the documents. I am very much aware of the content. I was only asking a question, so I think the answer should have been more appropriate.

Ms Gerda VERBURG (Observer for Netherlands)

Could I ask you to repeat what you summarized under point 4, which was dealing with trust?

CHAIRPERSON

“The Council appreciated the positive trend of trust and collaboration between the Secretariat and Members, and looked forward to its continuation.”

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

We agree with your summary on point (g) and we thank you for including our concern. But we think that it is not completely correct to join together or to present the scientific community in your

summary as part of civil society. That could be the case, but it is a separate category and we would ask you to get rid of the word “including” and say “civil society and academia”.

CHAIRPERSON

And that is taken. I have deleted “including” and replaced it with “and”.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

May I ask you please as well to repeat the language under point 3 regarding the cross-cutting theme on gender, please?

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

Regarding point (f) that you kindly read again, we do not see it really fit for including any reference to anything going beyond the PIR 2014-15 we are talking about. In order to avoid lengthy discussions, in our view the reference to strengthening country and regional offices in the next PWB should be dropped. Any reference to the future would not fit here.

Ms Gerda VERBURG (Observer for Netherlands)

Thank you for re-reading point 4 of your summary. We had an extensive discussion but I did not hear anything about a positive trend in collaboration and trust between the Secretariat and the Member Nations, neither looking forward to improve.

I think there is a good collaboration and there is trust between the Member Nations and the Secretariat. And if you want to maintain this, I would like to hear against what baseline this is considered and this remark is made. Otherwise, my proposal would be to make the summary even conciser to delete this point of your summary based upon the fact that there is trust between the Secretariat and the Member Nations, unless Member Nations or the Secretariat tell us that there is no trust anymore.

And we support the proposal made by Italy.

Mr Khaled M.S.H. EL TAWHEEL (Egypt)

Just to say that we support your initial proposal and especially the same language that you proposed for point (f) which is exactly taking from the report of the Joint Meeting of the Finance and Programme Committees and making reference to the coming biennium is something that is in line with other recommendations that you read, that also ask the Organization to take action in the future.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. That is the explanation given to point (f).

Mr Jón Erlingur JONASSON (Iceland)

Just a suggestion on the point regarding gender. We fully support recognizing what the Director-General announced yesterday and we support it to have it in this report from this discussion, but it is not part of the Programme Implementation Report in itself. We support it here, but we wonder if it would be better balanced also because many of us mentioned and welcomed the decision of the Programme Committee to conduct an evaluation to be presented at the Conference in 2019.

If you could just add that as a point, that would be a good balance for us.

CHAIRPERSON

Can you repeat it, Ambassador, please?

Mr Jón Erlingur JONASSON (Iceland)

I would like to propose to add to the recommendations from the Council that many Members welcomed the decision of the Programme Committee of having an evaluation of the FAO Policy on Gender Equality ready for the Conference in 2019.

CHAIRPERSON

We will get that recommendation in the item on the Programme Committee.

Mr Jón Erlingur JONASSON (Iceland)

I really want to work with you on that one, but let that be consequent on it and we will mention it there again.

CHAIRPERSON

You want me to record it twice? It was discussed in the Programme Committee and I think there is a recommendation to that in the language we are using.

Mr Jón Erlingur JONASSON (Iceland)

I said I am willing to work with you on that. But I also remind us that it is kind of a welcoming statement of the Director-General's good news to us he has mentioned here and we can live with that. Therefore, I was sort of thinking that it could be a good balance also to mention something more that has been decided on the same issue. But I have no good place to put the news from the Director-General, so let us stick to your original summary. We will welcome it under the discussion of the Programme Committee.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for your understanding.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

Quiero referirme al tema de la descentralización y apoyar su resumen e igualmente el comentario que ha hecho el delegado de Egipto, en el sentido de que el tema de descentralización fue resaltado en el Informe de la Ejecución del Programa como un elemento fundamental para haber alcanzado los avances que se han obtenido. Y es un elemento muy importante de ese Informe las enseñanzas, las lecciones aprendidas. Y de esas enseñanzas sale que se continúe con la consolidación de la descentralización.

Y por esa razón consta en el Informe del Comité de la Reunión Conjunta justamente el que se continúe en esta consolidación el siguiente Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto, por lo cual apoyamos su resumen que viene del texto de la reunión conjunta.

Sr. Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italia)

Creo que corremos el riesgo de que un porcentaje demasiado elevado de los trabajos de este Consejo aparezca dedicado al tema de la descentralización, lo cual es uno de los aspectos entre los muchos aspectos y temas que tenemos que tratar. Quiero formular un criterio de método que podemos a lo mejor verificar con el servicio jurídico.

La naturaleza soberana del Consejo, con relación a comités muy importantes, o a comités conjuntos muy importantes, que tienen un papel instructorio, preparatorio de las reuniones del Consejo, hace que el Consejo tenga que ejercer sus funciones con total y soberana responsabilidad.

Mr Abreha ASEFFA (Ethiopia)

We support your summary, including what was raised by Egypt about what you included in the Joint Committee Report.

Mr Godfrey C. MACGWENZI (Zimbabwe)

We are just taking the floor to say we support your summary, including what was said by Egypt.

CHAIRPERSON

I was saying that we have got two areas for which I will ask Members to be flexible about, to accept the fact that point (f) is relevant and it was also dealt with in the Joint Meeting. I hope Italy will agree with us to keep this paragraph in my conclusion.

Regarding paragraph 4, after hearing Zimbabwe, I think it was this morning, and after hearing Australia, I thought there was a positive trend of trust and collaboration between the Secretariat and

the Members and looking forward to its continuation. That is the benchmark. If Members do not want it, we can put it out. It is upon you, Members.

Mr Godfrey C. MACGWENZI (Zimbabwe)

We would definitely want it to remain where it is. We definitely appreciate the work that we are doing with the Secretariat. Not just here at headquarters, but even in our country. In my own country, Dr Perry is working very closely with the government, including with the President's office. As far as we are concerned, FAO is at the frontline of our combat against poverty and hunger in Zimbabwe, so we would want that sentence to remain as it is. This has to be acknowledged that we have a vibrant Secretariat and we are working very well with them.

M. Carlos Alberto AMARAL (Angola)

Seulement pour dire que nous sommes d'accord avec le maintien du paragraphe parce que nous suivons les réunions du Comité financier et du Comité du Programme et nous voyons qu'il y a une évolution très positive des rapports entre le Secrétariat et la Direction. Comme le Zimbabwe l'a dit, les rapports au niveau du pays sont excellents.

Mr Abreha ASEFFA (Ethiopia)

We agree with previous speakers that the relationship between Members and the Secretariat is very good and we want it to continue being very cooperative as much as possible. We want the statement to remain.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. I want to say that we have concluded on this Agenda item 3.

Item 5. Report of the Joint Meeting of the 119th Session of the Programme Committee and 161st Session of the Finance Committee (16 May 2016)

Point 5. Rapport de la Réunion conjointe du Comité du Programme (cent dix-neuvième session) et du Comité financier (cent soixante et unième session) (16 mai 2016)

Tema 5. Informe de la reunión conjunta del Comité del Programa en su 119.º período de sesiones y el Comité de Finanzas en su 161.º período de sesiones (16 de mayo de 2016)

(CL 154/5)

CHAIRPERSON

We now move on to item 5, *Report of the Joint Meeting of the 119th Session of the Programme Committee and the 161st Session of the Finance Committee*, which was held on 16 May 2016, and is contained in document CL 154/5.

I wish to remind Council that the Coverage of FAO Decentralized Offices has already been discussed under item 8, and the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15 has just been considered, so Council will not re-open these matters under item 5.

I now invite Mr Khalid Mehboob, Chairperson of the Joint Meeting, to introduce the Report.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

Since the Council has already taken up the substantial items, as the Chairperson has pointed out, these were discussed at the Joint Meeting of the 119th Session of the Programme Committee and the 161st Session of the Finance Committee under agenda items, I will report briefly on the one outstanding issue, namely assessment of the technical capacity of the Organization which was considered by the Joint Meeting under agenda item *Any Other Business*.

The Joint Meeting welcomed an update by the Director-General on work already started towards the independent assessment of technical capacity of the Organization. It appreciated his assurance that an informal briefing to Members would be arranged before the report of the assessment was finalized.

There were a number of views exchanged with regard to the process of the assessment. In the end, the Joint Meeting reached consensus in recalling that the Council had requested the Secretariat to

undertake this assessment. This consensus is reflected in the report of the Joint Meeting, document CL 154/5.

On the substance of the matter, the Joint Meeting recognized the complexity of assessing FAO's technical capacity in consideration of the Organization's broad mandate both at headquarters and the decentralized offices. The final outcome of the assessment would be shared with the Joint Meeting in March 2017 which would provide its recommendations to the April 2017 Council prior to presentation to the 40th Session of the Conference.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

El Ecuador interviene en este tema en su capacidad nacional. Queremos agradecer al Presidente del Comité de Finanzas por la presentación del Informe de la Reunión Conjunta y respaldamos las recomendaciones de dicha reunión.

En cuanto a la evaluación de la capacidad técnica de la Organización, queremos señalar que, en nuestro criterio, los importantes avances alcanzados en la implementación del Programa 2014-2015 evidencian de por sí que las capacidades técnicas de la FAO han ayudado a alcanzar esos resultados y, sobre todo, como se indica en el Informe de implementación de ese Programa, que los esfuerzos llevados adelante en la descentralización han ayudado a alcanzar esos resultados.

En ese sentido, el Ecuador alienta a la Organización a continuar trabajando en esa dirección para alcanzar resultados en el terreno. La FAO es una Organización basada en los conocimientos, pero estos no tienen valor si no reflejan en el apoyo directo a los países, es decir con una sólida presencia en el terreno. Para el Ecuador el fortalecimiento de las capacidades técnicas de las oficinas regionales, subregionales y de países contribuye al fortalecimiento de la capacidad de la Organización.

Por otro lado, queremos recordar que el mandato del 153.º período de sesiones del Consejo insta a que sea la Secretaría la que ponga en marcha la evaluación (assessment, en inglés) de las capacidades de la Sede y de las oficinas descentralizadas, a ser presentada en la Conferencia de 2017. Nos complace que el Director General haya presentado en la Reunión Conjunta información actualizada sobre el avance en esta actividad, así como su voluntad de mantener informados a los Estados Miembros sobre dicha evaluación antes de la presentación del informe a los órganos rectores correspondientes.

Finalmente, en nuestro criterio, la mejor evaluación de las capacidades de la Organización no son cuántas vacantes de profesionales llena y cuán velozmente lo hace, sino el impacto del trabajo de la FAO en el terreno, de su asistencia técnica y del apoyo al desarrollo de las políticas de los países en el ámbito de competencia de la FAO, las cuales ayudan a los Estados a alcanzar sus objetivos y afrontar sus necesidades de desarrollo. En ese sentido, cualquier evaluación de las capacidades técnicas de la Organización debe ser entendida en el contexto de los resultados que alcanza en el terreno así como en el grado de cumplimiento de su Programa de Trabajo.

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

We would also like to thank Mr Mehboob for the presentation of the Joint Meeting's results. Russia supports the conclusions and recommendations of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees.

In relation to what was just said by the rapporteur, we welcome the proposal of the Director-General to have a briefing for Member States to prepare the independent assessment of the technical capacity of the Organization. This initiative has already received support during the Joint Meeting.

Separately for this, we note one of the mentioned items from the meeting and this was the importance of guaranteeing translation into all languages of the meetings in a full manner, including the plenary assembly of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP). We understand the difficulties that the Secretariat has when it comes to terms and in relation to the Terms of Reference of the GSP from 2012 in relation to guaranteeing resources for this mechanism.

At the same time, FAO Member States clearly stated that they wanted to have a multi-lingualism included in partnership, included in the rules of procedure from 2013. In this connection, we are

grateful to the Secretariat for guaranteeing even if it was at the last minute, interpretation last week of the fourth plenary partnership meeting. This was following discussions at the Joint Meeting.

We note that this issue has been raised a number of times in Governing Bodies at different levels and needs a long-term solution, including at the recent plenary assembly, participants of the Global Soil Partnership, including Member States, looked at this issue and referred it to the FAO Council.

In this context, we invite the Council to adopt a clear recommendation to the Secretariat on the necessity for the regular guaranteeing of translation and interpretation into all FAO official languages during the plenary assembly of the GSP. We also ask the Secretariat to include this recommendation in planning the Programme of Work and Budget for 2018-19 and into the future.

If we can resolve this issue and both in relation to the plenary assembly from 2017, we will sincerely welcome such a move.

Sra. Mónica ROBELO RAFFONE (Nicaragua)

Nuestra Delegación apoya la decisión adoptada por el 153.º período de sesiones del Consejo, a que la Secretaría de la FAO ponga en marcha una evaluación de la capacidad técnica de la Organización, tanto en la sede como en las oficinas descentralizadas. Sin embargo, queremos destacar la importancia de que los Miembros nos concentremos más en alcanzar los objetivos fijados en el PTP y obtener resultados, en lugar de sacrificar los desafíos que tenemos con asuntos de microgestión de la Organización.

Consideramos que el Informe sobre la Ejecución del Programa, y a la vista de las Conferencias Regionales, haya puesto de manifiesto el alcance de las realizaciones planificadas con un nivel muy satisfactorio. Es consecuente que los cambios producidos por la administración no hayan perjudicado la calidad de los productos de conocimiento sobre cuestiones de importancia global tanto en la sede como en el terreno.

La documentación del PTP y las notas informativas nos brindan las actualizaciones necesarias y suficientes para que la atención de los Miembros se dirija hacia la definición de prioridades que tengan un real impacto en nuestros países. Aunque bien nos sumamos a las conclusiones adoptadas por el Comité conjunto sobre este tema, consideramos importante, a la luz de la información que nos ha brindado el Director General, garantizar que tanto la Secretaría como la Dirección General puedan contar con la confianza de los Estados Miembros para que el proceso pueda desarrollarse según la hoja de ruta y la metodología planificada de los avances del cual estaremos informados en los tiempos previstos.

Ms Wimonporn THITASAK (Thailand)

Thailand would like to thank the Programme and Finance Committees for the thorough and extensive review and recommendation on the PIR, the Coverage of FAO Decentralized Offices, and the assessment of the technical capacity of the Organization. We would like to focus our intervention on the assessment of the technical capacity of the Organization.

We recognize that the technical capacity has multiple dimensions, and assessment of the technical capacity is such a challenging task, but it will be useful. We would like to share our thoughts as follows:

First, the assessment team needs to identify and clarify what aspect of the capacity needs be assessed, and what kind of report is to be produced in order to make use of the results to improve the efficiency and the delivery of FAO services to Members.

Second; the capacity to be assessed should be focused on the capacity needed to carry out the work as planned in the reviewed Strategic Framework and Medium Term Plan 2014-17. Having said that, the period of the assessment should be between 2014 and 2017, and the period can be used as reference for an evidence-based assessment. The assessment should also project the technical capacity to carry out the future work of FAO as well.

Third, due to the growing number of partnerships, the assessment should reflect different “tiers” of technical capacity such as the technical capacity of FAO staff at headquarters, at regional offices and of the partners.

Thailand looks forward to seeing the report in March 2017.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Je voudrais remercier Monsieur le Président du Comité financier pour sa présentation très claire du rapport de la réunion conjointe et vous demander de bien vouloir céder la parole aux Pays-Bas, qui vont faire une déclaration commune.

Ms Gerda VERBURG (Observer for Netherlands)

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States and the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, and San Marino.

We take note of the Report of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees of 16 May. On the issue of the assessment of FAO’s technical capacity which is key to ensuring that FAO is able to deliver on its strategic objectives, we note that it was a serious and clear request from various members to be fully involved in the development of the independent assessment.

For that reason, we applaud the Director-General for his opening speech yesterday morning in which he announced that it will be a road map including a draft of the methodology and types of indicators to be presented to the Programme Committee in November.

However, because of the crucial importance of FAO’s technical capacity as a knowledge organization, we propose to make one extra step which is to discuss the scope, methodology, and indicators with the Membership before submitting the roadmap to the Programme Committee in November.

We believe this is in the interest of both Management and the FAO Members and will help to ensure we both are on the same page. Therefore we propose to Council to request Management to organize a meeting as soon as possible but well before the Programme Committee to present and discuss the draft of the scope methodology and indicators for the assessment and its independence.

Mr Jón Erlingur JONASSON (Iceland)

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

Allow me to repeat our support for the issue now once again raised by EU, earlier raised under item 4.3. That is the implementation of the independent assessment of FAO’s technical capacity as requested by the Council.

We fully support that this Council request the Secretariat to make one more extra step to the road map presented by the Director-General yesterday to discuss with Members the scope, methodology and the indicators well before the next meeting of the Programme Committee.

Mr Yoji MATSUI (Japan)

Like other Council Members, Japan is keen to know possible impact of the recent reorganization of FAO’s technical capacity, and considers that ensuring independence and the timeliness of the assessment is important. In this regard, we look forward to further information on the method of assessment including Terms of Reference of evaluators as soon as prepared.

We understand the complexity in assessing technical capacity, in particular, setting its definition. We welcomed the Director-General’s opening remarks that the roadmap of the assessment will be discussed at the next Programme Committee. We expect to discuss the definition of the technical capacity of FAO on this occasion.

As expressed in the previous Council session, Japan still has a concern over reorganization of FAO, because we are afraid that it could generate negative impacts on FAO’s technical capacity. We would like the independent assessment to address, in particular, i) whether coordination between the SO

management teams and the technical departments have been facilitated efficiently and effectively; and ii) the extent of possible extra burden placed on the management of the technical departments due to additional coordination required with the SO management teams, instead of being released from their previous workload.

Japan welcomes an informal meeting before finalising the assessment and looks forward to receiving the briefing, hopefully within this year.

Conducting the independent assessment is important, but what we expect is to utilise its findings as a base to further improve FAO's technical capacity. In this connection, we look forward to receiving management responses to its findings for concrete actions.

Sr. Mateo NSOGO NGUERE MICUE (Guinea Ecuatorial)

La República de Guinea Ecuatorial hace esta alocución en nombre de los Países del Grupo Africano.

Visto el contenido del Informe de la Reunión Conjunta que se acaba de presentar al Consejo para debate y decisión, queremos felicitar al Director General de la FAO y su Equipo de Dirección por los resultados que han alcanzado sobre la Ejecución del Programa en el bienio 2014-2015, sobre todo por haber rebasado la cota de 88 % de las realizaciones planificadas, al propio tiempo que ha logrado ayudar a los Miembros a realizar progresos en la consecución de sus indicadores de desarrollo.

Por otra parte, nos sentimos orgullosos porque la FAO ha conseguido colocar las políticas de la lucha contra el hambre, la inseguridad alimentaria y la malnutrición en el primer plano de la atención Mundial, así como la contribución de la FAO a la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible, el Acuerdo de París sobre el Cambio Climático y la Segunda Conferencia Internacional sobre la Nutrición, al igual que la celebración de los años internacionales: 2014 Año Internacional sobre la Agricultura Familiar y 2015 Año Internacional sobre la Tenencia de los Suelos

En efecto, la República de Guinea Ecuatorial elogia a la Directiva de la FAO por los éxitos alcanzados en el Bienio 2014-2015, pese a las dificultades conocidas en ese período, tales como, la fluctuación del cambio con Euros y sin olvidar la volatilidad de los precios de las materias primas.

En definitiva, apreciamos que la Reunión Conjunta haya tenido en cuenta todas las recomendaciones emanadas de las Conferencias Regionales sobre la necesidad de actualizar la cobertura de las oficinas descentralizadas de la FAO; así como todas las recomendaciones retenidas en la Conferencia Regional de la FAO para África.

Por último, la República de Guinea Ecuatorial quiere exhortar a la FAO en el sentido de seguir realizando esfuerzos orientados para la materialización de las iniciativas regionales, así como lo concerniente al Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto para el bienio 2016-2017; ya que se presentan muchos retos y desafíos en el contexto internacional.

Así mismo imploramos a la FAO que tenga en cuenta la cuestión de distribución geográfica y la equidad de género a la hora de contratar al personal en la Organización.

Por tanto, la República de Guinea Ecuatorial, en nombre de los Países del Grupo Africano, adopta este informe de la Reunión Conjunta del Comité de Programa y el Comité de Finanza que se presenta al Consejo.

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

I also would like to join colleagues who have thanked the President of the Finance Committee for the Report of the Joint Meeting. I was present at that meeting and it was very encouraging to see the depth of the dialogue between the members of both Committees and the Director-General which lasted for almost two hours.

Of course, I understand the keen interest that the independent assessment of the technical capacity of the Organization has risen in the minds of colleagues who have taken part in that discussion as well as the members of the Council.

I also welcome very much the contributions given by the Distinguished Delegates of Thailand and Japan for guiding the Secretariat in undertaking this task that was given to it.

I also would like to note that the Director-General has expressed his willingness to brief the Members of the Organization as an appropriate moment before finalizing the report on the independent assessment of the technical capacity of the Organization to be submitted to the Council early next year.

There is an institutional framework that conforms the governance of this Organization. The proposals made by the European Union and Iceland do not conform to the procedures that normally are followed in order to guide this Organization in the best way possible.

I would think that undertaking this course of action proposed by the EU and Iceland would undermine the competencies of the Programme and the Finance Committee. Brazil will not support that proposal.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

I also am a bit puzzled because what Brazil says is the correct way to go about it. The Director-General has been asked to do an assessment of the technical capacity of the organization with headquarters. It quite clearly said that he will submit to the Programme Committee the roadmap, the terms of reference, maybe even who he is going to employ to do the work.

The Programme Committee is made of Members. All regions are represented in the Programme Committee. So as far as I am concerned, the Programme Committee represents the Membership.

Now it has been proposed to say wait, Director-General, you cannot submit to the Programme Committee unless we have seen what you will submit. That is very odd. I have never in my experience in FAO come across this. So let us follow the standard procedure. The Director-General will prepare the roadmap, and the terms of reference. If the Director-General wants to be consulted, he will consult the Membership. If Members want to make voluntary informal suggestions to the Director-General, they are free. I am free to submit to the Director-General an informal note what is my view about this but not formally.

So the best thing would be to wait until the Programme Committee receives something, then what the Programme Committee reaction is before it goes to the Council. The Director-General may call an informal session of the whole Membership and he will explain this is what I proposed, this is the reaction of the Programme Committee, and this is how I am going to go.

If we break this legal procedure, we are going into a very dangerous area.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Je voulais remercier les interlocuteurs précédents, en particulier l'Afghanistan pour son éclairage intéressant. Dans la lignée de ce qu'ont indiqué les Pays-Bas pour l'Union européenne, je voulais revenir simplement sur la question du calendrier de cette évaluation indépendante qui, comme l'a souligné le Japon mais aussi la Thaïlande, l'Islande et d'autres, cette évaluation est cruciale pour la capacité de la FAO à exécuter le Programme.

Cette question du calendrier est essentielle et il faut que, en amont de la session du Comité du Programme qui est planifié en novembre, puisse se dérouler un travail préparatoire de cadrage de cette évaluation afin qu'elle produise les résultats que nous attendons tous dans l'intérêt de cette maison qu'est la FAO et que nous soutenons.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

We would like to support the proposal made by the Netherlands on behalf of the EU, the EU Members as well as Iceland. Likewise, we also agree with the comments made by other delegations about respecting the Governing Bodies.

Yet, I think that based on past experience, there would be value in having informal meetings before the formal Governing Bodies on important issues. Therefore, I believe that this is still consistent with the announcement of the Director-General to present a Programme Committee's roadmap and the draft methodology.

However, the presentation should have been made through an informal meeting, well in advance of the Programme Committee, so that the Governing Bodies can perform their functions more effectively.

Mr Abreha ASEFFA (Ethiopia)

We have to abide by the procedures. We agree with Brazil and Afghanistan that we should stick to the rules.

Mr Kirill ANTYUKHIN (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

In relation to the decision taken in the 153rd Session of the FAO Council, the technical nature of the activities that we are talking about here, this is in the jurisdiction of the Secretariat. Then, in the timetable document, this refers to the middle of 2017 without any intermediary stages.

Despite this, the Director-General met Member Nations halfway. We welcome the proposal made by the Director-General to have a briefing for Member Nations on the preparation of the independent assessment of the technical capacity of the Organization that is headquarters and decentralized offices. This initiative received support from the Joint Meeting.

Our delegation agree with the recommendations made by the Joint Meeting on this issue. So, we propose to go ahead with the decisions taken in the previous Council Session, which clearly defined the role and the obligations regarding the preparation of this evaluation.

Ms Natalie Eugenia BROWN (United States of America)

We would like to support the Netherlands on behalf of the EU and Nordic countries' suggestion on having a discussion prior to the next meeting of the Programme Committee. We believe regular consultation only strengthens the Organization and see great value in the informals that take place before the Governing Body meetings.

Mr Jón Erlingur JONASSON (Iceland)

I think there is some misunderstanding here. We were simply supporting an informal meeting of the issue. It was said by the Director-General himself that these are very complex issues, also by the Deputy Director-General under item 4.3 and it was pointed out to me that this is very complex.

We totally agree on that. We just want to be on board with all of the Members and the Secretariat. This is an informal setting to brief Members before the Programme Committee. So it has nothing to do with anything else; therefore I think there is a misunderstanding to put this into the perspective of micromanagement and it is for the Members to ask for information and we are doing that.

CHAIRPERSON

I would like to suggest that we take a break and come back at 18:00 hours sharp to continue with this item. I would like to suggest that we make a concerted effort to finish items 5, 6, 7 and 7.1 today and that we take up the remaining items on the agenda tomorrow morning.

Furthermore, presentations under item 14, *Developments in fora of importance for the mandate of FAO*, originally planned for Wednesday morning, will be made on Friday morning, followed by the briefing on field visits, after which we shall proceed to the adoption of the report.

The meeting was suspended from 17.33 to 18.14 hours

La séance est suspendue de 17 h 33 à 18 h 14

Se suspende la sesión de las 17.33 a las 18.14

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

I welcome the Legal Counsel to our meeting because it might be necessary as we have a legal matter before us. As it was rightfully pointed out by my Distinguished colleague from Afghanistan, there are certain procedures to be followed and he stated very well upon the normal practice in this Organization. The roles of the two Committees, the Finance Committee and the Programme Committee, as well as the Joint Meeting, are a subsidiary role to the Council, which in its turn is subsidiary to the Conference.

The proposal that was made by the Observer for the Netherlands on behalf of the European Union, its Member States and the candidate states of several regions of Europe, and supported by the Member

of the Council, Iceland, does not conform to the normal practice or the legal framework of governance of this Organization. It would be something like inverting the hierarchy: the Conference would come before the subsidiary bodies to instruct the discussions or to inform the discussions in the subsidiary bodies themselves. Informal consultations or not. What was requested was the involvement of the Members of this Organization in the formulation of the Terms of Reference and the choice of the team that is going to conduct this independent evaluation, which is something that is not even foreseen at the decision taken by the Conference last year.

Of course it is possible for the Members of the Organization to be informally consulted, but the normal way of doing that is that the Members of the Finance Committee and the Members of the Programme Committee consult with their constituencies. Before I attend a meeting of the Finance Committee, I go and talk to my colleagues at GRULAC, I hear what they advise me to say at the Finance Committee meeting. That is the normal practice. Then I attend the meeting and I articulate the positions that I gather from my constituency. Each Committee is composed of Members from the different Regional Groups of this Organization, so there is not a consultative process that is undertaken in order to forward discussion at the Committees. If we do it the other way around, before the Committees meet, we should consult everyone. We are actually bringing the Conference before the subsidiary bodies, which is not possible.

I understand that the advice that is given by the two Committees may or may not be followed by the Council because the Committees are subsidiary to the Council. No problem with that. However, there is a degree of commitment to those who have participated in the decision-making in the Committees. I myself would feel uncomfortable if I came to the Council and said something different from what I had said at the Committees or if I went against the decision that was taken by the Joint Meeting to which I was a part of. What I see now is that several colleagues around this room have revised what was the terms of the decision taken at the Joint Meeting. I have no problem that those who have not participated in the decision-making in the Joint Session raise their points of view, but I am surprised when I hear colleagues who have taken part in the discussions in the Joint Meeting come here and support something different.

Ms Gerda VERBURG (Observer for Netherlands)

I have been listening to Brazil's contribution and I think there is room to repeat one or two things of our statement. But at the same time, I think there is also room to consider that we are progressing our dialogue, the dialogue between Member States and Secretariat or the Director-General on this important topic. There is no doubt that all Members as well as the Secretariat and the Director-General consider this topic as an important topic. But how to conduct this is a matter of making progress in the process. As we refer to the speech that was made yesterday, the Director-General made progress in his thinking about how to conduct the independent assessment and he announced that it will be a road map including a draft of the methodology and the types of indicators. I have not heard this to be discussed in the Joint Meeting nor in one of the Programme or Finance Committees.

We are almost there to find an appropriate way of how to take on this important independent assessment. That is why we proposed to organize a meeting as soon as possible but well before the Programme Committee so that all Member States are informed, have the opportunity to respond, but not to make decision. Therefore, it is not as Brazil is stating that Council is coming before the Programme and Finance Committee. It is not the case. It is just to have transparency to build up the process and to ensure that we have a final result, a final trusted outcomewhere we all can build upon and taken as a basis for the crucial future work of FAO and the Member States.

We think it is a proposal that can be accepted by the Secretariat. We think that if you organize such a meeting around September or the beginning of October, the Secretariat has the scope, the methodology, the indicators to hold an informal briefing, and then think whether it can be improved before sending it and dealing with it in the Finance and Programme Committees. It is meant to be a constructive contribution to come forward with a sound result where FAO and the Member States can build upon the future.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

The Joint Meeting Report paragraph 8 states: “We look forward to receiving the outcome of the assessment in March 2017 prior to consideration by the Council and presentation to the 40th Session of the Committee”.

So the Joint Session must receive that assessment. It does not say that the Joint Session should receive the Terms of Reference of the study. The first paragraph clearly says to recall the decision of the 151st Session of the Council urging the FAO Secretariat to undertake an independent assessment of the technical capacity of the Organization for the record. The study is given to the Secretariat but it has to be independent. The Secretariat will decide how to make it independent.

The normal practice of an independent assessment has been that the Director-General hires one or two or three consultants. That person, he or she, becomes the manager of the study. Prepares the terms of reference, arranges the work, prepares who is to be employed, how it should be done, makes the assessment of what will be FAO's demands for the next two decades, what is the implication for the services of FAO, and what is the implication for the services on staff composition by sector, by discipline and by competence. Then the whole thing is given to the Secretariat.

The Director-General has the authority to do that. The Director-General is the manager of the Organization. He has every right to undertake an assessment, not only this assessment, but also a lot of other assessments. He either does it by staff or does it independently. We do not want to interfere in that. The only sensible thing to do is what our colleagues from Brazil said. Member Nations can express their opinion and submit it to the Members of the Programme and Finance Committees.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

Queremos apoyar las intervenciones que han hecho la Delegación de Brasil y de Afganistán. Queremos señalar o recordar que tenemos ya una decisión del 153^o período del Consejo con la cual se encarga la Secretaría a realizar este assessment sobre las capacidades técnicas y además una recomendación de orden conjunta sobre el tema.

Ecuador aprecia la voluntad del Director General de que a pesar que legalmente, como ha mencionado el Delegado de Brasil, están los Órganos Rectores para conocer este tema, previo la Conferencia del 2017, y como dijo, apreciamos la voluntad del Director General en el sentido que primero como informó en la Reunión conjunta de informar de los resultados de las evaluación a inicio del año 2017. Valoramos esta iniciativa del Director General y igualmente apreciamos lo que él dijo durante este Consejo en el sentido de su voluntad de presentar al Comité del Programa la hoja de ruta y la metodología, lo cual nos parece muy positivo y que sea a través de los Órganos Rectores competentes para conocer estos temas.

No respaldamos que haya un Seminario Informal antes de estos Órganos Rectores por cuanto estaremos restando las capacidades y la competencias que tienen estos Comités para conocer esto, si no habrá que preguntarse por qué está la existencia de los Comités de Programa y de Finanzas si se pueden hacer reuniones oficiosas con todos los Miembros para abordar los temas. Es decisivo de respetar el marco jurídico que tiene la Organización y en este sentido existen los Organos Rectores como el Comités de Programa y de Finanza para conocer este tema. Los Estados Miembros pueden participar y nada impide de que todo la membracia se exprese a través de los Miembros de los Comités, sino así no vemos el valor agregado que pueda haber una sesión informal anterior estos Comités que los Miembros de estos Comités no la puedan transmitir, por lo cual nosotros apreciamos que se vayan presentar esta información de la hoja de ruta y la metodología al Comité de Programa y consideramos que no solamente es legal ese tema, si no que además es muy apropiado.

M. Carlos Alberto AMARAL (Angola)

Je voulais éviter de prendre la parole, mais je pense que nous entrons dans le même type de discussion que celles du Comité financier et du Comité du Programme. Le Directeur général a promis de donner des informations sur ces vastes travaux, qui sont basés sur une décision du Conseil. Le Secrétariat accepte ses responsabilités. Pour cette raison, je pense qu'il faut lui faire confiance. Nous avons bien

dit au point précédent que nous faisons confiance à la Direction; il faut donc attendre un peu et laisser travailler le Secrétariat sur ce sujet.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

I guess just taking on from where Angola has left off and the discussion we had earlier about the positive momentum in terms of FAO's outputs. Just to say that we welcome the Director-General's proposal which he made at the start of this meeting to bring a paper forward to the November Programme Committee with a road map so the Members could consider that. This was something that Australia had specifically requested at the last Joint Meeting, at that point, that was not something that was on the table but we are glad to see now that the Secretariat has listened to the views of some Members expressed during that Joint Meeting and that the Director-General is now willing to do that. So we greatly appreciate that. I think we would highly recommend that this Council's report welcome and endorse the Director-General's suggestion for the Programme Committee to receive a report on this matter for discussion at its November meeting. So, as I say, I think that is a positive step.

Again, that is managed by listening to the views and issues of Membership. I think here today we have heard recognition and acknowledgement of that progress, but also a desire which has been previously expressed on all matters going to the Programme Committee, the Finance Committee and Council for there to be an informal briefing providing some information to all Members about the key issues that will be discussed at the upcoming meetings. So from Australia's perspective, we would fully support that on all items. But obviously in relation to this specific item, there is a very high level of interest.

It was this Council at its last session that actually formally requested the independent review. I think it is fully within the remit of this Council to also provide further guidance. I think what we are hearing here this evening is that a substantial number of Members of the Council would like to see also an early informal briefing ahead of the Programme Committee giving us equal opportunity, ample opportunity to understand what is in the proposal. We would fully support that. I guess I am just stressing that there are a number of countries and regions expressing that view and that is basically up to Management to take on board the views expressed.

Sr. Junior Andrés ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)

Muy puntual sobre el informe de la Reunión Conjunta. Nuestra Delegación quiere expresar nuestra satisfacción por los resultados alcanzados por la FAO con el tema de género, los cuales se expresan en los programas de mayor impacto en el terreno. Valoramos que el mismo esté presente dentro del informe sobre la ejecución del programa y otros documentos informativos.

Para Nicaragua, país de la región en que más se ha venido reduciendo la brecha de género entre hombres y mujeres, es sumamente importante contar con este esfuerzo de la FAO, incorporando la igualdad de género con atención prioritaria dentro de su programa y su estrategia.

Mr Andrzej HALASEWICZ (Observer for Poland)

I have listened to this debate with great interest. I think that the involvement of the Members are growing and the level of understanding of what we discuss is impressive. I think like many of us, I am really grateful for the contribution of Dr Ayazi to our debate. I learn a lot from him and I always listen to him really carefully. But I am afraid that today in this discussion I am not fully able to agree with our Distinguished Delegate from Afghanistan.

Being a Member of the Programme Committee, I do not feel the proposal presented by the Netherlands on behalf of the European Union and candidate countries is breaking any rule or limiting my rights as a Member of the Committee. Quite the opposite. I think that the proposal to have an informal discussion about important matters could contribute greatly to me as a Member of the Committee understanding what is going on. That means that the Programme Committee could give a better proposal to the Council than without such a seminar.

I have a question for the Distinguished Delegate of Brazil. What exactly is the rule broken by the proposal presented by the EU? Because you said very strongly that some rule is broken. I do not see that this is the case. So I would appreciate to have your explanation. What do you have in mind?

So, as an observer, I support the proposal presented by the Netherlands on behalf of EU Members and candidate countries and supported by Iceland on behalf of Nordic countries, supported by Australia and some other countries. I think that a really great number of Council Members are asking for an informal seminar. An informal discussion could contribute to better government of the Organization. What is wrong with this? I hope that Council will take the right decision.

Ms Maria Helena SEMEDO (Deputy-Director General, Coordinator for Natural Resources)

Thank you all Members of the Council for this constructive dialogue, which has shown your interest in this very important independent assessment of the technical capacity of FAO.

As it has been said by the Director-General, this is also important for FAO. It will give us the opportunity to measure our technical capacity, and more than that, to see if our technical capacity has been maintained or it has been improved over the years. I believe that we all agree on this point. Let us try to see what the Council requests the Secretariat to do. The Council requested the Secretariat to undertake an independent assessment to be presented to the Conference in 2017.

The only deadline we have is July 2017. I think that now it is up to the Secretariat to prepare to deliver what has been requested on time, that is July 2017. Please consider the importance of this process and the dialogue involved. We have said we will do an independent assessment. In our view, the independent assessment will be on the analysis, the interpretation of information to be done by independent and neutral experts.

In this regard, FAO will recruit excellent consultants to carry out the mentioned assessment. This is how we see the process. As it has been said, the technical capacity of an Organization is a difficult concept to define and more so to measure, meaning that it is complex.

We, the Secretariat, will need time for us to prepare in order to deliver what has been requested. Indeed, we need time to define the terms of reference of the consultant, to recruit the consultant and to have a discussion with the consultant in what should be the definition of the technical capacity.

I spent two days looking at the related literature. What is the definition of technical capacity? I was not able to find one which could suit FAO. Thus, we have to concur with the consultant. We have to define the methodology. We have to agree on the indicators. We have to assemble all of the information in order to prepare something to be presented to the Member Nations. So, all of this is a process and it is time consuming.

If you consider that the Director-General already agreed that we will present it during the Programme Committee in November 2016, we will organize an informal briefing beginning in 2017. We have again the Programme Committee, the Council and the Conference. You see, if you add another layer, how cumbersome the process will be. Then, I am afraid we, the Secretariat, will not be able to deliver our services, if you have all of those processes.

In the Programme Committee, as the consultants will be hired, we agreed that we will be able to present a proposal on the methodology, on the roadmap, on the indicators. Afterwards, you should provide your inputs, which we will present again in the informal seminar.

I am convinced that we have already enough information. We had the discussion and the verbatim during the Council. I understand you have already provided guidance on what you want. We have had the discussion during the Joint Meeting. We are having the discussion today. To us in the Secretariat, we consider we have already relevant information which will guide us towards the presentation to be done during the Programme Committee. So, this is what we would like to say.

We will be ready to discuss with you on the substance during the Programme Committee. Before that from our side, it will be difficult and we do not consider that is really necessary to have this meeting before.

Anyway, we will be able and open to receive any comment, any information from your side in order to be integrated in what will be presented to the Programme Committee. This is what I wanted to say so far and I think Antonio Tavares can complement what I have said.

LEGAL COUNSEL

I think everything has been already said in the course of this debate, but I wish to highlight a few legal points.

I would like to address first the question of the mandate given to the Secretariat, what was decided by the Council at its last session, and then I will briefly refer to the question of the procedure that we are following.

I have here in front of me the decision of the Council of the last session which reads as follows: "The Council urged the FAO Secretariat to undertake an independent assessment of the technical capacity of the Organization, both at headquarters and in the decentralized offices, to be presented to the Conference in 2017".

So this is the actual decision of the Council and we are clearly in the presence of a duty assigned to the Secretariat. I think this is beyond any dispute and any doubt, and I wish to recall that Mr Mehboob, the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, when chairing the session of the Joint Meeting, clearly highlighted this point.

This is a duty of the Secretariat and it is up to the Secretariat to arrange for this assessment. I note with appreciation that Mr Matthew Worrell from Australia has intervened on this topic with a very balanced statement and he was the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee of the last session of the Council.

You may recall that we had a very interesting exchange here in this same room about whether or not a particular review had been independent and I have a very good recollection of the conclusion of the Chair of the Drafting Committee at that time that this should be a matter for the judgement of the Secretariat.

So we are clearly in the presence of a responsibility of the Secretariat and the Secretariat has to balance a number of interests. It has to balance decentralized offices and headquarters. It is up to the Secretariat to balance these elements also because the initial requests had to do only with headquarters, which in our view would have been a wrong approach to this matter because the technical capacity must be seen in its broader context.

The Secretariat will rely also on independent inputs and on the work of consultants. As my colleague Maria Helena Semedo has pointed out, the intention of the Director-General is to submit a roadmap presentation of the methodology and indicators to the Joint Meeting so, as far as I am concerned, we are clearly in the presence of a mandate given to the Secretariat.

But we are in the presence of a situation where the Members, and certainly it is their right, are now trying to call into question a very clear mandate that had been given to the Secretariat.

So that is the first point that I wanted to emphasize.

The second point has to do with the procedure for the assessment. Indeed, we have a number of institutional players in the Governing Bodies of FAO. We have a number of rules in the Basic Texts which define the role of our various Governing Bodies. The intention is to submit some conclusions, some preliminary work to the Joint Meeting during its autumn session and then to submit subsequently other conclusions to the spring sessions of the Governing Bodies before the Conference.

To reply to the question of the Distinguished Representative of Poland, we have very clear rules in the Basic Texts regarding the statutory functions of these bodies and it is not for an informal meeting to take decisions on a number of matters. We know that informal meetings have been organized in FAO, but it is not the intention of the Secretariat to organize these informal meetings in this context.

These meetings are of an informal nature and they are not mentioned in our Basic Texts. I think there is a reference to informal meetings in connection with the functions of the Independent Chairperson of the Council. I think that is the only reference to informal meetings in our Basic Texts.

So indeed we have a number of institutional players and we do not intend to deviate from this approach. So I will stop here for the time being. But clearly I believe that we have a very clear

mandate which conferred upon the Secretariat a given role and we envisage the procedure under this framework will follow and we do not envisage referral of the matter to a seminar of permanent representatives during the autumn of 2016.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

In fact Afghanistan has said it all. He presented a very logical step-by-step process, which has always been followed in FAO. We have a governance mechanism in place. That is what I tried to put forward in the Joint Session.

The instructions from the Council are quite clear. It urged the Secretariat to carry out an independent assessment. As Afghanistan has pointed out, the independent assessment has always been arranged by the Secretariat with the assistance of outside experts, outside consultants. We have a confirmation from the Deputy Director-General that that is how they plan to proceed. The Secretariat shall get external technical assistance in the form of consultants to carry out this review.

The result of that review is supposed to come to the Joint Session of the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee, according to the Joint Session Report on which Members agreed. Before that, I believe the terms of reference for the consultants will be also cleared by the Programme Committee. The Director-General has now agreed that there will be an informal seminar, a roadmap and relevant information on the indicators.

So all of this is there. Plus, we have approved the management structure of the Secretariat. In fact, the Membership is paying for that structure every two years in the form of the Regular Programme budget. So why do we not let them carry on and do the job the way the Council has instructed? Besides, it has also been recognized that Members are free to make their comments either individually or as a group or as a region. In fact, the Deputy Director-General here now confirms that those comments will be taken into account.

So this desire for dialogue or desire to help with the views is taken care of. Then, let the assessment process go ahead and then examine the results. If they are not satisfactory, hold the people accountable.

CHAIRPERSON

We had a good discussion on this agenda item. I think it has always been said and it is contained also in the Reform of FAO that the Council gives clear, precise and focused guidance. All Council Members gave guidance regarding this matter and on a follow-up to that matter. I hope from discussions going on and management listening, the Director-General has been able also to come on board regarding what you had requested.

On the issue of informal seminars or consultations, I may agree with the Legal Counsel, but from my being a layman in legal issues, I would say that the Director-General may decide by himself to have an informal meeting and it does not mean that it must be written somewhere.

We have had several informal meetings and briefings. I remember in the previous biennium through my informal consultations with the Regional Groups, I asked the Members to make a list to come up with proposals where they see there is a need for informal briefings from the Director-General.

There were about eight issues on the list and I conveyed this to the Director-General, but it is the discretion of the Director-General to see on what he wants to brief you. It is not necessarily that he is going to make a briefing on what you have listed. The Director-General came back to brief you on various issues.

So we have got several challenges whereby we can continue discussing this issue through my informal consultations. I am here to link you with Management.

This call is there but I do not think that it needs to be recorded as such given that the informal briefings and the consultations can be agreed upon by Management, of course showing that Members have to be informed and to know on the progress and what is going on.

To me, I may not rule out that by the Director-General saying that he will come to a briefing or to the Joint Meeting means that he cannot call for a briefing if he sees it necessary or if he is ready to do so. Therefore that is what I can say on this.

Having said this, I want to make short conclusions on this Agenda item as follows.

1) The Council endorsed the report of the Joint Meeting and, in relation to its discussion on the independent assessment of the technical capacity of the Organization:

a) recalled the guidance from its 153rd Session for the Secretariat to undertake the assessment for consideration by the Conference in 2017;

b) appreciated the announcement made by the Director-General that a roadmap, including a draft of the methodology and the type of indicators to be used, would be presented to the Programme Committee at its meeting in November 2016;

c) appreciated that an informal briefing to Members would be arranged prior to finalization of the report of the assessment in early 2017;

d) noted the complexity in assessing the technical capacity of FAO, including in terms of definition, location and the context of the Organization's mandate and objectives;

e) looked forward to reviewing the outcome of the assessment at its April 2017 session, prior to submission to the 40th Session of the Conference.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

Just to be clear so I understand what is being proposed, so that I can agree to what I agree, the proposal from the Director-General was for a paper to come forward to the November Programme Committee but, then I take it from the way you read out the following sub-item, that the Council would not consider this matter again until the spring session. Is that normal practice?

Just for clarity, is the intent that after going to the Programme Committee, it would go to this Council or not in this year? What you read implied that it would not be coming back to this Council meeting after the Programme Committee's considerations. Could I just have some clarity around that?

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

We agree with your summary. The only thing we would like to underscore is that during our statement at the start of the discussion, we mentioned an issue that was discussed during the Joint Meeting and the measures that were taken as the outcome of those discussions, specific mechanisms, and during our statement at the start of the discussion we asked for our proposal to be reflected as a recommendation of the Council.

I am referring to ensuring on a regular basis the simultaneous and written translation of documents of plenary assemblies of the Global Soil Partnership. I would not raise this issue if it were not for the fact that it appears every year for three years now. We discussed it in many *fora* of the Governing Bodies and I have a feeling that the decision on this issue has already matured or it is time for the decision to be taken.

We mentioned this during my statement. I could suggest some text to include it in the conclusions, a text which I would think relevant for the Council in accordance with the recommendations. This text can of course be improved on and I would suggest the following. I will read in English.

“The Council acknowledged the imperative need to ensure regular translation and interpretation in all FAO languages at the plenary assemblies of the Global Soil Partnership and asked the Secretariat to take measures in this regard, including when preparing the PWB 2018-19.”

We understand the difficulties linked to bring the needs for 2017 as the Programme of Work and Budget has already been confirmed and adopted. We will not insist on the funding for translation and interpretation at the next session, as there is a relevant Conference decision and a proposal for the 2016-17 PWB, but we do hope the Secretariat will tackle this issue in 2017.

But we do not need to include that in the report.

CHAIRPERSON

I will ask the Secretariat to respond to this.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Thank you Chair. I see a procedural issue here. There is no mention in the report before Council (document CL 154/5) about the work or the funding of the Global Soil Partnership. The Distinguished Delegate from Russia is quite right in saying that this has been an issue under discussion for some time. And I am aware that there has been recently a meeting of the Plenary Assembly of the Global Soil Partnership. I personally have not read the report of this meeting. I know it is not a Governing Body as such, and it does not report to Council.

My question here is whether Council this afternoon has in front of it enough information and even the necessary authority to adopt and approve the wording that has been read by the Distinguished Delegate from Russia. I see it as a legal issue and perhaps the Legal Counsel could help us in that respect.

LEGAL COUNSEL

The Global Soil Partnership has a very specific legal status; it is not a normal statutory body of FAO. It has a loose structure and is hosted by FAO.

We know that a number of Members are very much attached to the role of the Global Soil Partnerships. Incidentally, currently the Director-General and the Management of FAO are concerned at some of these bodies which do not have necessarily a proper legal status, and we need to determine whether they are in FAO or outside FAO. The Global Soil Partnership is to be seen in this context.

My initial reaction was to say indeed that this procedure is a bit out of order. But I am in the hands of the Council. I do not wish to take this matter further than it should be here in this meeting. I note that the concerns of Mr Gagnon are founded as this is not really a point for this item of the Agenda. But I am in your hands.

Ms Gerda VERBURG (Observer for Netherlands)

First, we thank the Secretariat and Legal Counsel for the explanation on mandate. To us, the mandate of the Secretariat is crystal clear and we do not want in any way to undermine it. That was suggested by the Legal Office. But at last Council session we decided on having an independent assessment and when the result had to be presented. It was read out in your summary, Mr Chairperson.

Meanwhile, I wonder where it is stated in the Rules of Procedures that neither we nor the Secretariat are allowed to think about how to undertake. I see that we are making progress on the manner to conduct these complex assessments. We are not questioning the mandate of the Secretariat by expressing our contribution here and our desire to have an informal meeting.

Having said this, we wonder whether we would like to see point (d) in the conclusion because we all agree that it is complex but the way you read it out was a little bit confusing to us.

It reads something like: "acknowledging the difficulties of assessment". What do we mean by this? For what reason should we take a decision on this matter? So I do not see the added value of this here.

Two additional points. Under point (b) of your conclusions, we would like to add after what you read out a new sentence as follows:

"A substantial number of Member States expressed the desire to request the Secretariat to organize a meeting well before the Programme Committee meeting in November to present and discuss the scope, methodology, and indicators for this assessment".

That is what we propose.

Finally, we agree with the Secretariat and the Legal Office that the request of the Russian Federation is understandable, but the Council is not the right place to deal with this topic right now because the Global Soil Partnership is a specific entity in which FAO has a Membership. We recognize the request from Russia but it is not up to the Council to take a decision on this topic.

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

A quick intervention to support what has just been said by the Netherlands as Presidency of the European Union. In particular, I think that the commitment that we all appreciated made by the Director-General yesterday when he committed to present a draft of the methodology and the types of indicators through a roadmap to the Programme Committee, that is not by any means violating the prerogatives of the Secretariat. That is a very important step in what is in our view the right direction, to involve and engage the Membership, exchange views and do things better together.

Sr. Nazareno Cruz MONTANI CAZABAT (Argentina)

En términos generales queremos apoyar las conclusiones que Usted ha leído y en particular queremos apoyar la propuesta de la distinguida Delegación de Rusia. En este sentido varias delegaciones, entre esas la Delegación de mi país, hemos levantado la cuestión del multilingüismo durante la reunión conjunta, ya que es una cuestión que nos parece que es sumamente relevante y excede las cuestiones jurídicas aquí. En respecto de la Alianza mundial sobre los Suelos ha habido una fuerte voluntad de la Asamblea Plenaria de solicitar y de remarcar la necesidad de tener traducción e interpretación sobre todo para el futuro.

Comprendemos las restricciones que puedan existir hacia el 2017 por el período de tiempo, pero nos parece que ésta es una cuestión sumamente importante desde lo práctico y la Alianza mundial sobre los Suelos, la Asamblea Plenaria cuentan muchas veces con técnicos de nuestros países y es una real dificultad llevar estas reuniones a cabo solo en inglés como propusimos en la reunión conjunta.

Entendemos ciertas dificultades, pero también necesitamos que nos entienda, porque en realidad si se nos dice que no hay presupuesto para esto, bueno propondríamos que la reunión se vaya haciendo en distintas lenguas. Una vez en español, una vez en francés, una vez en ruso, una vez en árabe para que se entienda realmente cual es la dificultad que tenemos. Esto es un debate que este Consejo tiene que dar porque donde lo vamos a dar, si no. En este sentido, la Delegación Argentina quiere apoyar la propuesta de Rusia y nos parece que es muy importante tomarlo en cuenta en este Consejo.

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

Let me start by saying that I also have the same recollection as my colleague from Argentina that this matter was brought to the attention of the Joint Meeting of the Committees and it is certainly an obstacle that challenges many delegations which attend the GSP Meetings. I would invite the Council to look into this matter and find a solution, because the proposal made by Russia seems quite positive and forthcoming. Otherwise, the solution would be what has been proposed by Argentina and I suggest that the next meeting be held in Russian as it was their proposal and the other delegations should bring their own interpreters.

I also would like to comment on the decision-making process of the Council. The last intervention by the Distinguished Ambassador from the Netherlands was not introduced by any Member of the Council. As far as I understand, observers do not matter in the decision-making process of the Council itself. I do understand that the proposals made by the observer Delegation of the Netherlands were endorsed by one Member of the Council. However, I have to reiterate my objection to it, I do not want to reopen the discussion as I do not think it is the appropriate moment for that. I just would like to first hear the response to the question made by my Distinguished colleague from Australia, and second, endorse the language that you have proposed as the conclusions for this meeting.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

As Member of Council, we are listening to discussions that are ongoing and I have to understand the cost implication of this assessment that we are talking about because, of course, it would be paid by Member Nations.

What would be the cost of this assessment? Because in my mind it may go up to maybe USD 500 000 or USD 600 000, because you would be taking into account that you need experienced managers, many technical experts to visit the different regions, the countries, and the rest of this. You have too many things involved here.

FAO, we need to be mindful that there are people out there dying of hunger, about 800 million people are out there. So every dime or every nickel that we are going to spend, we must always be cautious of it. My question is how much is this going to cost us Member Nations? Maybe someone can be able to tell us the cost implication.

Mr Salah AL BAZZAZ (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

I would like to refer to what the Honorable Delegates from the Netherlands and from Italy said. Instead of holding a single informal meeting, perhaps a series of informal meetings would be better because we all see the complexity of the problem and we all see that there are way too many ramifications and we need extensive discussions on the matter.

I would now like to refer to what our colleague from Liberia said. I wonder what the cost will be for the assessment. Cost is of paramount importance and we need to know who will be handling this. An assessment is always interesting and the idea is a very sound one, at least in principle, because assessing our technical capacities is very important. We can see whether we are up to the task, technically speaking, and whether we still have an edge in terms of delivering on food and agriculture issues. But the cost issue is to be looked into nevertheless.

On the issue of our colleague from the Russian Federation, we fully agree with and welcome the idea and we would like to suggest to the Council to find a way of tackling this issue.

Mr Jianmin XIE (China) (Original language Chinese)

After listening to all the interventions, I have learnt a lot. These two issues are very important. First of all, regarding the technical capacity assessment, we agree with the conclusion made by the Chairperson. I think all the points of interest were in the conclusion.

If I am not mistaken, in point (b) the Chairperson already mentioned that, starting November 2016, this issue should be given to the Programme Committee for discussion. I think everyone now is expressing their will to have an earlier meeting to be able to know more about the assessment. I think this is the will in this room. This is not in contradiction with the conclusion reached.

If a few Members are more active and have more constructive proposals or suggestions, for example, I think the Delegate from Kuwait said we can have a series of meetings instead of one informal meeting, or maybe it is not up to the Secretariat to hold any meetings of this kind. If you have this wish, or if you are ready and thinking this issue is very important and you would like to tell the Secretariat how to do the assessment, then you can make your proposals. You can propose to the Secretariat how to assess FAO's technical capacity.

I think now is not the time to think about when or where or how to discuss this assessment. The point is to have an assessment that is more realistic because this issue is very complicated. In the Organization how to assess itself has always been very complicated. I think very seldom we see an organization wanting to assess itself. It is difficult. So I propose that Members should maybe take the initiative to study this issue and make proposals to the Secretariat to do a better assessment. If you have already concrete ideas, you can make your proposal tomorrow. The Chair also was thinking about how and when to do it, so Members having ideas can make their comments or proposals to help out. I think that is a constructive way. Therefore, the conclusion reached by the Chair is already quite comprehensive.

Secondly, regarding the Global Soil Partnership and the use of languages, I agree with the Russian Delegation. In the past, when discussing issues related to this, we already expressed China's opinion. Currently, once again, I would like to point out that in FAO's publications, language is not balanced.

The GSP is very important. Language is very important to disseminate FAO's knowledge and vision and can play an important role. We should all be on the same side. We can take concrete actions. Russia's proposal is very concrete. We can take steps and have very tangible measures or make really concrete proposals so we can dwell on these.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

Queremos referirnos brevemente a dos temas. El primero con relación a la propuesta que ha hecho los Países Bajos en el apartado (b). Nosotros consideramos que, como ha sido enfatizado siempre en este Consejo, los informes del Consejo están centrados en las decisiones que toma. Es decir, donde existe el consenso. Y este es un tema en el que claramente no hay consenso. Y si no, nos tocaría agregar otra frase que diga que otros países consideraron, que no están de acuerdo, y consideraron que se debe presentar en el Comité. Es decir, los informes del Consejo están centrados únicamente en las decisiones.

Por otro lado queremos, con respecto a la propuesta de Rusia, para mi Delegación es fundamental el tema del multilingüismo y la respaldamos. Quizás para no entrar en el tema legal en cuanto a la jerarquía de la Alianza, se podría dejar la propuesta de Rusia en algo más general. Es decir asegurar la interpretación en las reuniones que tienen lugar en la FAO.

Y posteriormente cuando obviamente se discuta el siguiente programa de trabajo, podríamos insistir en el tema específico de la Alianza.

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

Just a couple of points. The first one is to complement what some interventions have highlighted, in particular the intervention by the Distinguished Chinese colleague about the usefulness of informal occasions to exchange views and to get better results together. My observation is that in modern legal orders what is not explicitly prohibited is normally allowed.

The second quick observation is unfortunately to transmit at this late time of the day a sense of sadness because I have heard a legalistic – allow me to use this word – consideration about an intervention made by the Netherlands as a President of the Council of the European Union and, as everybody knows in this room, the European Union and its Member States, apart from being the first donor worldwide, is the staunchest supporter of FAO precisely in that fight against hunger and malnutrition that has been highlighted by some colleagues discussing the costs of the assessment.

Mr Sprydon ELLINAS (Cyprus)

I want to echo what Italy just said and also to add that, when the Netherlands takes the floor, it takes it on behalf of the Presidency and actually on behalf of one of the Council Members belonging to the EU unless otherwise stated by themselves.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Je ne voudrais pas prolonger trop longtemps la discussion parce que j'ai l'impression que nous arrivons au bout de ce processus. Je crois que sur ce point-là, l'un des messages clés que nous avons dans notre déclaration commune a été entendu, à savoir associer les Membres, et le Directeur général l'a dit hier, au processus. On souhaitait avancer un petit plus loin dans le type de consultation sans forcément être trop prescriptif sur la méthode, mais je crois que l'essentiel a été dit, et c'est là le principal.

En ce qui concerne les dernières propositions formulées par les Pays-Bas qui, comme l'a indiqué Chypre, exercent la présidence de l'Union européenne, je crois qu'effectivement on peut regarder peut-être s'il est nécessaire — et on peut éventuellement soutenir la demande de suppression concernant la prise de note sur les difficultés techniques —, et puis s'agissant de l'ajout d'un paragraphe, comme l'a indiqué la Chine, il faut peut-être voir si la valeur ajoutée de ce paragraphe est là. Pour cela je m'en remettrai à vous, Monsieur le Président.

Mr Khaled M.S.H. EL TAWHEEL (Egypt)

First of all we support your initial proposal and we are concerned about the lengthy process we are following. Your proposal was supported by many. There was one substantial amendment to your proposal that received some support but was not supported by consensus. As we said before, Egypt strongly supports the independent evaluation as a tool that will lead to certain results. These results as we envisage it are to determine any areas that need improvement in technical capacity at headquarters and decentralized offices.

Ergo we believe that this long drafting exercise we are undergoing now will not really lead to any positive effect on the outcome of this evaluation. We would strongly support adopting your initial proposal with no changes.

Mr Jón Erlingur JONASSON (Iceland)

I am taking the floor as Iceland but having been involved in the discussion so far, and my position has been clear, I would like to say the following. I take the answer from the Deputy Director-General as acceptable for me. It was coming from the Secretariat having listened to the Members, so I listened to that.

But for me, this can never be and never was a legal issue. So I did not have to listen to any legal explanation on if I as a Member, and I have full right as a member of the Council, to be among those who ask for dialogue among ourselves or dialogue with the Secretariat.

Having said that, I can accept the summary made by the Independent Chair on this issue. I might say that probably we are in the situation that, if I understand right, the Director-General listened to voices in the Programme Committee and he decided to do it this way. So he is listening. So I also listened and I hope and I expect the Director-General is listening to the voices here today. He might decide to have an informal briefing. He may even decide, well, let us have the briefing. I decide it will be in January. I might have it before. So there are options. So he is listening and I am happy with that.

Then I have also the option I can invite myself to a briefing on the same issue and I can decide to invite Members who I am very interested to have dialogue with. It will prepare myself to follow the Programme Committee and the issue so that is also open. I will consider that of course as an option.

I have one more thing on the language issue coming from Russia. I think having gotten guidance from the Secretariat and the Chair earlier that my interventions would be better placed somewhere else on the agenda, so I wonder if as much as financial issues about the language could be taken up in the report of the Finance Committee. At least I do not see any difficulty that this Council should say that the issue was mentioned in Council and the Council encouraged the Finance Committee to take up the issue.

It is for the Conference to decide what we use our resources for and there is definitely a debate around what we use the resources for. Should it be for the language or should it be for this? If Conference decides that we would like to have translation and interpretation on the Global Soil Partnership Plenary Assembly, it is a decision of the Conference. But I would expect that the discussion would start in the Finance Committee. This is a substantive discussion but I understand and I throw this out as an idea then if the Council could somehow put the phrase around that it is for the Finance Committee to discuss the issue. From there it goes through.

So those were my final words on this issue.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

We are at a dilemma. I think most Members will not be happy, including members of the EU, to have a separate sentence in the report saying some Members want this. That will show that the Council is divided and we do not want that. The Council should decide a decision unanimously.

Now in order not to have a sentence, we have to find a way to satisfy the EU and other Members, Australia. Let me explain. This assessment is done by the Secretariat. The Secretariat arranges for the methodology and the terms of reference. It does it by hiring consultants and the Deputy Director-General made that very clear.

The Programme Committee is briefed on the terms of reference. The Programme Committee does not consider the terms of reference. The members of the Programme Committee know very well all of the corporate evaluation conducted; they do not approve the terms of reference. The terms of reference are agreed, approved by the Director of Evaluation. The Programme Committee does not even see the inception report. The only thing they see is the final product.

At some stage where the methodology is prepared with the consultants, the Director-General will brief the Programme Committee.

Mr Chair, you could consider a way yourself of that before the Director-General briefs the Programme Committee. The Director-General may find it useful to have a dialogue with the Membership on this matter.

We do not tell the Director-General you must do it. We leave it to him. He may feel that the dialogue is unnecessary. This could be a compromise.

Mr Vimlendra SHARAN (India)

It is pretty late in the day and all I will be doing is reiterating certain views already expressed, but let me take this opportunity to just put on record that I think Iceland in its last intervention actually brought us very close to what could be a way out when he says the Director-General is listening and to leave it to the Director-General's good sense of listening and allow him to call for an informal seminar or any other mechanism through which he would like to interact with the Membership at an appropriate time to deal with this issue.

I would think that that would be the appropriate way forward and also on the language issue, I appreciate fully what Russia has said and many others have supported. I think Iceland has rightly pointed out that this has a financial implication and the discussion is best started in the Finance Committee and perhaps from there it will take its route onwards.

I would urge that Ecuador's intervention also be kept in mind that Council decisions should not come with some Members or a substantial number of Members. That wording would not be, in my mind, be appropriate for a Council decision.

Mr Zoltan KÁLMÁN (Hungary)

Sorry for taking the floor at the late hour and I really do not want to prolong the discussion. I would like to make a short intervention on three points. First of all I would like to confirm that I fully align with what was said by the EU statement by the Netherlands and also by what was said by my fellow EU colleagues.

My second point is that we should agree. I think there is a consensus in this room that informal consultations are very useful. It was demonstrated several times in our own experience successfully, that informal consultations are very useful and beneficial for both parties, both for the Membership because we feel that we are being involved and we feel that we can have our voices heard, and it is beneficial also for the Secretariat because they will understand better the situation. This is a really complex issue.

My third point is that it was very interesting to hear the intervention of the Distinguished Delegate of China and later on my neighbour from Iceland. These informal consultations should not necessarily be driven and called by the Director-General himself; they could be informal consultations also initiated by the Members.

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

As the previous speaker pointed out, we do not want to drag on this discussion. I would like to thank Mr Gagnon and Mr Tavares for the explanations on procedural issues and legal matters.

As regards the status of the Global Soil Partnership, maybe there is a bit of a grey area. Then, if we look at the rules of procedure that were agreed by the FAO's Member Nations, it is written "composed by FAO technical and administrative staff". These were indeed presented as an addendum to the report on the Committee on Agriculture and then went through the Council too. Those rules of procedure refer to Rule X in particular.

FAO itself is not a partner in the framework of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP) which appears to be logical if it is the Secretariat.

In respect of the report and whether this is to be discussed in the Council, perhaps there is a precedent. Yet, we think that it is something to discuss in the Council because there is Rule X of the Rules of Procedure of the GSP which says that the GSP shall report to the Committee on Agriculture and there

is also a recommendation about issues that affect policy matters. These recommendations can also be viewed by the Council.

In addition, FAO was mentioned in the recommendation of the plenary of the GSP, which took place on 27 May, that is to say last week. Funding is not a new issue. If we remember proposal 8 in the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) for 2016-17 that was adopted by the Conference last June, it was not amended in December 2015.

Specific funds were allocated. I am not going to give you the exact figures. You can refer to the relevant documents. However, specific amounts were allotted to provide interpretation and translation in the six languages during the GSP Plenary Assembly. Yet, this has not been done. I am sure that the Secretariat cannot do everything and I understand the workload. Nevertheless, we wanted to help the Secretariat by drawing its attention to this matter, because this is an issue we keep bringing up but we have not reached a solution yet, unfortunately.

What is happening? As far as I know, the report of the Plenary Assembly is still not accessible on the website, but it will be available for the Committee on Agriculture in September 2016. That I can promise you.

Then in December or at the end of November 2016, there will be the 155th Session of the FAO Council. On its provisional agenda, there is an item that is the Report of the Committee on Agriculture. I can assure you that this issue will be raised again at the Council meeting in December 2016. The Secretariat is also about to prepare a new Programme of Work and Budget. We just wanted to provide early warning to the Secretariat about the fact that this issue is going to require attention.

It was meant to be a helpful comment for the Secretariat. We see no problem with mentioning this point on the report on this item, because it was discussed during the Joint Meeting. Then, I would like to hear those who wish to say something about this subject, expressing their views again. Maybe after my comments they would have a new opinion. I would also like to hear a reply from the Secretariat.

Sr. Porfirio PESTANA DE BARROS (República Bolivariana de Venezuela)

Para ser lo más breve posible dada la hora, sencillamente queremos expresar nuestro pleno apoyo a lo expresado en la última intervención de Ecuador.

M. Carlos Alberto AMARAL (Angola)

Nous sommes d'accord avec la proposition de la Russie. Peut-être que la question pourrait être étudiée par le Comité financier. En ce qui concerne la tenue d'une réunion informelle, nous en avons déjà parlé. Je pense que si le Directeur général fait le point sur la situation et donne des informations, c'est une bonne occasion pour dialoguer et pour que les Membres posent toutes les questions qu'ils souhaitent.

Mr Andrzej HALASEWICZ (Observer for Poland)

I would like to support what has been said by the European Union and its Member States. For the sake of time, I will only refer to one issue and the proposal made by the Russian Federation. I am surprised to notice that our colleague, who is taking care of legality and for whom the formal aspect of our discussion is of the utmost importance, accepted this proposal so easily. As far as I am concerned, when I am looking very carefully at the Report of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees, I did not find any reflection on this issue.

Furthermore, as a member of the Programme Committee, I have a problem to recall the intensive debate about this issue. I could imagine quite easily that the language issue could be roused by the Russian Federation. Actually, our distinguished colleague is advocating this position at any occasion. From this point of view, I would like to strongly support what has been said by the Secretary-General: any decision in this regard cannot be made by the Council. We fully agree to say that it is important to have a balance of languages. However, so far, the United Nations have adopted other official languages.

There are many other nations and many other languages. They are not official languages. Fortunately, our experts had already been prepared to speak in foreign languages. Let me draw your attention to

one more aspect, the financial aspect. If we recognize a new official language, we will have to pay for it. Is it really what we want, in light of our current operational context and budget?

Thus, I strongly believe that this proposal should not be considered.

Ms Maria Helena SEMEDO (Deputy-Director General, Coordinator for Natural Resources)

We do not have a clear idea because we have not done a budget yet. However, it is possible to say, based on the previous evaluations or kind of assessment, that it will not be less than USD 500,000. We would have to hire a consultant for one year and eleven months. We would have to pay some other expenditure, such as travel costs.

I would like to make one more comment. I am sure you would agree to say that the Director-General has been listening to what has been said by the Council, the Programme and the Finance Committees. He did accept to organize a meeting on gender issues, another point discussed in the Programme Committee. The beginning of 2017 would be fine for us, taking into consideration our agenda and the related high workload, in particular the technical committees to be held this year.

I believe that you would agree to say that the Director-General has been flexible, constructive, and listened carefully to you. This is why we hope that you would agree on this provisional schedule. If we want to carry out a high-level assessment, and to produce quality and transparent results, it would not be reasonable to plan the meeting prior to this date.

Sr. Nazareno Cruz MONTANI CAZABAT (Argentina)

Vamos a ser muy breve porque es muy tarde, pero realmente estamos sorprendidos con algunas intervenciones en relación a multilingüismo. Sabemos que esta no es una cuestión que ha arrancado aquí, la cuestión de multilingüismo se debate en las Naciones Unidas desde hace mucho tiempo y, a este respecto, tenemos la resolución 5011 de 1995 de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas. Esta resolución fue impulsada por varios países en América Latina, China, Rusia y muchos países europeos, podríamos mencionar Francia, España, etc. y por eso que ciertos argumentos con respecto a las cuestiones relativas a cuales son los idiomas y las opciones de las Naciones Unidas nos parecen que están fuera de lugar en este contexto.

Queremos reafirmar que existe una resolución, existen lenguas oficiales de las Naciones Unidas, son las que son, y en este sentido deben respetarse las lenguas oficiales que tenemos en las Naciones Unidas. Comprendemos las dificultades que tienen los técnicos, comprendemos nuestras propias dificultades y nos parece que entrar en este debate relativo al multilingüismo que ha sido zanjado hace varios años en la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, no sea provechoso.

Queremos terminar aquí pero una vez más reafirmamos la importancia de lo que ha dicho Rusia. Esto tiene que ser abordado en este Consejo. Nos dedicamos horas y horas a intentar solucionar la cuadratura del círculo. Cuestiones abstractas de todo tipo de índole, y cuando tenemos algo muy concreto, algo muy claro, no vamos a tomar una decisión. Pasamos realmente muchas horas aquí simplemente haciendo ejercicios intelectuales al final.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Je voulais simplement dire que la question du multilinguisme est bien évidemment très importante. Le deuxième point, c'est qu'il y a des résolutions prises au niveau des Nations Unies et il y a des principes qui s'appliquent à nous tous. Troisièmement, nous sommes bien conscients qu'il peut y avoir des conséquences tant juridiques que financières. Je voulais donc juste rappeler que cette question est importante pour la qualité de nos travaux.

CHAIRPERSON

As I said earlier, we need to be flexible but not for the sake of being flexible. We need to understand one another and we need to work as one, as a Council. And from all the discussions I have heard, I would like to read again my conclusions on this Agenda item, having incorporated some of your views to the extent which I think would form a consensus.

1. The Council endorsed the report of the Joint Meeting, and in relation to its discussion on the independent assessment of technical capacity of the Organization:
 - a) recalled the guidance from its 153rd Session for the Secretariat to undertake the assessment for consideration by the Conference in 2017;
 - b) appreciated the announcement made by the Director-General that a roadmap, including a draft of the methodology and the type of indicators to be used, would be presented to the Programme Committee at its meeting in November 2016, and in this regard Members expressed the desire to request the Secretariat to arrange an informal meeting ahead of the Programme Committee;
 - c) appreciated that an informal briefing to Members would be arranged in early 2017 prior to finalization of the report of the assessment;
 - d) noted the complexity in assessing the technical capacity of FAO, including in terms of definition, location and the context of the Organization's mandate and objectives; and
 - e) looked forward to reviewing the outcome of the assessment at its April 2017 session, prior to submission to the 40th session of the Conference.
2. The Council acknowledged the need to ensure regular translation and interpretation into all FAO languages at the Plenary Assemblies of the Global Soil Partnership and requested the Secretariat to take measures in this regard, for consideration by the competent Governing Bodies of FAO when preparing the PWB 2018-19.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

I am just seeking clarification that it would come to the Programme Committee and then to the Council in the autumn session and then it will come back to the Council in the spring session before it goes to Conference. I might have missed your words that you might have put in the summary.

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, as you have said, it will come to Council in November. You know, I was telling somebody that when you say spring or summer, I get confused because where I come from, we have got only two seasons. So, please, mention the months.

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

Could I benefit from a re-reading of point (b)? I would also like to know how you are going to reflect your reply to Australia's question in a draft.

I would like to have clarity about the meaning of informal meeting in this context. Informal meeting of the Council, informal meeting of the Committee, or informal meeting of the Conference, it is not really clear. Perhaps you may wish to use another expression instead of informal meeting.

CHAIRPERSON

I think this is a generally used word here and it is understood by many. Maybe if you have got a better word you could make a suggestion.

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

Normally, when you have an informal meeting it is referring to a body. In this case, what you may wish to use and it would be more appropriate is an "informal briefing".

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

I thank you for your efforts to quickly incorporate our proposal despite the disagreement.

Could you please re-read point (b) of paragraph 1?

CHAIRPERSON

(b) appreciated the announcement made by the Director-General that a road map, including a draft of the methodology and the type of indicators to be used, would be presented to the Programme

Committee at its meeting in November 2016. In this regard, Members expressed their desire to request the Secretariat to arrange an informal briefing ahead of the Programme Committee.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

In relation to point (a), could I suggest that you please include, where we talk about the recalling the guidance from the 153rd Session, the word “independent” ahead of “assessment” to be consistent with the decision from the last Council meeting?

CHAIRPERSON

It would read: (a) recalled the guidance from its 153rd Session for the Secretariat to undertake an independent assessment for consideration by the Conference in 2017.

Mr Andrzej HALASEWICZ (Observer for Poland)

I would like to help our colleague from Brazil to have clarity about this informal meeting. So I suggest that it be “informal briefing for Members”.

CHAIRPERSON

We always take issues brought by the Members of the Council and the Members of the Council have already agreed to this. I can say it is decided.

Item 6. Report of the 119th Session of the Programme Committee (16-20 May 2016)

Point 6. Rapport de la cent dix-neuvième session du Comité du Programme (16-20 mai 2016)

Tema 6. Informe del 119.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa (16-20 de mayo de 2016)
(CL 154/3)

CHAIRPERSON

We will now continue with item 6, *Report of the 119th Session of the Programme Committee*. The document before Council is CL 154/3.

I invite Ambassador Claudio Rozenwig, Vice-Chairperson of the Programme Committee, to introduce the Report.

As you have noted the Chairperson of the Programme Committee, Ambassador Tomasi, has not been able to be here with us because he is not very well. We pass him our consideration and wish him a quick recovery.

Sr. Claudio ROZENWIG (Vice-Presidente del Comité del Programa)

Presidente, me imagino que va a ser breve desde el punto de vista de las discusiones sobre estos temas que se han sucedido durante todo el día. *I hope so*. Es un honor para mí presentar este informe de las discusiones del 119.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa, la cual tuve el placer de presidir en nombre del amigo y excelente colega, el Embajador francés Serge Tomasi, que lamentablemente por problemas de salud no le ha sido posible presidir y que esperamos que rápidamente esté entre nosotros.

El comité trabajó en una forma armoniosa y constructiva a lo largo de la sesión con un gran espíritu de consenso, otorgando orientaciones efectivas al Secretariado en diversos temas relacionados con el planeamiento de programas y evaluaciones. En el marco de la revisión del Marco Estratégico y de la preparación para el próximo plan de medio plazo, el comité realizó una revisión técnica de los *inputs* recibidos de las Conferencias Regionales del 2016. El comité enfatizó la necesidad de continuidad en la dirección estratégica de la Organización, tomó nota de las tendencias regionales y desafíos identificados y apoyó la importancia del alineamiento del Marco Estratégico de la FAO con los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible.

El comité también apoyó todas las iniciativas regionales para 2016-2017 como así también el trabajo interregional en cambio climático, nutrición y *bio-growth*. El comité manifestó también su satisfacción con la evaluación del trabajo de la FAO en recursos genéticos para la alimentación y la agricultura, tanto con sus conclusiones positivas como con la respuesta de la Administración.

El comité también hizo suya la hoja de ruta para la estrategia de la FAO en cambio climático y discutió así mismo el informe en temas transversales de género, nutrición y cambio climático. Específicamente en relación al tema género, hubo un consenso entre las diversas delegaciones sobre la relevancia de este tema. El comité apreció el comprensivo informe provisto y la información en el informe sobre la ejecución del programa 2014-2015. Hubo acuerdo, como dije, en la necesidad de prestar la debida atención al tema género en las evaluaciones futuras sobre los Objetivos Estratégicos.

El comité también solicitó una evaluación completa del trabajo de la FAO en género para ser sometida a la Conferencia de 2019. Y también hubo consenso en que se presentara la información sobre género a través de los correspondientes mecanismos de la FAO. Sobre este tema entonces debo decir que hubo un gran consenso sustantivo sobre la importancia de avanzar en el tema género en todos los órganos de la FAO.

Relativo al tema de la resistencia a los antimicrobianos, el comité apreció el progreso realizado por la FAO. Así mismo apoyó el Plan de Trabajo que se nos propuso sobre este tema y dio la bienvenida a las actividades del Secretariado relativas a la resistencia a los antimicrobianos dentro del Programa de trabajo y presupuesto.

El comité también manifestó su satisfacción con las donaciones, con aquellos donantes que ya han comprometido o realizado contribuciones voluntarias, y urgió a conseguir financiamiento para desarrollar actividades en este tema de resistencia a los antimicrobianos y también solicitó a los Miembros y a otros *partners* a proveer recursos extrapresupuestarios para alcanzar los 10 millones de dólares en contribuciones voluntarias necesarios para la ejecución del Plan de Acción.

Por último, deseo reiterar la armonía y el gran consenso en los temas sustantivos que se alcanzó en el Comité del Programa.

Ms Sri SULIHANTI (Indonesia)

I am honoured to provide this cross-regional statement stressing the crucial role of FAO's work on gender equality and women's empowerment, on behalf of the following Council Members: Afghanistan, Angola, Australia, Canada, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, European Union, France, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Liberia, Mali, Morocco, San Marino, Spain, South Africa, Turkey, United States of America, Zimbabwe. Altogether this is 25 Council Members. In addition, 58 observers support this statement.

We would like to highlight the importance of gender equality in FAO's work and appreciate highly that FAO is planning a seminar on gender, as announced yesterday morning by the Director-General. We consider that FAO's Policy on Gender Equality, endorsed in 2013, is a strong instrument which gives excellent guidance on how to reach FAO's gender equality goals and objectives, especially in the framework of the Agenda 2030. We consider this information of paramount importance for the upcoming discussions on the next Mid-Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget.

We appreciate the improved reporting on gender issues in the Programme Implementation Report. We are pleased to see that a lot of important work is being done by the Organization as reflected in the Programme Implementation Report, which shows ongoing efforts to mainstream gender throughout the FAO's five Strategic Objectives and the Programme of Work and Budget.

We welcome the recommendation made by the Programme Committee to the Council to conduct an Evaluation of FAO's work on gender, within existing resources, to be submitted to the 41st Conference in 2019 and look forward to it.

We are very pleased to learn today that a report on gender will be produced for the informal seminar later this year. We anticipate that the report will update Members on progress achieved on the implementation of FAO's Policy on Gender Equality in its entirety, including its accountability framework and further information on its minimum standards, in line with the decisions of the 2013 Conference and with the FAO Policy on Gender Equality.

As said by Director-General on 8 March 2012, achieving gender equality and empowering women is not only the right thing to do; it is also a crucial ingredient in the fight against poverty and hunger. We very much appreciate FAO's commitment to promoting gender equality and women's

empowerment and that FAO's Management sees gender equality as central to FAO's mandate and essential to achieve the Agenda 2030.

Mr Chairperson, we look forward to working jointly with you to fully achieve gender equality by 2030, which, as pointed out by UN Secretary-General, is fundamental for achieving a zero hunger world.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

El Ecuador realiza esta intervención en nombre del Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe. Queremos agradecer al Embajador Claudio Rozenzwaig por la presentación del informe así como por haber presidido eficientemente las sesiones del Comité, en ausencia del Embajador Serge Tomasi, a quien deseamos una pronta recuperación.

El Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe respalda las recomendaciones del Informe del Comité y quiere realizar los siguientes comentarios. En cuanto a la "Revisión del Marco Estratégico y el Plan a Plazo Medio 2018-2021: prioridades regionales", queremos ante todo reiterar el apoyo que la Conferencia Regional de América Latina y el Caribe dio a la continuidad en la orientación estratégica de la FAO y el reconocimiento de la alineación existente entre los ODS y los objetivos estratégicos contenidos en el Marco Estratégico de la FAO.

Respaldamos la identificación de las últimas novedades mundiales, entre ellas: el reto que significa para los países la implementación de la Agenda 2030 y rol de la FAO en apoyo a dicha implementación; el Acuerdo de París resultado de la COP21; la Segunda Conferencia Internacional de la Nutrición y la Década de Acción para la Nutrición 2016-2025; y, como se menciona en el Informe del Comité del Programa, también la Tercera Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas sobre vivienda y el desarrollo urbano sostenible, que se realizará en Ecuador, en octubre del año en curso, por las implicaciones que los resultados de esta Conferencia tendrán en temas como la urbanización, el desarrollo rural, la migración, la agricultura y la seguridad alimentaria.

Apoyamos el que se haya incluido en el documento de revisión del Marco Estratégico y del Plan a Plazo Medio las tendencias y los desafíos regionales identificados por las Conferencias Regionales. Respaldamos la importancia de un mayor trabajo de la FAO en temas como la migración por las implicaciones que tiene para el sector rural, la agricultura y la seguridad alimentaria. Éste, y los otros desafíos identificados en el documento, además del cambio climático y la nutrición, ya incorporados como temas transversales, y la implementación de la Agenda 2030 son los temas de fondo en los que queremos que la Organización se centre y que nosotros, los Representantes Permanentes, prestemos mayor atención y hagamos el seguimiento adecuado.

Con relación a la Evaluación de la labor de la FAO en materia de recursos genéticos para la alimentación y la agricultura, queremos resaltar que este es un tema clave para la FAO y apreciamos que la Administración haya acogido las recomendaciones de la evaluación, entre ellas la necesidad de desarrollar las capacidades técnicas de las oficinas descentralizadas, ya que este es un factor indispensable para apoyar adecuadamente a los países en la conservación *in situ* de los recursos genéticos.

En cuanto a las cuestiones de género como el tema transversal, queremos expresar nuestra complacencia por la detallada información y los significativos avances de la FAO en este tema, recogidos en el Informe de Implementación del Programa 2014-2015. Para la región de América Latina y el Caribe la igualdad de género y el empoderamiento de la mujer es un tema fundamental y buscamos que ese enfoque se incorpore en todos los programas y proyectos relacionados con los Objetivos Estratégicos de la Organización, y nos complace que esto se vea bien reflejado en el Informe de Implementación del Programa.

La FAO ha apoyado a los países de la región tanto con proyectos y programas que abordan las cuestiones de género cuanto en el trabajo que lleva adelante en esta materia la Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños (CELAC). Como ya lo expresó la Conferencia Regional, queremos reiterar nuestro reconocimiento a la FAO por el apoyo brindado en este ámbito.

La FAO ha conseguido resultados significativos en materia de género en el bienio 2014-2015 y alentamos a continuar trabajando en esa dirección.

Finalmente, con relación al trabajo de la FAO sobre la resistencia a los antimicrobianos, el GRULAC da la bienvenida al Plan de Acción elaborado por la Secretaría para este tema y resaltamos la necesidad de movilizar recursos extrapresupuestarios para la ejecución de dicho plan.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Je vous remercie tout d'abord pour les mots que vous avez eus à l'intention de l'Ambassadeur Serge Tomasi. Je remercie également Claudio Rozencwaig, Vice-Président du Comité du Programme, ainsi que l'Équateur, et tous ceux qui ont exprimé leurs pensées pour l'Ambassadeur. Je suis certaine qu'il y sera très sensible. Je souhaite également saluer le travail fructueux effectué par le Comité du Programme sous la houlette de l'Ambassadeur Rozencwaig, qui a assuré la présidence de cette session, et je vous prie de bien vouloir donner la parole aux Pays-Bas pour une déclaration commune de l'Union européenne.

Ms Gerda VERBURG (Observer for Netherlands)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate countries to the EU, Albania, Montenegro, as well as Turkey and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

We commend the work of the Programme Committee at its 119th Session and welcome its conclusions.

We welcome the review of FAO's Strategic Framework and preparation of the Medium-Term Plan 2018-21 – Regional Priorities as an important element in the production of the MTP. The trends and challenges identified by the Regional Conferences are well reflected and can be used for revision of the outcomes, outputs and indicators in relation to the Strategic Objectives. In this context, enhancing sustainability, in line with the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement, should be fully taken into account.

We note the work in progress on FAO's roadmap on climate change. The conceptual framework and overarching outcomes have now been proposed. But we would like to see a more concrete strategy on how FAO will support countries as they implement the deliverables of the Paris Agreement in the fields of agriculture, food and other areas related to FAO's mandate, including through initiatives under the Lima-Paris Action Agenda. In this respect, we expect the roadmap to clearly outline how FAO will capitalise on its technical expertise in order to disseminate knowledge on the links between climate change, agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food security.

We also look forward to a report that incorporates the contribution of FAO's technical committees to the Climate Strategy and Plan of Action. That contribution should come as a response to well formulated guiding questions to the Committees, covering all aspects, from adaptation to mitigation of climate change.

We would again stress the importance of cross-cutting themes, including nutrition, climate change, gender and governance. Therefore we look forward to receiving appropriate reports and evaluations on these aspects of FAO's performance. Taking into account the Programme Committee's request for an evaluation of FAO work on gender which will be considered by the Conference in 2019, we would ask the Secretariat to present a progress report on FAO's gender strategy to the 121st Session of the Programme Committee in May 2017, including how it is mainstreamed in all its Strategic Objectives.

We note the update on FAO's work on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and encourage FAO to strengthen its result-oriented cooperation with other agencies. We look forward to a fully-fledged Action Plan in the next PWB with a further allocation, clearly defined resources from FAO's Regular Programme budget as well as from voluntary and in-kind contributions, and with well-defined objectives, outputs and outcomes, also taking into account the UN General Assembly Resolution on AMR.

With these remarks, requests and recommendations, we support the approval of the Programme Committee's report.

M. Marc Mankoussou (Congo)

Permettez-moi de souhaiter une prompte guérison à Son Excellence Monsieur Serge Tomasi, Ambassadeur de France auprès de la FAO et Président du Comité du Programme.

La République du Congo intervient au nom du Groupe Afrique.

Le Groupe Afrique félicite l'Ambassadeur Claudio Rozenwaig, qui a assuré la présidence de la 119^{ème} session du Comité du Programme, pour avoir conduit de main de maître cette session, ainsi que pour la bonne présentation de son rapport. Il félicite également les membres du Comité du Programme pour la qualité des avis techniques et des conclusions soumises à l'attention du Conseil.

Le Groupe se réjouit du fait que le Comité ait examiné à sa session plusieurs questions relatives à la planification des programmes et à l'évaluation, qui constituent le substrat fondamental pour les travaux futurs de l'Organisation. Il approuve les conclusions du rapport.

Dans le cadre des questions de planification, le Groupe Afrique note que le Comité a débattu de quatre questions importantes.

Du "Cadre stratégique de la FAO et élaboration du Plan à moyen terme (PMT) 2018-2021- Priorités régionales". Le Groupe Afrique prend note de l'examen des évolutions mondiales, notamment le Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030 et le Programme d'action d'Addis-Abeba pour sa mise en œuvre, l'Accord de Paris sur le changement climatique, la deuxième Conférence internationale sur la nutrition et le Sommet mondial sur l'action humanitaire, ainsi que la troisième Conférence mondiale des Nations Unies sur la réduction des risques de catastrophe et la troisième Conférence des Nations Unies sur le logement et le développement urbain durable. Le Groupe Afrique exprime le souhait de voir toutes ces questions traitées dans les travaux futurs de l'Organisation.

Le Groupe Afrique est satisfait du fait que les tendances et les enjeux régionaux identifiés pendant les Conférences régionales aient fait l'objet d'un examen approfondi, notamment sur des thèmes fondamentaux pour la région Afrique comme l'emploi des jeunes, l'urbanisation, la migration des populations, l'innovation technologique, la résilience et le financement suffisant au développement, ainsi que les priorités régionales exprimées par les Conférences. Le Groupe Afrique appuie la recommandation du Comité relative à l'intégration des initiatives régionales pour la période 2016-2017 et des activités interrégionales relatives au changement climatique, à la nutrition et à la croissance bleue dans le Cadre stratégique de la FAO, ainsi que leur prise en compte dans l'élaboration du PMT 2018-2021.

Le Groupe Afrique se félicite de l'alignement des objectifs stratégiques de la FAO sur les objectifs de développement durable (ODD). Il souligne la nécessité d'établir des liens entre les indicateurs des ODD et le cadre de résultats du PMT 2018-2021. Le Groupe Afrique demande à l'Organisation de formuler des conseils sur les politiques à l'intention des Membres et de renforcer leurs capacités en s'appuyant sur le travail normatif de la FAO. Il apprécie la méthode participative entreprise dans l'élaboration et l'examen du projet de PMT 2018-2021, notamment en prenant en compte les conclusions des Comités de l'agriculture, des pêches, des forêts et des produits.

De la "Stratégie de la FAO en ce qui concerne les activités de l'Organisation relatives au changement climatique". Tout en mettant en avant ses avantages comparatifs, le Groupe Afrique invite la FAO à jouer un rôle plus important pour aider les Membres à s'adapter et à atténuer l'impact du changement climatique. Il prend note du cadre conceptuel et des trois résultats globaux proposés pour l'élaboration de la stratégie et appuie la proposition du Comité relative à la feuille de route établie. Il souscrit aux recommandations du Comité de prendre en compte les réalités nationales et locales dans la mise en œuvre de la stratégie et de son plan d'action, ainsi que le rôle des bureaux décentralisés. Le Groupe Afrique attend d'examiner la stratégie et son plan d'action dans le cadre de mécanismes existants au sein de l'Organisation.

Concernant "la parité hommes-femmes, le Groupe Afrique note les avancées accomplies par l'Organisation sur cette question, dans le cadre que nous avons examiné dans le Rapport sur l'exécution du Programme 2014-2015. Il appuie les recommandations du Comité de prendre en compte la parité hommes-femmes dans l'ensemble des activités de la FAO et qu'il soit fait rapport à

ce sujet par le biais de mécanismes existant au sein de l'Organisation. Le Groupe Afrique est favorable à l'évaluation des activités de la FAO en matière de parité hommes-femmes, que la Conférence examinera en 2019.

En ce qui concerne les "activités de la FAO dans le domaine de la résistance aux antimicrobiens", le Groupe Afrique se félicite des progrès que l'Organisation a accomplis dans ses activités sur cette question et demande qu'elle continue à bénéficier de l'attention souhaitée. Nous apprécions l'attention que le Secrétariat a apportée aux activités liées à la résistance aux antimicrobiens dans le cadre du Programme de travail et budget, ainsi que des ressources extrabudgétaires promises et mises à disposition jusqu'à présent par les partenaires. Le Groupe Afrique se félicite également de la collaboration qui existe entre la FAO, l'Organisation mondiale de la santé (OMS) et l'Organisation mondiale de la santé animale (OIE).

Le Groupe approuve le plan d'action quinquennal de la FAO, les domaines prioritaires ainsi définis par l'Organisation et les mécanismes de mise en œuvre envisagés par les équipes chargées des programmes stratégiques. Il appuie la proposition du Comité d'augmenter le financement des activités portant sur la résistance aux antimicrobiens, tout en exhortant les Membres de la FAO et d'autres donateurs potentiels à fournir des ressources extrabudgétaires supplémentaires, afin de réunir les 10 millions d'USD de contributions volontaires nécessaires à la mise en œuvre du Plan d'action.

Concernant les évaluations, le Groupe Afrique note que le Comité a examiné, notamment, l'Évaluation de la contribution de la FAO à la conservation et à l'utilisation durable des ressources génétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture. Le Groupe Afrique appuie les conclusions et les recommandations du Comité et note que la Direction a pris des mesures importantes pour donner suite aux recommandations formulées par l'évaluation. Le Groupe Afrique souscrit aux recommandations du Comité sur l'importance de renforcer les capacités dans les bureaux décentralisés et d'entretenir une collaboration étroite entre la FAO et les instances du Traité international sur les ressources phyto-génétiques pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture. Connaissant la complexité de la conservation de la biodiversité, nous pensons que cette question nécessite la participation de toutes les parties prenantes. Il serait donc important de trouver des formes novatrices de partenariats et de nouer une collaboration étroite avec d'autres parties prenantes dans ce domaine en vue de mobiliser plus de ressources.

En ce qui concerne le Rapport de suivi sur l'évaluation des bureaux régional et sous-régional de la FAO pour l'Asie et le Pacifique, et le Rapport d'évaluation du Bureau régional et des bureaux sous-régionaux de la FAO pour l'Amérique latine et les Caraïbes", le Groupe Afrique souscrit aux recommandations formulées par le Comité. Il appuie la demande du Comité de fournir davantage d'informations sur l'impact de la mise en œuvre des recommandations acceptées et des informations actualisées sur les recommandations rejetées. Il appuie également la recommandation du Comité qui encourage l'Organisation à continuer à prêter attention aux défis que doivent relever les pays insulaires du Pacifique et souligne l'importance de sa collaboration avec les organisations régionales de l'Asie et du Pacifique.

S'agissant du Rapport de suivi sur l'évaluation du rôle de la FAO à l'appui de la production végétale, le Groupe Afrique appuie les conclusions du Comité. Il est favorable à la mise en place d'une plateforme neutre permanente pour débattre de thèmes tels que l'agro-écologie et les biotechnologies.

Monsieur le Président, à la suite de ces commentaires, le Groupe Afrique adopte le Rapport de la 119^{ème} session du Comité du Programme.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much. You have worked very hard and I hope we will continue tomorrow. This brings us to the end of this meeting. The Council will resume its work tomorrow morning at 9:30 sharp with item 6 and we will continue with the list as it appears now on the screen.

The meeting rose at 21:02 hours

La séance est levée à 21 h 02

Se levanta la sesión a las 21.02

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Fifty-fourth Session
Cent cinquante-quatrième session
154.º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 30 May-3 June 2016
Rome, 30 mai-3 juin 2016
Roma, 30 de mayo-3 de junio de 2016**

**FIFTH PLENARY MEETING
CINQUIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
QUINTA SESIÓN PLENARIA**

1 June 2016

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

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

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

Item 6. Report of the 119th Session of the Programme Committee (16-20 May 2016) (continued)

Point 6. Rapport de la cent dix-neuvième session du Comité du Programme (16-20 mai 2016) (suite)

Tema 6. Informe del 119.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa (16-20 de mayo de 2016) (continuación)

(CL 154/3)

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, I call the fifth meeting of the 154th Session of the FAO Council to order.

Before returning to item 6 may I suggest that 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. This approach will enable us to use the limited time available as efficiently as possible.

Mr Jianmin XIE (China)

China is making this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

We welcome the report on the 119th Session of the Programme Committee just delivered by Ambassador Claudio as Chair of the Programme Committee for that session. We also wish a very speedy recovery to Ambassador Serge Tomasi and look forward to having him back in the deliberations of the Programme Committee soon.

The Asia Group welcomes the deliberations during the Programme Committee and fully supports its report presented to the Council. The Programme Committee has called for continuation and strengthening of strategic partnerships, including at regional level; enhanced capacity at regional and country offices in FAO's work in conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources; evaluation of FAO's Policy on Gender Equality; and greater details in the followup report on impact of the action taken on various evaluation recommendations, especially where Management has assigned high MAR scores. We extend our full support to all these issues and look forward to appropriate action by Management on these and other recommendation of the Programme Committee. The Programme Committee has also considered the AMR Action Plan and the roadmap for FAO's strategy on climate change. We look forward to further developments in both these areas.

Mr Jón Erlingur JONASSON (Iceland)

This statement is made on behalf of the Nordic Countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The EU countries, Denmark, Finland and Sweden align themselves with the statement made on behalf of the EU.

We are now, for the second time in a row, witnessing that Council Members and Observers give a cross-regional statement, with their policy guidance on gender equality and empowerment of women, as a follow-up of a Conference decision in 2013.

On substance, two issues, first we would prefer to receive a dedicated report on the implementation of the gender policy, including the accountability framework and second we look forward to the evaluations of the different Strategic Objectives where we understand a separate focus on the mainstreaming will be included.

On general notes about this cross-regional statement, the Nordic countries welcome this initiative very much and would like to highlight that this did not happen overnight, this was only possible because of the existence of the Gender Network here in Rome, a group of members from all regions that has for months come together to discuss and find common grounds for this particular issue, enabling us to come to this Council with one united view.

We are of the view, that we, the Members and Observers of the Council, should reach out more to each other, across regions, before we come the Council, to informally find common grounds and sort out differences. This will assist the Council to take clear guiding decisions on how we would like our Organization to fulfil its mandate.

In this regard, we also welcome recent developments from the Director-General in having informal briefings with Members; they are a good opportunity for the Secretariat to explain complex issues and to assist Members to find a common ground. We look forward to more of that kind of interaction with the Secretariat of FAO.

Mr Ivan G. KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation)

Tout d'abord, je voudrais ajouter ma voix à ceux qui ont déjà souhaité bonne guérison le plus vite possible au Président du Comité du Programme, Son Excellence Monsieur Serge Tomasi.

Continues in Russian

We would like to thank Mr Claudio Rozencwaig, the Vice-Chairperson of the Programme Committee for the presentation on the results of the work carried out in the 119th Session of the Committee.

We approve all the recommendations mentioned in the Report during the meeting. We have decided that the Programme Committee within its jurisdiction supported the regional initiatives and priorities of FAO for 2016-17.

We welcome the inter-regional organizational work in climate change, nutrition and we support the Blue Growth programme. We also approve FAO's strategic partnership work with stakeholder organizations. Especially, regional organizations as well as its activities in the normative work and on standards.

We also appreciate the report on FAO's activities on antimicrobial resistance work, which is undertaken in accordance with Governing Body recommendations.

At the moment, we are discussing with the Secretariat about our support in this area too. We recognize the importance in working on gender equality in the current mandate and framework of FAO's mandate. At the same time, we believe that we need to have a balanced approach towards this subject like any other subject.

Otherwise, there is a risk that such an approach could have a negative impact on results of FAO's activities in its fundamental areas of work, in its specialized and main areas. We call on the Secretariat to avoid an imbalance in this operation.

We would also like to talk about the content of the Programme Committee (PC 119/2) on the preparation of the Medium-Term Plan for 2018-21 including paragraph 19 on page 36.

We would also like to clarify with the Secretariat which decision of which Governing Body goes to the corporate policy of FAO in relation to peace building. We believe that the Organization should be involved in providing emergency support in the framework of food security and food security cluster including protracted crises. Likewise, FAO should provide urgent assistance in ensuring development.

With reference to the content of PC 8, rehabilitation and development assistance. We note the absence of the subject of peace building in the Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-17. We are concerned for the fact that such activity from the Secretariat could potentially jeopardise FAO's capacity, not to include it within its mandate. Then, this could provoke an interference in the jurisdiction of other core structures of the United Nations specialized agencies.

We would also like to discuss some points in relation to Point 18 of the current regulations in Programme Committee Document (PC 119/2) on the needs for the United Nations system to deal with the mandates of the specialized agencies, considering mandate sectors and institutions.

Ms Natalie Eugenia BROWN (United States of America)

Like other delegations the United States wishes the Chair of the Programme Committee a speedy recovery and thanks the Argentine representative for filling in.

The United States commends FAO for its commitment to work on AMR issues and supports the tripartite collaboration between FAO, WHO and OIE recognizing that AMR is both an animal and human health threat of growing concern, the United States also supports further collaboration with the Global Health Security Agenda Task Force. Additionally like other delegations, we support the

allocation of resources by the Organization, even a symbolic amount to AMR as a means of encouraging further voluntary contributions.

On climate change the United States compliments FAO for its work on the Climate Change Roadmap and we look forward to reviewing the strategy and plan of action.

Ms Makiko UEMOTO (Japan)

Japan appreciates the Secretariat for providing valuable inputs for the Strategic Framework and new Medium-Term Plan as well as updates on the FAO's work on AMR. We would like to make four comments under this agenda item.

First, as the Secretariat highlighted, the 2030 Agenda needs to be taken into account in these strategic documents. In this regard, development of data and statistics at the global and country levels should be further reinforced, given that FAO is one of the leading international organizations to monitor the progress of SDGs.

Second, another area where FAO has comparative advantage is its normative work, standard setting and its dissemination. This area should continue to be promoted, and planned activities be further elaborated.

We also place high importance on the cross-cutting issues, that is, gender, climate change and nutrition, as well as promoting sustainable agriculture, forestry and fisheries, developing food value chains, and building resilience.

Third, Japan considers that outcomes of the recent G7 summit and the G7 Niigata Agricultural Ministers' Meeting will contribute to addressing the common issues across regions, such as youth employment, innovation and technology, transboundary animal and plant pests and diseases and resilience building for vulnerable populations.

Last week, the G7 leaders gathered in Ise-Shima, Japan for the G7 Summit under the presidency of Japan and adopted the G7 Ise-Shima Leaders' Declaration.

Regarding global food security and nutrition, it identified three priority areas for concrete action, namely, (1) empowering women, (2) improving nutrition and (3) ensuring sustainability and resilience within agriculture and food systems.

Also, the G7 Niigata Agriculture Ministers' Meeting held last month adopted the Niigata Declaration, which highlighted G7's commitments in three areas, namely:

- 1) revitalizing rural areas and increasing income of farmers including women and youth;
- 2) improving agricultural production and productivity and strengthening food supply capacity; and
- 3) realizing sustainable agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to FAO for its valuable inputs in the G7 process and its participation at the G7 Niigata Agriculture Ministers' Meeting.

My last point is on AMR. As mentioned by the Director-General in his opening remarks, AMR was one of the issues discussed at the G7 Summit. In the G7 Ise-shima Declaration, the G7 countries committed to endeavour to take leadership in reinforcing response to AMR which could have serious impacts on our economies.

Also, in the G7 Niigata Agriculture Ministers' Meeting Declaration, AMR was recognized as a confirmed and very serious threat to global health, food production and the environment, and the G7 countries have decided to respond to AMR at global, regional and national levels.

Japan considers that the response to AMR should be addressed in a manner consistent with the Codex code of practice to minimize and contain antimicrobial resistance and WHO's Global Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance. In this regard, FAO's five year Action Plan should continue to be discussed in the appropriate Governing Bodies.

Sra. Andrea S.REPETTI (Argentina)

La Delegación de Argentina agradece la presentación y desea destacar los consensos alcanzados en el 119.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa.

Argentina apoya la declaración realizada por el GRULAC sobre esta materia, el tema género, y la realizada por Indonesia en nombre de varios Miembros del Consejo. Al mismo tiempo, desea resaltar los esfuerzos que está realizando la FAO, fundamentalmente en el terreno, área en la que se centran nuestras preocupaciones. Para nuestro país, en este ámbito las cuestiones de género se relacionan con el empoderamiento de la mujer rural, el acceso a los mercados y el acceso a microcréditos. Todos estos temas están incluidos en los programas de la FAO, por lo que entendemos que se está cumpliendo con nuestras expectativas. En este sentido, valoramos los anuncios realizados por el Director de la Oficina de Planificación, Estrategia y Gestión de Recursos, Señor Boyd Haight, que reflejan que la FAO esté involucrada en el tema.

La paridad de género y el empoderamiento de la mujer son de gran importancia para Argentina. Por eso la Señora Canciller Susana Malcorra presidió el mes pasado el acto de adhesión a la Campaña para la Paridad de Género en la Representación Internacional, GQUAL.

Como señaló la Señora Canciller, el problema de género no es un problema de las mujeres. Es un tema de todos, y recordó que cuando desempeñaba funciones en el Programa Mundial de Alimentos, se aseguraban que el alimento fuese recibido por la jefa de familia para que dicho alimento llegara a su destino, empoderando de este modo a las mujeres en el terreno.

Sr. Junior Andrés ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)

Queremos agradecer al Embajador por la excelente presentación del informe del Comité del Programa. Por cierto, esperamos en una pronta recuperación del Presidente del Comité.

Nuestra Delegación desea sumarse a la declaración del GRULAC y en particular queremos expresar nuestra satisfacción por los resultados alcanzados por la FAO con el tema de género. Estos resultados se evidencian en los programas de mayor impacto en el terreno en nuestro país. Para Nicaragua, país de la región en que más se ha venido reduciendo la brecha de género entre hombres y mujeres, es sumamente importante contar aún más con este esfuerzo, incorporando la igualdad de género y su metodología con atención prioritaria dentro de todos los programas y estrategias de FAO.

Ms Azulita BINTI SALIM (Malaysia)

Malaysia is making this statement on behalf of Asia Regional Group. Just a short intervention that we wish to state that the Asia Regional Group expresses our support to the cross-regional statement by Indonesia on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Sra. Alejandra GUERRA (Chile)

En primer lugar agradecemos el informe del Comité del Programa presentado por el Embajador de Argentina. En segundo lugar, hacemos nuestra la declaración realizada por Ecuador en la tarde de ayer, en representación del GRULAC en este punto de la agenda. En tercer lugar, quiero referirme a un tema transversal en el trabajo de la FAO, esto es, las cuestiones de género.

Apoyamos y reconocemos la labor que la FAO está haciendo en un tema que es fundamental para nuestra región. Me refiero a la capacitación y empoderamiento de la mujer en el terreno, especialmente la mujer campesina, la que trabaja en faenas pesqueras, y la mujer indígena, hoy en día las más desposeídas en nuestra región.

Es por ello que vemos con interés la declaración sobre la igualdad de género presentada y endosada por varios miembros del Consejo que van en la misma dirección de nuestros intereses y objetivos como país.

La Presidenta de Chile, Michelle Bachelet, fue la primera mujer Directora Ejecutiva de ONU Mujeres, por lo que ella, en el programa de gobierno que presentó al país cuando fue electa como Presidenta por un segundo mandato, puso el énfasis en la inclusión e igualdad de género, otorgándole un espacio fundamental y transversal en todos los programas y políticas públicas que se están ejecutando en todos

las áreas del quehacer nacional. Y como señalé anteriormente, en la que tiene que ver con el mandato de la FAO, el Gobierno de Chile está trabajando de manera conjunta y complementaria con esta Organización.

Por lo expuesto, apoyamos aquella parte de las declaraciones expresadas por diversos Miembros del Consejo que reconocen y valoran la labor de la FAO en la lucha para la igualdad de género y el empoderamiento de la mujer en el terreno, de conformidad a su mandato.

Mr Won Chul JOO (Republic of Korea)

The Republic of Korea is fully in line with China's joint statement on behalf of the Asian group.

We would like to make a short comment on the following two points. First we appreciate FAO's effort on developing a climate change strategy and the proposed roadmap. We believe FAO's climate change strategy will fully reflect the recent developments on the matter in the other *fora* including COP21 and look forward to full discussions on the draft strategy during the technical committees before its submission for approval by the Programme Committee and the Council later this year.

Second, on the follow-up report on the evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional offices for Asia and the Pacific, we welcome the good progress on the implementation of the seven recommendations accepted by Management. We encourage FAO's continued implementation of the accepted recommendations and expect to receive further information on them in the near future.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

Liberia would like to also add her voice, her best wishes for a speedy recovery to His Excellency Ambassador Tomasi of France and we want to thank the Vice-Chairperson of the Programme Committee, His Excellency Ambassador Claudio Rozencwaig, my dear good friend.

Liberia has already presented a statement relating to the issues of the Programme Committee. In addition to our statement, we would like to comment on the Director-General's remark in his opening statement to this Council requesting an adjustment in the PWB in order to address the issue of migration. We do realize that migration was not included in the PWB at the time of its preparation but considering the budget situation of the Organization, we would like to know if the Director-General has identified a source of funding for this emerging problem.

Liberia would like to get the clarification on the specific intervention that FAO would like to take, in view of the fact that other UN agencies, such as UNHCR or WFP, are presently dealing with this issue.

If FAO can work along with WFP to strengthen the efforts that they are making, it is indeed a laudable effort on the part of FAO but how effective will their support be or their intervention have on the desired outcome?

So, in this regard, I hope I will be able to get some clarification on these concerns.

Mr Abdul Razak AYZI (Afghanistan)

I am making this statement on behalf of the Near East countries but first we wish a quick and full recovery to Chairman of the Programme Committee, His Excellency Ambassador Serge Tomasi.

Secondly, we want to appreciate the brief and focused report of the 119th Session of the Programme Committee and wish to reflect only on two topics covered in the report.

First topic, regional priorities as an input for the review of FAO's Strategic Framework and preparation of the Medium-Term Plan 2018-21. As shown in document PC 119/2, the number of regional priorities emerging from the six regional conferences number 129 under 36 regional trends and challenges. It ranges from 17 priorities in the case of the Regional Conference for Europe to 27 for the Informal Regional Conference of North America. Obviously, sifting is required to bring the number to a reasonable level.

The Near East Group endorses the nine items listed under paragraph 3 of the Programme Committee report. However, the Group wishes to underline the regional priorities as the first segment in the process of reviewing FAO's Strategic Framework and in preparation of the next Medium-Term Plan.

The second segment will be the process of synthesizing priorities that will emerge from the technical committees of the Council, COAG, COFI, COFO, CCP and also CFS. Then there is the question of interface among priorities proposed by the regional conferences and those emerging from the technical committees, particularly in the areas of governance, innovation, technology transfer, capacity development, partnership, gender empowerment, and employment of young men and women.

In addition, the leverage of global challenges on FAO's priorities will have to be addressed such as the possible outcome of the World Humanitarian Summit on Strategic Objective five and of COP 22 on Strategic Objective one and two.

The inclusion of new regional initiatives for the Medium-Term Plan 2018-21 is another possibility. Taking these factors into consideration, the Near East Group considers that the process of priority-setting for the next Programme of Work and Budget and the Medium-Term Plan is in an initial stage and hard work lies ahead for the Secretariat, especially Mr Haight.

The second topic; the Near East Group concurs with paragraph 5 of the Programme Committee on climate change. However, as climate change impacts simultaneously the work of FAO, WFP, IFAD, and Bioversity International, it would be advisable for the four Rome-based Agencies to have a joint strategy as an umbrella type that can provide space for the unique role of each agency in the area of its competence and with due consideration for its comparative advantage.

The advantage of certain umbrella type strategies will be an effective way of sharing knowledge, promoting joint research, improving the overall level of resource mobilization for climate mitigation adaptation, robust partnership arrangements, enhanced coordination of climate-related activities at the country level, and effective monitoring of climate change impact on agriculture and all four dimensions of food security.

Chairperson, with these two comments, the Near East Group endorses the report of the 119th Session of the Programme Committee.

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

I would like to join other delegations in wishing a quick and full recovery to the Chair of the Programme Committee and also Brazil thanks the Vice-Chairperson for their very good work in conducting the meeting and presenting us a brief and substantive report which we endorse.

Of course Brazil has already voiced its views on the report through the statement made, by the Delegation of Ecuador on behalf of GRULAC. I would just like to add two comments regarding gender and migration.

First of all, we welcome the cross-regional statement that was read by Indonesia on behalf of several members of the Council and I could not agree more with the Distinguished Delegate from Iceland who has wished for more cross-regional coordination among members of the Council that will facilitate our work in the future.

I would like to coincide with the statements made by the Distinguished Delegates of Argentina and Chile on the content of the gender statements made by the delegation of Indonesia. It is important that FAO focus on empowerment of women in its projects and programmes, especially to have outcomes in the field.

On the issue of migration, I would like to thank the distinguished colleague from Liberia for reminding us that this point was raised by the Director-General and which is not contained in the Report of the Programme Committee.

Brazil believes that FAO has a role to play not so much in addressing the issue of international migration or attending to the needs of migrants once they cross the borders, but in helping to prevent the problem from accruing and reaching grave consequences.

The role of FAO is to help countries to tackle the problem of displaced populations and to provide them with the means to stay in their own countries so as to alleviate the increasing burden of international migration into the international community.

So it is notable that FAO has a role to play and Brazil is very supportive of entertaining a programme of activities in this area.

Mr Nthutang SELEKA (South Africa)

I am also trying to throw my weight behind the point that was raised earlier on by the Ambassador Liberia and of course Brazil regarding the reference that was made by the Director-General in his opening remarks. The issue on migration is to be considered important and emotive, as to what Brazil just said, there are entities that are charged with the responsibility of dealing with this particular issue. However, that does not preclude that FAO also plays its part towards dealing with the root causes of migration.

Therefore I think we should deal with it in a deeper manner. The statistics that we receive on a daily basis are horrifying. Just this morning we were told that since 2016, and we are close to halfway, in 2016 about 2 500 people have perished already in the Mediterranean Sea. It is a matter of life and death. We have to find a way of addressing the root cause because, if we do not, it will also have a great negative potential impact on food production as well as food security.

I would like to reinforce the message that was put across by the two delegations as well as what the Director-General also said.

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

Italy aligns with the statement made yesterday by the Netherlands as Presidency of the European Council. To complement that statement, I am echoing some interventions by colleagues on the issue of migration.

It would be wise to suggest or to recommend the Secretariat to establish or strengthen contacts, if not already established at the Brussels level, FAO should, in close cooperation with other UN Rome-based Agencies, look for a potential role in exactly what the Distinguished colleague from Brazil said, to play a role in deterring migration, helping foster local rural development.

As we all know, for Europe and in particular among European Member States, for Italy the issue of migration is an absolute priority in terms of looking for long lasting, coherent, consistent solutions, not just or not mainly when it comes to saving lives but in particular to prevent lives being endangered by migration.

A possible practical conclusion on this point could be to simulate a coherent, consistent approach by FAO in close cooperation with other Rome-based Agencies also taking into account the huge effort that is being done and is under discussion on how it can be improved by the EU and its Member States.

Sra. Meli ROMERO CELIS (México)

En primer lugar quisiera agradecer al Presidente del Comité del Programa por el informe excelente que nos ha hecho. También, me quiero referir al tema de la migración. Coincido con otros oradores anteriores - Brasil, Italia y otros - en el sentido de que la FAO tiene un papel importante que desempeñar en las causas de la migración. Es necesario, básicamente, apoyar a los jóvenes que es necesario retener en las zonas rurales para que puedan apoyar el desarrollo de sus comunidades.

Las mujeres rurales en México requieren un gran apoyo como consecuencia de la migración, y en esto la FAO tiene un papel sumamente importante que hacer. Por lo tanto, mi Delegación apoya firmemente el que la FAO tenga un papel importante en el tema de la migración.

Mr Khaled M.S.H. EL TAWEEL (Egypt)

We take the floor to comment on the importance of the issue of migration and to emphasize the interlinkage between food security and peace. We believe that FAO is playing and can play a major role in dealing with migration challenges and that FAO work to support food security in African countries and the Near East can lead to positive effects on peace building.

I would like to remind our colleagues that during the Regional Conference for the Near East, the ministers adopted a Ministerial Declaration that clearly requested FAO to intensify its work in dealing with the effects of migration and on countries that suffer from conflicts.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

Just briefly two things in relation to both the Programme Committee's Report but also some of the interventions this morning.

First, just to stress the importance of the work that is underway within the Secretariat in terms of reviewing the Strategic Framework but also preparing the Medium-Term Plan. I think as we discussed under another item, the expectation is that the results-based approach that FAO has put in place will continue to evolve and develop and the framework that will be developed under the new Medium-Term Plan will entail a high level of sophistication and provide the Organization and Members with clearer results-based information.

Second, on the issue that has been raised regarding migration, I think there was a brief reference to conflict and we have no problem with FAO relating its work to these important issues and challenges facing the global community. We would just add a note of caution in terms of FAO's activities; that it stays within its mandate and its comparative advantage.

We are quite supportive of FAO, the type of work that it does and how that may help in ameliorating some of these issues such as migration and conflict situations, but, from our perspective, we do not see that it needs to be doing anything differently to what it is doing at the moment which is focusing on helping countries develop their agricultural sector and addressing issues around food insecurity.

Mr Fabian Sumba MUYA (Observer for Kenya)

Kenya takes the floor on behalf of 58 observers of the Council to wish quick recovery to the Chairperson of the Programme Committee, the Ambassador of France, and as well encourage the Ambassador of Argentina for taking the Chairmanship during the Programme Committee session.

It is an honour to give this statement on gender equality and the empowerment of women on behalf of the following 58 observers of the Council: Albania, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Denmark, Eritrea, Estonia, Gambia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Ireland, Israel, Jordan, Kenya, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Palestine, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Monaco, Romania, Senegal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Zambia.

We endorse the messages of the cross-regional statement by Council Members given by Indonesia. We appreciate that FAO has strengthened the reporting on gender in the Programme Implementation Report, and are pleased that FAO will arrange a seminar on gender equality and women's empowerment.

We are confident that the additional report announced earlier today will satisfy the requirements of FAO's Policy on Gender Equality, and the decision taken at the 2013 Conference, and we look forward to discussing it at the Conference in 2017.

We look forward to FAO's report on this matter.

Mr Abreha ASEFFA (Ethiopia)

Ethiopia has aligned to this statement but we did not hear the name of Ethiopia and we remember that it was announced yesterday.

Ms Maria Helena SEMEDO (Deputy-Director General, Coordinator for Natural Resources)

First of all I would like to join my voice to wish a quick and full recovery to the Chairperson of the Programme Committee. We wish to have him with us very soon. I would like to congratulate the Ambassador of Argentina, as Vice-Chairperson, on the good work done.

I believe what we have listened from the Member Nations regarding climate change and climate change strategies, which are more comments to be included in the strategy. As you know, we agree that the strategy will be submitted to the Programme Committee session in November 2016. We

presented to the Programme Committee the roadmap where the strategy will be developed in three main areas.

The first point is the improved consideration of agriculture in climate change international governance. How we can put agriculture high on the agenda of climate change and have a positive view on agriculture's role in climate change?

As you know, during long periods agriculture was seen as a track to climate change. I believe that, in Paris, we were able to change the way agriculture was considered more in a positive way, as a contributor not as a track.

This is the message FAO wants to keep in Conference of the Parties (COP 22) and the forthcoming COP. We are very much working with the the Kingdom of Morocco in preparation for COP 22. We will be delivering a very strong message on our strategy, on how FAO works in the global governance of climate change and how we develop our coordination with other UN agencies, especially the Rome-based Agencies. Yet, we will work very close with UNEP, which is the environment agency of the United Nations.

The second part of the climate change strategy is how we can enhance the capacity of our Member Nations. We are using the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) for the mentioned strategy. The programme for the Member Nations would consider their contribution in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and see how they can develop their national strategy.

The third point is focused on how we increase our internal coordination. It has been mentioned by several Members how at the global level, at headquarters and in the countries, how FAO will enhance the required coordination. More importantly, we need to work out how FAO can technically support our regional and country offices to be able to respond to the demands coming from the Member Nations.

Certainly, the climate change strategy will be not done separately. It will be linked with the Sustainable Development Agenda where we have a goal, 13, on climate change. Nonetheless, we have to see climate change in a more global view contributing to the global agenda, more than only as one Sustainable Development Goal.

We will take into consideration all of the comments we received in the meeting today. As you know, the proposal will be presented to the technical committees for comment and for guidance on how we should move forward with the strategy. We hope we will surely be able to present your endorsement and the report or the climate change strategy before it has to be passed by the Programme Committee in the next meeting in November 2016.

Mr Ren WANG (Assistant Director-General, Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department)

I wish to respond to three points raised by the Distinguished Delegates.

First of all, there were several suggestions regarding FAO's contribution from the core budget towards our activities on antimicrobial resistance (AMR). I would like to report to you that actually the FAO inter-departmental working group has contributed in staff time and we calculate that into dollar terms. In fact, in the past year from May 2015 to May 2016, there have been 41 staff members from headquarters and decentralized offices contributing various percentages of their time to AMR, including myself. That in fact can account to about slightly over USD 1 million. This calculation does not include even the costs of the travel and attending workshops and the global events. That commitment will continue in the current biennium.

In that sense, FAO has already contributed from our Regular Programme budget towards the implementation of the Action Plan.

We believe that we have tried our best with the core budget and that is really a leveraging function.

Now, the second item, I wanted to briefly report which I actually refer to the Programme Committee report for the Members of the Council who were not at the Programme Committee of course. I wish to mention very briefly what we have done with the voluntary contributions already committed by some Members as well as the in-kind contributions together with our contributions from the core budget.

In particular, some delegates mentioned that FAO should strengthen collaboration with partners, particularly the (World Health Organization) WHO and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). This is what we call the Tripartite.

Indeed, FAO has been working very closely, and strengthened collaboration, with the Tripartite group. For instance regular tripartite focal point meetings are held. This year, we have developed a Tripartite manual to elaborate national action plans to respond to the global action plans and FAO Action Plans. There is an advisory group of tripartite integrated surveillance of AMR and also the antimicrobial awareness week. So, those are some of the highlights of the Tripartite work.

FAO also is a permanent adviser together with WHO and OIE to the Global Health Security Agenda. We have been actively engaged in the Global Health Security Agenda activities. The other area is FAO's engagement at global events on AMR. For instance, Ms Semedo, the Deputy Director-General participated in an inter-ministerial European Union Council on AMR held in Amsterdam in February this year.

Moreover, a series of events are foreseen in preparation of the United Nations General Assembly high-level event on AMR in September this year. Again, Ms Semedo participated in a high-level meeting of the Tripartite with the Director-General in New York, with Ms Margaret Chan of WHO and also with the Director-General of OIE, which was also held in April this year.

FAO was actively engaged in the preparations and supporting the G7 Agriculture Ministers Meeting as emphasized already by the Distinguished Delegate from Japan during today's meeting.

On 12 May 2016 a high-level Global Leader's Conference on World Health was held in London and I represented FAO participating in that session. Besides, this year we were able to already start some activities in some countries, including Cambodia, Ghana, Kenya and Zimbabwe moving from a global commitment to local action with our limited resources and valuable support from the United Kingdom Government. Furthermore, a number of activities are to be initiated with funds from the United States, the United Kingdom and Russia, as mentioned today by the Delegate from Russia in the discussion.

Therefore, I would like to reiterate that we are trying our best with limited resources. So, we very much appreciate the commitment of voluntary contributions from the countries as well as in-kind contributions to implement the FAO Action Plan at a large scale. In addition, we would count on your support and on voluntary contributions in that context to be able to move it to the country level.

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

Thank you for the comments and guidance provided on the trends going forward and priorities in preparing the review of the Strategic Framework and the Medium-Term Plan for 2018-21. We have just started this process with the first consultation with the regional conferences and you have discussed that under a separate item. We are now preparing the documentation for the technical committees that will take place from July to September 2016. During the session of the Council to be held in December 2016 we will provide the draft review of the Strategic Framework and outline of the Medium-Term Plan. We note in particular the emphasis that you have given today to migration and in fact it was one of the main trends that emerged from the regional conferences, so we will be developing that as we prepare the review of the Strategic Framework.

Secondly, we welcome the statement on gender and, as has already been announced, we look forward to the seminar later this year on our work on gender and the document that will guide the discussions.

Mr Kostas STAMOULIS (Assistant Director-General a.i., Economic and Social Development Department)

I would like to give a short answer, a piece of information on the peace-building policy of FAO that was asked from the floor. First of all, in the background of this, the overarching role of peace is of course related to the Agenda 2030 in two ways: how the Agenda 2030 can contribute to peace and how peace is a prerequisite for the Agenda 2030.

Another important point is to see how the United Nations working as one can actually contribute to peaceful societies. In addition, there are the key trends and projections involving conflict, forced

displacement, intensified resource stresses and climate change and the impact on hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, as well as new risks and uncertainties, which are described in the background.

I can assure the Membership that this is not FAO going out of its mandate. It just organizes and looks at its work on how it can actually contribute to peace building. The rationale for this is FAO's traditional role in reducing hunger, achieving food security and nutrition, and building resilience in situations at risk affected by and recovering from violent conflict. As I said, the implications of contributing to achieve the 2030 Agenda through FAO's work refer especially to the principle 'leave no one behind' including people in conflict, fragile transition and post-conflict settings including the Global Goal 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies.

The centrality of conflict prevention and sustainable peace is a shared Charter-based responsibility of the United Nations agencies, as I said before. Building on FAO experience and work with up-to-date evidence and good practices, we recognize the importance of innovative and practical solutions that support both peace building and food security and nutrition. What could be the policy recommendations? We are at the initial stages. So, for FAO, what could a peace-building policy come up with?

First of all, we would outline how FAO can contribute to address the underlying concerns of violent conflict and instability from the perspective of food security and nutrition, which are our traditional areas of work. The aim is sustainable development and to support peaceful and inclusive societies.

We highlight the idea of building resilience to conflict by managing and reducing risks and supporting peace conflict mitigation and prevention by promoting food security and nutrition. It is the link from food security and nutrition to reducing conflict and building peace, through support to agriculture, fisheries, forestry, rural development and social protection.

Issues like specific context, joint risk analysis and assessments and things that we have already been doing in building resilience could be important for the work of FAO on peace building. Nothing that is outside FAO's mandate.

Let me remind the Membership that in the Secretary-General's Report, it is mentioned that, in conflict, 87 percent of the affected people actually remain where they are. They do not flee. They do not have the capacity to leave. So, helping those people and their resilience is a key part of FAO's mandate in the peace-building process.

Mr Laurent THOMAS (Assistant Director-General, Coordinator for Technical Cooperation and Programme Management)

There were a number of questions regarding migration and the importance FAO should pay to these new emerging challenges today and in the future. I want to reassure all Members that this is indeed a top priority not only in the planning of the future action, which will be probably part of one of the main trends that would influence the preparation of the new Medium-Term Plan (MTP) and the Programme of Work and Budget, but also of the actions that we are taking.

There are two sets of actions that FAO is taking regarding migration.

First of all, we believe that we should, as FAO, work on the root cause of the problem of migration when addressing the challenge of migration. Migration is very much linked to economic opportunities, particularly for the youth. We have a number of activities that are ongoing in a number of countries. I have in mind current activities in some countries like Tunisia and Ethiopia. That is one important factor.

We have also to ensure that in the countries where the incentive to migrate is higher, we help the people to stay where they are. This is the situation in Syria for example right now. Studies demonstrate that in conflict situations nine out of ten persons do not flee their homes. We have to make sure that we help people remain where they are and they are not forced to move to other locations. This is what we are doing for example in Syria right now, where we are supporting the rural population. I want to remind all of you that we are producing the bulk of the food still consumed in Syria today.

To sum up, for FAO these are top priorities: looking at the root cause of migration, helping the people stay where they are and making sure that this will be a growing priority. Indeed, migration is about all things related to all the strategic priorities of the Organization: the eradication of hunger, food systems, sustainable production, resilience and rural poverty reduction.

Ms Sri SULIHANTI (Indonesia)

I just would like to clarify as I had read out the cross-regional statement on gender yesterday. I think it is appropriate that I should clarify that Ethiopia is indeed a part of the cross-regional statement on gender equality and we welcome them very much.

Mr Salah AL BAZZAZ (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

As we have said on behalf of the Near East group, we call on the Organization to take into account in the strategy on climate change that will be submitted in COP 22. The strategy should take into account the risk and the problem of the polluted waters in the Gulf Area and their impact on the entire region, particularly for Kuwait.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

We appreciate the comments that were made by Mr Wang. We thank the Assistant Director-General a.i., Mr Stamoulis, for having effectively done this work for us. If you may recall at the last Council, this is exactly what Liberia requested; that is to quantify what they are already doing to show concrete commitment to AMR. Therefore, we value this interactive response that we have received.

On the issue of migration, Liberia raised the issue because it did seem that Council was not making any reference to it after the Director-General's opening remarks. We did not want this to go unnoticed. Thus, Liberia's request is a coherent collaboration of FAO with other Rome-based Agencies and governments to appropriately address the issue of migration and give concrete responses to the root causes. This is indeed important and we indicated if they have already the funding to address this issue, this is also a matter of concern.

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

We are thankful to the Secretariat for the comments that have been made. They have assisted us in understanding the vision in the policy of Management on these issues in relation to the question that I made.

I would like to separately thank Mr Stamoulis for his comments on peace building that he mentioned. This falls into FAO's mandate, Mr Stamoulis. As I mentioned earlier and also what the delegate from Australia said, as FAO supports its mandate, we support this activity also in relation to the development of activity in this area. The Secretariat should inform Members and consult Member Nations.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

I would like to thank Kostas and Laurent for their interventions in providing their information. We greatly appreciate this. As I said before, at this stage Australia has no problem with FAO trying to better articulate how its work relates to and helps contribute towards dealing with issues around migration and conflict. We would encourage FAO to better articulate and have a coherent strategic approach to these issues. As Russia has just said, we would like to be informed and to be consulted as part of that and so we look forward to future discussions with Members about that in the lead-up to the Strategic Framework and the Medium-Term Plan.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

Como vemos, el Comité del Programa ha abordado muchos temas fundamentales y el trabajo no ha sido fácil para el Embajador de Argentina de presidir de este Comité. Sin embargo, los resultados de las recomendaciones del Comité han sido, y lo consideramos, muy importantes. Queríamos, de entre esos temas importantes, señalar que quizá sería oportuno y queremos proponer que aprovechando que el Director General va a realizar, o ha anunciado que realizaría este seminario con respecto al tema de género, que lo apoyamos. Sería importante incluir también en ese seminario el cambio climático y la

nutrición, como estamos de cara a la COP22, así como en los retos de la implementación de la ICN2 y la declaración para la nutrición. Y apreciaría mucho que en ese seminario también se incluyeran estos temas fundamentales y transversales.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Je voulais remercier les intervenants pour les réponses apportées, en particulier Madame la Directrice générale adjointe, concernant la question relative au changement climatique. À cette occasion, et j'y reviendrai au point 14, je voulais saluer le rôle actif de la FAO lors de la COP21 sur les questions agricoles, sur celles liées aux forêts et celles liées aux océans.

Je partage l'idée que Madame Semedo a évoquée concernant le rôle positif et la contribution de l'agriculture comme partie de la solution au dérèglement climatique, à la fois dans son volet atténuation et dans son volet adaptation, avec un lien réaffirmé ou affirmé, en tout cas, avec la sécurité alimentaire; et je voulais, dans la lignée de ce qui a été indiqué par la Présidente de l'Union européenne, insister sur le message suivant: à l'avenir et dans la perspective de la COP22, il est essentiel que la FAO s'appuie sur son expertise technique et sur la dissémination des connaissances transversales en matière de changement climatique, d'agriculture, de forêts, de pêches et de sécurité alimentaire.

Sra. Andrea S.REPETTI (Argentina)

Voy a ser muy breve. La Argentina se suma a las declaraciones que realizaron Brasil e Islandia sobre la importancia de aumentar la colaboración y el trabajo de los países de las distintas regiones en el consejo. En este sentido la declaración que leyeron sobre género es un excelente ejemplo para tener en cuenta para el futuro.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

As a member of the Programme Committee, we did not intend to intervene but having heard the discussions we would like to make a few points and since we are taking the floor for the first time, we would like to join others who express wishes for a prompt recovery to Ambassador Tomasi and as well express our appreciation for the Chairmanship of Ambassador Rozencwaig.

Just to say then that we very much appreciate the presentation and the discussion that took place on climate change in the Programme Committee and we stress the importance of the role of FAO on this building on its comparative advantage. We really believe that for these cross-cutting themes it is useful and very valuable to have this Committee to have space for dialogue and hearing about FAO's work and FAO's plans. We had a full afternoon on that during Programme Committee that was really appreciated.

Similarly, we really welcomed the fact that the Programme Committee had an item on reporting on cross-cutting themes including gender and that is why we fully support the cross-regional statements that have been made. In that sense, in response to the proposal that was just made by Ecuador, we would not like to have the informal seminar that was announced by the Director-General on gender to have added climate change and nutrition.

I think the Director-General as well announced on Monday that there would be a technical symposium on nutrition in December which we welcome. We also welcome the fact that we see various updates on nutrition. We had progress reports at the Council on the follow-up to ICN2. We also had the discussion on climate change and a climate change strategy will go to the technical committees and this is something we welcome because we have an opportunity to meaningfully participate in discussions as we prepare the next Medium-Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget.

On gender, we have not had that opportunity, yet we have a very strong gender equality policy. There is a lot of good work done by FAO. We learned during the climate change session that there were FAO guidelines on gender and climate smart agriculture and we do not have the opportunity to have a discussion and learn about these good works.

We really would like to welcome the announcement of the Director-General as it was made as well as have a separate report as it was announced yesterday that would cover updates on FAO's

achievements on how it is implementing the FAO Policy on Gender Equality with an opportunity to consider it at the Conference in 2017.

Sra. Alejandra GUERRA (Chile)

Hago esta intervención para referirme al tema de la inmigración y la función que la FAO debe tener en esta materia. En primer lugar, consideramos fundamental que la FAO colabore con todas las agencias en este flagelo que hoy en día golpea a nuestras poblaciones. Recordemos que lo que motiva a una persona emigrar en la mayoría de los casos es la búsqueda de una mejor calidad de vida. El problema es especialmente notorio en los países en vía desarrollo, donde la población rural emigra a las grandes ciudades en búsqueda de mejores oportunidades de trabajo.

En esta área, el trabajo de la FAO en el campo es vital para incentivar que, junto con los gobiernos, trabajen en programas que incentiven a los jóvenes a permanecer en sus áreas, en el campo, y desarrollar reales perspectivas de trabajo para un futuro mejor. Y en esto me refiero también a lo que declaró México previamente cuando habló justamente de este problema que afecta especialmente a nuestros países, donde tenemos enormes ciudades y los campos cada vez van quedando con menos población, especialmente joven. Esto es un trabajo fundamental si queremos, en primer lugar, asegurar una seguridad alimentaria para nuestra población y en segundo, diversificar la población en otros países para poder de esta manera tener mejor desarrollo, mejor calidad de vida en los campos.

Sr. Junior Andrés ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)

En relación al seminario de género, mi Delegación mira muy positivamente que sean incorporadas de alguna forma los temas de cambio climático y nutrición. Creemos que estos temas tienen que ser vistos en modo transversal e integral.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

Liberia supports the position and statement made by Canada for the gender issue to be addressed as one agenda item.

Sra. Angèlica Maria JACOME (Observer for Panama)

Agradecemos el informe presentado por el Embajador Rozenwaig y deseamos la pronta recuperación del Embajador Tomasi. Panamá se suscribe plenamente a la declaración del GRULAC.

El tema de género es de suma importancia para Panamá. La Vicepresidenta Canciller de Panamá, Su Excelencia Isabel Saint Malo de Alvarado, ha enfatizado, en reiteradas ocasiones, que “la igualdad de género es una condición indispensable para combatir la pobreza y propiciar el desarrollo sostenible”. En ese sentido, destacamos el liderazgo del Director General en avanzar el enfoque del género en la labor de la Organización, tanto en el campo como a nivel estratégico, en conformidad con su mandato y en estrecha colaboración con los otros Organismos de las Naciones Unidas con sede en Roma. Por ello, vemos con gran interés la declaración de la delegación de Kenia en representación de los observadores de consejo del Grupo Transregional de Género.

Por último, apoyamos lo expresado por las Delegaciones de Brasil, Chile, México y otros sobre el papel de la FAO en el tema de migración, en conformidad con su mandato y en coordinación con las Agencias, fondos y programas de las Naciones Unidas.

Mr Fabian Sumba MUYA (Observer for Kenya)

We have two small points to make. One is a clarification and it is referring to the question raised by the Distinguished Delegate from Ethiopia and we inform that Indonesia had included Ethiopia on the list of Council Members on their statement, the list statement on the gender equality and the involvement of women. Today I want to raise a statement on behalf of the Observers.

Number two, we appreciate the role FAO is playing on antimicrobial resistance as elaborated by the Secretariat and we, the Kenya delegation, appreciate the biological projects on Kenya in this aspect amongst the other countries that were mentioned.

I think on antimicrobial resistance, it is a very essential issue which we need to work more on because this involves a wide range of microbial organisms including bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites,

and of which there could be development of resistance to antibiotics and so this issue I think needs more full attention because, in the event of a resistance taking place on some of these antibiotics, it would be detrimental to some of the developing nations. For example, the Ebola case that the Distinguished Delegate of Liberia gave yesterday.

So if I may recall, the Conference of last year requested FAO activity to support and provide capacity-building as appropriate to the sustainable production of food systems taking into account social, economic and environmental dimensions that prevent assistance through good and moral transboundary management and also practices as well as good plant production management and practices being important to combat antimicrobial resistance.

It is in this vein that we request more of an indulgence of FAO and the other concerned organizations like WHO in this area so that we do not experience cases of bacterial resistance in plants and animals.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Presidente Comité de Programa)

Creo que se ha debatido largamente y con mucho detenimiento cada uno de los temas, y creo que, como en el Comité de Programa, hay en general un consenso acerca de los temas tratados, así que yo no agregaría nada y esperaría a sus conclusiones.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Ambassador, for your remarks, and for introducing this agenda item. I want to thank also the Members for the good discussion we have heard and I hope my conclusions will capture what transpired during the discussion of this agenda item and that you will endorse them.

1. The Council endorsed the Report of the 119th session of the Programme Committee, and:
 - a) in relation to the ‘Review of FAO Strategic Framework and preparation of Medium Term Plan 2018-21 - Regional Priorities’:
 - i. supported the regional priorities identified, the 2016-17 Regional Initiatives, and inter-regional work on climate change, nutrition, and Blue Growth; and
 - ii. welcomed the alignment of FAO’s Strategic Objectives with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and underlined the importance of linking the SDG indicators to the results framework of the Medium-Term Plan 2018-21;
 - b) noted the guidance from the Committee on the Strategy for FAO’s work on climate change and looked forward to reviewing the Strategy and its Plan of Action at its next session;
 - c) reiterated the importance of the cross-cutting themes, including gender, nutrition, climate change and governance and looked forward to reporting thereon through the Organization’s existing reporting mechanisms;
 - d) looked forward to due attention to be given to the gender component within the upcoming evaluations of the Strategic Objectives; and endorsed the request for an evaluation of FAO’s work on gender for consideration by the Conference in 2019;
 - e) noted the wide-ranging support to the crucial role of FAO’s work on gender and women’s empowerment and expressed satisfaction that a document on gender would be prepared for an informal briefing to Members on gender to be held in 2016;
 - f) welcomed the progress of FAO’s work on antimicrobial resistance (AMR), its Action Plan and focus areas of work, as well as the Secretariat’s support for AMR activities within the Programme of Work and Budget, and appreciated extrabudgetary funds pledged and made available thus far by resource partners;
 - g) appreciated the continued cooperation on AMR under the tripartite partnership with WHO and OIE;
 - h) noted the positive findings of the evaluation of FAO’s contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture and underlined the importance of FAO’s work in this area; and

- i) encouraged FAO to include the issue of migration in its future Programme of Work and called upon Members to commit to voluntary contributions in support of this initiative in line with FAO's mandate.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

It is just a query about your last point about migration. It feels a little bit strong in relation to the views that we expressed on a couple of occasions. Perhaps we would feel more comfortable with a reformulation, a slight tweak to that. I think when we were talking about the Strategic Framework and the trends and developments that are occurring and that was one that a number of countries noted as something that should be included.

Then when the Secretariat was informing us further about that, they explained that it was better articulating and taking a more strategic approach to these issues. I am just concerned the language there infers that this Council is giving endorsement for a new body of work to commence on migration which seems a bit inconsistent with what I heard from the Secretariat which was that they are already doing work in this space that relates to this issue.

So I do not have any specific wording but I would suggest perhaps a slight rephrasing of that sub-point to take on board the concerns that I have expressed.

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

I would just ask that a reference be made at point (f), also to in-kind contributions having regard to what was said by the Director-General and today was repeated by Mr Wang on the importance of harnessing also in-kind contributions on AMR.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

On point (i), I would add to what you said, "[...] encouraged FAO to collaborate with the other RBAs" in addressing this issue because FAO cannot do it alone. So that they can have synergy working together with the other RBAs, as this Council has repeatedly asked about collaboration between the RBAs. So efforts being made in that direction to address the issue with one voice, all from different angles.

Mr Hans BRAND (Observer for Netherlands)

I am a little bit disappointed about the conclusion on point (f) regarding the AMR because we now have just the support of the Secretariat and we would like to reiterate also some contributions made by Members of the Council, for example the United States and Liberia who asked the Council also to allocate some Regular Programme budget, which is not to be mistaken by in-kind contributions by FAO, but budget from the FAO Regular Programme budget for the fully-fledged action plan of the AMR in the next PWB for further allocation, clearly defined resources from FAO's Regular Programme budget, as well as on both voluntary and, as Italy suggested, also in-kind contributions with well-defined objectives, outputs and outcomes, also taking into account the UN General Assembly Resolution on AMR.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Just to make a suggestion. We mentioned migration, but I wonder if I did not hear about the internally displaced people? In some countries there are more internally displaced people than migrants. In my country last year, there were 1.2 million people who became displaced. So the contribution of FAO to internally displaced people is probably greater than to the migrants. I was wondering if you could reflect that also.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Initialement, j'avais demandé la parole pour vous demander de bien vouloir la passer à la présidence de l'Union européenne, donc aux Pays-Bas, mais j'en profite pour redire en ce qui concerne le point relatif à la stratégie climat que, sans attendre la présentation de la stratégie et du plan d'action, il importe de capitaliser sur l'expertise qui existe d'ores et déjà à la FAO en la matière, et de continuer dans cette direction puisque déjà, le volet action qui fait suite à la COP21, doit être mis en œuvre.

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

First of all let me say that I am disappointed that at this stage we hear expressions of disappointment by the Presidency of the EU, because it seems that the proposals just made by the EU set us back to the previous session of this Council. It is a discussion that I would have hoped could be put to rest at this point. If we are to entertain those proposals, we will probably not leave this room today. So I really discourage the proposals just made by the EU at this juncture to be included in your conclusions.

I also would like to comment on the proposal made by my Distinguished colleague from Liberia, as well as the contribution made by my Distinguished colleague from Afghanistan. First of all, I would hope that FAO, in addressing the issue of migration, will collaborate not only with other Rome-based Agencies but also with the International Organization on Migration, UNHCR, UNDP, and all other international organizations that have taken the initiative to help serve this very important issue.

So if any reference is made to collaboration with other international organizations, it should not be restricted to the RBAs. And I do support the concern about internally displaced populations and the importance of FAO's work in preventing the root causes of migration.

Perhaps it would be necessary to elaborate a little further on the mentioning of migration under point (i) of your conclusions.

CHAIRPERSON

Let me at this juncture raise an issue for caution regarding the debate on the resources for AMR. As everybody may remember how we ended with the Conference Resolution, I think you should make reference to that Resolution.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

Just to come back on the point (e), we are pleased with the wording but we would like to suggest to also add a noted to the cross-regional statement.

I think it was a very powerful message that would support FAO's ongoing efforts toward gender equality and women's empowerment as well as welcoming different announcements and it is worth noting as we did last December.

Mr Khaled M.S.H. EL TAWHEEL (Egypt)

First of all, we would like to make a small proposal on point (i). We would like to suggest starting by saying "encouraged FAO to intensify its work on building resilience" and to include the issue of migration. In addition, further to the suggestion made by Afghanistan, we would like to add "internally displaced persons" in the Programme of Work. Actually, we believe that comments from the floor were not limited to migration but rather encompassed the effects of conflicts.

On collaboration with other Rome-based Agencies, as pointed out by our colleague from Brazil, we believe that this should not be limited only to Rome but should be expanded to other organizations. In this regard, we would suggest having a separate bullet point saying "encouraged FAO to intensify its collaboration with the Rome-based Agencies, the UNHCR and other relevant organizations to deal with the consequences of conflicts on food security, agricultural development, and nutrition".

Mr Salah AL BAZZAZ (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

I wanted to say the same thing as mentioned by my colleague from Egypt. I wanted actually to propose that Council encourage FAO to intensify its efforts to help farmers, women and men, in addition to youth, to stay in their lands and to not abandon their properties so that they can use them to the maximum in order to contribute to promoting their food security. FAO could also cooperate with other organizations in this field.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

It was just to come back to the earlier point that I made. I must admit that I did not quite follow all of what Egypt was proposing. I will just read my earlier comments about your proposal on point (i).

We are talking here about the review on the Strategic Framework and the preparation of the Medium-Term Plan. This is not a discussion about the Programme of Work and Budget, which is not the focus of this item at all, and so we should not be including in our summary references to including elements in the next PWB. We are talking about the MTP and the Strategic Framework now. We would be very concerned to be going down to the next level and locking us into positions when we have not yet had a focused discussion around the next biennium specifically.

We would feel more comfortable with point (i) with some sort of language, and we would be open to being flexible on this to take on board the issues around collaboration which we think are critical. The way we understand the discussion – and again we are just trying to reflect here the discussion we had on this item rather than to try to introduce new concepts in the summary that were not actually discussed in any detail or supported by more than one country – to include some language around encouraging FAO to include consideration and migration as one of the global developments in the review of the Strategic Framework. We would feel more comfortable with that.

Sra. Mely ROMERO CELIS (México)

Yo quisiera coincidir con la declaración que hizo el Representante de Brasil, en el sentido de que se desalienten las propuestas que han sido presentadas sobre los agregados sobre el tema de los recursos sobre la resistencia a los antimicrobianos. Nos parece como él lo ha señalado correctamente, que no es el momento ni es el lugar en que debemos volver a traer el tema en su resumen.

Por otra parte, con relación a la declaración en el sentido de que debe incorporarse la declaración interregional sobre el tema en su resumen, me parece, Señor Presidente, que el tema de género, en el que todos todos estamos muy comprometidos, ya está incorporado en su inciso C, donde habla sobre los temas transversales, y en el inciso D donde Usted ha recogido perfectamente cómo se debe abordar este tema y el proyecto que tiene la FAO sobre el particular. Y repito, todos en esta sala estamos muy comprometidos con el tema de género.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

Nosotros apoyamos su resumen. Queremos señalar brevemente, escuchando algunas declaraciones que se han hecho al respecto, es en cuanto al tema de la resistencia a los antimicrobianos, coincidí lo que han señalado unas delegaciones en el sentido de que no vemos conveniente de que se haga aquí una mención al tema del presupuesto ordinario. Es un tema que ha sido largamente debatido, no sólo en la Conferencia pasada y los consejos pasados, sino también en el Comité del Programa y no se ha llegado a ninguna solución en la cual se incluya esta referencia.

Y sería muy difícil que al igual en este Consejo lleguemos a un acuerdo y solamente llegaremos a una prolongación de las discusiones al respecto, ya que se implicaría también, si se aspiraría a que se tome recurso del presupuesto ordinario, a que haya una discusión en cuanto a qué temas del Programa de Trabajo y Presupuesto aprobados habría que retirarle los recursos, para asignarlos a la resistencia de antimicrobianos, que eso es fundamental, lo compartimos. Pero como lo señaló el GRULAC, y que recojo el espíritu de la resolución de la Conferencia, de la decisión de la Conferencia en cuanto al PTP, es que sean recursos extra-presupuestarios.

Por otro lado, en cuanto al tema de la inmigración, nosotros respaldamos igualmente su resumen. Esto es un tema que ha sido resaltado por muchísimas delegaciones, así por la importancia que el tema tiene y las implicaciones en el tema de la agricultura y seguridad alimentaria. Y creemos que al señalar en la competencia que el trabajo de la FAO y la profundización del trabajo de la FAO en este tema sean de acuerdo a su mandato, se estarían recogiendo un poco las preocupaciones de algunas delegaciones.

En cuanto al tema de género, queremos compartir lo que ha expresado la Embajadora de México al respecto. Creemos que en este tema hay un consenso absoluto en el sentido de que todos apoyamos y damos la relevancia que tiene el tema de género. Y en esto no hay discusión. Lo que nosotros un poco nos preguntamos es el hecho del valor que tenga que estar repitiendo las decisiones que ya toma el consejo al respecto. En el consejo pasado ya se hizo mención a este tema, se resalta la importancia que se incluye entre los proyectos y se establece el mecanismo de presentación de informes. Aquí cabría simplemente esperar y monitorear esta presentación de informes. No vemos en todo caso la insistencia

permanente repetir el tema, por supuesto, dándole la importancia y considerando la importancia que tiene.

Por lo tanto compartimos el resumen que Usted ha hecho, que lo consideramos bastante balanceado y que refleja las discusiones que se han tenido aquí. En cuanto a la propuesta de tomar nota de la declaración interregional sobre el tema de género, nosotros no lo vemos inconveniente, solamente que nos preocupa el hecho de que al mencionarse la declaración interregional, se da a entender que todos los países, o sea, todas las regiones han suscrito esa declaración, y lo cual no es así. Con lo cual habría que especificar o precisar que no es una declaración que ha sido suscrita por todos los miembros del consejo.

Y finalmente, en cuanto al tema del seminario que organizaría el Director General sobre el tema de género, no vamos a insistir en el aspecto de que se incluya también el cambio climático y nutrición, a pesar que nosotros consideramos que el tema del cambio climático es importante que también se lo aborde. La Delegada de Canadá señalaba que eso va a ser ya parte de los análisis de los Comités Técnicos de la FAO, pero esto se refiere a la estrategia de la FAO en cambio climático. Lo que señalaba en cuanto al trabajo de la FAO con miras de la COP 22, que será en noviembre. Eso amerita información en cuanto al trabajo que hace la FAO y el apoyo que da a los países antes de noviembre. A eso me refería pero obviamente en espíritu constructivo no vamos a insistir en el tema, lo que esperamos que la administración pueda tomar nota y veríamos con buenos ojos en que este tema también pudiera ser abordado en ese seminario.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Mr Chairperson, the discussion was completed and you made your summary. You asked comments on your summary. Now we are going back to the debate.

CHAIRPERSON

I hope the Members have heard and they will adhere to your guidance.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

On the issue of immigration, we are encouraging further collaboration between FAO, RBAs, the UNHCR, IOM and any other organization concerned to address this issue. This question is of the utmost importance for us. From this point of view, we would like to bring out that, so far, the Director-General has made no proposal in this regard. He only mentioned in his opening remarks that he will call for some readjustment in the PWB to address some issues related to migration, which we think is very important.

However, it should be noted that the Council has not received a formal request yet explaining how the Director-General intends to proceed in this regard. We hope he will be working with the countries, where the interest is high. We just want to reiterate our call for collaborating with those people who are already trying to tackle this issue. It would make this issue more broad-based. In doing so, we hereby endorse your comments.

On the question of antimicrobial resistance we have already made an intervention. We commended FAO for the support they are already giving to AMR. Mr Wong said that FAO is spending almost USD 1 million. Would it be possible to make it clearly appear into the budget? If an effective amount has already been used, it should be indicated expressively.

One more comment. The issue of AMR is too sensitive to be politicized. Human Resources, travel and accommodation expenses, airplane tickets are a lot of money. But it is necessary to spend this money. I do not understand why people are reluctant, where this fear is coming from. Are regional blocks trying to politicize this human threat? It would be a pity since this issue has nothing to do with the Director-General, or a particular country or a region. Disease does not have any border. Disease crosses any border. This issue is about human life in the global world. From this point of view, let me emphasize that I am speaking to you not only as a Council Member but as a medical professional person.

Consequently I am reiterating my call: let us not politicize this issue. Let Member Nations not politicize this issue. If they want to politicize it, New York is ready. They can go to New York. But in

this technical body, let us look at it from the technical arm, from the technical angle. As a medical doctor, I am saying it to you: the AMR issue is an emerging threat to the world. The only way to tackle this issue is to collaborate, to work together, and to make further improvement in the activities we are carrying out. People are dying. Having a resolution is not enough.

I remember in Liberia what happened with Ebola. My Government tried to mobilise public opinion on this emergency crisis, but no one understood what was really happening. People underestimated the Ebola virus. They took it for granted that the Government was only trying to threaten them. But then 500 000 persons died, and they did realize this was a real threat. If they had listened first, we would have prevented the epidemic to expand. But people did not believe it.

I know what I am saying. Please let us not politicize this issue. And please be ensured that this is not a debate between me and a member country. If it was the case, I would have asked my colleague for a bilateral discussion. I am speaking of human lives. Thank you, I do not want to take the floor again.

Sra. Alejandra GUERRA (Chile)

En primer lugar quiero decir que estoy conforme de acuerdo con el informe que Usted ha presentado.

En segundo lugar quiero referirme a varios temas que han sido aquí presentados por Miembros del Consejo y colegas míos. Uno, el tema de los antimicrobianos. Como Usted ya señaló, ya hay una solución sobre esto, ya fue asignado que sería con recursos extraordinarios y no con los recursos normales de la FAO. La FAO, por lo que tengo entendido, ya tiene todos sus recursos distribuidos en los diferentes mandatos que tiene y entrar a sustraer de ahí recursos para tratar el nuevo tema puede afectar el programa ya acogido y recogido por el consejo.

El segundo tema al que quería referirme es al tema de los desplazamientos. Yo en mi intervención señalé que la FAO tiene que trabajar en el campo para que la gente joven no emigre a las grandes ciudades para buscar seguridad alimentaria o una mejor calidad de vida. La razón por la cual la gente emigre puede ser varias, puede ser un tema de una guerra interna, puede ser un tema que viene de un tercer país. En fin, si esto hay que desmenuzarlo a que quede más especificado, que sean desplazamientos internos, que sea inmigración por reglas, por situación económica, por conflicto bélico, por lo que sea, no tengo ningún problema que sea todo incluido, porque lo que estamos buscando acá es que la FAO trabaje con sujetos, que trabaje con el campesino, con la persona que vive del campo y se ve obligada a emigrar por la razón que sea. O sea que si Usted quiere agregar o los Miembros del Consejo quieren agregar, que se incluya conceptos de desplazamiento interno como señaló el Afganistán, estoy sumamente de acuerdo.

Entonces el punto, otra vez, ya que ha vuelto a salir es el tema de género. Aquí todos los países hemos hecho manifestaciones con el tema de género, todos estamos totalmente de acuerdo, lo dijo mi colega de México, esto es un tema que preocupa a todos los países. Si se va a empezar a tener que poner en un informe lo que cada grupo hizo, ya sea interregional o regional, estamos alargando un informe que en el fondo es un resumen. Yo encuentro lo que Usted puso como resumen ya con eso basta y está explicitado y está incluido todo lo que aquí en el consejo se ha debatido.

Sr. Junior Andrés ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)

Comparto lo que han expresado mis otros colegas de mi grupo regional. Para mi Delegación su resumen es más que suficiente. Me quiero referir pero a un tema muy particular para mi Delegación que es el tema sobre la propuesta de incorporar el *cross-regional statement* en el informe.

Mi delegación encuentra dificultad, pues yo llegué tarde ayer por la tarde y no he leído el informe, no he firmado dicha declaración como muchos otros Miembros de este Consejo, y no podría aceptar. Quiero, sin embargo, subrayar que quede bien claro que mi país es pionero sobre este tema. Por lo tanto agradezco la aprobación de su resumen y lo acepto Señor Presidente.

Sra. Andrea S.REPETTI (Argentina)

Muy brevemente para apoyar lo que señalaron México, Ecuador, Chile y otras Delegaciones sobre el tema de la resistencia antimicrobiana, para no continuar con estos debates. Habló el Señor Ren Wang

y dijo el trabajo que se estaba haciendo, tenemos una resolución a que ajustarnos y debemos continuar con el resto de nuestra agenda que es muy extensa.

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

First of all, I would like to say that we are ready to support your summary. We have understood the proposals from our colleagues from the European Union. We would just like to remind everyone that in our presentation we welcomed the work carried out by FAO on antimicrobial resistance which is in accordance with the decisions made by the Governing Bodies.

With regard to the current biennium, we support the decisions made in June 2015 by the Conference and in December 2015 by the Council. We have lost a lot of time with these discussions in such a way that we welcome the decisions agreed upon by consensus.

We agree with the proposal made to reflect the in-kind contributions of FAO. Such a proposal is in line with the confirmed Programme of Work and Budget for 2016-17.

On the issue of migration, we have heard what has been said by the Director-General. We note that this subject has already been discussed in the past. Our understanding is that migration includes “refugees” and “internally displaced people and labor migrants” as pointed out by the Representative from Chile. We would prefer mentioning only the term “migration”, which has a broad definition in FAO and includes so many subsections.

Concerning the issue of conflicts, our colleague from Liberia cast light on the fact that FAO is more than a technical body when conflicts emerged. It becomes almost sentimental. We strongly believe that, indeed, FAO has a crucial role to play in this regard. We would like to bring your attention to the discussions that we had on the issue of peace building and the one concerning the role of FAO in this process, taking into consideration its concrete mandate and its comparative advantage.

In this connection, we are prepared to consider both the Egyptian and Kuwaiti proposals. Perhaps the proposal made by Egypt is more concise. We could review the wording. For example, the word “intensification” has been mentioned. We are wondering whether it would not be better to use the term “promotion”.

With regard to gender issues, we have paid a lot of attention to the summary that you mentioned. Concerns have been expressed in the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees and also during the discussion on item 3. The item that we are currently discussing is also very sensitive. We do not want to open a new debate on this issue given the current situation, but we just note that the issue of gender has been given a lot of attention in your summary. We hope that the Secretariat will look at all the perspectives on this issue.

We also note that mention of the cross-regional statement on gender was not included in your summary.

CHAIRPERSON

Do you agree with what I read?

Mr Ivan G. KONSTANTINOPOLSKIY (Russian Federation)

Yes. We agreed with what you read initially.

CHAIRPERSON

Netherlands on behalf of EU.

Mr Hans BRAND (Observer for Netherlands)

I would like to support France on the issue of climate change who asked for the reference of capitalizing technical expertise in FAO's roadmap on climate change. On the issue of gender, we support Canada in her intervention on improving Council conclusions. In regards to AMR, we are not in the position and are not willing to re-open discussions about budgeting the Action Plan on AMR. We commend and appreciate FAO's commitment to the work on antimicrobial resistance. We underline also the importance of the full implementation of Conference Resolution 4/2015.

My question to the Chair would be if he could read out slowly his conclusion on (f) on AMR once again so we can fully understand what the conclusion is and perhaps make an addition afterwards.

CHAIRPERSON

I will go back to my conclusions after I have heard all the concerns which have been raised. I will make some improvements, and I hope those improvements will not cause another round of debate.

Mr Maath Abdulwahab Abdulrazaq AL SAMARAI (Iraq)

Iraq would like to concur with Egypt and Afghanistan regarding the immigrants and internally displaced persons (IDPs). For instance, in Iraq, there are almost three million IDPs and we believe that they are worthy of assistance and support and should be taken into consideration.

Mr Abreha ASEFFA (Ethiopia)

First of all, we generally support your conclusions. We also would like to support Egypt's and Afghanistan's proposal in regard to migration. In regard to AMR, we also support your summary.

Ms Natalie Eugenia BROWN (United States of America)

I will be brief because I do not want to further prolong this discussion and I look forward to hearing your summary again.

I would just like to reiterate what our colleague from Afghanistan pointed out where it seems that we have gotten off topic and re-opening debates that belong in another forum. I would also like to echo Australia's comments about really what the focus of this item is. It is not the PWB. It is looking at the agenda item before us, the Medium-Term Plan, and that is really where we need to focus our attention on those issues and not discuss some of the very important and relevant topics that have come up but really again return to our purpose here. The United States also agrees with Canada's intervention, particularly on gender.

Mr Vimlendra SHARAN (India)

I fully support your summary and I have full faith that you will arrive at a consensus in your next round.

Just to highlight, I am fine with the way you summarized on gender, but just to highlight that, in the December Council, we did note the cross-regional statement and paragraph 7(f) noted the cross-regional statement on gender equality and women's empowerment. I just thought I would highlight that for your information and for the information of other Members here.

CHAIRPERSON

So you are saying it is not the first time.

Mr Osamu KUBOTA (Japan)

Just to support what Australia and the United States said about migration. I think it is not a discussion about the Programme Committee, so I am not sure it is appropriate to include the future PWB.

Mr Andrzej HALASEWICZ (Observer for Poland)

I really support the position of Afghanistan now that it is time to approve your almost excellent summary of the Council discussion. I listened very carefully to the discussion about AMR and what I heard was underlining the importance of AMR and the need for action and funds. During this discussion, several voices were for reflecting it properly in the Regular Programme budget. Let me say again, during the discussion, no one said anything against these proposals.

As an observer, I dare to say that your very good summary and this point about AMR did not reflect properly the discussion which took place in this room.

So I think that we should not discuss it now but your summary should reflect properly the discussion. It is true that the Conference adopted the resolution on AMR, but I think that Members and the Organization itself made the big journey from that point and there is now a better understanding of the

importance and need for action on AMR. There is time to try to stop this silent tsunami, as Ms Semedo called it during the Programme Committee meeting.

So there is no time for discussion. It is time for action and for proper allocation of the Regular Programme budget and, for sure, voluntary contributions will appear sending a strong signal that the Organization is taking the issue seriously.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

Unfortunately when it comes to the line of gender, every one of us in this room has breached our promises. So let me breach my promise in the cause of gender. That is the only issue I want to comment on.

In order to find a neutral position on gender, in December this very Council made a neutral reference to a cross-regional statement on gender which we all approved. Liberia would request that the same statement that the Council approved in 2015, let it be reflected here because it was the same thing we have already acted on.

That statement read: “the Council noted the cross-regional statement on gender equality delivered by Members”.

That was 2015. We were the same people who endorsed that. Can we say we cannot endorse it today? Have we changed in 12 months? So please bear with me for breaching my promise. I did not want to come back but because of gender I had to do so.

Mr Mafizur RAHMAN (Observer for Bangladesh)

I would like to support what was said immediately before me by Poland regarding the AMR issue. I would just like to see some kind of highlight because this is, as it was said, a silent tsunami. We need to do something.

Regarding the gender issue, it is also clear for a lot of people. I do not need to say anything.

Mr Fabian Sumba MUYA (Observer for Kenya)

I agree with your summary comments, but in totality I support the comments given by the Distinguished Delegates from Poland and Bangladesh. Just a token in a supplementary way or in some kind of budget provision to enhance work on AMR would be appreciated by Member Nations, especially in countries which may have very little power to respond to an outbreak of some of those micro-organisms.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, you have all agreed on my summary conclusions regarding point 1(a) up to (d). I think where the debate was on points (e), (f) and (i).

But in order to help the Drafting Committee not to debate again, I will read everything again.

3. The Council endorsed the report of the 119th session of the Programme Committee, and:

- a) in relation to the ‘Review of FAO Strategic Framework and preparation of Medium Term Plan 2018-21 – Regional Priorities’:
 - i. supported the regional priorities identified, the 2016-17 Regional Initiatives, and inter-regional work on climate change, nutrition, and Blue Growth; and
 - ii. welcomed the alignment of FAO’s Strategic Objectives with the Sustainable Development Goals, and underlined the importance of linking the SDG indicators to the results framework of the Medium-Term Plan 2018-21;
- b) noted the guidance from the Committee on the Strategy for FAO’s work on climate change and looked forward to reviewing the Strategy and its Plan of Action at its next session;

- c) reiterated the importance of the cross-cutting themes, including gender, nutrition, climate change and governance and looked forward to reporting thereon through the Organization's existing reporting mechanisms;
- d) looked forward to due attention to be given to the gender component within the upcoming evaluations of the Strategic Objectives; and endorsed the request for an evaluation of FAO's work on gender for consideration by the Conference in 2019;
- e) noted the wide-ranging support to the crucial role of FAO's work on gender and women's empowerment and expressed satisfaction that a document on gender would be prepared for an informal briefing to Members on gender to be held in 2016;
- f) welcomed the progress of FAO's work on antimicrobial resistance, its Action Plan and focus areas of work, as well as the Secretariat's support for AMR activities within the Programme of Work and Budget and appreciated extrabudgetary funds pledged, as well as in-kind contributions by Members, and made available thus far by resource partners;
- g) appreciated the continued cooperation on AMR under the tripartite partnership with WHO and OIE;
- h) noted the positive findings of the evaluation of FAO's contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture and underlined the importance of FAO's work in this area; and
- i) encouraged FAO's work on migration and internally displaced populations in its Programme of Work, including by means of collaboration with other UN and RBA partners and called upon Members to commit voluntary contributions in support of this initiative in line with FAO's mandate.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

Again just on your last point there about migration, we still have a concern as the language is still talking about the Programme of Work. I know you have generalized it a little bit but it still infers too much of a formal reference for us.

As we said before, we are referring to the review of the Strategic Framework and the development of a new Medium-Term Plan so we would be more comfortable with reference to the review of the Strategic Framework and the development of the MTP rather than a specific reference to the Programme of Work.

Mr Hans BRAND (Observer for Netherlands)

We could go along with your summary but we are still a little bit disappointed as we would like to see in your conclusions on point (f) the importance that is also stressed by the Programme Committee of enhanced finances for AMR.

So we would like to add to your conclusion in point (f) the sentence that was also agreed language in one of the conclusions of the Council of last December.

At the end of point (f) we would suggest adding: "highlighting the importance of adequate resources from different sources to ensure effective implementation".

If you could add that to point (f), we are willing to endorse your conclusions as a whole.

Mr Khaled M.S.H. EL TAWHEEL (Egypt)

On the last point, I think we proposed to add at the beginning of the paragraph, something about building resilience because we believe this is relevant to the work of the Organization when it deals with migration. This is missing.

The other issue that is missing as well is that we also suggested that when FAO collaborates with other Rome-based Agencies the focus of the work is to deal with the consequences on conflicts with food security and agricultural development, which also falls within the mandate of the Organization. So if we can accommodate these two comments please.

Ms Mi NGUYEN (Canada)

I would like to support Australia's proposal and actually, since when there was a discussion about the regional priorities migration was raised as an issue for many regions, I thought it would have been more relevant under point (a) and the Medium-Term Plan and the Reviewed Strategic Framework. But we can go along with the Australian proposal as a good compromise.

We could also support the Netherlands' proposal as a good way forward for point (f).

And as a last comment on point (e), we note that your summary does not include the cross-regional statement. At this late hour we could go with your proposal if that is what will attract consensus, but we express deep disappointment that it stings to be a challenge to find coherence in this Governing Body where we have done it in December. The cross-regional statement was supported by many delegations and many delegations intervened to welcome the statement and it seems to be hard to even note it in this Council session.

In addition, there were interventions saying there was use in having the cross-regional statements on other issues. So if we are not even able to be consistent with what you were saying in the discussion in the summary, I wonder how the summary is useful in going forward on issues.

In any case, the verbatim records are there. The statements are there. And the support is there so we are confident that we will continue to work together on this issue.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Canada. I thought this would be stronger if it was being supported by the whole Council rather than singling just groups, but I thank you for your understanding.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

Apoyamos su resumen. Queremos referirnos brevemente a la propuesta que han hecho los Países Bajos y queremos señalar que podríamos convivir con ella, por supuesto, en el entendido de que esa búsqueda de recursos es en el Marco del Programa de Trabajo aprobado. Caso contrario sería reabrir las discusiones, con lo cual apoyamos su resumen y bajo ese entendido con respecto a la propuesta de los Países Bajos.

Mr Abreha ASEFFA (Ethiopia)

We support the proposal for including the resilience because it is within the mandate of FAO to look into the causes of migration and help with building up resilience.

CHAIRPERSON

Let me read again points (f) and (i). I think that is where changes have been made.

(f): "welcomed the progress of FAO's work on antimicrobial resistance, its Action Plan and focus areas of work, as well as the Secretariat's support for AMR activities within the Programme of Work and Budget, and appreciated the extrabudgetary funds pledged, as well as in-kind contributions by Members, and made available thus far by resource partners, highlighting the importance of adequate resources to ensure effective implementation."

For point (i), I think the issue was raised by Egypt and Australia: "encouraged FAO to intensify its work in building resilience and to include the issue of migration and internally displaced people in collaboration with other UN and RBA partners".

Mr Hans BRAND (Observer for Netherlands)

I understand there is a little typo in adding the phrasing in point (f) because the agreed language in the Council Report of December last year (paragraph 9 of the Report) was "highlighting the importance of adequate resources from different sources to ensure effective implementation". So you missed the words "from different sources" in your summary. Could you please add them?

CHAIRPERSON

I will include them. I think Members do not have any objection. That would be: “highlighting the importance of adequate resources from different sources to ensure effective implementation.”

Mr Khaled M.S.H. EL Taweel (Egypt)

Sorry that we have to come back to point (i). Now we see that the Programme of Work is missing and from my point of view this makes the paragraph meaningless because the request of Member Nations from the floor was for FAO to work on these issues within the Programme of Work.

Mr Matthew Worrell (Australia)

We would agree in one part with Egypt about point (i). When you read it out, I could not actually understand; it seemed to be an incomplete sentence. I thought we had agreed that there would be a reference to migration in the context of the Review of the Strategic Framework; therefore that language should be included.

Also, as I expressed before, we are not comfortable in this summary discussion to talk about providing guidance and direction to FAO on its current Programme of Work and Budget. We are actually talking about the Review of the Strategic Framework and the development leading to the new Medium-Term Plan that was discussed in the Programme Committee. So we should be confining our discussions to that.

So I look forward to a reformulation of point (i).

Mr Ivan G. Konstantinopolskiy (Russian Federation)

Perhaps I was not attentive enough but when I heard your summary on point (f) on AMR, then I heard the suggestion from the Netherlands on behalf of the EU and its Member States, I think I missed the mention on the approved Programme of Work and Budget in this summary.

I would like to point out that the reference to the agreed recommendations by the Governing Bodies to include the Programme of Work and Budget existed in our initial statement under this agenda item, and also in our subsequent comment. I also would like to note that in the Report of the 153rd Session of Council, with paragraph 9, Council is requesting the Programme Committee for an update which has been discussed at the last session of the Programme Committee. I quote the request:

“[...] as well as on estimated resource requirements and availability in line with approved Programme of Work and Budget, highlighting the importance of adequate resources from different sources to ensure adequate implementation.”

So I would be glad to support the suggestion by the Netherlands on behalf of the EU if the approved Programme of Work and Budget language stays there in your summary.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, we do not have interpretation, therefore we will close this session and we will resume in the afternoon at 14:30 sharp.

I would like to place before you the nomination of Cyprus to complete the composition of the Drafting Committee of this session of the Council. Can I take it that the Council wishes to agree to this proposal?

It is so decided. Thank you.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I would like to inform Members of the side event on *Agroecology for Food Security and Nutrition* which will take place after this plenary meeting from 12:30 to 14:30 in the Iran room.

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-fourth Session
Cent cinquante-quatrième session
154.º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 30 May-3 June 2016
Rome, 30 mai-3 juin 2016
Roma, 30 de mayo-3 de junio de 2016**

**SIXTH PLENARY MEETING
SIXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
SEXTA SESIÓN PLENARIA**

1 June 2016

The Sixth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.49 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La sixième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 49
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la sexta sesión plenaria a las 14.49
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

Item 6. Report of the 119th Session of the Programme Committee (16-20 May 2016) (continued)

Point 6. Rapport de la cent dix-neuvième session du Comité du Programme (16-20 mai 2016) (suite)

Tema 6. Informe del 119.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa (16-20 de mayo de 2016) (continuación)

(CL 154/3)

CHAIRPERSON

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, I call the sixth meeting of the 154th Session of the FAO Council to order.

Let us return to item 6. That is the *Report of the 119th Session of the Programme Committee*. We will return to this Agenda item in the order concurred on my conclusions. When we did break for lunch, we had an outstanding two paragraphs to be agreed.

That is point (f). We had new additions from the EU and one from the Russian Federation. And then on point (i), I had Australia and Egypt. I have made some changes there. I hope it goes over the issues that we agreed. I take it all Members of the Council will agree to adopt these two paragraphs so that we will finish on this Agenda item.

Point (f) reads as follows: welcomed the progress of FAO's work on antimicrobial resistance (AMR), its Action Plan and focus areas of work, as well as the Secretariat's support for AMR activities within the approved Programme of Work and Budget, and the appreciated extrabudgetary funds pledged as well as in-kind contributions by Members and made available thus far by resource partners, highlighting the importance of adequate resources from different sources to ensure effective implementation.

Point (i) encouraged FAO to identify its work in resilience-building, including to address migration and internally displaced people in collaboration with other United Nations and RBA partners in line with FAO's mandate, and to address these issues in the review of the Strategic Framework in preparation of the Medium-Term Plan 2018-21, and called upon Members to provide voluntary contributions to support this work.

I can say this Agenda item is concluded.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

On your conclusion, the last one, the point (i), I think maybe just if you can modify the wording, I would say "RBAs and other United Nations Agencies". You have it as United Nations agencies and other RBAs. I think it sounds better with the closest agencies with you and then the others.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. We will change that one. I do not need to read it again.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

This morning before morning session, a Distinguished Spokesperson of the EU had an idea of resources from different sources. He took it from the previous Council document. I just discussed this problem with him. The way I gathered from our discussion, their idea is to increase the number of resource contributors with the hope that by increasing the number of resource contributors, the level of resources will increase. I think, if I am not interpreting wrongly, he agreed. I told him that the word "different" would not be the proper word. The proper word would be "a wide range of contributors".

CHAIRPERSON

This is what was agreed, what I read, and I listen that there is an amendment, because that was your discussion outside the room. If I do not see an intervention, then I take it as I have read it.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

Apreciamos sus esfuerzos por llegar a un texto de consenso que nos parece casi haberlo alcanzado. Queremos hacer una breve precisión en cuanto al tema de los anti-microbianos. Y es el hecho de que, en su resumen no se menciona un elemento importante que se desprende de la resolución sobre anti-microbianos de la Conferencia, así como la decisión de la Conferencia sobre el mismo tema, que el Comité del programa, además de discutirlo hace su recomendación sobre efectuar ese llamamiento a los recursos extra-presupuestarios. En su resumen, no lo vemos reflejado dado que se utiliza un lenguaje más general con el fin de no mencionarlo. Nosotros podríamos aceptarlo si al final del párrafo sobre este tema se menciona en línea con el programa de trabajo y presupuesto aprobado. Lo cual no considero que sea motivo de controversia, por cuanto es justamente una resolución de la Conferencia y un programa de trabajo que ha sido aprobado por todos nosotros, por todos los Miembros.

Con esa pequeña modificación, nosotros podríamos aceptar el que no se mencionen los recursos extra-presupuestarios.

CHAIRPERSON

I agree with you. I do not know if this does not reflect within the approved Programme of Work and Budget.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

Sí, está incluido su párrafo pero quisiéramos que lo pasara al final. Con lo cual, se cubre todo el párrafo con esa frase que es el programa aprobado por todos nosotros.

CHAIRPERSON

Okay. So we are changing that.

Mr Eric ROBINSON (Canada)

Just on the AMR question. I think I prefer your original formulation because my understanding is that the discussion has been to some degree forward-looking. I think if you refer it all back to the existing PWB, I do not think it quite captures the spirit of what we are talking about here which is future work on AMR. So, that is my first point.

The second point is on gender. Your summary is fine. I have just a question. I am wondering whether it would be possible to add the cross-regional statement on gender to the report as an appendix.

CHAIRPERSON

Members of the Council, you should know where we have come from and where we are. We have come from far away and you want us to go back far away where we have come from. I will not accept this.

Unless Members agree to your proposal, then I am open to that. Otherwise, it was agreed by the Delegate of Canada. She was disappointed by the Members. But I take what I get from the Members, so I am not going to accept that.

And regarding this approved Programme of Work and Budget, suggest changing the wording, put it towards the end. It does not make any changes to the spirit which is there in this paragraph.

So, please, I want to come to the end of my conclusions on item 6. Are there any objections? No objection.

Item 7. Report of the 161st Session of the Finance Committee (16-20 May 2016)**Point 7. Rapport de la cent soixante et unième session du Comité financier (16-20 mai 2016)****Tema 7. Informe del 161.º período de sesiones 158.º del Comité de Finanzas (16-20 de mayo de 2016)**
(CL 154/4; CL 154/LIM/2)**CHAIRPERSON**

We now move on to item 7, *Report of the 161st Session of the Finance Committee (16-20 May 2016)*. The documents before Council are CL 154/4 and CL 154/LIM/2.

I draw your attention to document CL 153/LIM/2, regarding the Status of Assessments and Arrears. This document sets out the status of assessments and arrears as at 23 May 2016.

Member Nations currently owe to FAO over USD 323 million for 2016 and prior years, which complicates FAO's liquidity management.

As of 23 May 2016, 51 percent of 2016 assessed contributions still needed to be settled. 59 Member Nations still had arrears outstanding from 2015 and previous years and 24 owed arrears in such amounts as would prejudice their right to vote at the next Session of the Conference in accordance with Article III.4 of the Constitution.

There is no decision to be made on this point, but the Council may wish to include a statement regarding arrears in its report on this item.

I now invite Mr Khalid Mehboob, Chairperson of the Finance Committee, to introduce this item.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Chairperson, Finance Committee)

Members of the Council, I am pleased to present the Report of the 161st Session of the Finance Committee. This report is submitted to the Council in document CL 154/4. In addition, as the Chair has pointed out, there is document CL 151/LIM/2 which has been prepared to provide the Council with an update on the status of contributions and arrears at 23 May 2016. I shall now present the salient highlights of the Report of the Finance Committee.

Under section Monitoring Financial Position, the Committee reviewed the financial position of the Organization. The Committee urged all Member Nations to make timely and full payment of assessed contributions to ensure that FAO continues to meet the operating cash requirements of 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 remained significant at USD 862.2 million due to unfunded staff-related liabilities.

In reviewing the report on investments for 2015, the Committee noted the good performance of the short- and long-term investment portfolios and commended the governance in place. The Committee reviewed the 2015 actuary evaluation of staff-related liabilities and noted the total staff-related liabilities as of 31 December 2015 amounted to USD 1 124.7 million, representing a decrease of USD 265.7 million from the evaluations at 31 December 2014. The Committee recalled its previous discussions on the complex matter of the unfunded After Service Medical Coverage Liabilities which concern the entire United Nations system and it encouraged the continued participation of the Secretariat in the United Nations Common Systems search for a solution to this issue.

On the section entitled Budgetary Matters, the Committee reviewed the Annual Report on Budgetary Performance and Programme and Budgetary Transfers in the 2014-15 biennium and approved the final budgetary transfers arising from the implementation of the 2014-15 Programme of Work. The Committee reviewed the Report on the Implementation of the FAO Cost Recovery Policy. The Committee took note of progress on implementation of the FAO Cost Recovery Policy and appreciated the efforts to inform and communicate with external resource partners on transition and implementation measures. The Committee supported the initiative by the Director-General on the establishment of a special fund for development finance activities. The Director-General recognized that the special fund would enable the Organization to engage proactively with the global funds and international financial institutions, including regional development banks, to meet the growing technical assistance needs of Members.

Under the section Human Resources Management, the Committee appreciated the significant achievements and innovations in Human Resources Management at FAO in recent years, noting these had provided the foundation for the success of the transformational change process at the Organization. The Committee encouraged the Secretariat to continue its efforts in particular on recruitment timeframes, equitable geographical representation, and gender balance, as well as vacancy rates.

Under oversight, the Committee reviewed the 2015 Annual Report of the Inspector General and welcomed the good cooperation on internal control issues between the Office of the Inspector General and Management. It urged Management to continue to prioritize the implementation of outstanding recommendations. The Committee welcomed the FAO Audit Committee 2015 Annual Report to the Director-General which included positive conclusions, in particular on FAO's System of Internal Control. The Committee recommended the Council endorse the Director-General's recommendations that Ms Lesedi Lesetedi's and Mr Juan Manuel Portal Martinez's terms on the Audit Committee be extended for a further three-year period. The Committee supported the appointment of Mr Thierry Rajaobelina to the post of Inspector General and expressed its appreciation for the work of the outgoing Inspector General, Mr John Fitzsimon.

The Committee welcomed the progress made by the Secretariat in closing recommendations of the External Auditor and urged continued efforts in this regard, particularly for recommendations related to strengthening internal control in decentralized offices and those which have been outstanding for a significant time. The Committee endorsed the recommendations contained in the 2015 Annual Report of the Ethics Committee and encouraged FAO to continue to monitor the effectiveness of the system and procedures in place to prevent and mitigate conflicts of interest in partnerships with the private sector.

The Committee considered the review of the work of the Ethics Committee that presented a review of the work of the Ethics Committee since its inception in 2011 up to its last session in August 2015 with the intention to allow the Finance Committee, CCLM and the Council to make a determination as to the future of the Ethics Committee. The Committee expressed its appreciation to the Members of the Ethics Committee and for its work which has been extremely useful to the Organization and for the assistance provided to the Secretariat and to the Membership.

The Committee noted the deliberations of the 102nd Session of the CCLM on this matter and endorsed its recommendations which were: i) that the Ethics Committee had fulfilled its mission and there was no justification for its continued operation nor for extending its mandate and that matters addressed by the Ethics Committee could be within the purview of the Audit Committee which submitted an Annual Report to the Finance Committee; and ii) that the Ethics Officer continued to report on the activities of the Ethics Office to the Governing Bodies, possibly in the context of the review by the Finance Committee of the Report of the Audit Committee.

The Committee reviewed an update on the progress made by the Organization on FAO's Accountability Policy and Internal Control Framework and welcomed the measures taken by FAO to strengthen accountability structures over the delivery of the Programme of Work and Budget. The Committee commended the Secretariat on the significant series of steps planned for the next 18 months to put in place the process and provide evidence in order to support the production of a statement on internal control.

In conclusion, overall the sessions of the Committee were very productive, and in particular I believe that it was possible to address a number of important issues facing the Organization. On behalf of Members of the Committee, I would like to extend our appreciation to the Secretariat for its assistance in our deliberations and our gratitude to the Member Nations of FAO for providing us this opportunity to further the important work of the Organization.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

El Ecuador realiza esta intervención en nombre del Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe. Agradecemos al Presidente del Comité, Señor Khalid Mehboob, por la presentación del informe, así como por haber presidido eficientemente las sesiones del Comité.

El Grupo de América Latina y el Caribe respalda las recomendaciones del Informe del Comité y desea comentar lo siguiente.

Acogemos con satisfacción el endoso dado a la propuesta del Director General de creación de un Fondo especial para actividades de financiación del desarrollo. Ese Fondo, cuyo montante inicialmente previsto es de 10 millones de USD, es de particular interés para los países en desarrollo. Además, permitirá a la Secretaría agilidad y flexibilidad para levantar recursos junto a las instituciones financieras internacionales y otros fondos internacionales que requieren de la Organización un inmediato desembolso. Reconocemos en esa iniciativa del Director General algo innovador, que permitirá mayor movilización de recursos para programas de cooperación técnica de la FAO, así como servirá de catalizador para nuevas alianzas y más intensa cooperación con otras instituciones internacionales.

El GRULAC observa que el Comité hace algunas recomendaciones a la Secretaría en lo que respecta la gestión del personal. Coincidimos con la evaluación del Comité de que los éxitos e innovaciones en los últimos años en la política de recursos humanos es la base sobre la cual se apoya el impresionante cambio transformativo logrado por el Director General. Sin embargo, recalcamos que el Comité de Finanzas no tiene el mandato para interferir en la gestión del personal, que es de competencia exclusiva del Director General y esto debe ser respetado. Como órgano subsidiario de este Consejo, debemos tener presente que al Comité de Finanzas cabe tan sólo hacer recomendaciones al Consejo sobre *“las propuestas del Director General y las recomendaciones de la Comisión de Administración Pública Internacional sobre la escala de sueldos y las condiciones de empleo del personal, así como las propuestas del Director General sobre la estructura general de los servicios administrativos y técnicos de la Organización”*.

En ese sentido, causa preocupación que las decisiones tomadas por la Asamblea General, producto de las recomendaciones de la Comisión de Administración Pública Internacional sobre las condiciones y beneficios de que gozan los funcionarios internacionales, que no tengan la implicación deseada para alcanzar los niveles de ahorros presupuestarios que se deseaba.

Por otro lado, coincidimos con la recomendación hecha por el Comité sobre la discontinuación del Comité de Ética, puesto que se cumplió el plazo de prueba previsto tras su creación provisional. Dejamos registrado nuestro reconocimiento al trabajo hecho y agradecemos la participación de sus miembros, así como sus recomendaciones, que posibilitaron la eficaz puesta en marcha de la función de monitoreo de las cuestiones éticas en la Organización.

Finalmente, el GRULAC desea informar al Consejo que dada la renuncia del representante de Trinidad y Tobago antes de que concluya su mandato en el Comité, nuestro grupo regional ha presentado la candidatura del Sr. Benito Jiménez, Representante Alternativo de México, para reemplazarlo. Esperamos contar con el apoyo unánime del Consejo para su elección.

Mr Khaled M.S.H. EL TAWHEEL (Egypt) (Original language Arabic)

Egypt would like to make this statement on behalf of the Near East Group. We would like to reassert the following point pertaining to the results of the Finance Committee work. First of all, the Near East Group would like to support the suggestion of the Director-General to create a special fund with an initial capital of USD 10 million. This is a very important suggestion because it will foster collaboration between the FAO and international financial organizations. It will also foster collaboration with all financial institutions, thus bringing better technical support to developing countries.

These new measures are extremely important because they are here to support also the SDGs and they are here to allow us to reach the SDGs by 2030. We urge therefore the organization to start working on this fund as soon as possible.

Second, we would like to reassert the importance of providing the necessary financial resources in order to start implementing the regional initiatives. I am thinking particularly of the initiative on water scarcity. It is an extremely important initiative for the Near East Group and we look forward to having further resources in order to focus on issues of important to the region. I am thinking particularly on handling post-conflict situations, migration, migrants, food loss, food waste and food security.

Third, the Near East Group is concerned about the deficit in the general budget of the Organization. To reach a deficit of this amount is extremely negative for the Organization and for the UN system and we notice that the After Service Medical Coverage is the main reason behind that deficit which is of concern to us.

We would like to urge all Member Nations to pay their contributions to the Organization so that the implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget is not hindered in the future.

Five, we would like to express our appreciation for the better management of human resources in the Organization. However, we believe that adequate human resources need to be sent particularly to decentralized offices and regional offices. We need to send the right persons to the right offices so that the needs of these offices are met.

We would also like to insist on guaranteeing equitable geographical distribution in human resources particularly. We would like also to insist on the importance of the technical collaboration programmes. We need to assure that the resources are allocated so that the technical collaboration programme is implemented with no hindrances. We need 14 percent of the budget to be dedicated to the technical collaboration programme.

After these remarks we would like to support the report of the Finance Committee and we would like to pay tribute to Mr Khalid Mehboob who has conducted our activities in a very apt manner and our thanks goes also to the Secretariat for its support.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Je souhaitais remercier M. Khalid Mehboob, Président du Comité financier pour la qualité de son exposé, très complet et clair, et je demande la parole pour les Pays-Bas, pour une déclaration au nom de l'Union européenne.

Mr Wierish RAMSOEKH (Observer for Netherlands)

I am honored to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate countries to the EU, Albania, Montenegro, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

We commend the work of the Finance Committee at its 161st Session and welcome the conclusions and advice to the Council as contained in the report on that session. We would like to limit our comments to some points from the report.

Looking at FAO's Financial Position we note with satisfaction that the Organization's liquidity position is expected to be sufficient to cover all operational needs to the end of 2016. We endorse the Committee's appeal to Members to make timely and full payment of their assessed contributions, and encourage the Secretariat to continue exploring measures to incentive such payments.

We take note of the Committee's conclusions regarding the final budgetary Chapter transfers for the 2014-15 biennium.

We appreciate the Committee's views on the funding of After Service Medical Coverage (ASMC) liabilities and see the need to further review the options to address the ASMC liabilities. ASMC liabilities are a concern for the entire UN system and a common approach to this issue needs to be adopted. We therefore encourage FAO to continue its active participation in the UN After Service Health Insurance Working Group. In the meantime, FAO should continue its efforts to contain the costs of the current medical insurance plan. In this regard, we reiterate our invitation to consider favourably requests from staff to have their appointment extended beyond the mandatory age of separation: this helps to reduce ASMC costs.

Referring to FAO's Cost Recovery Policy, we commend the Secretariat for the efforts being undertaken, especially on transitional and implementation measures.

As to the proposal to establish a Special Fund for Development Finance Activities, we generally acknowledge that such a fund might help to secure further extra-budgetary funding, while giving FAO more flexibility in partnering with financial institutions to achieve its Strategic Objectives. We look

forward to receiving more detailed information on the strategic goals and specific targets of this Special Fund at the next session of the Council. However, we would like to underline that, as stated in the Finance Committee report, any decision regarding the use of assessed contributions to finance the Special Fund is subject to prior approval by the Conference.

While acknowledging the ongoing efforts to improve human resources management, we are deeply concerned about the persistence of high vacancy rates, as it could compromise FAO's ability to meet its Strategic Objectives. We understand that the total number of vacant posts is even higher than it was in November 2015. Based on the information provided by the Secretariat at the Informal Briefing last week, the vacancy rate for professional positions as of 20 May 2016 exceeds 25 percent. This is more than one quarter of all professional posts under the PWB, which is a cause for serious concern. As the Inspector General has rightly pointed out, the current practice of hiring consultants to backfill vacant posts bears a high risk related *inter alia* to programme continuity, depletion of institutional memory and erosion of the technical capacity of FAO. This is a very important matter on which the Governing Bodies have to give guidance.

We therefore urge the Secretariat to address comprehensively all problems in the recruitment process, so as to reverse this worrying situation without any further delay.

In this context, we also would like to voice our regret that, unlike in the past, the Finance Committee has not been provided upfront with all the information it needs to hold an informed discussion of all matters. We are confident that the usual practice will be re-established.

Furthermore, we encourage the Secretariat to implement as soon as possible the recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission, which the United Nations General Assembly approved in Resolution 70/244 of 23 December 2015.

As to the 2015 Annual Report of the Inspector General, we are particularly concerned about the findings regarding the Shared Services Centre in Budapest. Several major weaknesses reported back in 2010 persist and many longstanding concerns remain unresolved. The extremely high turnover rate has led to a situation in which standard procedures can no longer be performed in a timely manner. These procedures are now delayed for several months. These weaknesses have to be addressed expeditiously. When developing the long-term strategy which the Inspector General has called for, the possibility to pool back office functions with Shared Services Centres of other UN Organizations in Budapest should also be examined.

We urge the Secretariat to implement all outstanding recommendations, not only of the Inspector General, but also of the Audit Committee and the External Auditor. A number of them are well overdue.

Last but not least, we welcome the recommendation to not extend the mandate of the Ethics Committee.

Mr Vimlendra SHARAN (India)

We make this statement on behalf of the Asia Group. We thank the Finance Committee for the hard work they have put in and the Finance Committee Chair for presenting this report to the Council. We welcome the conclusions and advice from this report to the Council and have three brief points to make.

Regarding the Organization's financial position, we note that the liquidity to cover the operational needs is sufficient but also note with concern the underfunding of the staff-related liabilities and the increase in the General Fund deficit.

We welcome and support the initiative by the Director-General to establish a special fund for developing financial activities. This will enable the Organization to broaden collaboration with new financial partners and garner technical support to tackle hunger and malnutrition in under developed and developing countries like ours.

Under Human Resources, we note the advice of the Committee to the Secretariat to give particular attention to recruitment timeframes, equitable geographical presentation, and gender balance, and to concerns expressed on the persistently high vacancy rates.

In this regard, we take note of the paper circulated at the recent Informal Seminar which indicated that vacancies in the professional category would come down to nearly 13 percent by the end of this year. We are pleased to see the progress made by the Organization on its accountability policy and internal control framework.

We look forward to receiving the statement on internal control in due time. With these comments, we endorse the recommendations of the Committee on the extension of members of the Audit Committee and, in the future, the Ethics Committee. We also take note of the decision of the Committee on the final budgetary chapter transfers for 2014-15 biennium and endorse the Committee's guidance provided to the Secretariat on all of the matters within its mandate.

M. Carlos Alberto AMARAL (Angola)

Avant tout, j'aimerais remercier Monsieur Khalid Mehboob pour sa présentation et pour l'excellent travail qu'il a réalisé en sa qualité de Président du Comité financier. L'Angola intervient au nom du Groupe Afrique. Nous sommes heureux d'apprendre que la situation financière de l'Organisation est stable et qu'il n'y a pas de problèmes significatifs en termes de trésorerie. Toutefois, je souscris à l'appel lancé aux pays membres pour régulariser en temps voulu leurs contributions.

En matière de placements à long terme, les résultats n'ont pas été favorables; il est donc conseillé d'investir dans des crédits à faible risque et de continuer à suivre une gestion prudente en coopération avec d'autres organisations des Nations Unies. Comme les délégations précédentes, nous soutenons la création d'un fonds spécial pour les activités de financement du développement, qui permettra de mobiliser des fonds supplémentaires, aux côtés d'autres institutions financières internationales telles que les banques régionales de développement nécessaires aux projets de la FAO.

Nous suivons avec attention l'augmentation du déficit dû à l'assurance-maladie après cessation de service, et il est suggéré que la FAO poursuive ses efforts en coopération avec d'autres organisations des Nations Unies, qui font face aux mêmes difficultés, afin de trouver une solution commune.

Les sommes versées par le Programme de coopération technique sont assez réduites, et devraient être utilisées dans leur totalité au cours de la période prévue.

En ce qui concerne les ressources humaines, celles-ci constituent l'élément principal d'une organisation. Elles sont les principales exécutrices des changements destinés à être opérés au sein de la FAO. Nous attendons les résultats de l'évaluation sur la capacité technique du siège et des bureaux décentralisés demandée par le Conseil à sa précédente session. Toutefois, il faut que les pays membres évitent de s'immiscer dans les aspects relatifs à la microgestion. Quant aux nouvelles directives des Nations Unies sur le personnel des agences de son système, nous espérons que la Direction trouvera les meilleures formules et types d'ajustement nécessaires à leur application au sein de la FAO.

Nous encourageons la Direction de la FAO à prendre en compte les recommandations de l'Inspecteur général, sur lesquelles elle a de manière générale exprimé son accord, et à réaliser des rapports périodiques sur leur mise en œuvre. Nous approuvons la proposition de prorogation de la durée du mandat des deux membres du Comité de vérification, et nous concordons avec la proposition du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques (CQCJ) de mettre fin aux travaux du Comité de l'éthique, ainsi qu'au transfert de ses responsabilités au Comité de vérification. Nous félicitons les membres de ce Comité pour le travail accompli au cours de ses quatre années d'existence.

Mr Nasrul Haquim BIN MOHD NASIR (Malaysia)

Malaysia wishes to align its intervention with the Asia Regional Group's statement made by India. Malaysia also wishes to join all others in welcoming the Report of the 161st Session of the Finance Committee and its presentation.

We recognize that the Organization liquidity is sufficient to finance the Organization's needs for the whole year of 2016. We second recommendations made to the Council urging Members to make

timely and full payment of contribution. The innovative approaches suggested by the Secretariat are encouraged and we look forward to the progress.

We take note of the Committee's decision on the final transfers for the 2014-15 biennium favouring Chapters 2 – Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner, 3 – reduce rural poverty, 5 – increase resilience, 8 – outreach programme and 10 – FAO governance, oversight and direction, amounting to USD 29 million. We believe these are all important agenda areas that need to be countiously focused on.

Malaysia recognizes the initiative of creating a special fund within the Director General authority for the purpose of proactive engagement with global funds and international financial institutions, including regional banks, to meet growing technical assistance needs to Members. We believe that the existing practice of internal control would ensure the fund to be managed efficiently and look forward to the information on this in the next report.

Malaysia welcomes the Report of the Progress in the implementations of the External Auditor, and urges the Secretariat to continue its effort in closing the remaining recommendations. As for the extension of two of FAO Audit Committee, Malaysia seconds the Director-General's recommendation.

Last but not least, Malaysia follows others in acknowledging the efforts of the Committee in providing guidance to the Secretariat on all other matters as well as improving the methods of work.

With that, Malaysia follows others in approving this report.

Ms Natalie Eugenia BROWN (United 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 proper financial and governance oversight. We feel particularly fortunate to have such a strong team of FAO partners and commend the leadership of the staff of the Office of Strategy, Planning, and Resource Management, of the Finance Division, of the Office of Human Resources, and of the Office of the Inspector General for their commitment to FAO and its work and for their openness and collaborative approach to working with the Finance Committee.

The United States appreciates the timely preparation of documents for the 161st session, although it was close for a few papers, and we hope this pattern continues and even improves.

Finally, on the mandate of the Finance Committee, we do not agree that consideration of HR issues should not be in the purview of the Committee. The strength of this Organization as a knowledge institution lies in its people and as discussed in so many Governing Body meetings, staff costs represent around 75 percent of the assessed budget. It is therefore entirely appropriate for HR issues to continue to appear before the Finance Committee for consideration.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

Liberia takes the floor to align itself with statements made on behalf of the Africa Group and wants to thank the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, Mr Khalid Mehboob, for his good work as well as the Secretariat.

When I took over his mission as Permanent Representative, Liberia was in arrears of its contributions to the Regular Programme from the year 1990 due to the civil war.

In 2012-13, Liberia was able to achieve the payments of all its outstanding arrears. At the moment, I am pleased to state that Liberia owes no arrears.

This shows how serious Liberia takes its commitment to the FAO Constitution as one of the only two African countries to have signed the Charter. That was to contribute towards towards an expanding world economy and ensuring humanity's freedom from hunger. We therefore encourage other Members to pay their dues for FAO to be able to deliver what we request the Organization to do.

At this point, we take serious note of the high vacancy rate that is existing in the Organization and we also want to allow ourselves here that in as much as Management continues to say that they do not

want to be micromanaged, Management itself should not micromanage. It should be able to allow those who are hired or employed in the Human Resources Department to be able to fully do their work, hire and employ based on the policies and guidelines of the Director-General.

The Director-General is accountable for this Organization to the Member Nations, to the Council, and therefore he should be able to trust those who are working with him to be able to deliver – to hire the qualified personnel so that those vacancies can be filled.

Liberia pleads with the Director-General not to micromanage the Human Resources Department.

Mr Abdul Razak AYAZI (Afghanistan)

Just a few observations on the USD 10 million fund to enhance investment in developing countries. This is an extremely useful and timely decision by the Director-General. We wish to congratulate him.

The question arises that FAO already has cooperative arrangements with major funding institutions, world banks, regional banks, Islamic banks, European development banks. This fund hopefully will not be monopolized by these institutions but will be used in a much wider sense to promote the environment for investment globally.

Now, lack of capacity for investment work in developing countries not only in formulation but in the management of investment projects is a very serious problem. There FAO can do a lot. And the Organization can do it in cooperation with the funding institutions.

The funding institutions would be interested if it is to their advantage. The funds depending on the country will produce better results if the staff of the country are well trained. That is one area of work.

The other area of work is doing more studies. Today investment in agriculture is affected by lack of baseline studies, resource studies in the countries. That would widen the environment for investment so this fund should also be used for such a purpose.

I hope this fund will be not restricted or monopolized by the big people, big banks, but widely spread so that the benefits reach mostly developing countries.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

I would like to thank the Chairperson of the Finance Committee for his presentation of the Committee's deliberations and his stellar job in chairing the meeting.

First, as a Member of the Finance Committee, we can fully endorse the Committee's report, and particularly those actions that the Council had requested to address. So we endorse the recommendations in terms of the extension of Members of the Audit Committee and the future of the Ethics Committee, and endorse the Committee's guidance on all other matters.

Just a couple of issues on the report. One was really just to highlight the importance of the discussion the Finance Committee had around the Internal Control Framework. There has been a lot of work that the Organization has put into this and quite a lot of work that it is sort of going to do over the next 18 months. Australia thinks it is appropriate that the Council sort of welcomes that progress and encourages the Secretariat and just to really highlight just how important that work is in terms of both providing the internal accountability but also as sort of providing management information to help guide the development of the Programme of Work and Budget and to give confidence to the Members that all the checks and balances are in place. So I really just want to highlight how important that work is, how much we really appreciate the effort that the Secretariat has put into it, and really just to encourage to continue with the implementation and the next steps in that process.

Second, on the Human Resources issues. We will not belabour the point. We look forward though to receiving some swift confirmation that the action that is being undertaken by the Management to address the persistently high vacancy rates that is resulting in the required or expected outcomes and that that vacancy rate is coming down and that you are recruiting some high calibre people.

Similar to the United States, we cannot agree with GRULAC's position in terms of the mandate of the Finance Committee on human resources issues. I think we will agree to disagree in that respect.

And third, I would like to also express our appreciation for the work of the outgoing Inspector General, Mr John Fitzsimon, for his contribution to the Organization.

Mr Ornal BARMAN (Trinidad and Tobago)

Trinidad and Tobago wishes to indicate its continued commitment to be up to date with its contribution to the FAO. Trinidad and Tobago expresses its cognizance that Small Island Developing States are sometimes challenged to meet their commitments in a timely manner.

My Delegation expresses its appreciation to the Finance Committee for its recommendations and supports its recommendations, especially in urging Members to make timely and full payments of assessed contributions.

With these brief comments, Trinidad and Tobago endorses the Committee's guidance provided to the Secretariat on all matters within its mandate, as well as initiatives to improve its own methods of work.

Mr Daniel J. GUSTAFSON (Deputy-Director General Operations)

I will start with the issue of human resources since it came up frequently. And if there are more specific questions, then my colleagues from Human Resources can respond. But I think all of the questions were about more of general nature and I think it may be helpful to cover a couple of ideas that may help explain the situation and how we see it going forward and where some of the difficulties are.

It relates maybe to two big questions. Why is the number of vacancies so high? Which I will get to in a second. And also, why is the number higher than it was in November? That one is easier to respond to, or simpler, as in any month there are people who leave the Organization or people who are hired and some periods have quite a few retirements and people who resign or leave for other posts and so on.

Remember, this is only of the PWB posts that we are looking at the numbers. So there is always a net, it is not all. There are current vacancies in a post and then we fill those. There is always a bit of a turnover, which makes it, in fact, more difficult to meet the target that we have set for filling those vacancies at the rate that we have specified or estimated in the document that went out in the informal seminar.

With regard to why they are so high, there I think we need to look to separate a little bit the differences between headquarters on one hand, regional offices on the other hand, and then in a third category the FAO Representations and the subregional offices. The more straightforward of those is the FAO Representation and subregional offices where there have never been any restrictions. And the process continues, there are no posts that are held vacant, and it is a process that can be quite time-consuming for FAO Representatives because of the clearance process. But there in both the subregional offices and the FAO Representations, all of those posts should be filled as quickly as possible and there should not really be any particular problem in doing that outside of individual cases that might come up for whatever reason, but no policy issue or no larger consideration about those.

With regard to looking maybe at the bigger group, also the largest number is headquarters posts, and in particular there we need to look at the technical posts and the non-technical posts. With regard to the technical posts, this has been really quite a long process and a very, I would have to say, difficult and more difficult than we had anticipated in realigning the post descriptions of the technical posts to align those with the Strategic Framework and the new demands to work in a more cross-disciplinary, inter-disciplinary or in a way that focuses less on an individual discipline but more on that discipline within the broader goals of the Strategic Objectives. This I think from the outset, everyone agreed with and still does agree with.

But in practice, when it came time and still often comes time to fill the post that is vacated, in particular by a retirement, or if someone leaves for other reasons, the natural tendency, I think natural, has been to put forward terms of reference that are identical to the person who has left the Organization in spite of a recognition of the need for realignment.

This, I think, is a sort of a natural inertia, but it has been really quite difficult for us to overcome that inertia and align the vacant posts with the needs and the demands that have come up from countries in line with the Country Programming Frameworks and in line with the programming from the Strategic Programme leaders in that system.

That has been difficult and took a lot of time and has taken a lot of work, and where we finalized that process was in the period soon after we met after the last Council, between December and January. Now we are at a situation for headquarters where we think that the vacancy announcements, the definition of those post descriptions match very well and through a very purposeful process what countries are demanding and at the same time what the overall strategic planning, that in the more top-down sense, envisions for the work of the technical staff of the Organization and it has consequently led to a higher level of vacancies than we would normally expect and we have normally had.

I think that is the reason why it is high. We also remember our keeping as a policy decision for now at least 10 to 15 percent of the posts vacant in order to accommodate new demands that come up partly in a way not to get stuck as we were in the past with limited ability to change or to adapt to new demands in the new areas that are coming up, nutrition – not new but with renewed emphasis – climate change, what we have discussed today around migration, and other topics. Because remember that with the permanent PWB technical staff, once they are hired, they are here on average for 20-plus years. It is a serious commitment and we need to have that aligned as well as we could.

So mainly the problem with headquarters with the high number that comes from this long and difficult process of alignment of getting actually every unit and every vacancy that comes up to, in fact, fit into that new way of looking at things and new approach and way of working rather than to rely simply on the same terms of reference as before.

With regard to the administrative staff, there it is a different issue. There I think the motivation has been different. As we have introduced a number of reforms, as all of you have too, in more automation, greater use for example of GRMS and other IT-related aspects, and also simply fewer administrative staff for the Organization on a ratio with professional staff that I think is I am sure generalized to all of us. I hesitate to use the word squeezing, but we have been attempting to over the years to diminish the number of administrative staff relative to the number of professional staff as the Director-General has mentioned in a number of his remarks. So the dynamics around the high administrative vacancy rate are of course different than the dynamics around the high vacancy rate of professionals, but I think it is worth remembering.

In the case of regional offices, there we have a different problem, more difficult and complicated to tackle. The regional offices, as the subregional offices, do not have very many posts, particularly relative to headquarters that have a number of specializations within each division and with each discipline. Typically in regional offices, we have one post to deal with combined food safety and nutrition. We have one post to deal with plant protection and plant production. We have one post to deal with animal health and animal production. All of those are two very distinct disciplines and it is difficult to respond to countries with one person for such a broad area.

At the same time, remembering that those definitions, even of plant protection/plant production, are still a far distance from sustainable intensification of production, from livelihoods and so on, on how that specialization fits within the larger framework. So consequently for regional offices, some more than others, there has been a preference for utilizing the funds from a vacant post not to hire a more generalist that can cover both of those but to utilize those funds for long-term or short-term consultants that would be able to provide more specialized assistance in each of the multiple areas.

So the dynamic of why regional offices have preferred to keep higher vacancy rates I think are again quite different than headquarters and different again for technical posts than administrative posts. But, nevertheless, the regional offices likewise have a target of keeping a 10 to 15 percent of the posts vacant and we hope that they will be able to do that.

Very clearly, the target of getting to the vacancy rate that we showed in the paper at the informal seminar is a challenging goal. It will not be that easy to meet that. But nevertheless, we are quite

hopeful that we can and are doing what we can to speed that up in order to fill the vacant posts, to get it down to that level by the end of the year, and I am confident that we can do it.

With regard to the SSC, definitely a very difficult period since the Council last met given, on the one hand longstanding issues and on the other a very high turnover rate, with the entry of a UNICEF shared service centre at the same time. There I think we are completely confident in the new director of the shared service centre; a different formulation of staffing, a different business-model looking at the end-to-end process, avoiding duplication and back and forth between Rome and Budapest, that was part of the system. I think in that case we really are confident that we are on the right track and I think we will see very good progress between now and the end of the year. I hope we can report very good results between now and then. But I think that looks very good.

Finally, from my side in response to Afghanistan's question, the new funding in the Development Fund is not designed to apply to the big ones, to the ones who we have been working with. In fact, we do not need it for them. We do very well with the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, IFAD, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. They have not imposed any additional requirements on us to fund things ahead of time. The new fund is designed, in fact, precisely to accommodate the smaller players, in particular the regional banks.

Mr Aiman Ibrahim HIJA (Director, Finance Division)

I just want to comment on the deficit that several Distinguished Members commented on. They also said something about the audit.

I acknowledge the statements made by the Distinguished colleagues on the difference that we have of USD 200 million that is primarily from the After Service Medical Coverage estimated costs. This is as stated by several Members. It is a United Nations System issue. FAO is a key member of the After Service Medical Working Group. The progress made so far is okay, but we still hope to finish the work by the end of this year or next year with concrete recommendations.

Currently we have USD 400 million to meet the level of almost USD 1 billion. This deficit of USD 600 million, USD 600 million plus, is going to be an issue for FAO in say 15 years' time from now. We expect several measures to be taken to contain the cost, but my best estimate would be in a period 15 years' time we should expect an increase in the medical costs to the Organization whether as part of the PWB or on the total PWB to be able to meet the medical costs of the staff. We will keep you posted. We will keep the Finance Committee posted. We will have a briefing session on the progress made on the After Service Medical Committee Working Group and on what comes from the United Nations.

On the audit recommendations, Finance Division and the Organization in general, we follow a systematic approach in dealing with the audit recommendations, which means rather than to handle it one-by-one on an office level or a transaction level, we try to first optimize the use of the GRMS system. The Oracle system cost USD 40 million, we need to optimize the use of it. Many issues are resolved in a lump-sum situation by establishing asset register, improving the management of inventory, improving the record management at the country office level. That helps us to strengthen first our internal control system, improve the efficiency of our operations, as well as meet the position of the audit recommendations.

Mr Salah AL BAZZAZ (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

My first comment focuses on the proposal for this Development Fund as proposed by the Director-General. My second comment is on the regional offices and the need to ensure that they have the necessary technical expertise in place.

While we welcome the Director-General's decision to set up the Development Fund, we would like to emphasize the need for us to be informed on all of the activities relating to it. That would be its scope, the mechanisms that would be followed in its work, the stages in the implementation of this decision and all the details that you would judge to be relevant.

On behalf of the Near East Group, we have emphasized in the past and continue now to state on behalf of our Regional Group that we perceive a need to endow the Regional Office in Cairo and the

Subregional Offices (Tunis, Abu Dhabi, and in the future in Beirut) with real technical expertise and competence, and the emphasis here is on the word real. By that we mean not in terms of number but in terms of quality. Our region suffers from a chronic lack of technical expertise which we need. That is the contribution that we need from FAO to support the countries in the region.

M. Mongui MEDI (Cameroun)

Je voudrais, puisque je n'ai pas pris la parole ce matin, présenter notre sympathie à l'Ambassadeur Serge Tomasi et lui souhaiter une prompte guérison, et demande à la délégation de la France de lui témoigner toute notre sympathie.

Continues in English

We welcome the report. What we want to say first is to congratulate Mr Mehboob for his leadership and also to thank the entire Finance Committee for hard work and for cost deliberation and presenting this report. Definitely, as was said, we welcome the initiative for the Director-General to establish a special fund for development finance activities; a special fund is long overdue since it was covered on the Financial Regulation 6.7.

As the former Chair of the Finance Committee, allow me to pay special tribute to one person, that is Mr John Fitzsimon. For the record, the outgoing Inspector General with whom I have spent four years working closely, we could appreciate his professional touch every time and also with the drafted report that he usually presented to the Committee. We had our work easy. We wish him a good and peaceful retirement from FAO and all the success in his future endeavours. At the same time, we welcome the appointment of Mr Thierry Rajaobelina from Madagascar as the new Inspector General. We look forward to working with him in the next future.

CHAIRPERSON

Now I read my conclusions.

1. The Council approved the Report of the 161st Session of the Finance Committee and:

On the financial position,

a) urged all Member Nations to make timely and full payment of assessed contributions.

On budgetary matters

b) noted that the Finance Committee had approved the final budgetary transfers arising from implementation of the 2014-15 Programme of Work in favour of chapters two, USD 3.2 million; chapter three, USD 1.2 million; chapter five, USD 8.9 million; chapter eight, USD 9.1 million; chapter ten, USD 6.6 million, from chapters one, four, six, nine and eleven.

c) noted the Finance Committee's support for the proposed establishment of a Special Fund for Development Finance Activities.

On human resource matters,

d) welcomed the significant achievements and the innovations in human resources management as an integral part of the transformational changes at FAO.

e) encouraged the Secretariat to give particular attention to recruitment timeframe with a view to reducing the number of vacant posts.

On oversight matters,

f) noted the Finance Committee's support for the appointment of Mr Thierry Rajaobelina to the post of Inspector General.

g) endorsed the recommendation of the Finance Committee in the CCLM that the Ethics Committee had fulfilled its mission and that there was no justification for its continued operation, nor for extending its mandate.

h) endorsed the extension of the term of Ms Lesedi Lesetedi and Mr Juan Manuel Portal Martinez on the Audit Committee for further three years.

i) welcomed and encouraged the measures taken by FAO to strengthen accountability structures through the adoption of the Internal Control Framework.

On other matters,

j) endorsed the Committee's guidance provided to the Secretariat on all other matters within its mandate as well as initiatives to improve its own methods of work.

That is the end of my conclusions.

Item 7.1 *Membership of the Finance Committee*

Point 7.1 *Composition du Comité financier*

Tema 7.1 *Composición del Comité de Finanzas*

(CL 154/LIM/4)

CHAIRPERSON

We now move on to sub-item 7.1, *Membership of the Finance Committee*.

We will proceed with the election of one member of the Latin American and Caribbean Region given that Trinidad and Tobago has withdrawn from the Committee. Relevant information can be found in document CL 154/LIM/4.

The Secretary-General will now inform Council of the sole candidate for membership of the Finance Committee. Mr Gagnon, you have the floor.

SECRETARY- GENERAL

Under Article XII, paragraph 10(a) of the General Rules of the Organization, if there are not more candidates than seats to be filled, the Chairperson may submit to the Council that the appointment be decided by clear general consent.

As there is one candidate to fill one vacant seat on the Finance Committee, the Council may wish to consider electing Mr Benito Santiago Jiménez Sauma, Alternate Representative of Mexico to FAO, as member of the Finance Committee, to replace and complete the term of office of Trinidad and Tobago. The term of office ends in July 2017.

CHAIRPERSON

Can I take it that the Council has no objection to the proposed nomination?

It is so decided. Thank you, and congratulations to Mr Jiménez Sauma.

Sub-item 7.1 is now concluded.

Item 9. **Report of the 102nd Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (14-16 March 2016)**

Point 9. **Rapport de la cent deuxième session du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques (14-16 mars 2016)**

Tema 9. **Informe del 102.º período de sesiones del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos (14-16 de marzo de 2016)**

(CL 154/2 Rev.1 ; CL 154/2 Rev.1/Corr.1)

CHAIRPERSON

We will now continue with item 9, *Report of the 102nd Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters*. The documents before Council are CL 154/2 Rev.1 and CL 154/2 Rev.1/Corr.1.

I invite Ambassador Lubomir Ivanov, Chairperson of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters, to introduce the Report.

Mr Lubomir IVANOV (Chairperson Committee on Constitutional and legal Matters)

I have the pleasure to present the Report of the 102nd Session of the Committee on the Constitutional and Legal Matters. The session was held from 14 to 16 March 2016. The Report is contained in document CL 154/2 Rev.1.

First, the CCLM examined in some detail the work of the Ethics Committee since 2012. The CCLM recalled that the Ethics Committee had been established on a trial basis in 2011 for a period of four years and that at the end of the period the CCLM, the Finance Committee, and the Council were called upon to make a determination as to the future of the Ethics Committee.

The CCLM was of the view that the Ethics Committee had fulfilled its mission and that there was no justification for its continued operation, nor for extending its mandate. In this connection, the CCLM observed that matters addressed by the Ethics Committee fell within the purview of the Audit Committee which submitted an annual report to the Finance Committee.

The CCLM expressed its appreciation to the members of the Ethics Committee for the work accomplished and the assistance provided to the Secretariat and the membership.

The Council is invited to make a determination as to the future of the Ethics Committee. The Council should take note of the views of the CCLM and of the Finance Committee set out in the report of the Committee. The Council is, in particular, invited to note that the parallel recommendations of these committees are similar.

Second, the agenda of the 102nd Session also included proposed *Amendments to the Agreement for the Establishment of a Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Western Region*. The CCLM reviewed the proposed amendments and considered that they were in order from a legal viewpoint.

The CCLM considered that they did not involve any obligations for the Commission's members which would have required a different amendment process. The CCLM noted that subject to the approval of the FAO Council, the amendments would take effect as from the date of their approval from the Commission during its special session in January 2017.

The CCLM endorsed the proposed amendments and submitted them to the Council for approval. So the Council is invited to approve the draft Resolution "*Amendments to the Agreement for the Establishment of a Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Western Region*" set out in Appendix I to the report and note that the amendments will take effect from the date of approval by the commission.

The third substantive item on the agenda related to the FAO Constitution which arose because the adoption of the FAO Constitution predated the adoption of the Charter of the United Nations. The treaty section of the United Nations recently drew the attention of the Organization to the effect that the FAO Constitution has not been published in the UN treaty series.

The CCLM reviewed the request and agreed that the FAO constitution should be transmitted to the UN treaty section for filing and recording and subsequent publication in the UN treaty series.

The Council is invited to recommend to the Conference that the Director-General be authorized to transmit to the UN treaty section the FAO constitution and the related instruments for filing and recording and subsequent publication in the United Nations treaty series.

Fourth, the CCLM was informed of a proposal by the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea for the establishment of an FAO World Fisheries University and had a brief preliminary exchange on this proposal. However, the proposal was subsequently revised and there would be no point in examining this issue.

I understand that information on the revised proposal will be provided under the item *Any other matters* of this Council session.

Item 5, the last substantive item on the agenda related to the activities of the Development Law Branch on which the CCLM received a detailed brief. The Council is invited to acknowledge the contribution of the Development Law Branch to FAO's mandate and its Strategic Framework and note the

CCLM's encouragement that the Development Law Branch continue its advisory legal work, responding to the priorities identified by regions and countries.

I invite the Council to approve the report of the CCLM.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

El Ecuador realiza esta intervención en nombre del Grupo de Países de América Latina y el Caribe. Queremos ante todo agradecer al Presidente del comité por la presentación del informe, el cual saludamos y acogemos. Queremos destacar que la labor y el compromiso del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos ha coadyuvado siempre a la misión de la FAO, orientándola hacia mejores prácticas como agencia especializada y facilitándole el alcance de sus objetivos.

Apoyamos por consiguiente la recomendación sugerida por el comité respecto a la no extensión del mandato del Comité de Ética, por entender que ha cumplido sus fines y agotado satisfactoriamente su tiempo, agradeciendo al propio tiempo a sus Miembros por su labor y la asistencia proporcionada a la Secretaría y a los miembros de la FAO. Sabemos y confiamos en que el Comité de Auditoría y el Oficial de Ética continuarán haciendo su trabajo como lo han hecho hasta hoy.

Asimismo, GRULAC respalda que el Consejo recomiende a la Conferencia autorizar al Director General a transmitir a la sección de tratados de las Naciones Unidas con fines de archivo e inscripción, la constitución de la FAO y demás instrumentos conexos para su posterior publicación en su colección de tratados.

Finalmente, respecto a la propuesta de la República de Corea sobre el establecimiento de una Universidad Pesquera Mundial de la FAO, favorecemos que este tema siga su curso al interno de la Organización a través de los Órganos Rectores competentes para que evalúen su contenido y reciban clarificación sobre las diversas cuestiones suscitadas.

Mr Nasrul Haquim BIN MOHD NASIR (Malaysia)

Malaysia has the honour to deliver this Joint Statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

The Asia Group welcomes the Report of the 102nd Session of Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters presented by Ambassador Lubomir Ivanov, the Chairperson of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters.

We would like to also recognize all the efforts provided by all the members of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters, in representation of their respective Regional Groups, for their constructive hard work and togetherness in addressing various legal and constitutional issues.

Under paragraph 6 of Article V of the Constitution, the CCLM, the Programme and the Finance Committees shall assist and report to the Council in the performance of its functions.

This function is obligatory for the Council to exercise its powers delegated by the Conference to carry out the functions of the Organization in achieving its goals and objectives.

Under Rule XXXIV, CCLM consider specific legal and constitutional matters within the Organization arising out of inter alia the application and interpretation of the Constitution; the formulation, adoption, and entry into force and interpretation of multilateral conventions and agreements concluded under Article XIV as well agreements under Article XIII and XV of the Constitution; and any other problems relating to conventions and agreements concluded under the aegis of the Organization or to which the Organization is a party.

On the review of the work of the Ethics Committee, we express our appreciation on the works accomplished for the assistance provided, and note that the Ethics Committee had been established at the request of the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO Renewal as a unique feature in the United Nations System, on a trial basis for a four-year period. We are also in agreement with the view that the Ethics Committee had fulfilled its function and there was no justification for its continued operation.

On the proposal to amend the *Agreement of the Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Western Region*, we take note of the need for DLCCWR to strengthen its capacity to react in case of locust outbreak, as well as the consideration of the detailed review and discussion during the

10th Session of the Executive Committee of DLCCWR. We approve the Amended Agreement for the Establishment of a Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Western Region, pursuant to paragraph 3 of Article XVI of the FAO Constitution.

On the request from the United Nations Treaty Section (UNTS) for filing and recording of the FAO Constitution, we take note of such important request that had been a matter of a long discussion between FAO and the UN, in accordance with Article 102 of the UN Charter. We agree that the FAO Constitution be transmitted to the UNTS for filing and recording, and subsequent publication in the UNTS. We also support to authorize the Director-General, by the Conference, to transmit the FAO Constitution to the UNTS for that purpose.

On the activities of the Development Law Branch, we take note of the three main important activities of the Development Law Branch, its role and technical assistance in: i) Combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing; ii) Strengthening Sanitary and Phytosanitary legislation; and iii) Developing the 'Guide on responsible governance of tenure and the law'. We support and encourage the Development Law Branch to continue its work and to be apprised of all its activities taking into account the importance of various international instruments and approaches.

Last but not least, in accordance with Article I of the Constitution, one of the functions of the Organization is the improvement of education and administration relating to nutrition, food and agriculture, and the spread of public knowledge of nutritional and agricultural science and practice. We believe that this can be achieved by a direct involvement of the Organization in the field of education.

We take note of the preliminary review done by the CCLM on the proposal by the Republic of Korea for the establishment of an FAO World Fisheries University. We also understand and appreciate of the information provided by the Secretariat, that a number of complex matters arose in relation to the establishment of a World Fisheries University, in particular the international legal status of the proposed University, the need to ensure an effective oversight role by the Organization, financial dimension, and the long-term sustainability of the University.

We commend the Republic of Korea for putting its efforts to achieve the global food security, Blue Growth Initiative, South-South Cooperation and sustainable fisheries.

With these comments, the Asia Regional Group endorse the Report of the 102nd Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

Liberia is pleased to make this statement on behalf of the Africa Region and wishes to express thanks and appreciation to the Secretariat for a concise report for our consideration.

The Africa Region, having reviewed the work of the Ethics Committee, which was established on a trial basis for the period of four years in 2011, acknowledges the report and wishes to thank the Ethics Committee for the fulfillment of its mission. Considering the recommendations of the CCLM, the Africa region concludes that there is no further justification for the extension of the Committee's mandate and therefore should be terminated.

The Africa Region approves the Resolution "*Amendments to the Agreement for the establishment of a Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Western Region*", and therefore requests Council to adopt it.

Having examined document CCLM 102/4 "*FAO Constitution – Request from the United Nations Treaty Section for Filing and Recording*" recommends to Conference that the Director-General be authorized to transmit to the United Nations Treaty Section the FAO Constitution and related instruments for filing and recording and subsequent publication in the United Nations Treaty Series.

The Africa Region welcomes and endorses the proposal forwarded to FAO by the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea for the establishment of an FAO World Fisheries University under Article XV of the FAO Constitution. The Africa Region fully supports the establishment of such

University which will train more Africans for capacity-building in food security and nutrition, in particular in the fishery sector.

The Africa Region expresses thanks and appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Korea for this laudable initiative which will be at no cost to developing countries. The Africa Region also wishes to request the FAO to give its full substantive consideration and support to this proposal in order to fast track all the modalities in achieving this objective for the establishment of such a premier FAO World Fisheries University under Article XV of the FAO Constitution.

Having examined the information provided in document CCLM 102/6 “*Activities of the Development Law Branch (LEGN)*” the Africa Group acknowledges the contribution of the Development Law Branch to FAO’s mandate and its Strategic Framework and notes that the CCLM’s encouragement for LEGN to continue its advisory legal work, responding to the priorities identified by the regions and countries.

With these comments, the Africa Region endorses the report.

Ms Shin-hee CHO (Republic of Korea)

Korea supports the statement made by the Asia Regional Group and the Africa Regional Group. Korea would also like to thank the Secretariat for the efforts made to prepare this document. Regarding document CL 154/2 Rev.1 please allow me to make a brief comment on Section V, *A FAO World Fisheries University – Proposal of the Republic of Korea*.

On behalf of Korea, I wish to express my gratitude to the Secretariat for preparing document CCLM 102/5. And my thanks also go to the CCLM Members for their preliminary review of the proposal.

However, there are three points I want to make. As paragraph 18 shows, this is CCLM document had been circulated just before comments by the session. So the Committee Members could not have enough time to consider the proposal properly and make informed deliberations at the session. I hope that there will be no such case in the next CCLM sessions or any other meetings of FAO.

Second, paragraph (d) of the Executive Summary stated that the 102nd Session of CCLM noted a number of issues of a policy and legal nature. However, I want to point out that the issues were raised by the Secretariat and not by the CCLM Members. We are concerned that this may cause FAO members to be misled about the meeting results.

Korea proposes that the second sentence in paragraph (d) of the Executive Summary read as follows: “The Committee observed that there were a number of complex matters were notated by the Secretariat in relation to the establishment of the World Fisheries University”.

Third, the Secretariat noted that a number of complex matters may arise in relation to the establishment of the World Fisheries University. To name a few, such matters include the international legal status of the proposed university; the long-term sustainability of the University; and FAO's past experience with Article XV institutions.

In response to the concerns raised by the Secretariat, Korea had a bilateral meeting with FAO in early May. Thus we would like to inform the Council members about the revised proposal on the Agenda item 16, *Any Other Matters*.

Sr. Junior Andrés ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)

Le estaba dando la palabra a Marruecos que había solicitado hablar después de los grupos regionales. Trataré de ser breve. Nuestra Delegación se suma a la declaración del GRULAC y agradece el documento CL 154/2 en relación al Comité de Ética. Apoyamos la recomendación hecha por el Comité de Asuntos Jurídicos y deseamos expresar el agradecimiento profundo a cada uno de los Miembros del Comité de Ética por el trabajo realizado en estos últimos cuatro años.

Quisiéramos también considerar que el trabajo que han hecho ha sido fundamental en el proceso de renovación de esta Organización y que su misión ha sido cumplida a cabalidad. Instamos a que el Comité de Auditoría y el Oficial de Ética continúen desempeñando eficazmente esta importante labor.

Por otra parte, acogemos con beneplácito la resolución sobre la solicitud realizada por la sección de tratados de las Naciones Unidas e instamos a que el Consejo recomiende a la conferencia de la FAO autorizar al Director General a transmitir a dicha sección la constitución de la FAO y sus instrumentos para fines de archivo, inscripción y publicación en su colección de tratados.

Para finalizar, Señor Presidente, nuestra Delegación desea agradecer profundamente y toma nota de la propuesta presentada por la República de Corea para la creación de la Universidad Pesquera Mundial. Espera que esta importante propuesta continúe su curso al interno de la Organización y sean realizados los exámenes pertinentes por cada uno de los Órganos Rectores y Comités Técnicos involucrados, para lograr dilucidar todos los aspectos, tanto técnicos como jurídicos, de dicha propuesta.

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

I would like to thank Ambassador Ivanov for having presented the Report of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters. We agree with the recommendations on the issues relating to the Ethics Committee and also on the idea of submitting the FAO Constitution to the United Nations Treaty Series.

Regarding the proposal from the Republic of Korea on the establishment of the FAO World Fisheries University. We would like to at this point voice our positive approach to this proposal.

Mr Salah AL BAZZAZ (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

On behalf of the Near East Group, we would like once again to reassert our support to the Korean proposal to create a World Fisheries University. We would like to salute Korea for this proposal because it comes to the service of all our countries, particularly for us in the Near East Group.

We believe that we are in dire need for an academic institution like this one and we are certain that it will help us develop the capacities in order to better manage our fisheries in the region.

We therefore call upon the FAO to facilitate the creation of this university as quickly as possible.

M. Mostafa NAHI (Maroc)

Je voudrais tout d'abord souscrire entièrement à ce qui a été dit au nom du Groupe Afrique par l'ambassadeur Sheriff. Cependant, j'ai une question d'ordre juridique. Je voudrais avoir l'avis de l'Ambassadeur Ivanov, ainsi que celui du Conseiller juridique de la FAO.

En ce qui concerne la procédure ou bien l'appel lancé au Conseil pour l'approbation des amendements relatifs à l'Accord portant création d'une commission de lutte contre le criquet pèlerin, dont le Maroc est partie, le résumé à la première page du document CL 154/2 Rev.1 nous dit au paragraphe b) que le Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques (CQCJ) a approuvé le projet de résolution du Conseil et le soumet pour adoption par le Conseil. Jusque là, cette proposition ne nous pose aucun problème.

Par contre, si l'on analyse le texte du projet de résolution dans la version française à la page 8, nous trouvons au troisième considérant, que le Conseil, je lis: «Considérant qu'après l'approbation du Conseil, la Commission approuverait les amendements à sa prochaine session extraordinaire, qui se tiendrait à Ouagadougou [...]»; ensuite, au dernier considérant que le Conseil: «Approuve les amendements à l'Accord portant création d'une commission de lutte contre le criquet pèlerin dans la région occidentale, conformément au paragraphe 3 de l'Article XVI[...]».

Je me suis alors référé à l'article XIV de l'Acte constitutif, qui traite des conventions et des accords. Je n'ai pas trouvé dans cet article une quelconque disposition qui traite des amendements des accords internationaux. Il parle des accords complémentaires — on peut comprendre qu'il s'agit des accords additionnels pris en application des accords internationaux — mais aucune disposition de l'article XIV ne traite du rôle du Conseil et de la Conférence en ce qui concerne l'approbation d'éventuels amendements.

Il nous reste alors l'accord de la Commission elle-même. Il n'y a qu'une seule disposition au paragraphe 1 de l'article XVI, et qui dispose que l'approbation de l'accord et de ses amendements doit être faite seulement par les États signataires, et non par le Conseil ni par la Conférence. Cependant, le

paragraphe 3 du même article précise que: «Tout amendement au présent Accord est transmis au Conseil», sans indiquer toutefois pour quelle raison cette transmission est nécessaire. Il y est seulement indiqué que le Conseil «peut désavouer tout amendement qu'il juge incompatible avec les objectifs et les buts de l'Organisation ou avec les dispositions de l'Acte constitutif».

Ma question au Conseiller juridique est la suivante: «Doit-on comprendre que le rôle du Conseil en pareil cas se limite uniquement à juger de la conformité des amendements avec les principes et les buts de l'Organisation de l'Acte constitutif et non pas d'approuver les amendements?»

Mr Mafizur RAHMAN (Observer for Bangladesh)

I would like to thank the Chairperson of the CCLM and all the Members of the Committee for their hard work.

I would like to support the statement by the Asia Group as well as the statement made by the Africa Group among others in support of the establishment of the FAO World Fisheries University.

The Chairperson of CCLM said it will be discussed under *Any Other Matters*. But it is in the report and there is something that I need to highlight.

In document CL 154/2 Rev.1, if we go to Section V, the title reads “FAO World Fisheries University”, but in paragraph 15, “FAO” is not mentioned. I do not know why. Also, in paragraph 17 I read: “the Secretariat noted that a number of complex matters arose”, that it was already raised by the Republic of Korea. Who raised this complexity sentence? A member of the CCLM or the Secretariat?

Thirdly, as stated in paragraph 18, the document itself was circulated just immediately before the CCLM session. How could the CCLM members be able to consider this document?

Perhaps we could talk about these issues under item 16, *Any Other Matters*.

Nonetheless, I would like to reiterate our support for establishing FAO World Fisheries University and we would like to thank Korea for their generosity coming up with this very efficient and useful proposal, particularly for the developing countries.

LEGAL COUNSEL

Je commencerais par la question qui a été soulevée par le représentant du Maroc et je suis prêt à donner par la suite d'éventuels éclaircissements.

Je tiens à vous présenter d'emblée mes excuses pour le manque de clarté sur certains points du rapport.

En réalité, avec les traités conclus dans le cadre de l'article XIV, nous sommes en présence de traités qui opèrent dans le cadre de la FAO, et le rôle du Conseil et du CQCJ est de s'assurer que les amendements sont conformes d'un point de vue juridique et qu'ils sont compatibles avec les objectifs de l'Organisation.

Ce n'est donc pas le Conseil lui-même qui va adopter les amendements, mais la Commission et il est prévu que la Commission se réunisse au mois de janvier prochain. Elle devra alors approuver les amendements, qui entreront en vigueur à ce moment-là.

Par conséquent, le Conseil est invité à travers le CQCJ à constater que les amendements sont conformes, qu'ils ne soulèvent pas de difficultés particulières d'un point de vue juridique et qu'ils ne bouleversent pas les obligations et les droits des États, mais surtout leurs obligations, car dans ce cas une procédure d'adoption différente devrait être suivie, impliquant une ratification par chacun des pays.

Ainsi, le Conseil est appelé à se prononcer sur la régularité des amendements, sur le fait qu'ils sont conformes aux textes fondamentaux et qu'ils ne semblent pas soulever de difficultés du point de vue des objectifs généraux de la FAO. J'inviterais donc le Conseil à travers vous à constater que ces amendements sont en ordre et qu'ils pourraient être adoptés par la Commission en janvier prochain lors de sa session.

Enfin, comme les États Membres de la Commission vont adopter ces amendements, il n'est pas tout à fait exact de dire qu'il appartient au Conseil de les adopter. Nous pourrions éventuellement revenir sur ce point si vous le souhaitez.

Je vois, Monsieur le Président, que le représentant du Maroc souhaite intervenir. Peut-être que vous pourriez lui donner encore la parole pour un éventuel éclaircissement?

M. Mostafa NAHI (Maroc)

Nous sommes tout à fait d'accord avec la clarification qui vient d'être faite par le Conseiller juridique. Dans ce cas, il faudra travailler sur un autre terme, au cinquième considérant concernant l'approbation, car celle-ci est clairement définie dans la Convention de Vienne de 1969 sur le droit des traités et n'a pas lieu d'être dans ce considérant.

CONSEILLER JURIDIQUE

Merci. Nous reviendrons sur ce point pour trouver une formulation satisfaisante pour tous.

Continues in English

Now I wanted to turn to the observations made regarding the proposal to establish the Fisheries University. I note that this proposal was revised and it has been withdrawn from the Agenda of the Joint Meetings, and we now are in presence of a revised proposal that we have already discussed with representatives of Korea and we look forward to discussing with them now after the Session of the Council the revised proposal.

Let me just clarify – and we take due note that a number of Members are very much attached to this proposal – let me clarify in very clear terms that indeed the Secretariat has some concerns, the Secretariat had some concerns in relation to the old proposal. This is clear. Indeed, FAO has not had an experience in operating an institution of this nature. It has not been the tradition of FAO. Definitely not. It has not been foreseen in our Strategic Framework. At the same time, there are a number of other institutions that deal directly with educational matters like the United Nations University, like UNESCO. We also note that there is a Maritime University of the International Maritime Organization.

And we had some fears regarding the fact that we would have an organization acting in the name of FAO towards the outside world, and using the name of FAO, without the Organization and its Members being able to exercise meaningful control and oversight over this institution. But no doubt these issues will be now addressed during the intersessional period. We will be discussing with our colleagues from Korea. And we believe that a suitable solution and a suitable scheme could be found for this initiative.

We also note that most likely the current management of the Organization will only be marginally involved in this proposal, but we hope that we will come up with a solution that will respond to the long-term interests of the Organization and which will take into account some concerns that, indeed, we in the Secretariat have expressed. Again, we look forward to discussing this matter with our counterparts of the Republic of Korea and we are grateful for this initiative.

I just wanted to take advantage of taking the floor now. This is something that the Members will themselves find in due course on our website. I note that yesterday some references were also indirectly made to this matter. We will be implementing a new format for the presentation of information on the ratification and acceptance of the FAO Constitution in response to some questions that a number of Members have asked. We will have on our website in the near future a new system which will describe all events and all steps and instruments deposited by the countries with great detail than we have had up until now. This will be an improvement as compared to the current situation.

So I will stop here, and maybe Ambassador Ivanov could have the last words on this matter.

Mr Lubomir IVANOV (Chairperson Committee on Constitutional and legal Matters)

I do not have much to add after what was said by the Legal Counsel. I only can say that there have been many cases when the CCLM has addressed bodies under Article XIV. In fact, at least the

experience I have, and of course Mr Tavares has definitely a longer one, the focusing for sure was never mentioned on introducing amendments to the agreements. This was done by the organizations themselves, like the one on locusts, and the CCLM was focused mainly on the question whether there is a need for a much more complicated procedure on the basis of which Member Nations to this agreement should or should not go through new procedures. And once, as you saw, we found out that there is no such need, this was leading to a much more simplified procedure which will be finalized, of course, as was mentioned already, next year in 2017.

About what was mentioned by the Korean representative, it is true and we should apologize for the delay of the document for the CCLM session because the report was delivered at the last moment indeed. But what I can say is that the main reason for the delay was the complexity of the whole issue. And as it was seen by this very brief exchange that we had, it is related to legal, procedural, and other complications and questions which need to be addressed. The discussion on the proposal for a World Fisheries University, as it was said already, will take place under *Any Other Matters* and is beyond what we should cover in the discussion of the CCLM Report. It is something that has to be addressed in the future.

I want to thank all the Committee Members for the very constructive approach and very fruitful and pertinent considerations. I hope that this will lead us to a positive finalization of this Agenda item.

CHAIRPERSON

I can now make conclusions for item 9, I think the presentation was clear and also the interventions were very clear, so I make my conclusions as follows:

1. The Council approved the report of the 102nd Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters.
2. In particular,
 - a) approved the draft Council Resolution “*Amendments to the Agreement for the Establishment of a Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Western Region*”, set out in Appendix I to the Report and noted that the amendments would take effect from the date of adoption by the Commission;
 - b) commended the Ethics Committee, which had been established on a trial basis in 2011, for its excellent work which had been extremely useful to the Organization, as well as for the assistance provided to the Secretariat and to the Membership;
 - c) concurred with the recommendations of the CCLM and the Finance Committee that the Ethics Committee had fulfilled its mission and that there was no justification for its continued operation, nor for extending its mandate, and that matters addressed by the Ethics Committee were within the purview of the Audit Committee, which submitted an annual report to the Finance Committee. It further concurred with the recommendation of the CCLM and the Finance Committee that the Ethics Officer continue to report to the Governing Bodies on activities of the Ethics Office, possibly in the context of the review by the Finance Committee of the Report of the Audit Committee;
 - d) recommended to the Conference that the Director-General be authorized to transmit to the United Nations Treaty Section the FAO Constitution and related instruments for filing and recording and subsequent publication in the United Nations Treaty Series; and
 - e) acknowledged the contribution of the Development Law Branch (LEGN) to FAO’s mandate and its Strategic Framework and noted the CCLM’s encouragement that LEGN continue its advisory legal work, responding to the priorities identified by the regions and countries;
 - f) noted with respect to the proposal for the establishment of a World Fisheries University that a review proposal had been made and would be presented for information under any other matters.

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

I would like to refer to the intervention made by my colleague from Morocco which was the object of comment by the Secretariat. I understood that the Secretariat, and particularly the Legal Counsel,

recognized that the point raised by Morocco was a valid one and has indicated that suitable language will be sought in order to reflect his concerns in the draft resolution that is contained in the report of the Committee on Legal Matters.

Hence, perhaps it would be more advisable if point (a) in the conclusion would say “approved the draft Council Resolution as amended” after the consideration by the Council so that it would entail the possibility that the Secretariat will make the suitable corrections in the text.

I also would like to clarify that in the last point of your conclusions, you said “review proposal” and perhaps you meant “revised proposal” as regards the initiative taken by Korea.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you Brazil, we take your legal advice:

(a) approved the draft Council Resolution “Amendments to the Agreement for the Establishment of a Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Western Region”, as amended by Council set out in Appendix I to the Report and noted that the amendments would take effect from the date of adoption by the Commission;

(f) noted with respect to the proposal for the establishment of a World Fisheries University that a revised proposal had been made and would be presented for information under any other matters.

Item 12. Status of implementation of decisions taken at the 153rd Session of the Council
Point 12. Suite donnée aux décisions adoptées par le Conseil à sa cent cinquante-troisième session
Tema 12. Estado de aplicación de las decisiones adoptadas por el Consejo en su 153.º período de sesiones

(CL 154/LIM/3; CL 154/INF/8)

CHAIRPERSON

We now turn our attention to item 12, *Status of Implementation of Decisions taken at the 153rd Session of the Council (30 November – 3 December 2015)*. The relevant documents are CL 154/LIM/3 and CL 154/INF/8.

As foreseen in the Multi-year Programme of Work, the Council is invited to note information on the implementation of decisions taken at its 153rd Session in December 2015. The document also gives an update on the status of implementation of decisions taken at the 151st Session of Council held in March 2015, and the 150th Session of the Council held in December 2014.

At the request of Members during the last session of Council, the decision regarding gender as a cross-cutting issue in the PWB 2016-17 has been added and marked as “ongoing”.

Furthermore, the request by the 150th Session of the Council, for progress reports on the strategies for partnerships with civil society and the private sector has been added and marked as “ongoing”.

Finally, with regard to the “Proposed Rules of Procedure for the participation of Civil Society Organizations and Private Sector Representatives in FAO meetings”, I wish to inform Council that, further to the decision by the 150th Session of the Council in December 2014, which mandated the Independent Chairperson of the Council to hold informal consultations with the Regional Groups with a view to reaching policy agreement on the proposed rules, I proceeded to convene a number of informal meetings with the seven Regional Groups, as well as a number of bilateral consultations with Regional Group Chairpersons, over the course of more than one year. An overview of the consultation process, and the outcome thereof is contained in document CL 154/INF/8.

During this process of informal consultations it became evident that consensus had not been reached on a number of issues. I subsequently informed the Chairs and Vice-chairs that, in view of the divergent positions of the Regional Groups, any continuation of consultations would not add value to the process.

Hence, there was nothing of substance for me to report to the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters, which had initially been tasked by the Council to review the Rules of Procedure. I suggest that the status of this matter be mentioned in the Report of this session of Council.

I will now give the floor to delegations who wish to speak on the status report set out in document CL 154/LIM/3.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Je voudrais vous demander de bien vouloir donner la parole aux Pays-Bas, qui exercent la présidence de l'Union européenne.

Mr Hans BRAND (Observer for Netherlands)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate countries to the EU (Albania, Montenegro and Turkey) align themselves with this statement.

In his introductory remarks on Monday, the Director-General called for the Council's guidance on how to move forward on a number of major issues on FAO's agenda: climate change, nutrition, migration and support for members in monitoring and evaluating the progress of the SDGs.

All of these issues are indeed very important for FAO. Addressing them effectively will require more systematic and structured collaboration between agencies, including IFAD and WFP, so as to better deliver results together.

We are therefore very much looking forward to the joint paper with IFAD and WFP outlining the elements of future RBA collaboration, which will be reviewed by this Council at its next session in December.

We welcome FAO's commitment to working with IFAD and WFP on a joint paper that indicates in a concrete and forward-looking manner how we can enhance RBA collaboration, particularly with a view to improving the division of work, achieving better synergies and focussing on comparative advantages to maximise results.

Our understanding is that the paper will be discussed with the Membership at a joint RBA informal seminar before being submitted to the respective Governing Bodies. We look forward to participating in this, thus strengthening our collaboration and partnership in delivering our shared goals.

CHAIRPERSON

My understanding that the Council has received and noted what is contained in the report and also the report which I have given to you with regard to the consultations I was supposed to make with the Regional Groups in regard to the participation of non-state actors in meetings. This was also endorsed by the Regional Groups. Therefore I can conclude on this agenda item as follows:

The Council took note of the status of implementation of decisions taken at its 153rd Session (December 2015), the 151st Session (March 2015) and the 150th Session (December 2014).

In particular, the Council noted that the mandate given to the Independent Chairperson of the Council to hold consultations with the Regional Groups with a view to reaching agreement on the proposed rules for participation of civil society organizations and private sector representatives in FAO meetings had been completed.

Item 13. Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2016-17

Point 13. Calendrier 2016-2017 des sessions des organes directeurs de la FAO et des autres réunions principales

Tema 13. Calendario de los períodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores de la FAO y otras reuniones importantes en 2016-17

(CL 154/LIM/1 Rev.1)

CHAIRPERSON

We now move on to item 13, *Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2016-17*. The document before Council is CL 154/LIM/1 Rev.1.

To avoid meetings overlapping, FAO draws up this calendar in close coordination with IFAD and WFP. The schedule of meetings is generally tabled at the first session of Council of the year for information,

and any changes made since the last session, when the calendar was presented for approval, are indicated with an asterisk.

I now pass the floor to the Secretary-General to inform the Council of some proposed changes to the Calendar for 2016.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I wish to inform the Council that a *Ministerial Meeting on commodity prices and sustainable development* will be held on Monday 3 October 2016. Consequently, the 71st Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems will be rescheduled to 4-6 October 2016, following the one-day Ministerial Meeting on 3 October 2016.

CHAIRPERSON

I can conclude on this item as follows.

The Council took note of and approved the following amendments to the calendar for 2016 set out in the Appendix to this report: the 71st Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems would be preceded by a Ministerial Meeting on 3 October and will be rescheduled from 3 to 5 October 2016 to 4 to 6 October 2016; the 43rd Session of the Committee on World Food Security will be scheduled from 17 to 22 October now to 17 to 21 October 2016 since the World Food Day will take place on the 14 October 2016.

Mme Onipatsa Helinoro TIANAMAHEFA (Madagascar)

La délégation de Madagascar intervient au nom du Groupe régional Afrique sur le point à l'ordre du jour relatif au Calendrier 2016- 2017 des sessions des organes directeurs de la FAO et des autres réunions principales.

Le Groupe salue l'établissement de ce calendrier des réunions des trois organisations des Nations Unies ayant leur siège à Rome. Cet outil de planification de vos activités donne une fois de plus la preuve de la bonne et étroite collaboration qui existe entre la FAO, le PAM et le FIDA. Nous vous encourageons donc à continuer à coopérer dans l'établissement de ce calendrier afin d'éviter le chevauchement des réunions des organes directeurs et des consultations informelles qui intéressent la majorité des Représentants permanents.

Le Groupe régional Afrique apprécie l'amélioration du système actuel, notamment la publication de ce calendrier sur le site web, donnant ainsi la possibilité de consultations en temps utile aux responsables des trois organisations chargés de la programmation des réunions et aux Représentants permanents. Nous félicitons l'Organisation pour les efforts consentis en vue d'une meilleure coordination des réunions de ces trois organisations, grâce à la mise à disposition en ligne d'un Calendrier commun sur le site web des Représentants.

Le Groupe Afrique prend note du calendrier 2017 des sessions des organes directeurs de la FAO, du PAM et du FIDA et des autres réunions principales, et approuve les dates des réunions pour 2016 avec les huit modifications apportées par le Secrétariat.

Toutefois, nous voudrions faire remarquer au Secrétariat que les calendriers de la 163^{ème} session du Comité financier, de la 120^{ème} session du Comité du Programme et de la session du Conseil d'administration du PAM de novembre se chevauchent avec la COP22, qui aura lieu à Marrakech au Maroc du 7 au 18 novembre 2016. Le Groupe Afrique invite le Secrétariat à bien vouloir apporter des améliorations au calendrier pour assurer une bonne participation à ces importantes rencontres.

CHAIRPERSON

I take note of your intervention and I thank you for agreeing to the changes which have been made, so my conclusion remains the same. So I can say we have concluded item 12.

Item 15. Provisional Agenda for the 155th Session of the Council (December 2016)**Point 15. Ordre du jour provisoire de la cent cinquante-cinquième session du Conseil (décembre 2016)****Tema 15. Programa provisional del 155.º período de sesiones del Consejo (diciembre de 2016)**
(CL 154/INF/2)**CHAIRPERSON**

We will now proceed to item 15, *Provisional Agenda for the 155th Session of the Council (December 2016)*. The relevant document is CL 154/INF/2. I will now give the floor to delegations who wish to speak on this item.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

So we understand, following the earlier decision of this Council meeting, that the Independent Technical Review would be added to this agenda as well.

Ms Placida Shuvai CHIVANDIRE (Zimbabwe)

Zimbabwe is taking the floor on behalf of the Africa Regional Group. We thank the Secretariat for preparing the Provisional Agenda for the 155th Session of Council. The Provisional Agenda is an adequate framework within which we can address issues of mutual interest at the next session of Council in December this year. We therefore endorse it.

CHAIRPERSON

Mr Gagnon, please, could you clarify the issue which has been raised by Australia?

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Australia, your point is of course valid. The question that remains to be looked into is whether it will come to the Council through the Report of the Joint Meeting, or whether, as we often do, it will be made a separate item on the agenda.

CHAIRPERSON

My conclusions on item 15 are that the Council endorsed the provisional Agenda of its 155th Session which will take place from 5 to 9 December 2016.

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

It is not clear to me what the decision is on the point raised by Australia. I understand that the Secretariat has provided us with alternatives to respond to the request made by Australia. However, your conclusion does not give clear guidance on how to proceed. Could you please clarify that?

CHAIRPERSON

I thought it did not need guidance. Maybe the clarification which was made was sufficient to Australia.

Mr Matthew WORRELL (Australia)

I think we raised this under the previous item where we discussed this explicitly and your clarification was that it would come forward to the Council meeting. I take the point now the Secretariat is raising that it is yet to be determined whether it is under the report from the Programme Committee or whether it comes forward as a separate stand-alone item.

Item 11. Council Multi-year Programme of Work 2016-19**Point 11. Programme de travail pluriannuel du Conseil 2016-2019****Tema 11. Programa de trabajo plurianual del Consejo para 2016-19**
(CL 154/INF/5)**CHAIRPERSON**

We now move on to item 11, *Council Multi-year Programme of Work 2016-19*. Please ensure that you have document CL 154/INF/5 before you.

As Members are aware, this planning tool is a standing item on the Council's agenda. Due to the rolling nature of the MYPOW, it should be considered a "living document" and, as such, is subject to constant improvement and fine-tuning, also as a result of consultations on the MYPOW that take place at the regular informal meetings I hold with the Regional Group Chairs and Vice-chairs.

In this regard, I wish to inform Council that, pursuant to the decision by the 153rd Session of Council in December 2015, and in line with the recommendation by the 39th FAO Conference, that a section on "Outstanding and Strategic Issues to be tracked over time" be added to the MYPOW to improve the document's usefulness by making the Results Section more focused and specific, the MYPOW was placed on the agenda of the monthly informal meetings with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Regional Groups from January to May this year.

To date, no inputs on issues to be tracked over time, nor suggestions for making the results section more focussed, have been submitted by the Regional Groups.

The floor is now open for delegates who may wish to propose improvements to the text you have before you.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Je voudrais vous demander, Monsieur le Président, de bien vouloir donner la parole aux Pays-Bas pour l'Union européenne.

Mr Hans BRAND (Observer for Netherlands)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 Member States. The candidate countries of the EU (Albania, Montenegro, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey) and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

We thank the Independent Chair, Regional Chairs and the Secretariat for the updated Council Multi-Year Programme of Work for 2016-19, which serves as a useful forward-looking and planning tool. It also provides an important platform to assess the results achieved by Council and review our ways of working, continuing to strengthen the effectiveness of our governance.

In response to the question on ways of making the 'Results Section' more focussed for follow-up in informal meetings of Regional Chairs and the Independent Chair of Council, we would like to see Members agree on a limited – maybe five – priority areas for a work plan, with milestones to track progress and developments. We should also introduce a section in the MYPOW to monitor results, highlighting achievements – such as Council's recommendation to Conference of a budget level for the first time – as well as areas for continued improvement.

With regard to which issues need to be tracked over time, suggestions include FAO's work on climate change; progress on nutrition; embedding the cross-cutting objective of gender; FAO stepping up to fulfil its global leadership role in implementing the Conference resolution on AMR; and collaboration with Rome-based agencies and other partners. We would also like to track the effectiveness of the Council in fulfilling its oversight function, with opportunities for a candid exchange on any aspects of the governance process that could be improved to ensure that our governance is as robust and transparent as it needs to be to perform its role in the best possible way. In addition, it would be useful to receive updates on the regular contacts between the Independent Chairperson of Council and FAO Management.

We would also like to reiterate the importance of regular informal exchange between Members on an inter-sessional basis. Such meetings allow Membership and Management to discuss key issues and enhance understanding, building a shared vision for the way ahead to deliver our common goals. As the Director-General often says, it is only in partnership that we can deliver results. So, we look forward to continuing to strengthen our strategic focus on delivering results and impact, and thank our Independent Chairperson of the Council and the Regional Chairs for developing proposals to maximise the use of the MYPOW for consideration at our next Council meeting in December.

Mr John TUMINARO (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 2016-19.

We thank the Member States and the FAO Secretariat for considering revisions previously proposed by the United States. We believe those changes have improved the functionality of the MYPOW by providing clearer and better focused outputs and indicators.

We welcome the additional details on proposed activities. We believe those changes marked an important step to make the MYPOW the “clear and precise” management tool it was designed to be.

The United States encourages the Secretariat to use the preparation of Council MYPOWs as an opportunity to examine its work plan in a structured manner. This would be useful in keeping with a results-based management approach, as well as a chance to review working methods and practices at regular intervals.

We note that the Council document CL 154/INF/5 invites Members to consider ways to make the “Results Section” more focused and specific. In this regard, the United States encourages Members to view means to empower the Council to review decisions forwarded to Conference and to ensure they are prioritized with respect to FAO’s mandate.

Ms Placida Shuvai CHIVANDIRE (Zimbabwe)

Zimbabwe is taking the floor on behalf of Africa.

Let me take this opportunity to congratulate you, Chair, and the FAO Secretariat for providing this revised informative and very comprehensive document.

The Africa Group appreciate very much the work being done by the Council and the Independent Chair of Council in leading the work of FAO to enable this Organization to deliver its programmes efficiently and effectively to fight hunger and poverty.

As it may be noted, on account of the many pressing issues FAO handles, there is a possibility that some issues that need to be developed longer may slip our attention.

We, therefore, note with satisfaction that the current refined MYPOW document has expectedly addressed our concern. This is exemplified by a clear description of critical components such as: indicators and targets, outputs, activities, as well as working methods that are user-friendly. It is remarkable that these components have been clearly enunciated in the following important themes: strategy and priority setting and budget planning; monitoring implementation of governance decisions; exercise of oversight functions; and work planning and working methods.

In light of the above, the Africa Group welcome the MYPOW 2016-2019 as a useful planning and guiding tool for FAO.

Mr Antonio Otávio SÁ RICARTE (Brazil)

I was not intending to take the floor on this subject because the MYPOW was acceptable to my Delegation, as it was presented.

I would just like to thank the delegations that have intervened on behalf of the European Union, the Africa Group, and the Delegation of the United States for their constructive suggestions.

I have some doubts about one proposal made by the Delegation of the Netherlands on behalf of the European Union, which is the request to hold frequent exchanges with the Secretariat outside of the institutional framework of the Organization. At a certain point during the debates this week, we heard from the Legal Counsel that informal briefings are not foreseen in the rules of the Organization except from those that are undertaken by yourself as the Independent Chair of the Council.

I do understand that the Director-General has taken the initiative of inviting Members for briefing sessions. However, I do not want to leave room to interpretation that these briefing sessions can be a platform for any kind of negotiations. They are informative sessions. So the word exchange between the Members and the Director-General is not applicable. Recently, what we are actually experiencing

is an opportunity of being informed on developments by the Director-General in implementing decisions. I would not like to give the impression that the informal briefings can in any way substitute the roles of the Governing Bodies of the Organization.

Sr. Benito Santiago JIMÈNEZ SAUMA (Mexico)

Al igual que Brasil, mi Delegación apoya el documento tal y como fue presentado. Como dijo Brasil, tengo algunas dudas sobre la posición que presentó la Unión Europea, en particular, sobre el echo de poner más énfasis en algunos temas específicos. Quizás esto es algo que no podamos discutir ahora, sino más adelante, así como la cuestión de las sesiones informativas oficiosas.

Por el momento, apoyamos que el documento sea adoptado como lo ha presentado y como lo han apoyado el Grupo Africano y los Estados Unidos.

Mr Mohammed S. SHERIFF (Liberia)

Liberia takes a different view on the position expressed by my dear Distinguished colleague from Brazil, because as a diplomat accredited to the United Nations agencies and also to the Republic of Italy, I do not see any rules that prohibit us from interacting with the Secretariat.

I am sincerely very shocked and surprised to hear such advice to say this is unnecessary and not applicable. As Regional Groups or as people within this Organization, we can make a request to interact, maybe to ask questions of how the Organization is running. What is this fear that if Member Nations interact with the Secretariat, are there any secrets there to be discussed? Out there, there are so many millions of people dying of hunger.

If Member Nations decide or ask Management to interact with the Secretariat or interact with even the Director-General or anyone, as a matter of fact, why should someone limit us? I sincerely do not seem to understand what is the concern. What is the problem? Are we hiding something in the Organization or are we hiding something from ourselves?

No. Please let us not go that way. Let us not go down that drain. Please let us be open, transparent, and discuss issues openly. That is why when I sit in here representing my country, I express exactly how I feel on behalf of my country or on behalf of my continent. I express it with no fear, with no favour. I say it in the interest of my region or my country.

After that, we are friends again. We come right back on the scene. We shake hands. We laugh. We eat together. We laugh.

You know, when two lawyers go to court, one is on the other side. One is on the defending side and the other one is – you know, so after they hit an argument, when they get back outside they are friends. So, speaking sincerely, I am baffled to hear such statements in Council. No one should limit us from interacting with Management or with the Secretariat or with anybody. We have the right to request an interaction with anyone.

So this is not about region versus region, because I am beginning now to think that you have a certain group of people who are trying to shield our beloved Director-General from interacting with us, that we have to go through someone. We do not have direct access to speak to him, to report to our capitals. If that is the case, then I need not to have any bilateral. So please, distinguished colleagues, let us respect our status and let us respect ourselves and let us above all respect the sovereignty of nations. We are here as sovereign nations, so when we are speaking, let people listen to what we are saying.

Let them not look at it as if Sheriff is speaking or John Brown or John Doe is speaking. It is Liberia that is speaking when I take the floor. It is Brazil that is speaking, my dear Distinguished colleague who takes the floor. So please, let us be transparent and discuss issues as they come on the floor and let us be objective and neutral. Let us not begin to build walls or shield people with whom we are supposed to interact.

I will take an objection to that. If there is any decision or not, Liberia will not be part of that decision.

CHAIRPERSON

The Council has already agreed on the MYPOW for 2016-19. I do not want to have a debate, the discussion we have had is continued improvement on this.

I never got any response from one regional group in view of the several meetings I held. Now I start getting the views, which are very good and normally such views come in an informal consultation. And I expect views which have been expressed by the United States of America, good views, and I remember last time we had a good discussion on this issue.

The EU, Africa, all have good views which I expect to come to my informal consultations for discussion. But this is not for this Council to discuss. Normally each regional group gets the opportunity to go through the MYPOW, make changes and improvements, and when all of the Regional Groups have made comments, they are circulated to all the other regions and all the Members.

Then I convene a meeting whereby we start a discussion until we agree. And we agree in an informal meeting and we bring the results to the Council. So please, I would ask you not to have a debate on this issue. This is the position of the Netherlands. This is the position of Brazil. This is the position of the United States of America. But we still have to discuss. So please, the positions as they are now, they will be subject to consultations and discussions.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

Respaldamos completamente sus comentarios y agradecemos sus esfuerzos y los esfuerzos previos que hizo en tener consultas sobre este tema. Quería señalar brevemente que no creo que esté en juego o se esté cuestionando aquí la utilidad de los seminarios informales del Director General. Yo creo que todos coincidamos que es útil y ha sido habitual en la Organización tener este tipo de seminarios informales. Teniendo en cuenta el tema del que estamos hablando del programa del Consejo, esos seminarios escapan del ámbito del Consejo. Los seminarios del Director General van tratados con la membresía, con lo cual no cabe en este punto y en el programa del Consejo tratar estos temas.

Mr Nthutang SELEKA (South Africa)

I am not trying to complicate your situation. I am trying to say that I think just to see where Brazil's view is coming from. I believe maybe the point he is trying to put across is that there is nothing wrong with informal consultations or briefings. Yet, I deem that he is trying to caution us that if that is overdone, it tends to undermine the calendar of meetings of the Organization. If we make a practice and a pattern of it.

In other words, the point he is trying to make here is that consultations and this type of informal consultation have to be done if and when it is absolutely necessary.

If you overdo that, then it tends to undermine the calendar of meetings and therefore it gives an impression that some people want to micromanage.

CHAIRPERSON

Let me conclude on item 11.

The Council noted the document for information on the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2016-19 and requested that proposals for the adjustments of the "Results" section to make it more focused and for the definition of issues that need to be tracked over time, as well as other suggestions, be discussed in the agreed upon for insertion in the revised MYPOW on the occasion of informal meetings with the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of Regional Groups convened by the Independent Chairperson of the Council.

Before we conclude on this item, I call on the Secretary-General to inform us of any improvements made to our working methods. I would like to take this opportunity to mention that document CL 154/INF/9, *Note on the Methods of Work on the Council* is available for information on the Council webpage.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Members Gateway itself has continued to consolidate its role as an efficient channel of communication between the Organization and Members. I am pleased to report that the number of web hits has notably increased in recent months to reach over 29 000 visits in the first four months of 2016.

In line with the move toward 'paper smart' meetings throughout the UN system, I am pleased to report that there has been a sustained reduction in the number of documents printed for recent sessions of the Council and more and more delegates download documents to tablets and other electronic devices. FAO closely monitors all documents at each session and modifies print runs for future sessions accordingly, thereby reducing cost and environmental impact of meetings.

Item 16. Any Other Matters

Point 16. Autres questions

Tema 16. Asuntos varios

CHAIRPERSON

We now move on to item 16, *Any Other Matters*. Members will recall that two sub-items added under this item for information only when the Agenda was adopted yesterday, namely: 16.1, *Proposal to establish a World Fisheries University* and 16.2, *Statement by a Representative of the FAO Staff Bodies*.

Now on sub-item 16.1, proposal to establish a World Fisheries University, I shall give the floor to the Republic of Korea. Republic of Korea, you have the floor please.

Item 16.1 Proposed World Fisheries University

Point 16.1 Proposition relative à une université mondiale des pêches

Tema 16.1 Propuesta de una Universidad Pesquera Mundial

CHAIRPERSON

On sub-item 16.1, *Proposal to establish a World Fisheries University*, I shall give the floor to the Republic of Korea.

Ms Shin-hee CHO (Republic of Korea)

It is my great pleasure to address you about Korea's revised proposal on the establishment of the FAO World Fisheries University. Let me briefly explained about why Korea revised the initial proposal.

As distinguished Council Members may recall, Korea officially introduced the proposal at the 153rd Session of the Council. The Council welcomed it and noted that it would be further discussed by relevant Governing Bodies this year.

The FAO Secretariat suggested that the final decision with an establishment agreement and other legal instruments would be made at the FAO Conference in 2017. Accordingly, the 102nd Session of the CCLM received information on the proposal and the Secretariat noted that a number of complex matters such as financial sustainability and legal status of the the WFU.

Subsequently, the Korean Vice-Minister of Oceans and Fisheries and the Director-General of FAO had bilateral meetings on this to further examine some difficult aspects and explore alternative possibilities.

After discussion, both sides, in recognition that the WFU is an important initiative that needs to be implemented successfully, agreed to take a step-by-step approach which covers a pilot partnership programme, a working group and a final decision at the next FAO Conference in 2019.

The Republic of Korea is pleased to reach a constructive agreement with the Secretariat. So Korea would like to inform the distinguished Council Members of our revised proposal in more details.

First, my Ministry will positively consider withdrawing "FAO" from the title of the University, taking into account concerns raised by the Secretariat.

Second, starting from 2017, a pilot partnership programme between FAO and a Korean academic institution will be operated for two years for the delivery of a joint degree in fisheries.

We hope the next Council will be informed of the negotiations for the partnership agreement between FAO and Korea. In fact, some Members told us that they really want to see the establishment of the WFU soon.

So Korea is happy to somewhat realize their hope with the early operation of the pilot programme, although it is a smaller scale compared with the original proposal.

Second, in parallel with the pilot programme, a working group will be formed to address legal, programmatic, financial and technical aspects of the establishment of the proposed university. At the COFI and at the next Council, we hope terms of reference, composition and timeline of the working group will be discussed and determined.

Third, the proposal will be further developed, in light of the experience gained under the pilot programme and deliberations made by the working group, for a final decision for the establishment of the WFU at the FAO Conference in 2019.

With regard to the pilot programme and the working group, we look forward to closely working together with the Secretariat for the preparation for the upcoming 32nd Session of COFI and the next Council

As its part, Korea is willing to fully support and cooperate with the Secretariat.

Lastly, Korea wishes to thank the Secretariat and many FAO Members for their cooperation, encouragement, advice and support.

Item 16.2 Statement by a Representative of FAO Staff Bodies

Point 16.2 Déclaration d'un représentant des associations du personnel de la FAO

Tema 16.2 Declaración de un representante de los órganos representativos del personal de la FAO

CHAIRPERSON

We now move on item 16.2, *Statement by a Representative of FAO Staff Bodies*.

I give the floor to Ms Elena Rotondo, Deputy General Secretary of the Union of General Service Staff, who will speak on behalf of the FAO Staff Representative Bodies.

Ms Elena ROTONDO (Deputy General Secretary of the Union of General Service Staff)

Mr Chairperson, Mr Director-General, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, colleagues, on behalf of the Staff Representative Bodies (SRBs) and of the staff we represent worldwide, I thank you for having been granted the opportunity to address you today. It is an honour and a privilege we do not take for granted and we approach it with the renewed hope to be able to provide you with an inside snapshot of Staff Management Relations and HR management in our Organization.

Looking back over the past few years and the addresses of the SRBs to Council and Conference, I am conscious of the heavy burden we leave you with at each opportunity given. We have made you privy to our troubles, the many difficulties we have encountered along the relentless road of the current FAO reform. Today we are here to let you know that FAO is only as strong, as wealthy, as knowledgeable and ultimately as solid as the staff that work within it. During this Reform process, we have consistently shared with you the obstacles in terms of Staff Management Relations, as well as in substantive matters, to no avail.

This change process has been unrelenting and at times forceful; Administration has oftentimes decided to move forward with reform at the price of setting aside the consultation process. Setting priorities is a managerial prerogative and we have consistently reassured this Administration that we have no aspiration, nor do we want to co-manage FAO. However, we feel the Organization would have only benefitted from due consultation process, and would have gained from the social harmony that would have resulted from it. But that is not all: we truly believe we are an asset to FAO and that we can

represent the added value in the Reform process. Our Recognition Agreements state, and I quote, “The Organization recognizes that representative staff bodies capable of negotiating with authority greatly facilitate good staff management relations”. And “The Organization and the Staff Associations agree that well-defined consultative and representational arrangements are essential for the orderly conduct of staff management relations”. As representatives of staff, we are in this process on a voluntary basis, and this alone should be a token of our commitment to FAO’s mandate and what an important role Staff Management Relations play in achieving key objectives.

Therefore, with the reform ‘steam train’ moving forward with or without us, it is easy to understand why this has become such a harsh reality, one that is so difficult to accept.

In the last five years, we have seen a drastic cut in regular programme positions and, most recently, a 15 percent across-the-board freeze on posts, which has had significant effects on the staff of FAO. We are persistently asked to take more and more work on. Staff and employees on the whole have met this challenge because of their demonstrated dedication to the Organization’s goals, which has never faltered and has helped us focus on the greater picture through this challenging period, even if discouraged by events. Our passion for our work speaks for itself. If today the Organization can celebrate its many successes, it is above all thanks to its employees. However, this cannot be kept up for long: the quantity of work is crushing and quality sooner or later will suffer despite our present efforts.

Owing to this major gap in staffing, consultants and other “Non Staff” Human Resources (NSHR) today represent 70 percent, if not more, of the FAO workforce; not only does this alter the required degree of independence and geographical representation established by this Council, but more importantly they carry out core functions in the Organization without guaranteeing continuity. More worryingly they lack the right to appropriate social security and right to representation.

The average staff member in FAO today faces a desolate landscape when considering career development and advancement opportunities. The Organization’s workforce is, for the most part, overwhelmed, stressed – some burnt out, yet FAO seems incapable, if not unwilling, to give the recognition and respect staff deserve. Some progress has been made on the issue of NSHR, and Administration has made a commitment to work together with the SRBs on a policy to ensure that core staff functions be carried out by duly selected and appointed staff members. This would go a long way in preventing the use, and misuse, of NSHR within the Organization beyond their natural intended purpose.

In December 2015, the General Assembly of the United Nations decided that the mandatory age of separation for staff recruited before 1 January 2014 should be raised by the organizations of the United Nations common system to 65 years, at the latest by 1 January 2018, taking into account the acquired rights of staff. As one of the most important specialized agencies in the UN Common System, the SRBs would urge the member countries to give effect to the UNGA decision within the established timeframe.

Staff members would feel better if they were informed of the bigger picture, if we knew the real direction the Organization is taking regarding HR policies, we would probably be able to equip ourselves with the necessary patience and strength needed to carry this process forward. To take the metaphor a step further, if the ‘steam train’ could make a couple of stops and let the staff onboard, we would all most certainly be better off for it. I ask you today, would this not be the most beneficial solution, or are we to believe that we are not a fundamental part of this Organization? Are we the backbone of FAO, or should we feel like a liability or a hindrance to “progress”?

We, the Staff, know our Members, our international partners, our comparators, most of the stakeholders involved in ensuring food security for all. We are closely acquainted with this Organization’s strengths and weaknesses, we are aware of gaps, address problems and propose solutions at all levels in our individual work every single day. We fight a daily battle to keep this Organization effective and efficient even in this moment of constraint. In a nutshell, we strive to keep this institution relevant, as much as you do. We have given a lot, as have you, and we feel it is now time for recongnition.

We want to be respected and valued. We want the Recognition Agreement to be restored as the guiding principle behind all decisions concerning the conditions of employment of FAO staff. More than ever today, we need for FAO to ensure transparent and fair processes, as inclusive as possible in order to guarantee the buy-in that is so direly needed.

Our hope has faltered, but we still believe that taking this train together can ensure the success of FAO in the longer term.

CHAIRPERSON

We have come to the end of our afternoon meeting. Please note that the first meeting of the Drafting Committee will take place at 19.00 hours in the Lebanon Room after we break here. I will now give the floor to Mr Gagnon who will make some announcements.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I wish to remind Members of the side event *Bridging the gap between the World's Leading Seed Companies and the Smallholder Farmer: Findings of the Access to Seeds Index 2016*. This side event will take place on Friday 3 June, from 13.00 hours to 14.30 hours in the Iran Room.

Additional information on side events is available on the order of the day as well as the FAO Council web page and Members Gateway.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Mr Gagnon. We wish the Drafting Committee success in their work and look forward to reconvening here at our next plenary meeting on Friday 3 June at 9.30 hours. With this, our work for today has been concluded. I thank you.

The meeting rose at 18:31 hours

La séance est levée à 18 h 31

Se levanta la sesión a las 18.31

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

**Hundred and Fifty-fourth Session
Cent cinquante-quatrième session
154.º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 30 May-3 June 2016
Rome, 30 mai-3 juin 2016
Roma, 30 de mayo-3 de junio de 2016**

**SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING
SEPTIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
SÉPTIMA SESIÓN PLENARIA**

3 June 2016

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

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

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

Item 14. Developments in *Fora* of Importance for the Mandate of FAO**Point 14. Évolution des débats au sein d'autres instances intéressant la FAO****Tema 14. Novedades en los foros de importancia para el mandato de la FAO**

(CL 154/INF/4 Rev.1)

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, I call the seventh meeting of the 154th Session of the FAO Council to order.

Before we start with the last item on the agenda, which is for information, I would like to draw the attention of Council to the Order of the Day in which it is foreseen that we will proceed to the Adoption of the Report this afternoon at 14:30 hours.

We now take up item 14, *Developments in Fora of Importance for the mandate of FAO*, which is presented to Council for information only. The relevant document is CL 154/INF/4 Rev.1.

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:

- Report on Global *Fora* on Climate Change and Biodiversity which includes the:
 - 13th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity: Mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors;
 - Fourth Session of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES);
 - Outcome of the 21st Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Paris, France, from 30 November to 12 December 2015;
 - Outcome of the First Meeting of the UN Forum on Forests' *Ad Hoc* Expert Group on the International Arrangement on Forests' Strategic Plan, held in New York from 25 to 27 April 2016;
- Presentations will also be given on:
 - The Inter-Agency Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators: Global Indicator Framework for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
 - United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025);
 - International Year of Pulses 2016;
 - Update on the impact of El Niño and the potentially developing La Niña; and
 - Outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul from 23 to 24 May 2016.

CHAIRPERSON

Following the completion of all the presentations I will open the floor for questions.

The first topic under the presentation "*Report on Global Fora on Climate Change and Biodiversity*" will be presented by Mr Dan Leskien, Senior Liaison Officer, Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, on the *13th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity: Mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors*.

Thereafter Mr Leskien will also deliver the second presentation on the *Fourth Session of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)*.

Mr Dan LESKIEN (Senior Liaison Officer, Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture)

Chair, as you mentioned, I will present briefly the preparations for the 13th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in particular the issue on mainstreaming biodiversity across all ecological sectors, and also the Fourth Session of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services that took place in February.

Many of you will be aware of the long-standing collaboration between FAO and the CBD. The CBD is institutionally linked to the United Nations Environment Programme and the Secretariat is based in Montreal, Canada. This collaboration is reflected in a number of decisions and work programmes the CBD adopted over the years. It is demonstrated by the CBD work programme on agricultural biodiversity of 2000, a programme that was, in fact, adopted and responds to an assessment carried out by FAO and CBD jointly. FAO and the CBD have been collaborating on a number of issues, including on cross-cutting initiatives such as global initiatives on pollinators, food and nutrition, and soil biodiversity. Last, but not least, the collaboration is reflected in a joint work plan between the CBD, FAO and its Commission on Genetic Resources, and in regular consultations that are being held at senior management and working level.

The forthcoming 13th Meeting of the CBD Conference of the Parties will be special. Special in what sense? It is true that mainstreaming agricultural biodiversity has been on the agenda of the CBD for quite some time. However, mainstreaming agricultural biodiversity mainly meant to make sure that all relevant sectors become aware of the important role of genetic resources for food and agriculture, the diversity of our plants and animals for genetic resources used for human consumption or other purposes. The forthcoming CBD COP 13 will address biodiversity mainstreaming in a much wider sense. It will address agricultural biodiversity, the need to use and conserve genetic resources, the genetic diversity of our crops, livestock breeds, and other organisms supporting agriculture, but it will also target the negative impact on biodiversity and habitats of unsustainable agricultural practices, of unsustainable forest management and unsustainable fisheries.

Two outcomes on biodiversity mainstreaming are expected from Cancun. The Cancun Declaration is an outcome of the high-level segment which will precede COP 13. Elements for inclusion in such a declaration have been made available by Mexico and are available on the web. We also expect a decision of COP 13 on mainstreaming biodiversity across sectors. A recommendation for a draft decision, recently negotiated by the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, is available on the web.

On the road to Cancun, different stakeholders may take different actions. What is important is the involvement of all of the different stakeholders in this process, of everyone who cares, including obviously ministries responsible for agriculture, for forestry, for fisheries, for aquaculture. The Mexican COP presidency, as well as the Executive Secretary of the CBD, has repeatedly stressed the value they attach to the inclusiveness of this process and the value they attach to the participation of FAO and the agricultural sector. There is no excuse for staying behind in this process unless we want to be left behind. FAO, in the preparation of the two meetings and the forthcoming COP13 has provided and will provide advice, information on its activities and instruments, and support to governments.

The Director-General recently established an internal task force providing guidance to Senior Management in the run-up to COP 13. One of the tasks of the task force will be to make sure that FAO Members are informed of the forthcoming COP 13 and will be able to interact in the Cancun preparations. COP 13 provides an opportunity to showcase the role of sustainable agriculture in which natural resources are managed in a way that ecosystem functions are maintained. It provides an opportunity to build a strategic alliance for FAO's vision of sustainable food systems and agriculture. Both environment and agriculture should seize this opportunity to initiate the dialogue on realistic options for sustainable food and agriculture production and on interactions, synergies and trade-offs between agricultural production and the conservation of natural resources, including biodiversity.

Chair, with your permission, I am now moving to the next biodiversity-related topic, IPBES, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. You will

recall that IPBES, like IPCC, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 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 to policy makers. 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 fulfil this function. IPBES is hosted by UNEP, like the CBD; however, it is operationally quite independent, has its own governing body, the Plenary, a bureau, a multidisciplinary expert panel providing scientific and technical advice, and it is based in Bonn, Germany. The actual work, as so often, is done by less visible task forces and expert groups appointed by the multidisciplinary expert panel.

Some of you will recall this, but, just to refresh your memory, the idea of IPBES is to provide high quality, credible scientific information to policy makers. The information should be policy-relevant without however being policy-prescriptive. IPBES is not a policy-making body. Instead, it aims to fulfil as a science-policy interface; its function is to provide clear, transparent and inclusive information, to have decision-making processes that are clear and transparent and to have transparent peer-review processes and select experts carefully. It also aims to fulfil its science-policy interface role through collaboration with other bodies, including FAO, which make important contributions in this area.

The IPBES Plenary held its Fourth Session in February of this year and, among other things, adopted two so-called summaries for policy makers, to start ongoing assessments and reviewed its current work programme. Of particular relevance to FAO is the Summary for Policy Makers, the so-called SPM on Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production. FAO contributed to this assessment. It hosted the office meeting for this assessment, which refers more than 140 times to FAO and FAO publications. I will provide a little more information on this a little later. Before that, let me briefly mention that IPBES-4 also approved the undertaking of a global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services to be presented to the Plenary in 2019. FAO is in consultation with IPBES to align the processes carried out under the Commission for the preparation of the First Report on Sustainable Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture with the global IPBES Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. The Plenary also agreed to decide at its next session whether an assessment of invasive alien species and their control should be undertaken. Sustainable use of biodiversity has another chance at the next Plenary and the Land Degradation and Restoration Assessment is ongoing, clearly benefitting from the Report of the Status of the World's Soil Resources launched by FAO and its partners last year.

Briefly on the IPBES Assessment on Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production and the Summary for Policy-Makers adopted by the IPBES Plenary. The assessment caught considerable media attention; science and also the general media picked it up. In fact, the assessment has been featured in more than 30 languages, on more than 1 300 online news sites and in more than 80 countries, plus print media, radio, etc. Animal pollinators play a vital role as a regulating ecosystem service. About 35 percent of food crop production worldwide depends on animal pollinators. The rather important message of the IPBES assessment is that pollinators are increasingly threatened by a number of factors, and this threat is, in fact, a threat to global food production due to the important role pollinators play in agriculture. The threats for pollinators include changes of land use, intensive agricultural management and pesticide use, environmental pollution, invasive alien species, pathogens, and climate change.

Now it is difficult to link pollinator declines to individual drivers. We just do not have the data for such complex tasks. Yet a wealth of individual case studies worldwide seems to suggest that these direct drivers often affect pollinators negatively. The Summary for Policy Makers recommends moving to sustainable agriculture and it also recommends three complementary approaches: ecological intensification, minimizing, for example, environmental damage, reducing use of pesticides, strengthening existing diversified farming systems, including forest gardens, home gardens, agro-forestry; and mixed cropping and livestock systems to foster pollinators and pollination through practices validated by science or indigenous and local knowledge, for example crop rotation; and also

through investing in ecological infrastructure while protecting, restoring and connecting patches of natural and semi-natural habitats throughout productive agricultural landscapes.

I should briefly mention that the CBD subsidiary body, SBSTTA, considered at its last meeting the outcome of IPBES pollinator assessment and it recommended that the CBD COP 13 should request FAO, in collaboration with the CBD and other partners, to review the implementation of the FAO-led International Pollinator Initiative. FAO of course is ready to continue leading the International Pollinator Initiative and is ready to work on a revision of the Plan of Action. The Organization will continue collaborating with IPBES under the collaborative partnership arrangement and will also bring to the attention of relevant Governing and Statutory Bodies any relevant assessments, including the Pollinator Assessment. Allow me to say we encourage Members to actively engage in the IPBES process as many of its assessments are relevant to food and agriculture and the IPBES Summaries for Policy Makers may become influential policy-guiding documents which policy makers might not be able to simply ignore.

CHAIRPERSON

Our next speaker is Mr Martin Frick, Director of the Climate and Environment Division, who will make a presentation on the *Outcome of the 21st Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change*, held in Paris, France, from 30 November to 12 December 2015.

Mr Martin FRICK (Director, Climate and Environment Division)

The Paris Climate Conference of course was one of the diplomatic highlights, I dare to say, of the last ten years. Since the Earth Summit in Rio, there were more than 20 years of negotiations to come to this outcome, which is even better, I would say, than we expected it to be. The main outcomes of the Paris Agreement, widely reported in the media, are again a reconfirmation and a clear commitment to stop global warming at 2 degrees Centigrade added to an additional ambition to, if possible, keep it below 1.5 degrees Centigrade. These are not just technical numbers. There is solid evidence and science behind it. There is much evidence that above 2 degrees Centigrade, the risk of catastrophic climate change, the interruption of large-scale ecological systems, becomes very real. It is a reality that some of the Small Island Developing Countries would simply not exist if we cross 1.5 degrees Centigrade. So this is a political commitment. The reality of stopping global warming at 2 degrees, or even 1.5 degrees, is ambitious to say the least.

However, the political commitment is there and the Paris Agreement broke many records: 154 heads of state and government in one room. That is unprecedented. Not even the United Nations General Assembly has ever had this number of heads of state in one room. The signing procedure in New York, as you might recall on 22nd of April, had the immediate signing of 175 parties in the room, and a little bit later of two additional parties. We already have 177 parties signing the agreement but it is not in force yet. It needs a double quota of two times 55; 55 parties representing at least 55 percent of the global greenhouse gas emissions.

The Paris negotiations and the Paris Agreement bring substantial support for FAO's agenda. We have in the preamble a very solid and, I dare say, a modern mentioning of food security and eradicating hunger, which is clearly a step up from the original language in the UNFCCC Convention from 1992. While the Convention only mentioned food production as an area to be protected, there is now a clear commitment, at least in the preamble, for food security with a more systems approach and to eradicate hunger. At the same time, FAO's agenda to eradicate hunger and fight poverty is also reflected in other parts of the agreement, particularly in the recognition that the response to climate change is directly linked to sustainable development and all efforts to eradicate poverty.

What is very positive also is that, after ten years of negotiations, the REDD-plus agenda is now formally in the UNFCCC Agreement and this is also an example for the larger agricultural agenda which is still despite the age of the Convention in the early days. Bear in mind that the UNFCCC negotiations started largely as negotiations of a community of environmental experts and people from environmental ministries and mainly about energy production. Opening this space to integrate aspects like forests and agriculture happened relatively late and I will explain why. I think we now have an

opportunity to make this central topic for both adaptation and mitigation much more prominent in international *fora*.

There is renewed commitment for climate finance. This is not new. It basically goes back to the Copenhagen Agreement. But there is a mechanism which is very interesting. It is a one-way street for ambition basically saying that the Paris Agreement is based on the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions, which basically means the pledges that countries were prepared to bring to Paris, and they also agreed to review these periodically every five years, but only with a view to increasing the ambition, not going back beyond previous commitments. Paris, of course, with the aims of limiting global warming to 2 respectively 1.5 degrees had a strong focus on mitigation, but it also brought very solid language on adaptation, agreeing on a global goal to enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change.

We will see a very strong focus on adaptation and resilience in the upcoming COP 22 in Morocco. A central part of the Paris Summit was the Lima Paris Action Agenda. This is a new element because UNFCCC so far was a classic intergovernmental negotiation mechanism, but with the Action Agenda, there is a space created also for non-state actors to show concrete action on the ground and to showcase promising examples of successful adaptation and mitigation. In Paris, for the first time, there was an Action Day on Agriculture that was organized by the French presidency in close cooperation with FAO. With very promising initiatives, FAO presented two initiatives: the Blue Growth Initiative of our Fisheries Department, and from AG Department the Safe Food initiative. The French Government, as you know, has launched the '4 pour 1000' initiative for soil carbon sequestration as a means to mitigate climate change but also to improve soil fertility as a means for adaptation and water management.

For the road from COP21 to COP22, we just finished the Bonn Negotiations that were very important for our agenda. There were two workshops on the UNFCCC agenda on agriculture, both of which were prepared by submissions from FAO and both had participation from FAO.

We also organized two side events, one on the role of climate finance on the way to COP22 and a second one on the implementation of the INDCs. That is our current work that you can find on the FAO climate change website, analyzing the INDCs. That would be a five-minute intervention in itself but just to say that agriculture features most prominently worldwide in what countries want to do in addressing climate change and there is a huge space for FAO to support countries in turning this political commitment into actionable plans and ultimately projects.

Now on the way forward, we are working with the current COP Presidency. France will remain in the presidency until the first day of the Marrakesh COP, and we will be working with the incoming presidency, Morocco, very closely.

We are working on the basis of the analysis of the INDCs because that tells us on a top governmental level what Member States expect and what they want to do and what they want to have as support for the climate change work. And we are working in the perspective of action days.

You might have heard that Morocco has launched the so-called Triple A initiative on adaptation and agriculture for Africa which will take on the initiative of the French Presidency for the COP and working with soils and soil com.

There will also be a strong element of water protection which resonates with an initiative that is currently being developed inside FAO, a global initiative on water scarcity where the part that is concerning Africa will also be a part of the Moroccan Triple A initiative.

On the action days, we are offering our support and we are in talks with Morocco to work together very closely on four action days, the agriculture action day of course but also an action day on forests, on resilience, and potentially on oceans and fisheries.

COP22 will be very much focused on adaptation. It is a very interesting point in time as the COP is going to happen on the African continent where the need for adaptation and agriculture is particularly strong. It will happen in a water-stressed country where one of the main effects of climate change,

water scarcity, is particularly tangible, and it will be organized by a country that has vast experience in dealing with water scarcity and pushing back desertification.

So we are not only working with the presidency for the political agenda and for the action days but on a whole series of side events and we are looking actively into opportunities to work also with Regional Groups. That will certainly be an African pavilion, a European pavilion, some country pavilions, and we are very happy to collaborate with you in the perspective of side events and action at COP22.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to the next speaker, Mr Peter Csoka, Senior Forestry Officer, who will deliver a presentation on the *Outcome of the First Meeting of the UN Forum on Forests' Ad Hoc Expert Group on the International Arrangement on Forests' Strategic Plan*, which was held in New York from 25 to 27 April 2016.

Mr Peter CSOKA (Senior Forestry Officer)

Distinguished Members of the Council, it is my pleasure to report to you on the outcome of the said expert meeting but before doing so, allow me to recall that the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations in its resolution 2015/33 decided to extend the mandate of the International Arrangement on Forestry (IAF) 2030. I would also like to recall that the International Arrangement on Forestry includes the United Nations Forum on Forests as an intergovernmental body, its Member States, and Secretariat, and also the Collaborative Partnership on Forests which is an alliance of 14 major international organizations with a substantive mandate on forests and it includes the Convention Secretariat, the aforementioned Secretariats, UNEP and UNDP, the World Bank and its Secretariat, major resource organizations, IOCN, and FAO is a member and also the Chair of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

In its resolution, ECOSOC also decided that for this long period of time, there would be a need for a Strategic Plan that will regulate and rule the functioning of the IAF in the coming years and it resolved that the objectives of the Strategic Plan would be to improve coherence and have synergies and reduce the fragmentation of forest issues which are being discussed by a surprisingly large number of international, global and regional instruments and, while doing so, it is expected to integrate the existing objectives, targets, actions and commitments.

The resolution gave the mandate to an *ad-hoc* expert group to develop proposals for strategic plans for the period 2017-30 and define a mission and vision for the IAF, incorporate the global objectives on forests that were adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2007 together with the key forest-related elements of the 2030 Agenda, and specified roles of the different actors and create a frame for review in progress towards the set objectives, and also placed emphasis on communication and awareness-raising so that forest contribution to the Global Sustainable Development Agenda is better highlighted and understood.

The resolution has also decided that a Strategic Plan should be operationalized by four-year programmes of work. We should specify priority actions that should present the associated resource needs as well.

At the first meeting, the government designated experts, shared their views on the desired structure of the plan and provided content for the main sections. They also considered ways to streamline contribution and input to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development as one key function and contribution of the IAF and they also discussed how the quadrennial programmes of work could be established and what role the key players could play in these. These key players include, as I mentioned at the beginning, UNFF and regional organizations, major groups and other stakeholders, and in the case of FAO there is a role both as a CPF member, as an organization with an important regional dimension to contribute to the process.

This being the first meeting, the co-chairs will develop a zero draft and share it with Member States for consideration in the course of the summer. The second meeting of the expert group is expected to consider and discuss the zero draft and make further recommendations so that the formal working

group in January 2017 could finalize the plan and present it to the special session of the UNFF in January 2017.

The process is particularly relevant for FAO as an organization of the UN system with considerable normative and operational mandates related to forests and also a share of the collaborative partnership on forests, coordinating the input of food in major international organizations. FAO is a recognized source of quality information on forests and an Organization of competent global and regional coverage. FAO could play an important role in supporting both the development of the Strategic Plan and the Programme of Work and also the implementation and support to Member States in this regard.

Distinguished Members of the Council may wish to take note if there is a request to FAO to continue its active role in the IAF and support the development of the Strategic Plan and Programme of Work and ensure that quality is maintained with the Organization's ongoing efforts in supporting sustainable development.

CHAIRPERSON

I now call upon Mr Pietro Gennari, Director of the Statistics Division, who will speak on the *Inter-Agency Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators: Global Indicator Framework for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

Mr Pietro GENNARI (Director, Statistics Division)

I am pleased to provide you with a brief report on the outcomes of the 47th Session of the UN Statistical Commission and the ensuing international processes concerning the decisions taken on the Global Indicator Framework for Monitoring the SDGs.

The last session of the UN Statistical Commission in March 2016 endorsed the Global Indicator Framework comprising 230 unique indicators as a practical starting point to monitor progress towards the 169 targets of the 2030 Agenda and requested the Inter-agency and Expert Group (IAEG) on SDG Indicators to continue refining them.

The IAEG on SDG Indicators met in Mexico City in April and agreed on a series of proposals to be endorsed at the next session of the UN Statistical Commission in 2017. The main outcomes of the meeting of the IAEG are the following:

Apart from a focused review of a limited set of indicators explicitly mentioned by countries during the 47th Session of the UN Statistical Commission, the first complete review of the Global Indicator Framework will not be conducted until 2020. So the Global Indicator Framework is here to stay for at least five years.

The 230 SDG indicators are at a level of development and provisionally have been classified into three different tiers based on the level of the methodological development and data availability.

It is important to know that the indicators are selected for global reporting but global indicators are to be considered as a core set of metrics that all countries are invited to monitor. The global indicators can be complemented by national automatic indicators. However, FAO encourages all countries to adopt the global indicators in their national SDG reporting mechanism to avoid drastically increasing the already heavy reporting burden.

Only if countries provide data for Global Indicator Framework, they will be visible in the global reporting processes.

Each global SDG indicator has been assigned a custodian agency which is responsible for collecting data from national sources, providing the storyline for the annual global SDG progress report, providing the indicator documentation, working on further methodological development, and contributing to country statistical capacity development.

Data to inform global indicators should be produced to the extent possible by national statistical systems except for a few indicators, but international agencies have an important role to play in global reporting as they ensure that national data are comparable and can be aggregated at regional and global levels.

For global reporting purposes, data should continue therefore to be reported to governments by custodian international agencies which will then transmit them to the UN Statistics Division.

Strong emphasis has been placed also on statistical capacity development as an essential tool for national statistical systems to meet the demands of the 2030 Agenda. The IAEG-SDG and the high-level group for the post-2015 monitoring will cooperate on developing a global action plan for statistical capacity-building while international agencies will have the responsibility to implement statistical capacity-building initiatives for the targets under their respective mandate.

FAO has been proposed by representative Member States as custodian UN agency for 20 SDG indicators across Goals 2, 5, 6, 12, 14 and 15 and as a contributing agency for five more which represent a significant increase on the four indicators for which FAO was responsible during the MDG process.

For the 20 indicators, FAO will be responsible for collecting data from national sources, validating and harmonizing them, estimating regional and global aggregates, and publishing them on FAOSTAT. FAO will also contribute to the global annual SDG report, the first one to be published in July this year which will feed into the high-level political forums follow-up review processes.

The expanded role for FAO in monitoring the SDGs implies much greater potential for involvement of the Organization at regional and country level than was the case for the MDGs. The FAO Country Programming Frameworks will be revised to reflect a range of activities performed by country offices to support SDG achievement and reporting.

These activities include strengthening country capacity, adopting new statistical standards and tools for data collection and developing additional indicators tailored to national circumstances.

Acknowledging the immensity of the task, FAO is establishing a strong partnership with other UN agencies to monitor the increased number of SDG indicators.

FAO has already collaborated with various agencies in formulating the indicator proposals and going forward is establishing even broader partnership with the aim of further strengthening the indicator methodology and of supporting countries in their regular production of reporting.

FAO's flagship publication will also be revamped following the adoption of the SDGs, broadening the scope to include both the storyline and statistical analysis on all relevant SDG indicators under FAO custodianships. A new web page will be created summarizing all FAO relevant SDG indicators in simple score cards updated annually.

FAO's internal support to the global reporting is being led by the Chief Statistician. A new subgroup of the Inter-Departmental Working Group on Statistics has been established to improve information-sharing and coordination for work on FAO-relevant SDG indicators, bringing together focal points from all relevant technical divisions.

The subgroup is the ideal entry point for any request for assistance from FAO country and regional offices. FAO decentralized offices will be able to call upon the support of statistical focal points to ensure knowledge is shared and a harmonized approach is adopted to support SDG monitoring.

Close coordination is also ensured with the corporate task team on the broader 2030 Agenda which is coordinated by DDN.

Concerning the next steps, in this light I have listed a number of contributions that will be provided to the IAEG-SDG process in terms of storylines for the global SDG reports, the country data that have been submitted on the tier one indicators, new standardized documentation on the indicators and the action plan for the indicators that require further methodological development.

FAO is also developing a corporate plan for statistical capacity development. Support to countries can be provided on both technical and institutional aspects related to SDG monitoring, including presenting guidelines and manuals through training programs, e-learning courses, regional and national training workshops, providing technical assistance to develop surveys or new data sources for the collection and dissemination of food and agricultural statistics, and providing technical assistance to help identify national or regional-specific SDG indicators.

CHAIRPERSON

Our next speaker is Ms Anna Larthey, Director of the Nutrition and Food Systems Division, who will make a presentation on the *United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-25)*.

Ms Anna LARTEY (Director, Nutrition and Food Systems Division)

I would like to acknowledge that it is your hard work at ICN2 here in November 2014 and also the hard work of your Members in New York that has actually secured this Decade of Action on Nutrition for the world, so we congratulate you.

At the UN General Assembly, the Decade of Action on Nutrition was declared for 2016-25. In addition, the meeting endorsed the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Framework for Action. The Declaration calls on FAO and WHO to lead the implementation in collaboration with WFP, IFAD, and UNICEF, and also to develop a web programme using coordination mechanisms such as the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition and multi-stakeholder platforms such as the CFS.

In addition, it advises the Secretary-General to inform the General Assembly about implementation of the Decade on the basis of reports compiled by FAO and WHO.

We foresee the development of the web plan as an open and inclusive process which will call on Member States, UN systems and other stakeholders to declare and also to strengthen their commitments under the ICN2 Framework for Action.

FAO and WHO in collaboration with the UN system will offer tools and examples of SMART commitment and also mobilize means for the implementation of what they plan to do. The UN and CFS, and other bodies in line with their respective mandates and priorities, will be relied upon to strengthen coordination and evaluate our experiences and support policy dialogue.

Going forward, the immediate next steps will be in July when we plan to have a launch of the Decade and then, in September, there will be a commitment conference at the UN General Assembly. In December we will have a nutrition technical symposium here at FAO to which we plan to bring country, technical, policy, offices so people on the ground that actually execute programmes and policies in the countries come to this conference and we also want to use this conference to actually learn lessons. What has been done? What countries have done since ICN2?

We will plan to have a first decade progress report in October 2017. We will also be having a high-level political forum, a side event where we will bring various groups together to talk about other things in addition to the Decade.

In terms of reporting on the Decade, there will be biennial reports jointly drafted by WHO and FAO with inputs from other organizations of the UN system. The reports will include actions that Members, international partners and non-state actors commit themselves to implementing within the Decade.

We foresee the Decade really is for everybody; it is not only for UN agencies or FAO and WHO. The Decade is for the world. What are we going to do to move nutrition forward in the next 10 years? The progress report will also look at progress in implementing policies and programmes to fulfil some of the commitments.

Also we will report on some quantitative data based on agreed international indicators for nutrition outcomes, nutrition policy environment and nutrition programme implementation.

CHAIRPERSON

I now call upon Ms Marcela Villarreal, Director of the Office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development, who will speak on the *International Year of Pulses 2016*.

Ms Marcela VILLARREAL (Director, Office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development)

This is actually a pleasure to report on the implementation of the International Year of Pulses today.

Now the first key message of the Year of Pulses is that pulses are highly nutritious. It is actually amazing the amount of nutrition that is contained in these very small seeds. They are actually seeds. In terms of minerals, vitamins and proteins, they are quite substantial. The second message is that

pulses are affordable and contribute to food security at all levels. Actually, for the amount of protein that is contained in them, they are very affordable in relation to other sources of protein, including animal protein. So they are very important in terms of food security for all people, for poor, less poor and rich people equally. Pulses have important health benefits.

So it is not only the nutrition, but it is also that they contribute to healthy diets, helping control the amount of sugar in the blood. There is also some research that indicates that pulses do have some protective impacts in terms of cancer, and very important in terms of diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. Very high in fibre, which contributes importantly to healthy benefits. But that is not all. Pulses are also very important in terms of taking care of the environment and the planet. We do know, of course, that they are very important in fixing nitrogen and therefore contribute importantly in terms of improving the nutrition of soils. We heard already from the climate change presentation how important that is in terms of climate change. And, of course, there is also a huge biodiversity associated with many thousands of varieties around pulses.

So what is it that we would like to do with this International Year of Pulses? Well, in a nutshell, what we want to do is to increase the awareness around all of these really important characteristics of pulses in order to increase consumption and therefore to contribute to diets, to healthy diets, to health, to nutrition, and also to the climate, to the environment. And we also want to increase the production. We do see that in spite of all these I would say quite amazing characteristics of pulses, consumption levels worldwide have been going down. So the timing of the Year of Pulses has basically let us understand what is there, increase the research, increase the knowledge, and hopefully also strongly increase consumption as well as production.

Now in terms of the governance of the International Year of Pulses, we have set up an International Steering Committee, and I am happy to see present several of the members of that Steering Committee. I would like to thank them for their very dynamic contribution to the Steering Committee. It is co-chaired by Turkey and Pakistan, and the members of the Committees include the members of different regions from the Membership, farmers' organizations, the private sector, which have played a very active role in promoting the Year, civil society, the CGIAR centres, IFAD, World Food Programme and GFAR. The Secretariat here in Rome is led by the Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development Division, but it brings together technical support from across the house in terms of everybody who can contribute technically to the topic, but also with a very active role of the Communications Division.

We have developed and approved an Action Plan which you can find on the web, and what it tells us is basically that there is a huge amount of outreach activities happening at global level, regional level and country level. They actually already add to several hundred activities and we are only halfway through the year. We are already hosting regional dialogues throughout all the regions and, towards the end of the year, we will have a global dialogue here in Rome. There is also a number of other activities like, for example, the Food Composition Database being put up. The research, scientific papers and studies are being promoted. We are also trying to engage a number of different networks through online discussions. Naturally, in order to do all of these activities, we need to find extra-budgetary sources to be able to carry them out. We have set up a multi-donor trust fund, so I would just like to remind you that the trust fund is there and we would like to see more contributions to it so that we can increase the level of activities.

Special ambassadors have been named already. These are the special ambassadors of the Director-General. One per region. Many of you were here last week when we had the nomination for the European Special Ambassador here in Rome, Jenny Chandler, who is a blogger, a chef, a person who writes very much in the media, a journalist. For Asia and the Pacific, we have Dr Siddique who is an Indian professor of pulses in Australia. We have, for Africa, Ms Elizabeth Mpfu who is a farmer, an activist and the leader of several farmer organizations in Africa. For North America, we have Dr Joyce Boye who is a researcher, heads research centres, and has dedicated her life to research precisely on pulses. For Latin America and the Caribbean, we do have a candidate who has said yes in principle but we are awaiting final confirmation. We will let you know of course. For the Near East, we have Magy Habib who is a very well-known TV entertainer, a chef who presents a number of TV

programmes and is passionate about pulses. She is a very strong communicator. We have developed a wealth of communication material, which is all on the web. It is also available in hard copy. If any of you would like to have some copies, we would be very happy to provide them.

So, what would we want to see by the end of the Year and after the Year? I would say that, on the one hand, the product of this huge effort in terms of awareness-raising has to be translated basically into better, higher consumption, which will be translated eventually into better health and nutrition outcomes and it is very important what we just heard on the Decade of Nutrition, that pulses are a huge contributor to nutrition and also have very important environmental outcomes. So we also expect that through increasing knowledge and research on pulses, we will also incentivise others to continue expanding the knowledge base that we have around pulses. You can find all of this information and much more on our website. On the website you will find not only research information and videos, but a number of fun things like huge amounts of recipes that have been contributed from different parts of the world, so we do hope that you will be visiting that website and follow the activities of the Year.

CHAIRPERSON

Our last speaker today is Mr Dominique Burgeon, Director of the Emergency and Rehabilitation Division, and Strategic Programme Leader for Resilience, who will present the *Outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit*, which was held in Istanbul from 23 to 24 May 2016, and afterwards will provide an *Update on the impact of El Niño and the potentially developing La Niña*.

Mr Dominique BURGEON (Director, Emergency and Rehabilitation Division, Strategic Programme Leader for Resilience)

Thank you very much for the opportunity to brief the Council on these two important events.

On El Niño, the impact of the 2016 El Niño weather phenomenon has been one of the most intense and widespread in the past 100 years. We know that agriculture, food security and nutritional status of more than 60 million people around the globe is affected as a direct result of El Niño-related droughts, floods and extreme hot and cold weather, and this figure is increasing. Of the almost USD 3 billion required to meet the humanitarian demands of El Niño-affected countries, almost 80 percent is for food security and agricultural needs. As such, it is not an exaggeration to say that this is primarily a food and agricultural crisis. FAO is continuously monitoring the status of El Niño and the worst is not over yet. While it has declined in strength and a return to a neutral state is indicated by June, its impacts on the agricultural sector are still continuing. Harvests in several parts of the world have already failed, and are forecasted to fail in other parts, resulting in a dramatic increase of acute household food insecurity.

In South Africa alone, over 32 million people are currently affected by serious drought. These figures are likely to rise in the coming months. In addition, as El Niño-related impacts continue, planet models are now predicting an increasing likelihood of La Niña developing in 2016, which is an opposite phenomenon. Indeed, if this develops, the impact could not only be the opposite, for example increased rainfall and flooding instead of drought, but it could also be in the same areas already affected by El Niño. So what is FAO doing about this?

FAO took swift action when the first warning came in early 2015. FAO set up a multi-departmental El Niño Task Force which is liaising directly with countries of concern to develop early action and response plans. Information sharing to increase knowledge and to advocate for early action has been a priority. Through FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System, an El Niño date was issued and, in December 2015, a special alert was issued on the effects of El Niño in South Africa.

In addition, early action reports and situation updates are regularly issued in order to pinpoint the current impact of El Niño on agriculture and food security and to outline the early action and response being taken by government partners and FAO itself. These documents are available on the FAO El Niño webpage.

Support to government activities and efforts is a cross-cutting theme throughout all of the plans and in FAO's response to El Niño in general. For example, in Ethiopia, FAO has supported the government in developing the El Niño Response Plan on behalf of the Agriculture Task Force, a body co-chaired by

the Ministry of Agriculture and FAO, which is spearheading the response in the agricultural sector. Currently, we are supporting the 2016 belg assessment, the result of which will lead to a revision of the Humanitarian Requirements Document for Ethiopia. FAO is also active at regional level in Southern Africa, playing a key supporting role to the efforts of the Southern African Development Community to respond to the crisis which includes the development of an Action Plan at regional level. We are one of the four agencies involved in the recently formed SADC El Niño Response Team which is coordinating analysis and response efforts at the regional level on behalf of and in close cooperation with the SADC Secretariat.

To date, FAO has appealed for over USD 370 million through individual country and regional El Niño Response Plans covering 29 high-priority countries in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific. The plans cover immediate emergency-related action to save livestock as well as livelihoods and recovery activities related to crops and livestock. So far, we have mobilized a total of USD 70 million. This includes USD 10 million from the emergency window of the TCP and the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities. Therefore, the funding gap now stands at about USD 300 million. The importance of early action cannot be underestimated. Early action saves lives, conserves resources and results in more effective responses.

For the current El Niño, for instance, FAO and Somalia, together with the government and with the support of resource partners, implemented an early action programme focusing on flood mitigation measures along the Shabelle River following flood forecasts. With flexible emergency funding, not only from the United Kingdom, the United States and the CERF, FAO was able to repair river breakage and reinforce embankments, reducing the likelihood of animal disease outbreaks and helping farmers protect their crops. This early action and intervention provided recurring investment four times the initial investment, saving over 9 000 hectares of farmlands which are capable of producing enough to feed about two million people for a month.

FAO has also played a leadership role in relation to El Niño at the global level. Along with OCHA, WFP, IFAD, and with a fully mobilized food security cluster, FAO organized an El Niño event on 17 March in Rome. The event at FAO headquarters resulted in concrete agreements on further steps to address the impact of the phenomenon. One was the commitment to organize an El Niño pledging event. This event took place in Geneva on 26 April and resulted in the announcement of a new commitment of over €400 million from the European Commission to tackle El Niño. A second commitment made by the four agencies was to develop a protocol outlining steps to be taken collectively within defined timelines to ensure we act early and coordinate it with future El Niño and La Niña events. Drafting of this protocol is now underway with the final expected to be ready by July. The aim is to have the protocol in place to guide collective action. In the coming weeks, FAO will continue to act as a global forum for discussion and decision-making on responding to El Niño and also on taking early action on La Niña. There will be several meetings that will take place in that respect.

Ladies and gentlemen, the impact of the current El Niño is overwhelming for any one agency or government and requires consulted and decisive assistance from the international community. Without such resolve, the economic and social gains made by these countries will be diminished and progress against the Sustainable Development Goals will falter. In some cases, gains in relation to the Millennium Development Goals may even be reduced.

I thank you, Mr Chair, for the opportunity to brief on El Niño. If you agree, I will move to the next part which relates to the World Humanitarian Summit.

The World Humanitarian Summit that took place last week was the first of its kind, dedicated to humanitarian issues. The United Nations in its 70 years of history had never come together on this scale with so many different stakeholders to discuss how we can respond better to crises and help affected populations as a global community. With the world witnessing the highest level of humanitarian needs since the Second World War, the Summit was a global call to action by the United Nations Secretary-General. Hosted by the Government of Turkey, it was attended by over 9 000 participants, including 55 heads of state and government, United Nations agencies, NGOs, the private

sector and people affected by crisis. The Summit engaged world leaders and mobilised political commitments to advance global action on some of the greatest challenges of our time.

The participants came together and expressed their support for the Secretary-General's Agenda for Humanity and its five core responsibilities, and made it emphatically clear that humanitarian assistance alone cannot adequately address or sustainably reduce the needs of over 130 million of the world's most vulnerable people. Put simply, we cannot carry on doing business as usual. The Summit was not only unique, it centres on a new course. Humanitarian and development partners agreed on a new way of working aimed at reducing the need for humanitarian action by investing in resilient communities and stable societies. At the Summit, some 1 500 commitments were made, including a 'Grand Bargain' that will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of investments in emergency response, getting more resources into the hands of people who need them at the local and national level. Governments also committed to do more to prevent conflict, encourage peace, to uphold international humanitarian law and deliver to the promise of the Charter of the United Nations.

For decades, FAO has worked in and across both the humanitarian and development spheres in order to strengthen resilience and save, protect and restore land use. Over the past three years, FAO has been actively involved in consultations leading up to the Summit. FAO's message was clear. We stand behind an approach and a genuine commitment that combines the joint efforts of the development and humanitarian communities to build and sustain the conditions for peace, security and respect for human rights, and prioritize investments in prevention and resilience with the ultimate objective of ending future humanitarian needs. In this context, the Director-General joined the United Nations Secretary-General and executives from seven other United Nations institutions to sign the Commitment to Action. Among other things, the Commitment to Action refers to the new way of humanitarian work outlined in the United Nations Secretary-General's 'One Humanity: Shared Responsibility' report, notably with a strategic focus on collective outcomes on increased investment in prevention and resilience and on strengthening the capacity of local and national actors to respond to disasters, natural and human-induced.

At the Summit, FAO made a number of commitments which included scaling up the Organization's work on social protection and cash-transfer programmes by linking them to agriculture and rural development and scaling up initiatives that link more closely food security and climate change adaptation measures. The Director-General co-moderated the round table on managing disasters differently, which focused on commitments to respond to and manage risks associated with natural disasters and climate change. As co-moderator, the Director-General, together with the WFP Executive Director and the UNDP administrator, put forward FAO's specific commitments to ensuring food security and nutrition in the face of climate change. Importantly, all the commitments made at the Summit will have a critical role in achieving commitments made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, on the needs and the interests of the most vulnerable.

The Summit not only reinforced support for working together, but also provided a platform for strengthening partnerships and exploring how we can better achieve collective outcomes. Over the course of two days, many innovative project initiatives were launched. This includes a major new global partnership to better prepare countries and communities for disaster. Led by the Vulnerable Twenty Group of Finance Ministers, which represents 43 high risk developing nations, in collaboration with the World Bank and a number of United Nations agencies, including FAO, the partnership will strengthen preparedness capacities in initially 20 countries so they attain a minimum level of readiness for future shocks by 2020.

In addition, FAO together with partners collaborated and organized five side events during the Summit. To highlight just a few, the Director-General gave the keynote address at the joint event with the World Health Organization and the USA on building resilience to increasing risks of pandemic and jointly called for concerted global efforts in health protection with emphasis on integrated multidisciplinary approach to health risk management. In addition, the Director-General also spoke at an important side event co-organized with the Government of Ireland and WFP on Zero Hunger by 2030, the commitment which is at the heart of FAO's mandate.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, in conclusion, the two-day Summit marked a clear demonstration of leadership and a particular way to change the way we work in response. The strong commitments made to the Summit are first important steps toward achieving this. But now it is time to act. We must honour our commitments and champion them to assuring this agenda collectively and with resolve and urgency over the coming months and years. FAO is committed to building on the global momentum this first World Humanitarian Summit has generated and to working in partnership with all stakeholders to make the vision a reality.

M. François PYTHOUD (Observateur de la Suisse)

Tout d'abord, nous souhaiterions remercier le Secrétariat pour la présentation des débats au sein d'autres instances intéressant la FAO. Je pense qu'il s'agit d'une opportunité unique que d'avoir dans une même séance un tour d'horizon sur tous ces sujets importants pour la FAO.

Nous souhaiterions revenir sur la 13^{ème} Conférence des Parties à la Convention sur la biodiversité, dont le thème, comme l'a relevé le Secrétariat de la FAO, porte sur la prise en compte systématique— « mainstreaming » en anglais—de la biodiversité dans les différents secteurs de l'agriculture, de la foresterie et des pêches. Comme mentionné, un des rôles de la FAO sur la route de Cancun, est de collaborer avec le Secrétariat de la Convention sur la diversité biologique afin de conseiller les gouvernements et faciliter l'engagement au niveau national des autorités en charge de l'agriculture, des forêts et des pêches dans la préparation de cette Conférence.

Dans ce contexte, la réunion à Rome, d'ici le début d'octobre, des trois comités techniques de la FAO (le Comité des pêches, le Comité des forêts, en juillet, et le Comité de l'agriculture fin septembre) offre une opportunité unique de sensibiliser les États Membres sur cette thématique.

Nous savons déjà, en ce qui concerne d'autres thèmes abordés aujourd'hui, à savoir le changement climatique, le Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030, la nutrition, que ces thèmes figurent à l'ordre du jour des trois Comités techniques, tandis que, pour l'instant, à notre connaissance la biodiversité n'y figure pas. Et nous serions intéressés de savoir comment ou si la FAO envisage d'utiliser ces opportunités pour mettre aussi en avant la question de la biodiversité. Il nous semble qu'il y a là une occasion unique d'offrir la possibilité aux États Membres de donner un input à la FAO, mais aussi de préparer les États Membres à cette Conférence.

Pour conclure, nous aimerions, dans ce contexte, remercier également l'État hôte, le Mexique, pour avoir d'une part choisi cette thématique importante pour le segment à haut niveau ministériel, et d'autre part pour tous les travaux préparatoires qu'ils ont engagés.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Je souhaiterais remercier tous les orateurs et le Secrétariat pour la qualité, la concision et la clarté des exposés que nous avons entendus ce matin, qui furent extrêmement intéressants.

Je voudrais concentrer mon intervention sur le point 1 et m'associer à ce que vient d'indiquer mon collègue de Suisse pour féliciter le Mexique d'accueillir et d'avoir retenu ce thème pour la Convention sur la diversité biologique. En effet, la question de la durabilité en agriculture, en aquaculture et en foresterie est essentielle, et le travail de la FAO est à saluer en la matière, comme est à saluer également le travail de la FAO sur ce qui nous a été présenté dans le cadre de la Plateforme intergouvernementale scientifique et politique sur la biodiversité et les services écosystémiques.

Enfin, mon dernier point concernera la Convention-cadre des Nations Unies sur les changements climatiques. Je voudrais m'associer effectivement à ceux qui ont souligné que pour la première fois, le rôle positif de l'agriculture pour faire face au double défi de la sécurité alimentaire et du dérèglement climatique a été reconnu; par conséquent, il a été reconnu que l'agriculture contribue, comme solution, à la fois dans son volet atténuation et dans son volet adaptation, et le lien avec la sécurité alimentaire a été affirmé.

Je voudrais à cette occasion, féliciter la FAO pour son active participation à cette Conférence des Parties, à Paris en décembre, à la fois sur la forêt, sur la résilience, sur les océans et sur l'agriculture, par la présence de son Directeur général, de la Directrice générale adjointe et des équipes de la FAO.

Je voudrais également remercier chaleureusement la FAO qui a co-organisé avec la France la journée thématique sur l'agriculture du 1^{er} décembre. À cette occasion, comme l'a rappelé le Directeur de la Division du climat et de l'environnement, M. Martin Frick, six initiatives ont été présentées, dont deux portées par la FAO: l'initiative Croissance bleue, pour les secteurs marins et maritimes; l'initiative « Save the Food » pour la réduction des pertes et gaspillages alimentaires; mais également quatre autres initiatives, comme l'initiative « 4 pour 1000 : les sols pour la sécurité alimentaire et le climat », le programme ASAP du FIDA pour l'adaptation des petits agriculteurs au changement climatique, ainsi qu'une initiative sur « Live Beef Carbon », et enfin l'initiative de la CEDEAO sur la promotion de l'agriculture et sa transition agro-écologique en Afrique de l'Ouest.

Toutes ces initiatives, qui illustrent les actions à mettre en œuvre, contribueront à la promotion et la diffusion des pratiques agricoles durables en faveur de la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle.

Pour conclure, je dirais que la France souhaite que cette dynamique puisse se poursuivre et que continue le soutien au Plan d'actions Lima-Paris en vue de la COP22, à Marrakech, et pour les prochaines COP. Au sein de la FAO, un travail a été commencé sur la stratégie climat, qui sera présenté au Conseil de décembre. Et je salue l'engagement de la FAO sur ce thème et voudrais assurer le Directeur général et ses équipes du plein soutien que nous apporterons à poursuivre le travail en commun dans ce sens.

Ms Roberta Maria LIMA FERREIRA (Brazil)

Our delegation thanks FAO for the informative presentation. We think it helps us to see the big picture and better reflect on how we can effectively contribute to the developments in other *fora* of relevance to our own mandate.

I will not comment on all presentations but make a suggestion that could eventually become a routine for strengthening collaboration in different areas and with the most relevant organizations and initiatives.

Regarding climate change development following the Paris Agreement, Brazil suggests that FAO invite the new Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, Ms Patricia Espinosa from Mexico, to come to Rome and share with us her expectations for COP22 with regards to agriculture.

As we know, combatting climate change in the agricultural sector is a high priority cross-cutting theme for FAO along with nutrition and this would be an opportunity to strengthen collaboration between the highest level of FAO and the climate change convention.

Our suggestion is also inspired by the very productive session we had about agriculture and trade last November with the Director-General of the WTO, Mr Roberto Azevêdo, just before the Ministerial Meeting Conference we had in Nairobi last year.

So that is our suggestion which could also be adopted for future relevant meetings that are also of our interest in FAO.

Sra. Maria de Lourdes CRUZ TRINIDAD (México)

Se agradece a todos los ponentes sus presentaciones, las cuales fueron claras y concretas. Me voy a referir particularmente a la 13^a Reunión de la Conferencia de las Partes (COP 13), así como a las reuniones de los países parte de sus protocolos, el de Cartagena y el de Nagoya. Estas reuniones se realizarán en Cancún, Quintana Roo del 4 a 16 de diciembre de este año, esperando la participación de 196 países partes, observadores y representantes de organizaciones sectoriales, intergubernamentales y no gubernamentales.

En ese contexto, los trabajos de la COP 13 se centrarán en la integración de la biodiversidad en los sectores agrícola, forestal, pesquero y turístico. Dicha integración implica que la biodiversidad, su conservación y su aprovechamiento sustentable sean una parte integral de la planeación y la operación de los sectores productivos. Implica también que la biodiversidad y su importancia se conoce, se valora y por ello se conserva, restaura y utiliza sustentablemente, contribuyendo al bienestar humano, al general desarrollo y a erradicar la pobreza.

De otra manera, como comunidad mundial, tendremos dificultades para alcanzar las metas que nos hemos fijado para erradicar la pobreza, atender los impactos del cambio climático y los demás objetivos de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo. Por ello, agradecemos las palabras de Francia, de Suiza, y de Brasil, y nos unimos a que se informe como la FAO va a incorporar los trabajos de esta cumbre en los comités de bosque, agricultura y pesca.

Asimismo nos da orgullo que hayan designado a la Señora Patricia Espinosa, con el honor que se le ha dado y sería un gusto que se presentara a este para informar sobre estos trabajos. Se les espera entonces en México, se les invita a todos los países a que acudan a nuestro país para participar en este importante evento.

Mr Abreha ASEFFA (Ethiopia)

We thank the Secretariat for organizing this information session on various areas and we thank all the panelists for their informative presentations. We thank also the Director of the Emergency and Rehabilitation Division for the information on what FAO is doing in Africa in general, and especially Southern Africa and Ethiopia, to support the governments and people in those countries who are struggling against crises.

We also thank FAO for its work with my Government and people in alleviating the El Niño crisis, as well as for joining the Government to assess the impact of the belg season.

Sra. Andrea S.REPETTI (Argentina)

Mi Delegación agradece las excelentes presentaciones y nos gustaría pedir a la Señora Marcela Villarreal si nos podía emplear la información sobre el diálogo global del Año Internacional de las Legumbres. Nosotros participamos en el diálogo global del Año Internacional de la Agricultura Familiar que fue muy muy exitoso. Nos gustaría si nos pudiera dar más datos sobre las fechas, eventos paralelos, etcétera. Y a la Señora Anna Lartey, nos gustaría pedirle que nos brinda mayor información sobre la Primera Conferencia de Compromisos 2016. Y en particular, qué tipo de anuncios se espera que hagan en los países respecto a estos compromisos.

Mr Jón Erlingur JONASSON (Iceland)

I have one short comment and one question. The comment was to really commend FAO and appreciate the willingness to assist and brief Members to follow the process of coming to an agreement on the indicators for the SDGs and the Statistics Division and Technical Divisions being very helpful and willing to brief. So I think that should be thanked.

I have one question for the Director because when we started the journey to reach the 169 indicators. I remember in 2014 it was said that this target was so big that implementing it would cost more than all of the budget allocated for a year.

So it would be interesting now, when we have come to a conclusion on the monitoring, to know what is your assessment? I mean, how expensive could this journey be?

We also listened to Members calling for assistance in this field, so is this ready to implement or is it as big as we heard in the beginning?

Mr Nthutang SELEKA (South Africa)

There is a tendency of linking the great source of proteins of pulses with the poor. By making frequent reference to the effect that these seeds are of nutritious value to the poor and the rich, I think the key message has to be that of promoting the nutritious benefits of these pulses to all.

This point was already made in the last Council. It does not make me happy just to say poor and rich. Reference to the poor should be taken out because it is of a mutual benefit to all. I think that is the point I would like to see today and tomorrow on this particular matter.

Mr Pierfrancesco SACCO (Italy)

Allow me to congratulate FAO and all of the panelists for these very interesting presentations. As a representative of Italy, a very proactive host country of this Organization, I feel a sense of pride in

seeing how FAO takes care of its leading role on so many key global public goods under the current international agenda.

Allow me to pick up on an expression used by Mr Frick. He used the expression FAO Agenda. The FAO Agenda is also its Membership Agenda and for this reason, I am also happy to note in how many areas the Italian Government is fostering collaboration, initiatives and activities among the issues that were raised by the panelists.

The second remark is about the intervention of Mr Gennari. He said that the SDG indicators will drive the international agenda on statistics until 2030 and he also noted that alignment of national and global indicators is in the best interests of countries. So a natural conclusion that we could draw from this assertion is that alignment between the FAO Strategic Framework and Medium-Term Plan 2018-21 and the framework of the SDGs, targets and indicators will also be in the best interest of FAO.

The third point is more a question or suggestion about the possibility to extend this type of extremely interesting and stimulating session to developments in *fora* for potential FAO outreach and I am referring to maybe OECD, G7, G20 processes, or important regional or political organizations like the African Union or European Union, and others of course.

Mme Ségolène HALLEY DES FONTAINES (France)

Je pense que, sous réserve de confirmation par mon collègue de la délégation de l'Union européenne, il souhaite prendre la parole en tant qu'observateur, et non pas au titre de la présidence de l'Union européenne.

Mr Salah AL BAZZAZ (Kuwait) (Original language Arabic)

First of all I would like to say that all of the presentations were extremely useful and interesting. However, there is a point that I should like to make about emergencies in a number of countries, particularly in the Near East.

We look forward to being briefed by FAO about the efforts made in terms of emergency and preparedness to those emergencies. With regard to the expected COP22 in Marrakesh, I would like to say that it is necessary to focus on climate change and to study its impact on the environment and on water pollution, particularly in the Gulf of Kuwait.

About the decade for nutrition, we look forward to an increased role of FAO in our region for the upcoming decade. The Regional Conference for the Near East focused on that point and we should like to see more involvement for FAO in our region.

Sr. Antonio CARRANZA BARONA (Ecuador)

Queremos unirnos a las expresiones de felicitación por las presentaciones y por la asistencia de este punto en el programa del Consejo que nos ayuda a tener información sobre el trabajo y la contribución de la FAO en los diferentes foros.

Quería referirme a la intervención del Director de la División de Emergencias y Rehabilitación, que agradecemos por su clara presentación. Y que señalaba que a propósito del esto del niño y de la niña, que fundamentalmente son crisis de la agricultura. Y esto lo quería vincular con el Informe de Implementación del Programa 2014-2015, en la parte de las enseñanzas o lecciones aprendidas.

Se menciona también que una de las mayores lagunas que existe es la de los conocimientos y de los datos en relación con los daños y pérdidas sufridos en el sector agrícola, justamente a consecuencia de estas crisis y catástrofes. Y allí señala también que la FAO ha puesto en marcha un sistema de información para cuantificar la amplitud de los daños y pérdidas del sector agrícola. A propósito de estas, o como consecuencia de estas catástrofes.

Igualmente señala que, además del sistema de información, se tiene previsto elaborar un informe anual. Queremos solicitar más de información sobre este sistema de información que consideramos una herramienta muy importante. Queremos felicitar a la FAO por emprender estos trabajos en este sistema y en este informe anual, que como lo digo, será de mucha utilidad para los Estados en la recuperación de esos sectores luego de las catástrofes.

Mr Majid DEGHAN-SHOAR (Islamic Republic of Iran)

I am aligning my voice to Ecuador and other colleagues in thanking FAO and yourself as Independent Chairperson, the Secretary-General. And all colleagues for a wonderful briefing and informative statements.

Regarding statistics, it is very important to have monitoring and evaluation toward achievement of SDGs and talking about information systems and just I want to remind the right point mentioned by Dr da Silva at the meeting before Council and during the Council about the need for innovation systems of statistics and information for evidence-based policy making on the basis of timely, accurate and very favourable data and information, early warning capability based on improved statistics for all elements of the supply utilization balance to think of a market of information.

We would like, if possible, to have an informal meeting or workshop in FAO with the Statistics Division to brief us more on the target, on how to monitor and evaluate, on how Member Nations can help FAO to undertake this extremely important task and we should work together to eliminate hunger.

Additional input and information by the Statistics Division would be very welcome for other colleagues I am sure.

Mr Mafizur RAHMAN (Observer for Bangladesh)

I would like to thank all of the presenters for their very informative presentations. Regarding the first presentation, it was said that probably due to climate change and sea level rising many SIDS countries will actually vanish from the globe. The sea level is already rising.

I have just one question: because of the sea level rising, the saline water intrusion is already happening in many countries, including Bangladesh. Is there any information on this? Do you have statistics that show how much agriculture production is already lost by this time?

The second question is regarding the UN Decade of Action. Madam Lartey said that the action plan would be prepared soon and that there will be a progress report in 2017 and a biennium report. I would like to say it is very close to 2015. Probably it would be better to have another progress report at the end of the 2022-23, two years ahead of the Decade. That will help us to know what progress we have made in the issue of nutrition.

Ms Elizabeth NASSKAU (Observer for United Kingdom)

Thank you to everybody for all of these highly relevant updates and we very much hope the presentations can all be circulated soon. We wanted to just share a couple of comments on two or three of the presentations. First of all, many thanks to Anna Lartey for all of her work on the update of the Decade of Action on Nutrition that the UK very much welcomes.

We are very interested in engaging with that work plan and look forward to FAO sharing more details on that as it evolves. The Decade provides a really important opportunity to ensure that nutrition remains a priority for the next ten years, which is going to be critical if we are actually going to achieve global Goal 2 on ending hunger.

So, as part of this, it is important to see the commitment of the UN working better together to collectively deliver improved and increased nutrition outcomes as well as supporting Member States to do the same. It is also really important we feel that the Decade of Action works alongside other key nutrition initiatives and movements so that they are mutually reinforcing rather than competing at all.

We look forward to the Nutrition for Growth (N4G) and the Decade of Action working together to maximize high quality SMART commitments for nutrition at the next N4G Summit. The SUN movement also remains key to delivering nutrition outcomes in country and maintaining global commitment from all actors so we very much welcome coordination with this too.

We also finally welcome the WHO resolution on the Decade of Action approved just last week. We wanted to underline our appreciation to Mr Frick for his update on the outcome of COP21 and

very much welcome and encourage FAO's work on climate and supporting further action on agriculture for the next COP22 with Morocco.

Finally, thanks also to Mr Burgeon for the update on El Niño and La Niña. We commend FAO's work on early warning and coordinating with partners on response.

On the World Humanitarian Summit, it is great to hear about FAO commitments. We would just like to ask how progress on these will be reported in the future.

Mr Jan Artur SIENCZEWSKI (European Union)

Let me thank the speakers for their informative presentations, and especially Dominique Burgeon for his excellent presentation on the World Humanitarian Summit.

I would like to take this opportunity to refer to the creation of the Global Network for Food Insecurity, Risk Reduction and Food Crisis Response, which was announced on 24 May in Istanbul. Let me stress that this is a high priority for the European Union and we expect that this new Global Network will contribute to preparing the international community to address food crises when they occur and also to reduce the growing aid gap. It would be appreciated if Mr Burgeon was willing to provide his view on this network.

Ms Maria Helena SEMEDO (Deputy-Director General, Coordinator for Natural Resources)

Thank you to all the speakers for the comments and the questions and the recognition of the important role FAO is playing in the international agenda or in the *fora* of importance.

I just came from Kenya where I attended the General Assembly of UNEP and I had the opportunity to meet Mr Braulio De Souza who is the Executive Secretary of the CBD, and Mr Rafael Pacchiano, the Secretary of State of Environment, and I think he is the Commissioner for COP 13. We had a very fruitful meeting where we discussed how the three organizations could work together towards the preparation of COP 13 in Mexico. We agreed that we would really strengthen the mainstreaming of agricultural sectors of biodiversity and agricultural sectors, and it will be highly in the Mexico Declaration where all the sectors, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, will have a special paragraph how they can contribute to biodiversity and vice versa.

We will be having an FAO week throughout the 15 days. Now we have to see internally how it will be done. And we also agreed that maybe Mexico will report to the three technical commissions on the preparation of COP 13. I told them we are already finalizing the agenda. It is not up to me to decide but to be seen with the Bureau how we can integrate it, these outcomes, or these points in the agenda. This is to confirm that we are very much involved in the preparation of COP 13 in Mexico. The mainstreaming of biodiversity in agricultural sectors will be high in the discussion and in the outcome of COP 13. We will be having the CBD Executive Secretary here in FAO on 16 and 17 June. It will again be an opportunity for us to work with Mr Braulio De Souza towards the better preparation of COP 13 and will be in close collaboration with the Permanent Representation of Mexico to FAO.

Regarding COP 22, as it has been noted by myself and by Martin, we are very much in close collaboration with the Kingdom of Morocco; how FAO can support the Kingdom of Morocco in the preparation of COP 22 and how we can be as active or even more than we were in Paris in the preparation of the action days. Our contribution on the Triple A presentation: we can say that agriculture, adaptation for Africa, the Triple A Initiative, and the FAO Initiative on Water Scarcity to be also presented in Marrakesh. We received a request from the Kingdom of Morocco if FAO can allocate two staff to be working closely with them in the preparation. We are trying to find out if we can have some resources to finance two staff during six months in the preparation of COP 22.

One comment to the Ambassador of Iceland. During the signature of the agreement, the World Bank made representation where they said that if all the developed countries contribute 0.7 percent of their GDP, it will not be sufficient to finance the 2030 Agenda. Meaning that the resources needed are immense. This is the reason why partnership and the means of implementation are very important, meaning that the private sector domestic resources are important as we move towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. I will leave Mr Gennari to give further information.

Regarding the invitation to Patricia Espinosa, I can say that Cristina Gutierrez will be in FAO on 17 and 18 June. We have the CPF meeting. This is the reason why Mr Braulio will be here, Cristina will be here, and it will be another opportunity for her to talk on COP 22. We will be willing to invite Ms Patricia Espinosa. But for diplomatic reasons, before she takes over, it will be difficult. We have an incoming and a forthcoming, but it is in our plans to find the appropriate moment for us to invite her to come to FAO.

Mr Peter CSOKA (Senior Forestry Officer)

Just a piece of information in response to the comments made by the Distinguished Representatives of Switzerland and France.

Regarding the agendas of COFO, the work and the collaboration with CBD has been addressed quite extensively in the last sessions. And this time, preparations are underway. That in response to the request of the Government of Mexico to provide an opportunity for His Excellency the Minister to address COFO and speak about the 13th Session of the CBD COP.

Mr Martin FRICK (Director, Climate and Environment Division)

Also from my end, many thanks for the encouragement given by many Delegates in this room.

Just to answer the technical questions asked by the Distinguished Representative of Bangladesh, there are three publications from FAO covering this question. I am happy to give you the references. One is a publication on climate change, water and food security, with a chapter on rising sea levels.

The second one is an article which is specific to your question, potential impacts of sea level rise on populations and aquaculture that was published not so long ago. Not for Bangladesh, but their immediate neighbourhood, there is a publication on rice in Southeast Asia that also references the impact of salination and sea-level rise which is of course not only relevant for Bangladesh but for many areas in the world, certain events in India and the Nile Delta, for example, but also other river deltas, particularly since IPCC just corrected the predictions for sea-level rise which are more dramatic than was estimated before.

Ms Maria Helena SEMEDO (Deputy-Director General, Coordinator for Natural Resources)

I forgot to mention that the SOFA this year will be on agriculture and climate change. It will again be another contribution to COP 22 in Marrakesh and we hope in October to share with you the findings coming from this publication. During World Food Day, it will be launched and we hope to organize a debate on the findings and how FAO can take the messages from the SOFA to Marrakesh.

Mr Pietro GENNARI (Director and Chief Statistician, Statistics Division)

Thank you to the distinguished delegates for their comments and questions. Let me address first the question on the cost of monitoring the SDGs.

For sure, this would be quite high. There are some assessments already made on the overall cost, the estimates of the costs, and I can provide you with the reference to these assessments. We think that however these assessments are only preliminary for a number of reasons. First of all, a number of indicators—I think more than one-third of the indicators—still have to be completely developed from the methodological point of view. So we do not know exactly what will be the data sources for these indicators.

The second point is the famous call for data revolution and use of innovative tools for data collection. We think that the recent opportunity for many indicators to be produced with some innovative tools, new methods; remote sensing is a clear reference in this case. Also, there is an opportunity for greater coordination between different statistical initiatives and different surveys. Instead of launching new surveys specific for a certain domain, the most effective approach is to try to use the current survey and introduce specific modules, items, for collecting the additional indicators that are needed. So I think that these opportunities for coordination needs to be further explored and this will be in a way the task of the United Nations agencies now that the indicators have been selected and as we go towards implementation.

As the Distinguished Delegate from Iran has mentioned, this will not be only a result of support from United Nations agencies. There are increased opportunities for South-South Cooperation and many countries have developed strong expertise in different areas that can be used for supporting other countries that have a weaker statistical system.

On the need for aligning the FAO Strategic Framework and MTP to the SDGs and, in particular the SDG results framework, the monitoring framework, this is fully acknowledged and we are going to start very soon to work on revising the indicator for SO level, impact level for monitoring the FAO Strategic Framework, and also the outcome indicators. So to have a revised MTP proposal in terms of monitoring framework by the end of this year.

Concerning the work on statistics for damages and losses on agriculture from disasters, I thank the Representative from Ecuador for mentioning this. This is actually work that we are undertaking. There will be an expert group meeting organized next week in Rome and we think that this will be an essential step towards coming to an agreement on the methodology to be used and this would be the necessary step, as I mentioned, for then implementing this methodology and then to have initial estimates of loss of agricultural production consequent to climate change, as the Ambassador of Bangladesh has mentioned, is required and bilateral talks if needed.

Ms Anna LARTEY (Director, Nutrition and Food System Division)

Thank you again, distinguished speakers, for the comments and also the questions. I would like to take first the comment from the Distinguished Representative of Argentina. Her question was what would the first Commitment Conference be about and what is expected of the countries.

If you recall, at ICN2, the commitments made were general global commitments, so now what we are saying is that what as a country will you be doing to really move forward in nutrition? So here we are looking at specific SMART commitments, things that can be measured, what you say you will do specifically within the decade to be able to move forward nutrition.

Regarding Bangladesh's comment about the progress. Indeed, an initial, mid-term and final progress report will be very useful and we have taken note of your suggestion.

To the UK, indeed we see the work plan being inclusive and we have taken your caution to make sure we work alongside other different initiatives. I think that is very important and as I said in my presentation, the Decade is not for any one person or group. It is for the whole world. So indeed we need to really work together to make sure that the work plan is something that covers all of the groups and your caution about bringing alongside all of the various nutrition initiatives is well taken and we will ensure that this is done.

Then there was a general comment from Kuwait about wanting more of FAO's presence. I know they did not mention nutrition but certainly I know that this also refers to FAO's presence regarding nutritional support to the region. It is also something that we will also take serious.

Sra. Marcella VILLARREAL (Director de la Oficina para la Asociación, la Promoción y Desarrollo de la Capacidad)

Quisiera referirme primero a la pregunta de la Argentina. Quisiera también tomar la oportunidad para agradecerle a la Argentina su muy activa y dinámica participación a través de los Años Internacionales, claramente la Agricultura Familiar pero también Suelos y Legumbres.

En relación a su pregunta sobre el diálogo global, tenemos fijada la fecha alrededor de noviembre y estamos ultimando la fecha. Probablemente va a ser el 21 de noviembre. Es un diálogo que es multi-actor, trayendo a todos los diferentes actores con sus diferentes voces. Traeremos también a todos los embajadores regionales con el objetivo de documentar el estado del arte sobre las legumbres en todas las diferentes regiones, incluyendo identificar las oportunidades pero al mismo tiempo los desafíos para aumentar el consumo y la producción en cada una de las regiones, y haciendo referencia también a las políticas necesarias para ello.

El objetivo también será de llegar a un acuerdo sobre cuáles son las prioridades en términos de la promoción de los mensajes del Año Internacional y la comunicación, actividades también que se seguirán llevando a cabo después de la conclusión del Año.

Finalmente el objetivo es identificar las lagunas en los conocimientos alrededor de las legumbres y promover investigación para colmar estas lagunas. Claramente el diálogo global, como también los diálogos regionales y ya hemos tenido el diálogo regional para África - los de las otras regiones los tendremos en los próximos meses - pero todas estas actividades naturalmente dependen del presupuesto que logremos conseguir, porque todas dependen de fuentes extra-presupuestarias.

De manera que esperamos - estamos seguros que seguiremos contando con el gran apoyo de la Argentina en este sentido.

Continues in English

I would now like to refer to the comment made by South Africa. I would like to say that we do take note of your comment and we would ensure that in the communication materials we do refer to the importance of promoting the nutritious aspects of policy's benefits to all.

Mr Dominique BURGEON (Director, Emergency and Rehabilitation Division and Strategic Programme Leader, Resilience Programme Management Team)

I would like first to answer to the Distinguished Delegate of Kuwait and say that we take note of his request and are available for a briefing on FAO's efforts undertaken in response to emergencies in the Near East Region. It is an important region for us and we have a lot ongoing and definitely ready to brief.

Regarding the comment made by the Distinguished Delegate of Ecuador, I should say in addition to what my colleague has said, indeed that we are preparing for the third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction that was held last year in Sendai, we found that there was some sort of gap of information in terms of the impact of disasters, natural disasters on agriculture and food security.

We therefore prepare this first ever report on damage and loss and the impact of disasters on the sector and came out with important information, one being that overall the agricultural sector absorbs about 22 percent of the total cost of disasters. But this cost can go up to 87 percent when we are talking about drought for instance.

At Sendai we committed to produce regularly such a report and under Strategic Objective on the Strategic Program on Resilience, we have a very close partnership with the Chief Statistician and his team to indeed develop a methodology that will enable us to come up with a regular report which we believe will highly contribute to the advocacy for the impact of disaster on agriculture and the related need to invest on prevention preparedness and the value it represents.

Coming to the comment by the Distinguished Delegate of the United Kingdom regarding the World Humanitarian Summit, yes we did a number of commitments that are presented in this paper, the FAO position paper that we prepared ahead of the World Humanitarian Summit, and I would say that this document is fully coherent with the Strategic Framework.

A number of the commitments we are making are taken, I would say, from the existing PWB with very precise targets. For example, we are talking of assisting 30 countries in mainstreaming in their sectorial policies which is exactly the target we have in the Strategic Framework. Then a number of other commitments which we are making which are not in the PWB but which will inform the way we are preparing for the next MTP, bearing in mind that the commitment to the WHS are essentially aspirational commitments.

So this is the way we are going therefore to monitor these points against monitoring the delivery of the Strategic Framework.

Coming to the comment of the EU and indeed there was an important side event that was jointly organized by the EU, WFP and FAO at the World Humanitarian Summit on the so-called walking the last mile during which indeed, we presented a joint global assessment report that was prepared by FAO, WFP and the EU Joint Research Centre which is essentially a first then. This was a pilot to

present a joint analysis of the situation worldwide of the various, ongoing and potential food crises with the way of promoting joint analysis and joint programming towards developing not only early action but also promoting resilience building.

This global assessment report and the joint analysis that will be done will be supported by a number of partners which will contribute to a network, a network that is now being established and that working together with WFP and the EU, we will be promoting.

I should say also in concluding that because I did not say it in my remarks on El Niño, that there will be two important events that will take place in the coming weeks. One will be a high-level meeting on the Dry Corridor in Central America: El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala, during which we are going to present the various shocks that regularly are hitting the region, including the impact of El Niño.

Then on 6 July, we will have another high-level meeting that will be dedicated to the impact of El Niño and forthcoming the risk of La Niña in Africa for the morning session, and on Asia and the Pacific for the afternoon session.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, this concludes item 14 of the agenda which was presented to Council for information only. The list of presentations has been included in the draft Report.

In addition, the power point presentations we have just seen will be uploaded to the FAO Members' Gateway.

Debriefing on Field Visit to the Lao People's Democratic Republic (from 6 to 12 December 2015) by Senior Officials of Rome-based Permanent Representations

Bilan de la visite de terrain effectuée en République démocratique populaire lao

(6-12 décembre 2015) par des hauts responsables des représentations permanentes sises à Rome

Informe oral acerca de la visita sobre el terreno realizada por altos funcionarios de las

Representaciones Permanentes en Roma a la República Democrática Popular Lao (del 6 al 12 de diciembre de 2015)

CHAIRPERSON

I now welcome to the podium the representatives who participated in the Field Visit to Laos which took place from 6 to 12 December 2015, and who will now debrief the Council on their visit.

M. Mohamed Bassirou NIANG (Sénégal)

Nous aurions dû être plus nombreux, mais certains de nos collègues ont été empêchés aujourd'hui, car la présentation du rapport prévue hier leur aurait permis d'être parmi nous, mais elle n'a malheureusement pas pu se faire.

À présent, nous allons vous présenter le rapport de la visite de terrain que les Représentants permanents désignés par leur groupe régional respectif ont effectuée du 6 au 12 décembre 2015, en République démocratique populaire Lao. Cette visite, comme vous le savez, s'inscrit dans le cadre des visites que la FAO organise chaque année au profit des Représentants permanents basés à Rome, afin de leur permettre de voir effectivement sur le terrain des programmes et projets de la FAO.

Le rapport que nous allons vous présenter est structuré en huit points, qui sont les suivants: un résumé du rapport; une introduction; un aperçu du pays; les principaux enseignements tirés de la visite; les recommandations pour les visites à venir, « the way forward », la voie à suivre; les remerciements; et enfin les annexes.

Nous allons passer à la diapositive relative à l'aperçu. Nous pouvons dire de prime abord que le Laos s'étend sur une superficie de 236.800 km² et que le pays est enclavé et très montagneux, les trois quarts du territoire étant occupés par des montagnes. Il compte une population de 6,6 millions d'habitants avec 49 groupes ethniques et une grande diversité linguistique, car il existe 84 langues parlées. Sur le plan économique, le Laos a connu une rapide croissance économique, avec une moyenne ces dernières années de 8 pour cent par an. Au plan nutritionnel cependant, sa population compte un million de

personnes souffrant de malnutrition, ce qui représente sur 6,6 millions d'habitants une importante proportion. De surcroît, plus de 60 pour cent de la population vit en zone rurale et l'agriculture occupe 75 pour cent de sa population active.

Sur la carte, les points en rouge indiquent la répartition dans l'espace des différents projets de la FAO. Cependant, du fait du temps dont nous disposons, nous n'avons pu couvrir que les projets localisés au Sud-Est du Laos, c'est-à-dire la partie qui va de Vientiane à Champassak, tout près de la frontière avec le Cambodge.

Mr Mafizur RAHMAN (Bangladesh)

This part, which relates to the field visit in Laos and projects carried out, was supposed to be presented by one of our colleagues. Unfortunately, he is not available. Thus, I will be presenting this part also on behalf of him.

There are so many projects introduced in Laos. However, we would like to focus on four main projects. Project number one relates to locust control. Project number two is flood management. The third one is rice-fish systems. And the last one is related to horticulture.

The first project is related to locust control. We have to deal with the yellow-spined bamboo locust which has indeed a very negative impact. Since their outbreak in Northern Laos in 2014, they have produced dramatic effects on agriculture production and maybe also in the associated economic conditions. Some videos after the project's implementation laid emphasis on the divested impact of these locusts. FAO has to play an important role in this regard. FAO have already provided for a technical assistance programme, and capacity-building activities. The money available is not very much, around USD 5 million in 2015-16, and it includes FAO and UN-OCHA.

We have to take the appropriate actions to combat this disaster, in combining short-term interventions with long-term strategy. These are challenging and difficult issues to deal with because we need to use ecologically friendly matters, and we lack expertise and resources in the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. FAO expertise can be of great help to combat this locust problem.

The second project relates to drought and flood management. We have to tackle the increasing occurrence of floods as well as droughts affecting smallholder agriculture production. FAO has already carried out a programme with capacity building and institutionalization of disaster risk mitigation. In agriculture, we received USD 670 000 from the FAO and the EU. We used participatory matters appreciated by the leaders, but unfortunately we still do not have any specific activities there. International drought- and flood-resistant varieties led to higher yields meeting the demand of the local grazers. The adaptation of farming practices is a good practice option focusing on the local specificity. And we should note that they just want to implement this kind of adaptation programmes.

Let us move on to the Belgium project. The problem here is the following: farmers were producing very low horticulture production, providing as a consequence limited income earnings and opportunities. FAO has taken a small initiative with limited financial resources. However, this initiative has a very good impact. It lies on supporting investment, the canopies and packaging house, building partnerships, training of the farmers. This leads to high horticulture production, and to high-level markets, particularly in the EU and Thailand through private traders. In addition, farmers have significantly increased their incomes in this small project. Because of the lack of resources, the project has not yet materialized sufficiently. However, we expect the project to be scaled up appropriately with sufficient resources in future.

The last project is related to fish systems. We reviewed the oldest practices still in use in Laos, carrying out fish analysis in farming tuna. We noted biodiversity loss associated with rice intensification with increased use of fertilizer and pesticides. FAO has made available limited financial resources, but brought expertise, capacity-building activities, sharing good practices and facilitating awareness-raising. And finally we have some findings: emphasis should be laid on high nutritional economy and environmental benefits of synergies between the aquatic resources and Laos's fish sector. We note that rice and fish as well as other varieties of aquatic life resources could also be produced. That has a very good impact and we will see when we talk over all the findings.

Further research, capacity-building, and awareness-raising is needed. FAO is committing itself to supporting the sustainable intensification of this rice and fish combination.

These are the four projects actually we have visited and we have seen the good impact of FAO involvement with these projects. Now we will show a short video.

Video Presentation

Présentation video

Videopresentación

Mr Mafizur RAHMAN (Bangladesh)

I have seen the impact of these rice field farming systems and how they could be intensified. People over there are saying that they need some small resources. Technology is already there so actually we are hopeful that it will be done.

I am now presenting the findings of the whole visit. Finding number one is expanded FAO involvement. Actually, expanded FAO involvement in policy standard-setting and project implementation could be highly relevant.

The government of Lao People's Democratic Republic aims to combine agricultural growth with conservation of natural resources and improvements in nutrition in terms of agricultural trade. It tries to bank on the green growth using comparative advantage in organic production and geographic indicators.

At the same time, the country faces weather related risks, mainly floods and droughts, pests, animal disease, and pressure on natural resources including forests. In all of these areas, FAO involvement can and should be stepped up.

Finding number two: FAO in the Lao People's Democratic Republic is in the process of improving relations with the Government, other UN agencies and development partners. These relations have been marginalized in the past, but this situation is now improving while relations appear to have been normalized again with the Government and with most of UN agencies and development partners. However, it should be pointed out that the mission could not actually fully assess the working relations with the other two RBAs, namely WFP and IFAD.

The third finding relates to FAO's current portfolio in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. This portfolio consists of a small range of projects with a wide diverse and thematic as well as geographic terms. As a consequence, FAO's portfolio is highly fragmented. Many of the projects are quite small and not necessarily connected between themselves. It is then very difficult to scale up. FAO should also make sure that the Country Programming Framework is more strategic and linked with the programmes carried out.

The fourth finding is relating to nutrition. There is no denying that the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic has recently placed nutrition high on the policy agenda. A national nutrition strategy has been developed in a cross-sectorial manner and FAO has been effectively and efficiently involved in this process.

The drivers of the highly unfavourable nutrition situation in the Lao People's Democratic Republic includes high levels of adolescent pregnancies and undernutrition. FAO is also involved in the implementation of the strategy, particularly with respect to nutrition-sensitive agriculture. FAO is looking to expand its involvement in 2016 as more fundings becomes available from IFAD and EU.

The fifth finding is a highly sensitive issue in Laos. A large part of the Lao People's Democratic Republic has been contracted to large companies, in particular foreign companies, foreign investors, and often in the form of concessions. Almost 20 percent of the agricultural land was given there. Many concessions are used for banana and rubber plantations which are chemically intensive and have often resulted in heavy pollution on soils, affecting water quality, health and nutrition.

The seventh finding is the spread of yellow-spined bamboo locust. I have already considered one of the consequences of climate change and in September and October 2015 small swarms of yellow-

spined bamboo locust were noticed in six districts in the north of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

But subsequently it expanded rapidly and struck 13 districts. FAO has offered an emergency response project whose purpose is to improve national management of locust plagues through capacity-building. This project is very successful over there in such a way that it may be possible to avoid having that kind of attack.

The next finding concerns the challenges that the Lao People's Democratic Republic is facing to achieve agricultural and economic development. The Government has selectively limited resources and capacity. The main challenge is relating to the lack of qualified personnel in the country, particularly in the areas of agriculture and forestry as well as on fisheries.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic could benefit from sending more people for training and education on the other side of the country.

Finding number nine deals with NGOs and civil society. NGOs and civil society activities have been quite limited. As a consequence, the regional policy is weakened.

We already mentioned the farming systems. I would just like to say that there is a very good opportunity for intensifying efforts in the field. The main objective is to increase income but also the nutrition level of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

The final finding of our mission is related to the small farmers. How would it be possible to connect the small farmers to high-value markets? The projects targeted the objective to change production from low-base crops to high-value products such as coriander, strawberry, eggplants and chilies. Farmers have significantly increased their incomes. Although the project was successful, scaling up this success has not been realized sufficiently because of the limited resources. That is the reason why we expect that FAO use case materials to stimulate wider uptake of the production, practices and partnerships. As a result, the Lao People's Democratic Republic should get more income. In addition, to broaden the basis of this project is most welcomed to cast light on this high-value product, and further engage the developed countries and the related high-value markets.

Ms April COHEN (United States of America)

One general recommendation that we made was to limit the visit to one country. From this point of view, it was very fruitful to get the opportunity to see a lot of different projects in Laos. We strongly believe that if we had had another country added to the itinerary, it would not have been possible to complete a more in-depth analysis as the one we carried out in Laos.

We also recommended to have at least one ambassador participating in order to facilitate meetings with governors and local officials. It helps us to clearly identify who should be the first to greet the government official.

We also thought that there should be a balance between the field projects and the FAO country office location. We loved going into the field but we also realize that we learned quite a lot in the capital.

We also needed to prepare the visit in advance. We have had a video-conference with the FAO country director before the trip and that was very helpful. It allowed us to set our expectations and we were able to give a lot of feedback both before and after the trip based on that video-conference.

With regard to the FAO country office, we felt that local staff should receive increased training at regional and headquarters levels so that they can learn more about FAO and better understand the work that is carried out. That is the reason why we strongly believe that it would be useful for them to come to headquarters in order to see how things are handled here.

Having the right FAO Representative is critical to the success of the office. From this point of view, we were very impressed with Dr Stephen Rudgard who was really very good at handling the myriad of issues that come with being an FAO Representative.

Dr Rudgard pointed out that there are a lot of small-scale projects in Laos. This is prohibiting larger scaled-up projects, which is a widespread drawback, not unique to Laos.

We also recommend stepping up collaboration with local partners, the private sector, civil society, other RBAs in country and other UN agencies. In addition, we did have an opportunity to meet with a team while we were in Vientiane, a team who was basically like the local landscape of all of the different development partners. It happens to be, as far as I am concerned, one of my most useful meetings.

Last but not least, I would like to cast light on green sustainable agriculture, which is of the utmost importance to help Laos to develop.

Mr Mahmoud Mohammed Ahmed AL-ASHWAL (Yemen)

In conclusion, we confirm that the visit was extremely well organized. The group would like to express its sincere thanks to the following persons: Ms Kadiresan, Assistant Director-General; Mr Rudgard, FAO Representative in Laos and his team; Mr Rodrigo de Lapuerta, Director, OSD; Ms Nadine Kayal and Ms Emma Wittekind. We would also like to thank the Laos Government's representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Investment and Ministry of Health.

Finally, we would like to thank all representatives and delegations that we met in Laos, the Russian Ambassador, the EU delegation, the *Agence Française de Développement*, USAID, Plan Protection, Centre for Locust Management Projects, ECTAD, National Animal Health, and the UNDP, WHO and UNICEF representatives.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, we have reached the end of this morning's plenary meeting. We will reconvene at 14.30 and will hear the second debriefing on the Field Visit which took place earlier this year from 13 to 19 March.

After the debriefing, we will proceed with the adoption of the Report.

Before we close, I will give the floor to the Secretary-General who will make some announcements. Mr Gagnon you have the floor.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I wish to inform the members of the European Union, that a Coordination Meeting of the EU will take place immediately following the end of this meeting in the German Room.

Furthermore, I wish to remind you of the Side Event *Bridging the gap between the World's Leading Seed Companies and the Smallholder Farmer: Findings of the Access to Seeds Index 2016*, taking place from 13:00 to 14:30 in the Iran room.

CHAIRPERSON

Ladies and gentlemen, this brings us to the end of the morning meeting. We shall meet again at 14.30 hours this afternoon.

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-fourth Session
Cent cinquante-quatrième session
154.º período de sesiones**

**Rome, 30 May-3 June 2016
Rome, 30 mai-3 juin 2016
Roma, 30 de mayo-3 de junio de 2016**

**EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING
HUITIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE
OCTAVA SESIÓN PLENARIA**

3 June 2016

The Eighth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14.37 hours
Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La huitième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 37
sous la présidence de M. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la octava sesión plenaria a las 14.37
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Wilfred J. Ngirwa,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

Debriefing on Field Visit to Albania and Serbia (from 13 to 19 March 2016) by Senior Officials of Rome-based Permanent Representations

Bilan de la visite de terrain effectuée en Albanie et en Serbie (13-19 mars 2016) par des hauts responsables des représentations permanentes sises à Rome

Informe oral acerca de la visita sobre el terreno realizada por altos funcionarios de las Representaciones Permanentes a Albania y Serbia (del 13 al 19 de marzo de 2016)

CHAIRPERSON

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the eighth and final meeting of the 154th Session of the FAO Council.

Before moving to the adoption of the Report of this session, we shall listen to a debriefing on the field visit to Albania and Serbia. I am joined on the podium by the representatives who participated in this Field Visit, which took place from 13 to 19 March this year.

Sr. Luis Fernando AYALA GONZALEZ (Chile)

Tengo el agrado de referirme a esta Asamblea para informar brevemente sobre los resultados del viaje de trabajo a la República de Albania y la República de Serbia, efectuado por una comisión conformada por los grupos regionales de la FAO. El grupo estaba representado por Rusia, Estados Unidos y Canadá, Medio Oriente, Japón, Libia, Australia naturalmente y la Unión Europea, junto conmigo, Fernando Ayala, Embajador de Chile, representando al grupo latinoamericano.

Quisiera decir que esta visita a dos países de los Balcanes orientales fue extremadamente positiva desde el punto de vista de ver dos países que fueron severamente afectados por inundaciones que dejaron consecuencias económicas muy duras, sobre todo para pequeños productores, zonas rurales, campesinos, que fueron severamente afectados. Además, a ellos se suman los problemas políticos, étnicos, que enfrentan algunos de los países y pudimos ver cómo algunas de las familias refugiadas de Serbia habían tenido que dejar su lugar de nacimiento por los problemas étnicos que todos conocemos y que ocurrieron en la década de los noventa, y luego enfrentar estos problemas de la naturaleza.

Como sé que el tiempo es muy escaso, voy a pasar la palabra a Rosemary Navarrete, que va a presentar el informe sobre Albania, y a mi compañera Ana Fraile de la Unión Europea, la cual va a presentar el informe sobre Serbia y posteriormente mi compañero Osamu Kubota de Japón, que va a referirse a las conclusiones de este viaje.

Ms Rosemary NAVARRETE (Australia)

As the Ambassador said, it was a pleasure to go to Albania and Serbia together with the group. I will be reporting on the visit to Albania. You will find further details on the FAO Members Gateway.

As we all know, these visits are focused on trying to understand better how FAO works in the field, the different presence and activities of FAO in each country. They also provide a greater understanding of the challenges faced by the country and how FAO responds to these difficulties through the operational presences that they have there. Based on this brief visit we also identified some recommendations for improvement.

Albania's country office was established in July and it works through a multiple accreditation system. Therefore, the FAO staff in Albania consist of an assistant FAO Representative and a programme assistant seconded by the Albanian Government from the Ministry of Agriculture. She is only working on a part-time basis though. So the operations in Albania are overseen by the Deputy Regional Representative for Europe and Central Asia, who also joined us on this part of the visit.

The Country Programming Framework was always present, even if we did not speak directly. Whenever we spoke to anyone at the meetings to understand whether they really were listening to problems for their country that aligned to what we had identified in the report and something that we kept in mind throughout the trip.

The first day of our trip happened to coincide with a national holiday, so we started the trip in the southern districts of Albania by the name of Lushnje and Fier. These two districts were actually those

that were more severely hit by the floods in 2015. In Kafaraj we visited local representatives and small farmers that had been affected by the floods.

We also visited a USAID project that worked on pilot greenhouses primarily used for strawberry production. What we learned in this particular meeting was the EU Recovery Programme for floods provided compensation-based actual production loss estimates, as well as access to grant funds. These grant funds could be used for equipment, among which these pilot greenhouses. So we were shown what these were like and how they were more adaptable to the potential floodings.

And we obviously tasted the strawberries at the end of the meeting. We not only understood that the strawberries tasted very good, but also that there was a particular characteristic of the Albanian farmland that made it a very big challenge to increase agricultural production and efficiency, that is the very high fragmentation of agricultural land.

We also visited the wholesale market. It is an aggregator market where entrepreneurs can buy vegetables and fruits for export, as well as sell seedlings to local farmers. We observed plant grafting going on with the seedlings, which are eventually sold to the local farmers and we found it very interesting.

We visited the water reservoir in Fier, where there is a project of rehabilitating the reservoir with use of the World Bank funds and FAO as a technical advisor. With the improved irrigation reservoir, drainage would improve and this would be a way to mitigate the heavy rains.

At the University of Tirana, we visited the Institute of Plant Genetic Bank. What we learned was that FAO has a very long-standing partnership with this institution trying to preserve and conserve the crop diversity of Albania. We also learned that in Albania they benefit from a high diversity, especially in medicinal plants. As a contracting party of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, they have access to a lot of training and activities they have done in the past with FAO. We were also given a demonstration on the Global Information Early Warning System in place that we found really beneficial. We also noted that the Institute's professionals had identified a lot of ideas for collaborating with FAO that they wanted to bring across FAO. So we hope that that dialogue will continue in future.

In Tirana we visited the FAO country office, which is placed within the Ministry of Agriculture, but we had also meetings with the Head of the Department of the Land and Water Management, the European Commission, the Office of the Prime Minister, Department of Investment in Foreign Aid, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and lastly the United Nations Country Team.

At the United Nations Country Team meeting we met the United Nations Resident Coordinator, as well as representatives from the UNDP, UNFPA, ILO, UNICEF, WHO and others. It was a very beneficial discussion on how working as a UN was happening in Albania. Albania happens to be a pilot country for working as one, and therefore they were very appreciative of this new stable and more permanent presence for FAO in Albania, and looked forward to coordinating in a more consistent manner.

The Delegation found interesting that FAO had decided to remain within the Ministry of Agriculture instead of actually having their office within the United Nations Country Team.

Sra. Ana FRAILE VASSALLO (Unión Europea)

La presencia de la FAO en Serbia es un poco diferente que en el caso de Albania, porque no existe una oficina de país. En este caso, la representación se establece a través de la figura del corresponsal nacional, que en este caso es miembro del Ministerio de Agricultura. Además, existe una oficina de proyecto que supervisa las acciones que se están llevando en el terreno actualmente en el país, un consultor del Centro de Investigación y por supuesto las actividades se supervisan desde la Oficina Regional de Budapest.

En nuestra visita a Belgrado, tuvimos la oportunidad también de reunirnos no sólo con el equipo de la FAO, sino que también tuvimos la oportunidad de hablar con gobernantes y con representantes del Gobierno, en este caso del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores y del Ministerio de Agricultura y también con los Representantes de las Organizaciones de Naciones Unidas que tienen presencia en el país.

Durante nuestra reunión con el Banco Europeo para la Reconstrucción y el Desarrollo, aprendimos más de primera mano algunas de las acciones que se están llevando a cabo de manera conjunta con la FAO, en particular para facilitar el diálogo político en sectores como el de la carne o el de los productos lácteos, o la inclusión de indicaciones geográficas protegidas para algunos productores de vegetales.

En cuanto a los donantes, tuvimos oportunidad de reunirnos con la delegación de la Unión Europea. La Unión Europea es, al igual que en el caso de Albania, el principal donante, y tuvimos la oportunidad de conocer las acciones que se están llevando a cabo en el país, concretamente el proyecto que se lanzó en el 2014 para apalejar los efectos de los grandes inundaciones que tuvieron lugar en Serbia.

El componente que está enfocado a recuperar la capacidad de producción de los pequeños agricultores y aumentar su resiliencia está siendo implementado por la FAO.

Y por ese motivo tuvimos la oportunidad de visitar la parte noroeste del país, concretamente las zonas que tienen identificadas con el punto rojo, y poder conocer de primera mano cómo se está desarrollando esa ayuda.

El proyecto ha sido definido y ha sido desarrollado en un total de 23 pequeños paquetes de ayuda, de tal manera que los pequeños productores pueden optar por aquel paquete que le resulte más conveniente.

De hecho, cuando estuvimos en Serbia tuvimos la oportunidad de ver in situ como la FAO distribuye parte de esa ayuda. En este caso lo que ven en la imagen es el paquete de semillas y de fertilizantes para distribuirse a tiempo antes de la época de siembra.

Tuvimos también oportunidad de visitar una familia que había sido damnificada; como ven en la imagen, nos muestra la altura a la que llegó el agua, que supera la altura de la ventana, y por lo tanto perdieron todo durante esas graves inundaciones. Por suerte y gracias al programa, han sido capaces de recuperar esa capacidad productiva, gracias a algunos de los invernaderos que son más resilientes. Actualmente, el proyecto que se está desarrollando finalizará este año en 2016 y se ha previsto que alcance a casi un total de 35 000 pequeños productores, más de 144 000 personas en los 41 municipios que se han visto más afectados por las inundaciones en Serbia.

Mr Osamu KUBOTA (Japan)

I will present our recommendations that came up from this field visit.

Our first recommendation is about raising awareness on FAO projects and has two points: FAO headquarters should strengthen collaboration and coordination with the country office to understand the full range of FAO areas of work. At the same time the country office is to undertake efforts to increase knowledge and awareness of regional and country stakeholders.

We were informed on many occasions on the areas currently underway in Albania as part of its accession to the EU, many of which lead to the agricultural productivity where we believe FAO technical expertise will be highly beneficial.

The other main recommendation for Albania is focused on land tenure which was recognized as the key issue to boost agriculture production by all stakeholders. This issue was brought up at every meeting with officials in Albania who highlighted the difficulties with the land distribution as a result of privatization and the related challenge of large concentration of small plot poses to agriculture sectors. Actually, this is an area where FAO provided technical expertise in the past, but we think much more remains to be done. Given the importance of land tenure and the fact that it is connected to every aspect of FAO work in Albania, one of our recommendations is that FAO should seek ways to prioritize its work according to Albania's priorities.

We will move on to our recommendation regarding Serbia related to the issue of day-to-day communication with the Government. As an overview, Serbia is a country without an FAO country office and only project offices. One option to increase communications is to strengthen the role of national correspondents. What we saw in this field visit is that national correspondents, at least in

Serbia, are focusing their job in tracking project status and facilitating the work of FAO project teams. It seems that the main communication is not part of their duty.

The other option we came up with is to institutionalize the FAO project staff activities. What we saw in Serbia is that the project team is already fulfilling such day-to-day communication functions, but informally and not as part of contracted scope of work. Therefore, we came at the recommendation to institutionalize these common activities of project staff.

The other recommendation for Serbia is that FAO should consolidate its presence in the country. Currently the FAO office in Serbia is a project office, as I said, but it appeared to be equipped with all key roles, including project managers, various other national experts in specific project components, administrative and finance support staff is there, as well as drivers. It also includes an investment officer housed in the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) premises. However, those roles are not registered in terms of staff presence in Serbia and often not even known to FAO staff in headquarters.

There is also the issue that currently they are not working in one place. For example as I said, there is an investment officer but he is working in the EBRD premises which is a different place from the project office.

We recognize the need for FAO to consolidate its presence, for example by considering housing all staff under one office. We heard that the office of Serbia is moved to UN joint premises and we think it is good that all staff work together in the new office.

Lastly, we would like to emphasize that it would be important to further clarify the roles between national correspondents and project teams to foster synergies and complementarities.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for this excellent debriefing. Are there any questions from the floor regarding the Field Visit to Albania and Serbia?

Mr Nii QUAYE-KUMAH (Observer for Ghana)

Mr Chairperson, I would like to congratulate you and the Secretariat for how you have conducted business to this spirit. We thank the representatives for their presentations as well, for both field trips.

These two reports re-echo the importance of the decentralization process and bringing the Organization closer to its Members and the need to consolidate it. The very much acclaimed global footprints of FAO are as a result of the Organization's presence and delivery in the countries and regions.

The reports are yet another evidence that reaffirms the need for the Organization to consolidate its world acclaimed global footprint with a strong presence of experts and professionals at the country and regional levels.

If we take the case of Serbia, it revealed the challenges of multiple accreditation which was also raised by the Africa Group in its intervention on the decentralized office structure under Agenda item 8. We encourage FAO to consider the recommendations made with respect to this.

We want to congratulate the teams for their informative reports and encourage the Organizations to continue undertaking these field trips which we value as an important means of verification of FAO work in the field.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

**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 154/Draft Report.

I now invite His Excellency Claudio Rozencwaig, Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, to present the report.

Sr. Claudio J. ROZENCWAIG (Presidente del Comité de Redacción)

En primer lugar y presentando este proyecto de informe, quiero destacar la actitud de todos los Miembros del Comité de Redacción, la confianza con el cual se trabajó, la transparencia, la actitud constructiva, teniendo en cuenta además que veníamos de un Consejo que había actuado en alguna forma como una especie de *drafting committee*, por lo cual nuestra tarea fue en algún sentido un poco más fácil que en otras ocasiones, teniendo en cuenta que las conclusiones del Presidente Independiente del Consejo habían sido objeto de *drafting* y *re-drafting* en la plenaria.

Nosotros trabajamos con una metodología que fue ceñirnos a nuestras notas, ceñirnos a lo que el Presidente Independiente del Consejo había concluido y había sido aceptado por ustedes en la plenaria. Y en los casos en que hubo algún tipo de discusión, nos ceñimos al *verbatim* que es, como ustedes saben, en el sistema de Naciones Unidas la forma de dilucidar y de alguna forma solucionar los problemas cuando existe algún tipo de inconveniente en alcanzar los consensos. Fueron muy, muy pocas ocasiones en las cuales tuvimos que ir al *verbatim*.

Deseo entonces agradecer en particular a los Miembros del Comité de Redacción, las Delegaciones de Argentina, Australia, Chile, China, Chipre, Ecuador, Egipto, España, Estados Unidos de América, la Federación de Rusia, la República Islámica de Irán, Italia, Liberia, Marruecos y Pakistán. En particular, como dije, por esta actitud constructiva que le hace muy bien, yo creo, a esta Organización. Creo que como se dijo en esta plenaria, haríamos muy bien en buscar más consensos entre los Miembros. Haríamos muy bien en hablar más entre nosotros y en conseguir seguramente comunicaciones que fueran interregionales, intra-regionales, seguramente eso hará que esta Organización pueda cumplir sus objetivos mucho mejor.

Y finalmente, quiero dar las gracias personalmente al Embajador de Liberia, que, teniendo un luto muy cercano en familia en familia el mismo día del Comité de Redacción, estuvo en el Comité durante toda la noche. Creo que estas cosas deben ser remarcadas en esta Organización porque no son muy usuales, ni muy comunes. Dicho esto, tenemos un informe consensuado, y entonces yo sugiero a los Miembros de la plenaria que lo aprueben en bloque.

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for clapping. It appears that the Report of this Session may be approved in block. Any linguistic observations should be communicated in writing to the Secretariat for inclusion in the Final Report.

Does the Council wish to adopt the Report *en bloc*?

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. The Report of the 154th Session of the FAO Council is adopted.

I wish to inform delegates that the Director-General regretfully will not be able to address the Council as he had to leave on duty travel to China to attend the meeting of G20 Ministers for Agriculture.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, we have held seven busy meetings during this session of the Council. Discussions on some agenda items lasted many hours and, for the first time in recent years, our meetings ended late in the evening. On reflection, I believe this has been a very productive and intense week. It occurs to me that each of our sessions is unique in character and mood.

I believe this session can be characterized by the far-ranging, dynamic and interactive dialogue that took place amongst Members and Regional Groups, and between Members and Management. It was a lively dialogue, rich in constructive interventions, and underpinned by our customary respect and desire to strive for consensus-based decision-making.

Indeed, respect and consensus-building continue to serve as the basis for Council deliberations, and I am grateful for this, as it greatly facilitates my task as Independent Chairperson.

At the start of the session, the Director-General asked for our guidance on how to move forward on a number of issues, including FAO involvement in COP22; the cross-cutting theme of nutrition; and the topical and at times tragic issue of migration. Council commented on these issues throughout the week, and I have no doubt we will continue to interact with the Director-General and provide further guidance on these and other matters in the coming months.

This session of Council was the first to consider a Programme Implementation Report compiled under the FAO reviewed Strategic Framework and Medium Term Plan 2014-17, using results-based monitoring and reporting, with a sharper focus on outcomes and the inclusion of gender as a cross-cutting theme.

The PIR triggered debate on a number of significant issues. As a consequence, the list of speakers continued to grow throughout our deliberations. Naturally, divergent views were expressed, but there was also all-round recognition for the results achieved in the last biennium, and the way they are reported in the new PIR.

It was also encouraging to see how Regional Conferences have progressed from being primarily technical meetings that submitted a long list of proposals to the Council, to become Governing Bodies with the power to inform issues and priorities in the next Programme of Work and Budget.

The ability of the Regional Conferences to influence policy was clearly manifest in their support and guidance on the Review of the Decentralized Offices Network, with the Council endorsing the region-specific recommendations made by the 2016 round of Conferences.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, looking to the future: for the 2030 Agenda, the Director-General spoke of the efforts required for FAO to monitor at least 20 of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators. Council also noted that a Rome-based Agencies joint document on the SDGs will be presented to our next session in December 2016. At the same session, Council will receive input on the PWB for the coming biennium from the technical committees, all of which will convene over the coming months, starting with COFI and COFO next month, followed by COAG in September and CCP in October.

Your continuous interest and keen participation in the upcoming technical meetings will be appreciated.

As we reach the close of this session of Council, I wish again to extend my gratitude and recognition to the staunch leadership of the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, Ambassador Claudio Rozenwaig. I also wish to recognize the good work done by the Chairpersons of the Committees which report to Council, and to you, the Members of those Committees and of the Council as a whole.

Furthermore, I wish express my appreciation to the enormous contribution made by the outgoing Members of Council. I would also like to make a plea in favour of brief interventions at Council.

Once a regional group position has been stated, I would suggest that Members from the region refrain from intervening, unless they have something new to add to the debate. This is simply in the interest of good time management.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, may I also express my appreciation for the work of those who enabled the session to take place. Thanks go to those who wrote the documents, the translators and interpreters, the verbatim hub, the editors and reports office staff, the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary-General, the Secretariat as a whole, which provides support before, during and after the session, the facilities group, the Security Guards and all the messengers. I thank them all.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, with this we have concluded the 154th Session of the FAO Council. I wish you all a restful weekend and a safe journey home to all those who are travelling, and a peaceful holy month of Ramadan. God bless you all.

I declare the 154th Session of the FAO Council closed.

The meeting rose at 15:19 hours

La séance est levée à 15 h 19

Se levanta la sesión a las 15.19



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