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

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сельскохозяйственная организация
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Organización de las
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COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

soixante-et-onzième

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

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COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Seventy-first Session Cent soixante et onzième session 171.º período de sesiones
Rome, 5-9 December 2022 Rome, 5-9 décembre 2022 Roma, 5-9 de diciembre de 2022
FIRST PLENARY SESSION PREMIÈRE SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE PRIMERA SESIÓN PLENARIA
5 December 2022

The First Plenary Meeting was opened at 09:36 hours
Mr Hans Hoogeveen,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La première séance plénière est ouverte à 09 h 36
sous la présidence de M. Hans Hoogeveen,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la primera sesión plenaria a las 09.36
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Hans Hoogeveen,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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CHAIRPERSON

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, dear friends, Director-General, a very warm welcome and it is great to see how crowded the room finally is again. It is so great to see so many in person here. Not only from Rome but many also from Capitals.

May I ask the technician to start the video?

Video Presentation

Présentation vidéo

Videopresentación

Excellencies, what a message of solidarity, what a message of dedication and hope we saw during this year's World Food Forum (WFF) week. That is what we need at the end of this year in order to face our challenges and take decisive decisions.

We are approaching the end of a very difficult year, a year in which we were confronted with a perfect storm of crises with devastating consequences for many, especially in developing countries. With 860 million people in hunger, which number will grow to 1 billion people next year, if we do not act, we know that the world is clearly not on track.

On top of this, we have 345 million people on the edge of starvation and more than 3 billion people who do not have access to safe, affordable, and healthy food. We face an unprecedented uncertain future, and despite efforts from the global community to reduce global warming, climate change is striking farmers, especially smallholder farmers, with brutal droughts, heat, and flooding.

But let us not forget that we will also have to feed 10 billion people in 2050 and estimates show that we need an increase of our sustainable agriculture production by 50 percent. That means an increase in agriculture production in a sustainable way, in a climate-smart way. We know that we cannot achieve food security without coping with climate change.

Ladies and gentlemen, we know our challenges. We have set our goals and targets and we know the solutions. At least, we think that we know the solutions. But what about the how? How are we going to do it now? At the end of the day, it has to happen at a country level. Only a strong multilateral system will bring us the desired action at the country level, but we need an even stronger multilateral system, especially here in Rome. Of course, we have a strong FAO, and we are making it even stronger.

The last Council took decisive steps with the adoption of the climate change strategy and the science and innovation strategy. But also, the 169th Council took a decision and recommendations, as well as the 170th Council, on the Ukraine war. At the last Council, we took decisions by consensus.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, and dear friends, what was shown in the short video of the WFF of this year gave a clear message. It showed inspiration, dedication, innovation, new investments and, moreover, an even stronger commitment to do better. The enthusiasm, dedication, and commitment that you showed are very much-needed agents of change for the transformation of our food systems. This is the message of hope that we have to seize during this Council.

We have to overcome our differences, and by overcoming our differences we can path the way for action on the ground for those who need it the most, leaving nobody behind. We are clearly on this journey together. We have to unite, leaving politics behind, to be inclusive. Let us show this Council a strong commitment to making it happen, showing solidarity, and taking decisions by consensus. Of course, we have to work within the mandate of FAO, focusing on global food security. The Council is not a forum for security issues or border political issues, as was also set by the Group of Twenty (G20).

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, this Council can give further guidance to the devastating effects of the multiple crises which we are faced with. We can give clear guidance by adopting decisions brought by the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), amongst others: food safety, One Health, antimicrobial resistance, sustainable livestock, innovation systems, the UN Decade of Family Farming (UNDF) and, of course, mainstream biodiversity.

By adopting the proposed decisions by the Committee on commodity problems, we can give further guidance on the development of international agricultural trade and markets, which is very much needed, and we can support the further implementation of sustainable fisheries and give stronger emphasis to Small Island Developing States (SIDS), because they need our support, our strong support.

Last but not least, we can further sustainable forest management, halting deforestation and increasing reforestation by adopting the decisions of the Committee on Forestry (COFO). We will learn about the successful implementation of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative. The need for more effective and consistent actions coupled with strong political will and recognizing the value of managing water in a holistic and integrated manner to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and many more issues.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, dear friends, we have to make this Council a decisive Council, showing unity, unanimity, solidarity, and let us work inclusively and find consensus. Let us make the message of hope not only the message of hope of the WWF but also the message of hope and dedication of this Council.

With that, I would like to give the floor to the Director-General for his opening statement.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Thank you Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC), Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, Good morning.

I am pleased to be addressing this 171st Session of the FAO Council, 40 months after taking office as FAO Director-General.

It has been an extraordinary journey, together! We have faced many unexpected new challenges, marked by a wave of unprecedented, complex and overlapping crises, each one affecting all of us. We have accomplished a lot, together!

We must continue to work together to fulfil FAO's mandate, guided by the FAO Strategic Framework, in support of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), for the transformation of global agrifood systems and to achieve the *four betters*. I am determined to continue upon this path through extraordinary efforts, with your concrete support and contributions.

In January, I declared that 2022 would be the year of extraordinary efforts, to achieve extraordinary results. Now, at the end of these extraordinary 12 months, we can confirm that indeed this year has been extraordinary – with extraordinary circumstances that provided an opportunity to achieve extraordinary results, due to extraordinary efforts.

When I addressed Council in June, I provided an overview of the extraordinary achievements of the first half of 2022. Last months, just four weeks ago, I provided details about the progresses at the Programme Committee (PC) and Finance Committee (FC).

Today, as I look back during the past 40 months as FAO Director-General, I will highlight in particular some of the extraordinary achievements.

Of course, you can read all my speeches and statements in the past 40 months, in PC, FC and Council. Many friends already realized I use this opportunity as progress report to you because I said that FAO is owned by Members, led by Members, I am the number one servant, elected by you to work for you. That is why I do not only give general statements of 3-5 minutes, no. I said it is a good curriculum now, after so many months, you can see that every six months I give you updates on the progress of what we have done. It is fine for you, it is an honour for me and it should be for my colleagues, because there are so many colleagues around the world that work with us, with me, on what they have contributed. Especially during challenges and difficult times, 14 000 staff in FAO all over the world that contribute. It is my duty to report you what they have done, the difficulties they face, the achievements they have accomplished. Now you can get all my report. That is also a way of transparency and accountability – I can tell you now.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, I am proud to say “Welcome to the new FAO!” A new, renovated, restructured and dynamic FAO for a better world – a new ONE FAO.

That brings together all the professional and scientific expertise of the Organization from around the world, responding efficiently and effectively to the challenges we are facing together.

In March 2020, the world was shaken by an unprecedented shock – the COVID-19 pandemic. The FAO Crisis Management Team (CMT), which I had established for pest control, reacted immediately, proving to be an agile and efficient mechanism for quick collective decision-making, and demonstrating the Organization’s extraordinary crises response capacity. The CMT ably guided the Organization during times of uncertainty, protecting the safety and health of all employees worldwide, while enabling us to continue working and delivering on FAO’s mandate.

As Designated Official for the UN in Italy, I managed to exercise my responsibilities effectively and efficiently with the host country day and night, as well as with all FAO host governments globally.

At the global level, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, FAO demonstrated its capacity and professionalism to cope with the extraordinary emergency and to provide leading analytical information when it was needed most, based on science and evidence-based data.

From the start, FAO strongly emphasized that “there is no health without food”, which was critical to re-focus food production.

The pandemic reaffirmed the centrality of food, and the urgent need to address the fragilities of our agrifood systems. In emergencies, FAO saves lives, safeguards livelihoods and lays the foundations for resilience, implementing emergency interventions in over 70 countries.

Over the past 40 months, FAO has also demonstrated its emergency response capacity by stepping up efforts to contain the spread of plant pests, which annually cause between 20 to 40 percent of global crop production losses. For example, FAO played a significant role during the 2019-2022 Desert Locust crisis across the Horn of Africa and beyond. Thanks to large-scale control operations supported by donors we were able to mitigate devastating consequences in already vulnerable regions.

The Global Action for Fall Armyworm Control has been an effective coordination mechanism that links technical and financial resources to farmers’ fields.

Since 2019, crop losses have declined by 5 to 10 percent, and the risk of further spread and infestation has also decreased. FAO continues to be at the forefront of global efforts to address the emerging world food security challenges, leveraging its leadership role and strengths as the UN specialized agency in food and agriculture.

FAO has produced a series of briefs and information notes, including assessments of the impacts of the pandemic, conflicts, and the war in Ukraine on global agricultural markets and food security. All these briefs are permanently being updated.

FAO has scaled up efforts and is on track to exceed the 30 million people reached in 2021 with urgently needed, life-saving and cost-effective assistance,

In a world where around 45 million people in 37 countries are projected to have so little to eat that they will be severely malnourished, at risk of death or already facing starvation and death (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 4 or above).

FAO has also stepped up its emergency and resilience programme in countries with high levels of acute food insecurity, targeting at least 60 million people per year by 2023.

FAO has also advocated strongly for placing agricultural investment at the core of the humanitarian response to the global food crisis.

At the country level, FAO has also prioritize the food access problem faced by the most vulnerable countries because of the increase in food prices and currency devaluation,

And has developed a range of concrete policy proposals, including for the establishment of a Food Import Financing Facility to help countries with balance-of-payment problems,

Which has been adopted two months ago by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) through a Food Shock Window under its emergency financing instrument. I got to know several vulnerable countries that already got financial support. One country maybe USD 2 billion, some countries several millions. It is really substantial support to vulnerable countries that depend on food import. That is a real collective action. Totally, more than USD 32 billion to support 62 countries. That is really the professional role of FAO to support the decision making, not only for the Members, for the other sisters Agencies, who need the most professional knowledge from FAO.

These are extraordinary achievements!

We have also elaborated a methodology identify the gaps in fertilizer inputs and to prioritize the allocation of international fertilizer supplies to countries in Africa and promoted the use of soil nutrient maps to improve fertilizer use efficiency, reduce production costs and boost productivity.

FAO has made extraordinary progress in mobilizing voluntary contributions. Thanks to all donors and partners to support.

In 2021, we mobilized USD 1.42 billion - the highest in the history of FAO - that is, USD 139 million more than in 2020, and 22 percent above the 5-year average.

2022 is projected to exceed these numbers, and we have already mobilized USD 1.6 billion. As the ICC said, solidarity helps what it is indicated in the voluntary contributions, because it is voluntary, it is not assessed contribution, it is legal mandatory. This indicates all the key donors from all over the world, from Europe, United States of America, Asia, Latin America and Near East. A quite number of the foundations also support that and other multilateral financial institutions, like the World Bank, Asia Development Bank, Africa Development Bank, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) – just to mention a few.

This sharp increase in funding, is partly in support of major emergency operations, including in Afghanistan, Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia Kenya and Ukraine, and is an important sign of the critical need for the contribution of FAO in emergency contexts. It also reflects the confidence and trust of resource partners in FAO's ability to deliver high quality, large-scale, development programmes requiring specialized technical expertise.

In Ukraine, FAO has a unique role to play in supporting storage to keep grain secure and ensure food security across the country and beyond.

To safeguard existing and upcoming harvests and food reserves, FAO has provided massive capacity to store up to 6 million tonnes of grain - about 30 percent of the national storage capacity gap.

In addition, over 80 000 rural people have received emergency agricultural support such as seed potatoes and vegetable seeds, and cash assistance.

In Afghanistan – one of the countries most reliant on agriculture - FAO is on the ground, meeting critical needs.

By the end of 2022, 9 million people (50 percent of the rural population in IPC Phase 3+) are expected to receive livelihoods assistance from FAO. Get the *de facto* rulers to align to international engagement is very important to support vulnerable people there.

Likewise, FAO has been quick to provide humanitarian aid to one of the most severe droughts in decades in the Horn of Africa.

In addition to anticipatory action, FAO has scaled up its response as the situation has deteriorated, reaching almost 4 million rural people across Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia in 2022,

And ensuring that over 4 million children have access to milk every day.

Furthermore, FAO's cash assistance has ensured that over 1.5 million people have been able to access food every day for at least 3 months, while crop production support has met the annual cereal needs of almost 400 000 people.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Following the reform I initiated for the transformation of the FAO Investment Centre in January 2022, the Centre has developed an ambitious programme providing a full suite of integrated investment and finance solutions and innovations - the so called “4+2 solutions”,

Covering strategic investment planning and policy, public, private, and innovative finance, as well as increasing capacities and knowledge on Investment.

Progress highlights include investment planning and policy support to 54 countries, through the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, and 50 agrifood systems assessments.

Between January and October 2022, the Centre provided assistance to international financial institutions (IFI)-financed projects worth USD 7.6 billion - a significant increase compared to USD 7.2 billion in 2021, and a major advance on the 2023 target of USD 7.8 billion. This is the value of FAO, you did not see it before, but it is a big impact for Members.

This reflects new investments for 24 Members at country level plus 5 regional projects in Africa.

Partnerships with international finance investors and national development banks have been scaled-up and diversified, as well as increased engagement with Development Finance Institutions and Impact Funds, including advice on opportunities and challenges for blended finance.

For example, the TERRA project with the Italian Development Finance Institution - Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (CDP) - could reach around EUR 260 million in potential investment with agri-SMEs in support of agrifood system finance.

Blended finance efforts also included support to the EU through the AgrIntel project in support of agrifood blended finance funds worth approximately EUR 913 million, of which EUR 174 million, mostly in Africa, already signed and moved to contracting stage, allowing FAO to deepen and broaden its work in blended finance in the coming years. This is also not only money increased on investment of agrifood systems, but also to change the business model, that is very substantial. You would have never known that 3-4-5 years later it would have doubled and became bigger than some direct investment on other international financial institutions. This is a marketing approach.

As I had undertaken to do in 2019, over the past 40 months I have launched a series of important coherent initiatives.

The Hand-in-Hand Initiative was the first strategic initiative launched. Today, the Initiative has 54 participating countries, and 2 more in the process of being included, out of a total initial target of 64 countries. Of course, we need more people, more countries to join. It is a country owned, country led volunteer base. It is not only restricted to vulnerable countries. At the next stage, we will move on to the middle and middle-high income. Three years ago I said we start with vulnerable Members first, and then we move on to the middle and middle-high income countries if needed.

It is a mechanism for bringing diverse actors together to help the least advantaged Members reduce poverty, end hunger and malnutrition, and reduce inequalities within and among countries.

The recent Hand-in-Hand Investment Forum held in the context of the World Food Forum in October, provided, for the first time, a platform for Members to present their investment opportunities to partners and stakeholders, for a total value of USD 3 billion, affecting 6 million direct beneficiaries and 9 million indirect beneficiaries.

A second initiative is the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture, an inclusive multi-stakeholder forum to promote dialogue on the digitalization of food and agriculture. Actually, this was asked by the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA). I remember four years ago, they handover to FAO. At that time, the former Director-General started and three years ago I started this Global Forum for Food and Agriculture. We took other contributions from the Global Economic Ministers of Agriculture because GFFA is running for more than 90 years. They got much international consensus and initiatives, but in FAO we are willing to implement.

The 1 000 Digital Villages Initiative is a country-led, user-centred initiative that promotes digital transformation of villages and small towns across the world,

Enabling farmers to use digital technologies to improve livelihoods, individual wellbeing, and social cohesion in rural areas by bringing digital innovation closer to the needs of small-scale farmers.

In September 2020, I launched the Green Cities Initiative during the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to support municipalities in creating more sustainable and food secure cities that are resilient to shocks and stresses such as climate change, urbanization and public health issues. Because more and more people will migrate to the cities, by 2050, more than 70 percent of people will be leaving and stay in the city.

The initiative has now reached 80 cities globally, and we are working with Members and partners to meet the target of 1 000 cities by 2030.

The One Country One Priority Product Initiative has now been launched in all five FAO Regions.

The Initiative is in alignment with FAO's Programme Priority Area on "*Innovation for sustainable agriculture production*" contributing to *better production*. It was very successful. For the first time in history, we had Global Conference on Sustainable Plant Production last month.

We have received applications from over 80 countries from across all regions to promote 50 Special Agriculture Products as a first step – next steps will also include animal products. You know that animal product, SPF is quite complicated, so we started from crop, first.

The need to fill data gaps to accelerate our corporate delivery is critical and for this reason I have institutionalized the 50x2030 Initiative,

Which supports 50 low- and lower-middle income countries to build strong national data systems by 2030 through the production and use of high-quality and timely agricultural data.

Reducing food loss and waste has been one of my priorities since taking office, as it presents a triple-win opportunity with immediate climate benefits and increased availability of nutritious food, while improving the overall sustainability of agrifood systems.

As the responsible UN agency for the SDG indicator Food Loss Index, FAO continues its efforts to build capacity to measure and reduce food loss in countries and across all regions.

I have also re-launched the technical platform on measuring and reduction of food loss and waste; we have joined a Zero Food Loss and Waste Campaign with Türkiye; as well as the Hashtag 123 Food Loss and Waste Pledge for Climate Action; and are co-leading the Food is Never Waste Coalition.

Finally, as part of the World Food Forum, we partnered with the Social Gastronomy Network and in a six week campaign 20 million kilograms of food was saved from waste providing more than 71 500 meals shared across 27 countries in over 1 200 cities.

These are extraordinary partnerships with extraordinary results!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Women and Youth are at the forefront of my vision of the new FAO.

Upon taking office in 2019, I established the FAO Women's Committee, and FAO Youth Committee to prioritize women and youth.

The FAO Youth Committee and FAO Women's Committee are two extraordinary achievements, backed by our extraordinary youthful employees and women colleagues.

The objective of the FAO Youth Committee is to increase youth engagement and foster their innovative spark, by actively networking among young and young-at-heart FAO staff, and to play a key role in the transformation of our agrifood systems, by identifying actionable and out-of-the-box solutions to current and future challenges.

Since its inception, the FAO Youth Committee has reached out to major youth groups from around the world with the creation of the World Food Forum, which in less than three short years has grown from a "My Idea" to a global shared platform. As you feel, many friends participated and you saw the prelude of the show. If you have the chance to participate next year will become a real. We started the global movement this year, but you will see how it will impact all the three dimensions in the world.

It is an independent, youth-led global network of partners facilitated and hosted by FAO that empowers young people everywhere to help achieve the SDGs, and a better food future for all.

The 2022 hybrid World Food Forum brought together more than 2 000 participants in person and over 40 000 visits across platforms and 15 000 registrations, representing 183 countries. There are only 11 countries that did not participate.

With a Digital Reach of over 76 000 unique visitors and almost 15 000 social followers.

All speaking with one dynamic voice in solidarity for “Healthy Diets. Healthy Planet”.

This year the Forum comprised three segments: the Global Youth Forum, the FAO Science and Innovation Forum and the FAO Hand-in-Hand Investment Forum.

The three interlinked fora advanced bold and actionable solutions to catalyze the transformation of agrifood systems, highlighting inter-generational collaboration in science, technology and innovation in food and agriculture.

The next World Food Forum will be held from 16 to 20 October 2023, starting with World Food Day 2023 - making sure food remains central to the discussions! Please, all the delegations leaders, Ministers, Vice-Ministers block your calendar in that week, you will whisper what is the new FAO and the global movement.

The FAO Women’s Committee launched in 2019 has proven to be a successful platform to build a meaningful space to share, discuss and showcase ideas and actions that can empower women - and the Organization.

The Committee’s wide range of activities – from the Joint Mentorship Programme, information campaigns and partnerships – is working to advance gender equality in FAO and to contribute to a gender-equal world. Because it is a new platform to promote gender issues through FAO and to reach Members.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To implement my vision of a new FAO, we needed to start by changing the business model based on innovative working methods.

We have made extraordinary advances in modernizing and digitalizing the way we manage the resources allocated to FAO, and support effective and efficient delivery through projects.

The wave of unprecedented challenges did not catch FAO unprepared.

On the contrary, the Organization has demonstrated a readiness to adapt rapidly, and respond to changes agilely.

The Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) strategic review exercise concluded this year has set TCP on a new course and has increased transparency, with updated criteria and methods for TCP allocation to regions and within regions.

To support TCP, we have streamlined, modernized and simplified the project cycle and our support model to be fit for purpose for different types of projects.

FAO’s toolbox is now much better equipped and ready for new ways of project delivery, using modern technology like mobile phones, and is better equipped to support investments that directly benefit smallholders.

The Organization needs a modern and efficient Decentralized Offices network as a key element to ensure optimal support to Members.

In February this year, I approved the reorganization of capacities within the structures of the Regional Offices following the new headquarters’ model – to work better together as One FAO. I encourage all country and regional offices to cross continents and countries collaboration through the FAO systems. This is a very bold action. You know that all UN Agencies, they have representations only working in the country or region. However, now I encourage to share experience and knowledge together. This is a real transparent One FAO, systematic competence.

Since taking office, I established the first ever FAO Chief Scientist position, along with the Office of Innovation, to ensure that the Organization has a strong science-based voice, and to lead engagement with Members on innovation.

The Office of Innovation consolidates and further strengthens FAO's innovative spirit, mindset, cooperation models, and digitalization.

The new FAO Science and Innovation Strategy will enable us to step up our efforts to address the urgent, complex and interlinked challenges facing our agrifood systems, by driving a new business model at FAO.

The FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 includes accelerators on innovation and technology, and each of the 20 Programme Priority Areas are underpinned by science.

Science and innovation are critical to finding solutions to the climate challenges we are facing today; this is why we are implementing our two new thematic strategies on Science and Innovation, and on Climate Change, in synergy.

The Agrifood Systems Technologies and Innovations Outlook (ATIO) is a new knowledge product to inform evidence-based policy dialogue and decisions.

As a scientist, I have always been in the business of change – that is the essence of science: adaptation to change.

Science advances, generating new information and knowledge, and is applied to solve problems. Science is not only a personal curiosity, it resolves problems – and to improve agrifood systems, and life.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The new Digital FAO ensured that we remained ahead of the curve over the past 40 months, ensuring work continuity, efficiency, transparency and unhampered growth.

We are the first UN agency to operate in a fully digital manner and was the pioneer in holding the first fully virtual FAO-AU meeting in April 2020, together with the African Union Commission, with virtual interpretation in all six official languages.

This was a really extraordinary achievement!

Today, we can see that the strengthening of a Digital FAO is a key accelerator for transformation within the FAO system and beyond.

A main pillar of FAO's transformative process is the Digital Workplace - FAO's digital productivity engine that provides the optimal environment for FAO to best deliver on its work. Now you can see that FAO is paperless, almost zero paper. How much saving and positive impact on the environment. Mr Máximo Torero Cullen, I do not know if you calculated it or not. Because before I came, I saw offices full of printed paper – I have not seen in so many years in my office in China, but I saw it here in every office – meters high printed documents. Now, almost paperless. I cannot say zero, but almost. It is a big revolutionary change. I think we are the first among the UN Agencies. We are the best, I should be proud to tell you.

As a main pillar, it comprises a set of digital solutions that provide the necessary tools for all FAO employees to perform their work regardless of location or time, fully enabling remote and digital work, contributing to the transformation of the Organization.

At the global level, FAO has vast experience in the development and use of geospatial data, methods and tools, which are applied to sustainable development planning and implementation at all levels.

FAO's open access and award-winning Geospatial Platform, for example, provides food security indicators and agricultural statistics to support more targeted agriculture interventions.

And serves as the key enabling tool for FAO's Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

Since the launch of the platform in 2020, over 65 countries and institutions have participated in workshops to learn how leveraging data and technology can contribute to digital agriculture transformation and rural development.

The State of Food and Agriculture 2022 (SOFA) report looks into the drivers of agricultural automation and its role in making food production more efficient and more environmentally friendly, and explores the potential use of block chain technology to feed more people, while safeguarding the environment.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have pulled FAO back on track to be recognized as a center of excellency for technical specialized knowledge, expertise, information and data.

A strong flow of technical knowledge products has re-positioned FAO globally, in line with its mandate, redesigning agrifood systems to be more socially, economically and environmentally sustainable,

Making FAO a reliable and professional partner in the global transformation agenda.

Extraordinary strides have been made in that direction over the past 40 months, reflecting the more responsible and policy-relevant work streams in the new FAO organizational structure.

For example, in 2021 we developed a Blue Transformation Roadmap for the sustainable intensification and expansion of aquaculture, especially in food deficit regions, aiming to grow the subsector by 30-40 percent by the end of the decade.

In 2021, FAO led the report on “*Repurposing agricultural support to transform food systems*”, a turning point that called for action to redirect investments in public goods and services for agriculture, such as research and development.

The *State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2022* flagship report provides guidance on alternative combinations of policy support and how to better manage trade-offs for improved agrifood systems.

FAO is preparing the global report on the *Status of Rural Women in Agrifood Systems*, which will expand the focus beyond agriculture to understand opportunities and constraints that women and men face in broader economic and social processes. I think the Status of Rural Women in Agrifood Systems will be the landmark for the world on how to deeply understand the situation of women, especially vulnerable women in the rural areas. We are walking the talk, not only talking. From the Women’s Committee, now to the Women’s Report and then policy recommendations. Step by step we will get the core business, not only political slogans every time. We need some political slogans, I am not against that, but political slogans are not enough. To be frank with you. Different regions have different priorities. I visited so many different regions, related to women’s issues. You will see, we have a common guideline and then we have regionalized recommendations. That is the way to push the change of women’s situation and issues, not only related to agriculture.

The FAOSTAT data portal has been greatly enhanced with new domains, such as for example, to identify where greenhouse gas emissions occur, and tracking cropland nutrient budgets to optimize fertilizer use.

The FAO Food Price Index, during the past months – now everyone recognizes its importance because it tracks monthly changes in world prices of five food commodity groups: cereals, vegetable oils, meat, dairy products and sugar, and is a global reference now of the price situation in the world. I saw so many leaders, UN agencies, including the UN Secretary-General, always refer to the FAO Food Price Index. That is our real impactful knowledge product.

All of these knowledge products are designed to produce and accelerate results on the ground, leading to extraordinary impact.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

FAO’s international visibility and reputation has continued to increase, despite global challenges.

Since the lifting of travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I have travelled to 30 countries during the past nine months; where I met with 27 Heads of State and Government; 118 Ministers; 40 Vice-Ministers and innumerable government officials, CEO and scientists.

But more importantly, I met with farmers on the ground, with rural women and youth. Each time when I travel I always take some time to talk with them and listen to them, to discuss the issues from the ground, what are their thoughts and then we try to adjust our thinking and come up with more solutions to be more pragmatic and in a more participatory approach.

In each country, I undertook field visits to see first-hand the work being done on the ground, and where FAO needs to boost interventions and support.

These have been extraordinary moments in my 40 months as FAO Director-General – at the service of our farmers!

This year alone, I have also engaged in 56 high-level events, including Security Council brief at the United Nations, and in Member State processes, in New York.

FAO's expertise, knowledge products, tools and policy recommendations have been in high demand in New York to inform the UN Secretariat and other specialized agencies.

The UN Food Systems Summit follow-up Coordination Hub, hosted by FAO on behalf of the UN system, is operational and work has already started at the country level.

FAO has been actively engaged in the G20 and G7 pluri-lateral processes, monitoring global agrifood market developments, assessing their impacts on food security, and providing policy advice throughout 2020-2022.

And forward looking, FAO is already engaged with the 2023, and 2024, Presidencies of these key fora.

We have been working hand in hand with our Members and partners to implement the Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors.

In response to the climate crisis, we have worked collectively through a transparent and inclusive process with our Members, experts, and partners worldwide to develop the new FAO Strategy on Climate Change,

Which aims to build climate-resilient and low-emission agrifood systems, while striving to achieve the SDGs.

Agrifood systems transformation is a crucial part of climate solutions – this is the message FAO brought to 27th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP27), even before at COP26 and we are already engaged in follow-up work leading to COP28.

FAO is also participating at the technical level at the COP15 to the Convention on Biological Diversity, where we are advocating the central role of biodiversity for food security and nutrition.

FAO has been actively, and successfully, supporting Members to access climate and environment finance flows in support of agrifood systems transformation through the Green Climate Fund and the Global Environmental Facility.

Since 2019, FAO has more than doubled these portfolios, enabling Members to mobilize more than USD 6 billion in more than 100 countries. This is a real game change approach.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

FAO continues to leverage partner strengths to transform agrifood systems, delivering results for the most vulnerable and small-scale rural farmers and producers.

The sheer scope of current global challenges means that we can only succeed if we work together – through partnerships at different scales, across different sectors and at all levels.

In the context of the UN Decade of Family Farming, together with IFAD and other partners, National Action Plans for family farming were approved in 11 countries, and 185 policies, laws and regulations were developed and endorsed.

At global level, the Decade helped mobilize more than 2 600 stakeholders to identify concrete initiatives and measures in support of family farming.

FAO has directly supported more than 45 Parliamentary Alliances against Hunger and Malnutrition worldwide,

As parliamentarians play a critical role in setting policies and regulations at the country level to support those most in need.

Through partnerships such as the Global Hub of Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems, FAO continues to support these traditional food systems as critical game-changers for transformation.

FAO's traditional, established and long-standing partnerships add significant value to our work, however private sector partnerships have emerged as an important policy and priority to meet current global challenges.

Over the past 40 months, our private sector engagements have scaled-up multi-stakeholder efforts for country-owned and country-led innovative solutions.

Our Private Sector Engagement Strategy is historic for FAO, after 11 years we had it, setting in motion new ways of thinking and working that has brought about transformative change, innovation and measurable impacts.

The private sector is diverse, and FAO has recently expanded its engagement to include important new actors from all across agrifood systems,

With a particular emphasis on small and medium-sized enterprises, while improving the balance of partners across different sectors and regions.

FAO continues to mainstream South-South and Triangular Cooperation throughout the Organization, to facilitate knowledge creation and sharing, catalyze investments, and for match-making, such as through the Hand-in Hand Initiative.

Partnerships with scientists are crucial to FAO's vision, and we continue to strengthen and increase partnerships with key academic and research institutions worldwide.

We have signed strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) over the past three years with key scientific organizations and universities to further strengthen collaboration through innovative and sustainable approaches for improving lives, while safeguarding natural resources.

FAO and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) recently signed an updated MoU for the Joint Centre to strengthen and broaden collaboration on practical arrangements for our joint work.

In addition, opportunities from space breeding are being explored, through the recent joint mission that sent seeds to the International Space Station to develop crops able to adapt to climate change on Earth – this is also a first extraordinary action!

Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) collaboration remains a key partnership, with increased country-level coordination, especially in humanitarian development crisis contexts management. We need to do more with the new Principals of IFAD and WFP. We can design for longer and joint action together.

FAO offices are also actively engaged in UN efficiency initiatives at the country level, with an estimated benefit over the five year period from 2019 to 2023 of USD 24.7 million in efficiency gains.

Under FAO's Chair, the One Health Quadripartite developed the One Health Joint Plan of Action, launched in October 2022, to better integrate and coordinate our work across the human, animal, plant, agricultural and environmental sectors.

And recently, about 10 days ago, we launched the Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Multistakeholder Partnership Platform, bringing together stakeholders to assist in combatting AMR in Oman Meeting. For the first time we had so many Ministers from Agriculture and Health and also four principals from

the World Health Organization (WHO), FAO and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH). Now we really built one big team to work together to combat AMR.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Work to streamline and modernize the internal rules of the Organization has continued, enhancing the understanding of the rules-based nature of the Organization amongst employees, Members, and partners, and addressing gaps and ambiguities.

Significant steps have been taken, to ensure FAO's operations are both efficient and rules-based, with appropriate accountabilities.

With my full support, the Office of Evaluation has independently conducted an average of 50 evaluations annually.

Based on findings from the SDG evaluations, the Office of Evaluation recommended that FAO further align its strategy with the SDGs.

We did this through the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, which now fully supports the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the SDG targets.

The Core Leadership Team has been championing the *four betters* to promote cross-sectoral strategic coordination, and to create a common vision for the delivery of the Strategic Framework.

This strategic coordination facilitates interlinkages between the 20 Programme Priority Areas and ensures coherency in our work from country to global level for improved outcomes and impact.

Changing the business model of the Organization for more efficiency and impact relies heavily on the capacity and capability of our human resources.

During the past 40 months, I have focused on implementing best practices that support programme and administrative effectiveness, and on creating people-centred HR policies.

Creating an inclusive and positive work environment and improving working conditions have been a top priority for me from Day 1!

On gender parity, FAO has achieved a score of 94 percent for indicators met or exceeded on the UN Action Plan on Gender Equality, we should say that we are one of the best now - and FAO has recently been recognized for excellence in implementing good practices that advance gender parity in the UN System.

At the beginning of my term of office, the Council urged FAO to continue concentrating in combating all forms of harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, sexual exploitation and abuse of authority.

I, and the entire Core Leadership team, have been fully committed to this, and compliance mechanisms have been enhanced and corporately prioritized.

Since 1 August 2019, a new Office of the Ombuds has been established at FAO.

The Ombuds has since provided informal conflict resolution services to over 400 employees and is a key contributor to the new culture of greater integrity at FAO.

The stand-alone Ethics Office was established on 1 March 2020, to enhance our understanding of our obligations as international civil servants, foster an ethical work environment and ensure the Organization is in step with best practices.

The first FAO Code of Ethical Conduct was published in May 2021, and a revised Whistleblower Protection Policy was issued in June 2021.

In line with my commitment to strengthen accountability, integrity and transparency in the Organization, I have allocated additional resources to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to enhance the ability of the Office to deal with complaints of misconduct. I also delegated the authority for the P-3 as all the staff should be selected as Director of OIG, based on merits and on position requirements.

The Employee Satisfaction Survey launched in 2019 served as a catalyst for change across the Organization, with over 90 staff listening sessions organized to discuss the survey results,

And priority areas of concrete action were identified to respond to employee concerns, including: communication, professional development, and new ways of working.

Infrastructure improvements at headquarters, and in the decentralized offices, have also helped foster a positive working environment.

At headquarters, the Main Entrance has seen the addition of a ramp to facilitate access for people with limited mobility, and the installation of energy-saving state-of-the-art lighting has drastically reduced electricity consumption. This year is very substantial.

More recently, FAO employees and visitors have been able to enjoy the renovated 8th floor cafeteria, with a variety of nutritional and international foods, and a strict zero food waste policy.

The newly refurbished terrace showcases the photos of FAO Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) sites, in appreciation of our traditional agrifood systems.

The restoration of this iconic Plenary Hall was recently completed and includes the modernization and digitization of the technical equipment.

I am appreciative to the Italian Government for their longstanding and unwavering commitment and support, including fresh funding from the new Italian government to enhance the multilingual capacity of the Plenary Hall, and the Red and Green Rooms. We just received the fresh funds from the new Government last week, it is quite big but it is fit for the purpose as we need to modernize three locations. You see it has started but I hope that for the next Session of the Council or of the Programme Committee it will be finished. It should be finished in February. They will use the holiday season to finish the last part of the modernization of this facility.

I am really much appreciative to the Italian Government for their commitment and support including the new fund to enhance that, and also for the solar panels installed on the roof of this building. We need to build a closer relationship with the host country, not only Italy. I encourage all the FAORs to have a closer relationship with the host country. Host is host. We are guests and guest must be good guests. Host must be a qualified supportive host. Then, we will have a harmonized relationship. Any guest that come to the host should be polite and appreciative. You know, I am a very simple person, when you have guests coming to your home, you have to treat well your guests. Your guest is a guest. Do not blame the host too much.

Today, FAO is new, more efficient, dynamic, innovative and effective.

We are speeding up delivery. We know it is just the start, it takes time, but FAO is like a big ship, we have started sailing, but not at full speed – I know.

The Organization is now globally recognized as a professional, trusted partner of all stakeholders working to eradicate poverty, hunger and malnutrition.

Our future strategic direction is transparent and inclusive, and includes of all you, working together towards our global goals.

FAO, and I, continue to be your partner on this extraordinary journey.

Working hand in hand to transform our agrifood systems and achieve the Four Betters, committed to leaving no one behind.

My 40 months in office thus far have been marked by strong human values, ethics, integrity, transparency, inclusivity, solidarity and professionalism, and above all by the extraordinary efforts with extraordinary results of all my FAO dear colleagues and Members during these very difficult times – and for this, I am deeply grateful to each one of you - from Members to partners, from staff to society!

Let us continue to work together in this cooperative and constructive spirit for people, planet, and prosperity in partnership.

Thank you.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Director-General, Dr QU Dongyu. Thank you very much for your dedication and for building an even stronger FAO.

You gave an overview of many of the actions taken, the results achieved and things to come, and I think all those will be addressed in different Agenda Items during this Council. And via you, I think we should also thank the staff of FAO, not only here in the Headquarters here in Rome but also in all the countries, often working in very difficult circumstances, trying to achieve on the ground what needs to be achieved to get global food security. Let us give them a big applause.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

With that, I would like to turn now to the proceedings of the Council.

First of all, I really would like to also welcome the interpreters, the technicians, the messengers, and the support staff, because without them we could not have had this Council. Thank you so much for facilitating our work. And, as I said already at the opening, I am pleased to see so many people here sitting in the Plenary Hall in person because I think that is very much what we need if we want to achieve results: seeing, speaking with, and consulting with each other in an informal way, brings us success.

Nevertheless, of course, this Session of the Council, the 171st Council, is held in a hybrid modality with both physical presence as well as participation through the Zoom video conferencing platform. And of course, as you are probably also aware, the Green Room is also available for those who want to work as well as follow the Council.

Before going to Agenda Item 1, I would like to draw your attention to the procedures to be followed in the hybrid setting, we need to do that in order to do it. For those participants participating in a physical mode, you may request the floor by pressing the button in front of you. For those attending the Council in virtual mode, I would like to request you to follow the meeting in mute mode and click the unmute button if you are allowed to speak, and of course you may request the floor by using your 'Raise Hand' function.

I will endeavour to keep an accurate list of speakers on a first come first served basis, taking into account both those who are here in the Zoom room and those who are following the Council in person. I also would like to bring to your attention that European Union (EU) is participating to this meeting in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of Article II of the FAO Constitution. Furthermore, the EU will be participating in the Drafting Committee in accordance with the aforementioned paragraphs of Article II of the FAO Constitution, and on matters within its competence, will be exercising on an alternate basis the Membership rights of the EU Members elected in the Drafting Committee.

The Declaration made by the EU and its Member states is contained in information document *CL171/INF/3*, and of course, you are now probably already aware of the practicalities of the Session: each Session during this week will be from 9:30 till 12:00 hours; from 14:00 to 16:30 hours. Then we have an international snack, so that you will not become hungry and are energized for the late afternoon Session. That Session will be from 17:00 to 19:30 hours. We do not have any Session foreseen beyond 19:30 hours, but of course, it depends very much on your participation and collaboration.

Before starting with Agenda Item 1, I have to inform you that Iraq is considered to have resigned from the Council under the Terms of Rule XII Paragraph 7 of the Council of the Organization, regarding arrears in payment of financial contributions. Therefore, Iraq will participate in this Council as an Observer.

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 del calendario**

(CL 171/1 Rev.1; CL 171/INF/1; CL 171/INF/3; CL 171/INF/5)

CHAIRPERSON

With that – and I thank the Director-General for being present – we go to Agenda Item 1, *Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable* which is contained in Document CL171/INF/5, *Special Procedures for the 171st Session of the Council*. Special arrangements and procedures are proposed for this hybrid Session, and of course are proposed for endorsement under this Agenda Item.

Under this Agenda Item, the Council is invited to suspend any rules incompatible with the hybrid setting, specifically Rule II.3 of the Rules or Procedures of the Council, which provides that each Session of the Council shall be held at the seat of the Organization in accordance with the Rule VIII of the Rules or Procedures of the Council.

Finally, I would like to bring to your attention the Agenda itself. As said in the pre-Session, I had the intention to propose a separate Sub-Item 3.1 and Item 3, but I have consulted over the last couple of weeks and certainly last week with many Members to see how to proceed, and although some Members were favouring an Agenda Sub-Item 3.1, now I think there is a clear consensus hopefully that we can deal with Agenda Item 3 without a Sub-Item. I am not proposing any Sub-Item anymore, we deal with Agenda Item 3 as a whole without a Sub-Item.

Furthermore, I would like to propose that, in view of the recent vacancy in the Staff Pension Committee, we deal with the appointment of a representative of the FAO Conference to the Staff Committee under Item 24, *Any other matters*.

As you are aware as well, we have the written procedures again as we have done to make the Council more effective and efficient, and also, we would like to see that we follow the practice we have done with five-minute statements of Regional Groups and three-minute statements of each of the Members – and I hope that we can follow this practice as done before.

Last but not least, we have Agenda Item 11, *Report of the 50th Session of the Committee on World Food Security*, but we all know that the Committee of Food Security (CFS) will meet after the Council Session and in trying to finalize its report. My proposal would be to postpone this Agenda Item because we cannot adopt a Report yet, postpone this to the next Council so that after the Committee in its 50th Session adopts the Report, and hopefully on the 19 December and we can then address this report.

With this, I will bring forward to you the *Adoption of the Agenda and the Timetable* for approval. I see that Argentina has asked for the floor.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Presencialmente en forma virtual, quería pedir la inclusión de un nuevo tema en otras cuestiones que tiene que ver con las consultas llevadas adelante de manera informal con muchos colegas respecto de la importancia que tiene la cuestión de la ganadería, sobre todo particularmente en los datos críticos sobre la inseguridad alimentaria que todos conocemos.

Dado ello, me parece importante ver la posibilidad de que al final del Consejo en otras cuestiones pudiera haber un informe de actualización sobre la situación de la ganadería y lo que la FAO está haciendo en materia de ganadería y para lo cual quien es el responsable de esa área, que es el señor Thanawat Tiensin, pueda realizar una breve actualización de esa temática.

Es algo que, dentro del propio subcomité, lo han pedido cada uno de los miembros del buró y representando a cada una de las regiones, por lo tanto, interpreto que debería tener el consenso suficiente.

CHAIRPERSON

We all know how important livestock is, not only for sustainable agriculture but also dealing with our challenges in climate change.

Can we also agree that under Item 24, *Any other business*, we will have an Item on Update on livestock? Of course, it is great to have Mr Thanawat Tiensin presenting us this update, in his new capacity.

Can we then agree to the Agenda as proposed? I see no objections, so decided.

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 designación del Presidente y los miembros del Comité de Redacción

CHAIRPERSON

We now turn to Agenda Item 2, *Election of three Vice-Chairpersons, and designation of the Chairperson and Members of the Drafting Committee*. Based on the proposals of the Regional Groups, I would like to propose to you the following three Chairpersons of the Council: Mr Abdoulaye Traore (Guinea); Mr Khalid Yousef Al Sada (Qatar); from the non-G77 and China countries, Ms Alison Storsve (United States of America).

Can we agree to these three Vice-Chairpersons? It is so decided.

Thank you very much for not only your willingness to be a Vice-Chairperson, but also to support the work of this important Council this week.

We turn to the Drafting Committee. Based on the nominations received, we have the following countries for the Drafting Committee: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Luxembourg, Saudi Arabia, and Canada, and we are still waiting for the nomination of the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, which has to come from the Group of non-G77 and China countries. Can we agree to the Drafting Committee?

I see Russian Federation asked for the floor. Please push your button, because otherwise, we cannot see who asked for the floor.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

We raised this issue during your meeting with the Regional Groups and we indicated our willingness to join the Drafting Committee to expedite the proceedings.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

Je voudrais signaler que la France avait également soumis sa proposition pour participer au Comité de Rédaction. Je vous remercie, nous nous dissociions de la participation de la Russie.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States, Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Iceland, Montenegro and the Republic of North Macedonia align themselves with this statement.

First of all, let me congratulate the Vice-Chairpersons of the Council Session and all the Members of the Drafting Committee.

The European Union and its Member States including European Union Member States, which are Members of the Council, have disassociated themselves from the nomination of the Russian Federation to the Council Drafting Committee. The EU and its Member States wish to express strong condemnation of Russian Federation's unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine and its impact on global food security and nutrition.

We must recall the decision by the FAO Council at its 169th Session, which affirmed that the aggression against Ukraine by the Russian Federation with the involvement of Belarus is in violation of the objectives and purpose of this organization as set out in the preamble of the Constitution and of the obligation accepted by the Russian Federation and Belarus as Members of the Organization.

Therefore, we request this disassociation be reflected in the Report of the Session through a footnote.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

In response to the statement that has just been made by the distinguished Representative from France and from Czechia on behalf of the European Union, and as was done on previous occasions, I wanted to disassociate the support from my country to their representation in the Drafting Committee and also to reflect that respectively on the foot note. At the very same time, I strongly support your appeal and the one that was made by the Director General not to use the FAO platform to politicize the discussions that are being conducted in different other forums and to bring into this room, the atmospherics of confrontation.

Ms Cindy MCCAIN (United States of America)

The United States joins everyone else in disassociating ourselves from the Russian Federation's need to be on the Drafting Committee.

Mr Thomas John KELLY (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

The United Kingdom disassociates itself from the Russian Federation's nomination as part of the Drafting Committee. I am speaking as a Member of the European Regional Group, and like the European Union Presidency, I would like our disassociation to be recorded in the footnotes of the meeting.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

I am sorry to take the floor for the third time but having heard the statements that have just been made by the Representative of the United States of America I also want to disassociate myself in case the United States of America were to be part of the Drafting Committee.

Speaking to the statement that has just been made by the Representative of the United Kingdom, who is a Member of the European Regional Group, Russian Federation is also a Member of the European Regional Group within FAO, that is why I cannot agree that the European Regional Group disassociated itself from the support of the Russian Federation.

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

Japan disassociates itself from the nomination of the Russian Federation for the Drafting Committee.

Mme Michèle PRANCHÈRE-TOMASSINI (Luxembourg)

Comme déjà expliqué par la République tchèque au nom de l'Union Européenne, le Luxembourg se dissocie de la présence de la Fédération de Russie au Comité de Rédaction.

Ms Elissa GOLBERG (Canada)

With regret, we too will have to disassociate ourselves in recognizing the Russian Federation as a Member of the Drafting Committee.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

I will be very quick and, of course, with deep regret. I also have to disassociate my support of Luxembourg, Canada and Japan, and once again, I hope that our proceedings will be done in a non-political atmosphere.

CHAIRPERSON

Now I would like to see whether or not we can adopt the Members of the Drafting Committee. I will read them out again: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, Cote d'Ivoire, Luxembourg, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Russian Federation and France.

Of course, we will reflect all the disassociations in a footnote in the Report. Can we adopt the Drafting Committee, and we will relay hopefully soon, today or tomorrow, who will be the Chair of the Drafting Committee? I see no objections, so adopted.

Item 3. Update on FAO's work on the global food crisis

Point 3. Informations actualisées sur les activités de la FAO relatives à la crise alimentaire mondiale

Tema 3. Información actualizada sobre la labor de la FAO en relación con la crisis alimentaria mundial

(CL 171/3)

CHAIRPERSON

Now we turn to Agenda Item 3, *Update on FAO's work on the global food crisis*. I would like to remind the Members of the Council and those Observers who take the floor to submit a copy of their statements in advance, if possible, to assist the interpreters and Verbatim reporters in order to have an efficient and effective Council.

I would like to also remind Members that, in light of the amendment modalities for the Session, the introductions of the Agenda Items have been circulated in written form to Members and Observers of the Council, in an effort to streamline the proceedings of this meeting. All introductions may be found on the dedicated webpage on the website of the 171st Session of the Council.

In such cases where written introductions have been circulated, the introduction of the Secretariat will not be delivered during the meeting in order to be effective and efficient. Of course, we will address the Draft Conclusions for each Item immediately following the discussion in the Plenary.

The Draft Conclusions will be projected on the large screen in front of you as well as on the screen for those who are following the Zoom platform. This will enable the Council Members to see the draft text at the same time as it is being read out and react to comments more easily – hopefully not too many.

Not only speakers of the Council will be able to follow and provide comments for interpretation, that is why I will wait out the Draft Conclusions. Once the Council has reached a consensus on the Conclusions, the Secretariat will implement the same streamlined procedures as was done during the last Council, which means the translation of each set of Draft Conclusions will be undertaken on a rolling basis, so that we have a smooth adoption of the Report at the end of the week, and also a timely availability of the Report.

As we have done in past Councils, we will have a professional editor to check the wording and, any changes made by the editor will be seen by track changes which will go to the Drafting Committee.

As per the last Session of the Council, the Drafting Committee will receive a formatted and edited Draft Report of the Session of the FAO Council in all languages, and we do hope with the new procedures we can speed up the work of the Drafting Committee and have it to start as soon as possible as we have concluded our work in the Council.

Hopefully, we can all be very concise and brief in our interventions and stay within the five or three minute limit, because based on that we can arrive, hopefully on Friday at the end of the afternoon, to the adoption of the Report, and it is very unpleasant but necessary task for me as Chairperson to remind everybody when they are going overtime, that they should conclude their statements as soon as possible.

With that, I now turn to Agenda Item 3, *Update on FAO's work on the global food crisis*. I do hope we can deal under this Item with all the issues related to the global food crisis and the war in Ukraine, so that we do not have to take up this issue again under the other Agenda Items, for example, under Agenda Item 6, when we speak about the Technical Committees, or the Report of the Programme Committee, or the Status of implementation of decisions taken at the Council.

In order to be efficient and effective, let us please contain the discussions on all these Items when it refers to the global food crisis or to the war in Ukraine under this Agenda Item, so that we can finalize our conclusions under it.

Introduction to Item 3: Update on FAO's work on the global food crisis

Mr Máximo Torero Cullen, Chief Economist

Document CL 171/3 Update on FAO's work on the global food crisis provides an overview of the global food security situation and associated risks, and highlights selected aspects of FAO's work in response to the emerging food security challenges.

As requested by the 170th Session of the Council, FAO continues to monitor the impact of the war in Ukraine on global food security and related matters under its mandate. FAO's global monitoring highlights that conflicts and geopolitical tensions, extreme and more frequent climatic events, economic slowdowns and downturns – including as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic – and increasing inequalities have been key drivers of hunger and malnutrition in the world. Macro-economic data confirm that the global economy has been experiencing a new slowdown in 2022 characterized by a series of overlaying crises exacerbated by the breakout of the war in Ukraine, continued impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, soaring food prices and overall inflation, and tightening financial conditions.

FAO has played a key role in the global response to the escalating food security challenges, as a provider of timely and neutral information on global markets, and assessments of the impact on food security and nutrition, as well as a reliable partner in the global food security governance. The Organization has also developed targeted policy proposals to tackle the challenges, as well as a set of concrete emergency and humanitarian response measures at country level.

The document highlights the importance of FAO's established work in monitoring and assessment of market developments and early warning, in food security data and statistics, as well as in playing a leading and contributing role in partner initiatives, such as the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS), the Global Network Against Food Crises and the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC). In addition, the Organization has also developed new tools such as the Data in Emergencies (DIEM) Hub and has made major contribution to emerging initiatives, such as the Global Alliance for Food Security (GAFS).

FAO has also helped shape global governance for addressing the food crisis through regular briefings to the UN Security Council, its contributions to the Committee on World Food Security, and by taking on a co-lead role in the UN Global Crisis Response Group. The Organization has actively contributed to G7 and G20 initiatives to tackle the food crisis, and has influenced the global policy response through joint statements by the Heads of FAO, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank Group, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Several of the policy proposals presented to the 170th Session of the Council have in the meantime received traction. FAO's proposal to establish a Food Import Financing Facility (FIFF) has been taken up in the IMF's decision to approve a Food Shock Window. The Organization has also developed a fertilizer tracker to support countries in gauging remaining import needs or unrealized export availabilities, and a new methodology to support the allocation of international fertilizer supplies to African countries. FAO's initiative to promote the use of soil nutrient maps for a more efficient use of fertilizers has received funding for implementation in a first set of countries. FAO has also contributed to a statement by the

Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board on the use of social protection in response to food price shocks. Furthermore, FAO has continued to scale up its humanitarian and resilience programming with the aim to exceed the 30 million people reached in 2021 with urgently needed life-saving and cost-effective agricultural assistance.

FAO's response to the food crisis is not limited to the selected contributions included in this document. FAO's support to transforming agrifood systems to be more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable, with the aim to leave no one behind, integrates short-term and long-term measures bringing the full strength of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 to bear the current crisis. The

Council is invited to note the information presented in document CL171/3 and provide guidance as deemed appropriate.

CHAIRPERSON

With that, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, dear friends, I would like to open the floor for the Members now to make an intervention, and I would like to give the prerogative to the Regional Groups to make a statement.

Ms Cindy MCCAIN (United States of America)

Conflict, climate change and the lasting impacts of COVID-19 are devastating local and global food systems and the people who rely on them, especially the most vulnerable. The Russian Federation's unprovoked aggression against Ukraine has significantly worsened these challenges. FAO's paper for this meeting, its analysis since February, and its flagship food security Report show the Russian Federation's war has an outsized impact on global hunger.

Addressing this falls squarely within the mandate of FAO. The United States of America values consensus and we have made significant efforts behind the scenes to consult across regions to reach consensus, but the dire food security picture and the Russian Federation's unwillingness to end its war, shows this is not the time for usual business.

Therefore, the United States of America proposes for decision Council document *CL/171/3/Add.1* co-sponsored by 51 FAO Members to be adopted in an ad hoc vote in the Report of the 171st Council. Unfortunately the Russian Federation continues to spread disinformation to deflect responsibility for the food crisis and blaming sanctions for the disruptions of the global food system. This is blatantly false. FAO's data shows Russian Federation's fertilizers reaching markets at the same levels they did last year. If the inaccurate and misleading proposal submitted by the Russian Federation is put to a vote, I urge everyone present to oppose it.

The global situation also underscores the imperative of avoiding any further disruption or slow down of the Black Sea Grain Initiative, and instead scaling it up to meet the market demand. Now is the time for countries to invest in more sustainable, resilient and productive food systems. The United States of America is meeting this challenge.

Since June, we committed over USD 9 billion in life saving humanitarian assistance to address global hunger needs. That includes USD 220 million for FAO in new funding for fertilizer and emergency agriculture for work in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, West Africa, the Sahel, Sudan, Sri Lanka, Guatemala, Honduras and Zambia. It includes a USD 250 million five-year grant to boost FAO's One Health approach, funds for IFAD Crisis Response and a massive scale up in emergency funding for WFP. I see others stepping up and encourage more to do the same.

I remind FAO Members to act with urgency and resolve to make further progress in the global food security roadmap many of us endorsed earlier this year. I appreciate the analysis and impact assessments FAO has produced and I urge FAO to be more productive with the products, more frequently, quarterly going forward.

Now is the time for us to solve the problem together. Together with FAO and other Rome-based Agencies and together as Members facing these struggles first hand, and together as human beings we want to make a better world for our children and our grandchildren. Let us get started.

M. MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

Can you please kindly give the floor to the Chairperson of Africa Regional Group, who is speaking on behalf of the Africa Group?

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Chairperson of the Africa Regional Group.

Mr Sébastien FOUMANE (Cameroon)

Cameroon, Mali and Ethiopia are speaking on this Agenda Item, on behalf of the Africa Regional Group.

Continue en Français

Permettez-moi tout d'abord de remercier l'équipe du Secrétariat, dirigée par Monsieur Máximo Torero Cullen, Économiste en Chef, d'avoir produit une mise à jour aussi bien documentée et factuelle sur le travail de la FAO sur la crise alimentaire mondiale, après la première mise à jour qui a été présentée à la 170e Session du Conseil de la FAO.

Continues in English

What comes out clearly is that the ongoing food crisis is driven by many factors including amongst others, conflicts and geo-political tensions and unrest, extreme and more frequent climatic events, economic slowdowns and downturns, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and increasing inequalities reaching many countries of the world. This is exacerbated by the fact that many of these drivers are in combination.

The Africa Regional Group appreciates the structure and the narrative of the Report for focusing on risk for global food security and FAO's responses to the food crises worldwide. We are particularly educated by the example of work, notably in Afghanistan, Somalia, Yemen, Nigeria, Ethiopia, South Sudan, amongst others. We welcome the work of FAO, including the framing of food and agriculture related responses to the global food crisis as a provider of neutral and timely information on markets.

Food security and nutrition has a reliable partner in the global food security governance and through policy proposals as well as a set of concrete emergency and humanitarian response measures in countries.

We recognize that FAO took swift actions to support countries, particularly in Africa in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. In this context, we take note with great satisfaction of the impressive work carried out by FAO, namely and mainly in the provision of neutral, timely and up to date information, in addressing the global food crisis in a wide range of mechanisms for global governance. Scaling up its humanitarian and resilience programming in framing policy proposals. Proposing the establishment of food, in part financing facilities to support countries to shoulder the soaring costs of food imports, and improve access to food at country level.

Addressing the issue of availability and access to fertilizers, promoting the adoption of the international code of conduct for use and management of fertilizers, addressing pests and diseases such as *peste des petits ruminants*, implementing humanitarian and social protection responses and cautioning the negative impact of the above-mentioned drivers on the food security and the nutritional status of people around the world.

We encourage the Secretariat to continue along the same direction, focusing on supporting the transformation of agrifood systems to be more efficient, more inclusive, more resilient and sustainable, addressing the three pillars of sustainability, social, economic and environmental, leaving no one behind.

Sra. Mirta Aurora GRANDA AVERHOFF (Cuba)

Cuba tiene el honor de realizar esta declaración en nombre del Grupo de Países de América Latina y el Caribe (GRULAC).

El informe del SOFI 2022 reflejó, que el mundo está retrocediendo en sus esfuerzos por acabar con el hambre, la inseguridad alimentaria y la malnutrición en todas sus formas.

Según las previsiones de dicho informe, cerca de 670 millones de personas seguirán padeciendo hambre en 2030, es decir, el 8% de la población mundial, cifra igual a la del 2015, cuando se puso en marcha la Agenda 2030.

En 2021 el 40,6% de la población de América Latina y el Caribe enfrentó inseguridad alimentaria moderada o grave, lo que sugiere que el problema ya no se limita a grupos sociales que han vivido en la pobreza rural durante mucho tiempo, sino que el fenómeno se ha extendido a ciudades y zonas urbanas.

Estas dramáticas proyecciones se están viendo agudizadas por las secuelas del COVID-19 que, por ejemplo, han llevado a una subida de los precios que erosiona el poder adquisitivo de los países en

desarrollo, sumado, por supuesto, a los impactos de las crisis, shocks, eventos climáticos extremos y disrupciones económicas, por mencionar solo algunos factores que conforman lo que FAO ha denominado “*tormenta perfecta*”.

Para enfrentar esta situación se impone la respuesta concertada, coherente y coordinada de las Naciones Unidas, los Gobiernos y otros actores relevantes.

El momento es sumamente crítico y difícil. Las personas necesitan que el multilateralismo brinde respuestas y supere desafíos que continúan poniendo en jaque a los que ya sufren inseguridad alimentaria y malnutrición. La ciencia, la innovación, la digitalización, el comercio internacional abierto y sin trabas parancelarias, la transferencia tecnológica, el acceso a financiación justa y equitativa, el derecho al desarrollo y una pluralidad de respuestas contextuales deben ser abordadas para brindar las soluciones que necesitamos.

Encomiamos a la FAO, por el apoyo a la transformación de los sistemas agroalimentarios, alentada de manera coherente, según corresponda y de acuerdo con los contextos y capacidades nacionales, a fin de que sean más eficientes, inclusivos, resilientes y sostenibles, sin dejar a nadie atrás, con la incorporación de medidas a corto y a largo plazo que permitan utilizar todo el potencial del Marco estratégico de la Organización para hacer frente a la crisis.

Agradecemos las actualizaciones que presentará FAO sobre el desarrollo y alcance de la iniciativa “*Mano de la Mano*” que, actualmente, tiene como beneficiarios a países de nuestra región. Adelantamos nuestro interés en conocer con más detalle los objetivos que persiguen las nuevas iniciativas institucionales propuestas por la Organización, así como sus respaldos técnico-teóricos. Al propio tiempo, reconocemos los esfuerzos desplegados por usted para lograr consenso en las resoluciones de “*Restitución de Voto de los Países miembros en Mora*” y “*Código de Conducta de las Votaciones*” que, como hemos adelantados en los debates informales, cuentan con nuestro apoyo.

El GRULAC se congratula del amplio número de países que fueron incluidos y participan en la Iniciativa “*Mano de la mano*”, entre ellos nueve de la región. Asimismo, reconoce la realización del Primer Foro de Inversión de la Iniciativa en el que los Estados tuvieron la oportunidad de presentar sus planes de inversión.

Invitamos a que otros se sumen a esta iniciativa. Consideramos oportuno que exista un mecanismo de seguimiento y presentaciones de resultados, para monitorear los progresos de la iniciativa coadyuvando a su implementación e identificando las buenas prácticas, siempre en estrecha coordinación con los países beneficiarios.

Nos gustaría, además, destacar la celebración, este año, de la primera sesión del Subcomité de Ganadería de FAO. Nos congratulamos por el establecimiento de esta plataforma que brindará la posibilidad de abordar desde la ciencia los aportes económicos, sociales y medioambientales que producen los diferentes sistemas ganaderos a los países en desarrollo, así como la contribución de las proteínas animales para alcanzar la seguridad alimentaria y dietas saludables.

El GRULAC, también, desea referirse a la propuesta para el establecimiento del Día Internacional de la Papa, el 30 de mayo, presentada por el Gobierno del Perú y que fue acogida con satisfacción por el Comité de Agricultura de la FAO, en su 28° período de sesiones, celebrado en Roma del 18 al 22 de julio de 2022.

Este resultado, permitirá continuar con el proceso hacia el establecimiento del Día Internacional de la Papa con el objetivo de impulsar acciones para la conservación de la biodiversidad de este cultivo y del funcionamiento de sus agroecosistemas. Asimismo, estimulará la cooperación y la adopción de medidas en favor de la producción y consumo de la papa; por lo cual ratificamos nuestro apoyo a esta iniciativa.

Confiamos en su liderazgo para conducir al éxito las sesiones que se avecinan, a la vez que reiteramos nuestro compromiso y disposición de trabajar de forma mancomunada y constructiva para alcanzar los consensos que nos permitan acercarnos, cada vez más, a los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenibles (ODS).

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Montenegro, Norway, the Republic of North Macedonia, San Marino and Ukraine, align themselves with this statement.

The alarming increase in the number of people facing acute hunger and malnutrition is a matter of great concern for all of us, as reflected in the recent update of the 2022 Global Report on Food Crisis and the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) report. Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine has severely deepened the crisis and exacerbated an already alarming situation. Russian Federation's war has disrupted supply chains, increased food prices and driven fertiliser prices up to record levels. Future crop yields are at risk. Restoring food and fertiliser exports is crucial to bring down prices and ensure availability and affordability in vulnerable countries.

The European Union and its Member States appreciate FAO's role in monitoring the global food security and nutrition situation, provide timely information, and address the impacts of Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine in affected countries. We request that FAO fully implement the decisions and recommendations of its last two FAO Council sessions and the decision of the 33rd Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe.

We remain fully committed to addressing the immediate needs resulting from the crisis, as well as supporting partner countries in enhancing sustainable production and resilience in the longer-term. EU funding commitments for global food security amount to EUR 8 billion. A significant part of this assistance will be implemented through the Rome-Based Agencies, notably in countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean regions.

We reaffirm our strong support for the Black Sea Grain Initiative. Keeping the Black Sea maritime route open is crucial.

The EU and its Member States also remain fully mobilised to help Ukraine export its agrifood production through alternative transport routes, in particular the EU Solidarity Lanes.

This acute crisis must not let us lose sight of the urgent need to continue addressing the long-term sustainability, climate and biodiversity challenges our agriculture and food systems are facing. Transforming our food systems to enhance their sustainability and resilience is the only way to avert future crises. We call on FAO to intensify its cooperation with other UN organisations, including the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), to promote the food systems transformation.

The EU and its Member States are among the co-sponsors of the draft decision set up in document *CL171/3/Add 1*. It clearly requests, among others, that FAO continue to monitor the impact of Russian Federation's war against Ukraine on global food security and scale up its response to the global food crisis with a specific emphasis on the most vulnerable countries.

The EU and its Member States condemn in the strongest possible terms Russian Federation's continuing aggression in violation of the UN Charter and international law, including FAO's Constitution. We strongly call for the immediate cessation of the use of force against Ukraine. Targeting civilians and their food supply, disrupting agricultural production and destroying key energy, transport and export infrastructure are all totally unacceptable. We again stress that negative impact of this aggression on world food security, as already addressed by this Council at its last two Sessions.

The draft decision submitted by the Russian Federation incorrectly points at sanctions as related to global food insecurity to divert attention as usually from the true causes and Russian Federation's responsibility of the current situation. We thus oppose this Russian draft decision - if even put on the table.

The EU sanctions target Russian Federation's war machine and not the trade in agricultural and food products, including grain and fertiliser, between Russian Federation and third countries. We have made this very clear to industry and partners by issuing a detailed and updated guidance on the implementation of the EU sanctions. There are no EU sanctions banning the export of agrifood products, including fertilisers from Russian Federation to anywhere in the world, except the EU. Some

EU Member States even finance the shipment by WFP of Russian fertilizers in Europe to third countries.

In conclusion, the EU and its Member States request that the Council adopt *en bloc* the draft Council decision set out in document *CL 171/3 Add 1*.

Ms Hyo Joo KANG (Republic of Korea)

My delegation is grateful to the Secretariat for the Report. According to the document, FAO Food Price Index remains above that of last year, although the index has declined since March, which marked the highest ever.

The Republic of Korea expresses serious concerns over the impact of the Russian Federation-Ukraine War on the global supply of food, fertilizer and energy. We also support the proposal for the decision on this Item, which was sent both to Director-General and the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) on 17th November, as a co-sponsor.

Climate change, prolonged pandemic and soaring food prices, as much as fertilizers, seeds and fuels, are risk factors that will further aggravate the current food crisis. The Republic of Korea recognizes updates of FAO's response to the food security challenges for FAO. We would like to deliver two comments in this regard.

Firstly, FAO's fundamental role of providing objective, timely and up to date information becomes more essential given the challenging circumstances. We believe FAO's regular release of updated information and risk analysis and prospects on food security and policy proposal have been of great assistance to many Members.

The information has been accurate and the latest information is the key to understanding the current situation and setting the finest policy direction. We appreciate FAO's provision of impartial as well as on time information, we request and encourage FAO to steadily play its basic role as a major international organization concerning defeating global hunger and strengthening food security.

Secondly, a close partnership and collaboration is another core element on our continuous journey towards food security. Elements concerning food security are complex, diverse and getting more dynamic. My delegation values FAO's collaboration with governments, United Nations Agencies including other Rome-based Agencies and even beyond, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), International Finance Institutions (IFIs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and Civil Society.

In this vein, we urge FAO to make every effort to have a chance of gripping and collecting our endeavours towards food security in conjunction with high level meetings such as the United Nations Security Council and the G20 Summit.

The Republic of Korea looks forward to continue receiving good quality, updated information from FAO.

Mr Nobuyuki KIKUCHI (Japan)

Japan extends its sincere appreciation for the Director-General, the Independent Chairperson of the Council and all the other people for making this conference possible. In recent years various factors such as COVID-19, climate change and conflicts have all made global food security complex.

The war in Ukraine that broke out back in February has basically worsened the global food crisis. The Russian Federation is busy washing all the claims made against it, spreading the false analysis, that the sanctions by the western countries are responsible for the current food crisis, but there is no doubt that the Russian Federation's aggression against the Ukraine is deeply uncouth.

In order to address and overcome this crisis we believe it is crucial to conduct an analysis [XX] and the neutral data and to hold dialogues between the consumer and the producer countries and with other stakeholders.

In this regard Japan appreciates FAO having provided information from its analysis in relation to global food and the results in the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2022.

We also believe it is also vital to promote the greater analysis and combining data held by various international organizations and we would welcome FAO promoting mutual cooperation with other international organizations such as IBC and Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS).

Access to affordable food should be a basic human need, it is being threatened as never before. And for the mid- to long term objectives to be met we need to map the way forward, establish more resilience to global food security, endurance and access to affordable safe and nutritious food for all.

It is also necessary for us to step into the field of local data collection, starting with no one size fits all, in order to provide fairer resources. Japan expects FAO to play a central role in establishing schemes and strengthening capacity for this.

Japan will work with other FAO Members and the Secretariat to overcome the current situation and promote the way forward for more resilient global food security.

Japan again solemnly condemns the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine and we call for its immediate cessation. Therefore, Japan supports the United States of America's proposal to adopt the decision in the Council document *CL 171/C/Add.1*, co-sponsored by the 51 Members *en bloc* and the Russian proposal in *CL 171/C/Add.2*.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation) (Original language Russian)

The Russian Federation is concerned at the growth in the number of people suffering hunger and chronic malnutrition around the world. We agree that this situation is the consequence at the same time of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, natural disasters, and, of course, conflicts. We are convinced that the FAO Council in strict compliance with the Organization's mandate, should give a full and unbiased view of all these factors and should make professional recommendations.

I would like to draw your attention to the following: the current food crisis is not connected with a global food shortage. In 2021, Russian Federation collected a harvest of around 121 million tons of grain. This year the harvest is around 150 million tons. A significant proportion of the harvest was made available to countries in need, including as free humanitarian assistance.

In October this year, the Russian President, Mr Vladimir Putin, proposed an initial measure of providing 500 000 tons of grain to the most vulnerable states, from a food security point of view. Thus far, we have not been able to ship this grain because of an absence of vessels and also because of sanctions. However, there are also unprecedented unilateral trade and economic sanctions against the Russian Federation that make it difficult to carry out both commercial trade and humanitarian deliveries of food stuffs and agricultural products.

For the same reason, countries in need have been cut off from Russian fertilizers, and this jeopardizes the harvests of next year. Several colleagues who have already spoken mentioned the absence of sanctions from the point of the European Union and other countries. That is a clear example. Russian fertilizers in the four European countries were frozen in April this year. This is 286 000 tons of fertilizer I am talking about, which is worth USD 158 million.

On Friday, the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) Report for 2022, noted that there was the first ship going to Malawi, which is only transferring 20 000 tons of that fertilizer. If we compare the 283 000 tons and 20 000 tons we can see how, in real terms, the sanctions are having an influence on deliveries of these fertilizers to countries that need them as humanitarian assistance.

That said, the sanctions are not only an issue for Russian Federation. These unilateral illegal limitations are also affecting around 30 other states, and for that reason we think that it is high time that the FAO Council send a clear signal on the destructive nature of these measures, and encourage countries to refrain from applying them, because in doing them they are indeed in circumvention of the UN Security Council. Russian Federation has made a corresponding proposal in its document *CL 171/3/Add.2* which was distributed to you by the distinguished Independent Chairperson of the Council.

CHAIRPERSON

Russian Federation, could you conclude your statement?

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

Well, I should have concluded it long ago.

I may interrupt each and every statement by the point of order, so I did not want to use this procedure each and every time, condemning each and every person who wanted to blame the Russian Federation for something. If you give me additional 3 minutes, I will conclude with this topic and then I will not interfere with the proceedings.

CHAIRPERSON

Can I ask you to do it in one minute?

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

I am trying to do it, but because of these allegations, I am obliged as a diplomat to take a point of order each and every time. I am sorry, but these are the rules of procedure.

We are concerned by the trend by which a number of countries are encouraging the FAO Council to take on functions that do not belong to it and in that way to broaden and politicize the mandate of our Organization. This refers to using the term 'war' with reference to Ukraine. In decisions in intergovernmental bodies this term has a precise legal content which does not allow for trade or economic or other links between the parties involved, and in this way it might also affect the Black Sea Initiative deal.

Talking about conflicts, the document that was presented for this Session, document *CL 171/3* contains reference to several other conflicts that are much more significant from a point of view of food security. Afghanistan, Somalia, Yemen, Nigeria, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and the list goes on and on. We all know who initiated those conflicts and who continues to ensure that those conflicts continue and to threaten food security. Therefore, we are against the document that was presented by a number of Members on the conflict in Ukraine. We think it is a unilateral one, and in this sense, we do not support it.

I have to end my statement, but I am ready to answer on the many questions from delegations on our comments. Our comments were delivered in an information note from the Secretariat, *CL 171/3* and were disseminated. These also include factual information on the Black Sea deal.

Mme Elissa GOLBERG (Canada)

Malheureusement, trois minutes ne suffisent pas pour formuler des commentaires significatifs sur un sujet aussi important. Alors, permettez-moi donc de souligner tout d'abord cinq résultats souhaitables du débat aujourd'hui.

Continues in English

First, while a four-month extension is important, given its significance for global food market stabilization, the Black Sea Grains Initiative should be extended indefinitely until Russia's wasteful war on Ukraine ends. Second, our major producers of fertilizers must continue to release their product to market, to step up production where possible, and press collectively to drive towards more efficient and effective fertilizer use.

Third, deliberate attacks against Ukrainian civilian agricultural infrastructure must stop. Even as the current food crisis emphasises the need to diversify global agricultural production, getting Ukrainian production fully back on stream will be an important element in the short and medium term for addressing the current global food crisis.

Fourth, we expect continued leadership from FAO and its partners to provide timely advice on the impacts of Russian Federation's war on Ukraine, to help shape a global response supported by data and evidence so that we can all make sound programme and policy choices. We support FAO's work to reinforce grain storage and animal health labs to sustain Ukrainian agriculture, to which we have contributed USD 52 million. This builds on Canada's significant investments over the last several years to respond to global food insecurity and to support partner country agriculture now in the billions of dollars.

Fifth and finally, we need collective and responsible multilateral action to address the current global food security crisis, to help our food systems to be inclusive and climate smart, and gender equality will be an essential precondition to do so.

We have long understood the cause and effect relationships between conflicts and food security, and while all conflicts have devastating local impacts, and some have significant regional impacts, very few have global impacts on food security. Russia's unnecessary war of choice against its neighbour, Ukraine, is such a case.

While circumstances were certainly already challenging due to the long tail of COVID-19, climate and other crises, contrary to what the Russian Federation has just stated, over the last nine months it has waged a total war against global food security. Indeed, there have been profound reverberations on food prices, global agricultural trade, market volatility and poverty writ large, with the World Bank Reporting food price inflation of 83 percent in low-income countries, 90 percent in low- and middle-income countries, and 95 percent in upper middle-income countries.

We appreciate FAO's concrete contributions to respond to the global food crisis, including through analysis, technical assistance and proposals for market stabilization measures. This must continue. The Black Sea Grain Initiative is a good example of an action to mitigate the worst effects of global food insecurity, helping soothe market volatility on prices.

Its remarkable achievement has helped to shift 12 million tons, 71 percent of which was corn and wheat, to countries in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and elsewhere. It must not be continuously questioned. More broadly, we continue to see developing and applying climate smart approaches as essential to enhance resilience and seize the opportunity that agriculture presents both in terms of adaptation and mitigation. Adoption of a climate change strategy was an essential step; an action plan is now needed for implementation. We also continue to underscore the transformative potential of food systems to help address gender inequalities.

Finally, in closing, the current global food crisis underscores what we knew already ever so well, that it is crucial to work together as partners to respond to needs that exist around the world, and to transform our approaches. The science and innovation strategy has set us on the right course, but now its implementation must help us to identify and apply solutions at scale.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

Let me open by underscoring Australia's condemnation of Russian Federation's unilateral, illegal and immoral aggression against the people of Ukraine, and reiterate our calls for Russian Federation to immediately withdraw its forces from Ukrainian territory.

Australia is deeply concerned at the rising levels of food insecurity globally, stemming from several compounding factors, such as climate change, COVID-19-related economic disruption, and conflicts, in particular the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine, and their impact on the most vulnerable countries.

On the latter point, we need to be clear – all conflicts are a human tragedy and right now, Russian Federation's ongoing invasion of Ukraine is causing immense human suffering and exacerbating the already fragile global food security situation. Food markets are global and the restrictions in supply caused by Russian Federation's actions are a direct cause of food shortages and price rises. Ongoing analysis, including by FAO, demonstrates that it is the poorest and most vulnerable countries that are struggling most with the impact of higher food and fertiliser prices, including in the South-West Pacific where Small Island Developing States (SIDS), in particular, face increasing challenges.

We also need to be clear - Australia supports the collective action by the international community and has imposed a range of sanctions to inflict costs on Russia and those responsible. Although sanctions are negatively impacting Russian Federation's economy, food and agricultural commodities are not sanctioned by Australia. Russian Federation's actions violate Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and undermine the rules-based international order. Australia is committed to upholding these principles, which are essential to international, regional and domestic stability and security.

Against this backdrop, we reaffirm our support for the proposed Council decision tabled under *Annex 1 of CL 171/3 Add.1* and recommend this be adopted *en bloc*. We also take the opportunity to highlight the following four points:

Firstly, while acknowledging the efforts of the Organization to date, we underscore the importance of the FAO implementing concrete actions to address this crisis in line with the Organization's Strategic Framework, and in close collaboration with Members and the wider multilateral system. We urge ongoing regular dialogue with Members, especially to allow full consideration of any adjustments that may be required to the Medium Term Plan (MTP) and Programme of Work and Budget (PWB).

Secondly, we highlight the need for a global trading system that is predictable, transparent, rules-based and non-discriminatory. Free and open global trade, underpinned by the multilateral rules-based system and risk and science-based decision making, will be essential to facilitate long-term resilience in agriculture, and meet our global food security needs.

Thirdly, we note with concern the high costs for energy and fertiliser which may have long term implications for agricultural productivity and food availability across the world. We welcome continued efforts by FAO to ensure that the current food access crisis does not become a food availability crisis.

Finally, we take this opportunity to welcome the extension of the Black Sea Grain Initiative and call on all parties to honour the agreement noting that any obstruction will increase food prices and exacerbate food insecurity.

In closing, Australia notes *CL 171/3* provides details on an array of work undertaken by the FAO in response to the current crisis. We will respectfully provide additional comments on these activities in writing.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

The Philippines appreciates FAO's efforts to help address the impacts of the global food crisis. We note the update on FAO's work in this regard presented in document *CL 171/3*.

The state of global food insecurity is regrettable. This situation emphasizes the need to accelerate and scale-up interventions to bring us back on track in attaining our Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Zero Hunger, poverty alleviation, and good health and well-being.

As to addressing current food shortages and soaring prices of food, fertilizer, and other agricultural inputs, the Philippines encourages FAO to continue providing timely information on markets to inform policy responses and in spearheading global appeals to keep the movement of food and agricultural inputs unhampered across borders. Every effort should be made to ensure that trade, especially in food, flows freely and easily.

The Philippines further encourages FAO's commitments, such as to strengthen global market transparency and coordination among Members through initiatives such as the Agricultural Marketing Information System (AMIS). Support with data and appropriate coordination of the Food Shock Window established by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in September 2022 for low-condition emergency loans to help eligible countries cope with food shortages and rising costs; and continue advocating for the expansion of this window, which was developed from an FAO policy proposal. Support the most vulnerable countries to access international fertilizer markets and to improve efficiency in its use, including supporting AMIS in expanding its mandate to include fertilizers in its commodity coverage to allow all market and policy developments to be closely monitored and publicly disseminated.

It is worth highlighting that FAO's response to the global food crisis goes beyond the specific interventions outlined in *CL 171/3*. The global food crisis, which challenges the quantity and quality of food that people can access, has been aggravated by COVID-19, climate change, and conflicts. This crisis undoubtedly requires emergency responses to address its serious impacts. Nonetheless, FAO should continue to sustain its focus on accelerating its strategic interventions, such as addressing climate change and leveraging science and innovation to support the transformation of agrifood

systems so that longer-term sustainability, resilience, and inclusivity will not be traded-off for short-term unsustainable achievements.

The Philippines encourages FAO's commitments to accelerate innovation, joint planning, agricultural research and development, and systemic coordination with other UN entities and relevant bodies, especially the Rome-based UN agencies and international financial institutions, to connect short, medium and long-term opportunities and deliver support to Members in a timely manner.

CHAIRPERSON

With that, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, dear colleagues, we have finalized the time for this Session this morning.

We will continue Item 3 in the afternoon with Slovenia and South Africa as the first two speakers.

I would really like to thank you for your input, for your dedication to the work of FAO this morning. Let us be constructive this afternoon, be concise, and stay within the time limits.

I give you now some time to energize yourself with lunch and we see each other back at 14:00 hours in this room.

The meeting rose at 12:02 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 02

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.02

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Seventy-first Session Cent soixante et onzième session 171.º período de sesiones
Rome, 5-9 December 2022 Rome, 5-9 décembre 2022 Roma, 5-9 de diciembre de 2022
SECOND PLENARY SESSION DEUXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEGUNDA SESIÓN PLENARIA
5 December 2022

The Second Plenary Meeting was opened at 14:02 hours
Mr Hans Hoogeveen,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La deuxième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 02
sous la présidence de M. Hans Hoogeveen,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la segunda sesión plenaria a las 14.02
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Hans Hoogeveen,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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Item 3. Update on FAO's work on the global food crisis (*continued*)**Point 3. Informations actualisées sur les activités de la FAO relatives à la crise alimentaire mondiale (*suite*)****Tema 3. Información actualizada sobre la labor de la FAO en relación con la crisis alimentaria mundial (*continuación*)**

(CL 171/3)

CHAIRPERSON

Delegates, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, great to see you back in the Plenary Hall for our second session of today. I do hope that you have energized yourself for the afternoon session until 16:30 hours, before the snack.

Let us continue our considerations of Item 3, *Update on FAO's work on the global food crisis*.

With the permission of South Africa, I give the floor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, who is just starting his work here in Rome - it would be an honour, and thank you South Africa for giving me that flexibility.

Su Excelencia Mario Adolfo BÚCARO FLORES (Guatemala)

Es un verdadero honor, en mi calidad de Canciller de Guatemala, estar con ustedes esta tarde y desearles el mayor de los éxitos en las labores de este 171 Período de Sesiones de este Consejo que tiene, ante sí, importantes retos mundiales.

Guatemala reconoce lo importante de la labor de FAO en la región, así como a nivel mundial. Debemos de lograr juntos una seguridad alimentaria para todos. En ese sentido, Guatemala apoya a la FAO y a las instituciones nacionales en diversas iniciativas de las cuales quiero destacar esta tarde el programa Mano a Mano. Un registro único de agricultores familiares, un mapeo de suelos que logra que nuestra población guatemalteca tenga esperanza en tiempos tan complejos.

Al ser la primera vez que tengo la oportunidad de estar en este importante conclave, deseo compartir con ustedes que durante la gestión del gobierno del señor presidente, Alejandro Giammattei Falla, se ha priorizado en la forma categórica sobre un compromiso a la reducción de la pobreza, a la seguridad alimentaria, realizando acciones como la reactivación del Gabinete de Desarrollo Rural Integral para promover acciones intersectoriales estratégicas que atiendan una problemática estructural del país. Bajo este cometido, nos hemos propuesto promover el fomento a la producción de exportaciones de alimentos para dinamizar las economías locales y generar el desarrollo de nuestros territorios.

Nuestros esfuerzos están orientados a incrementar la productividad de la tierra, mejorar la comercialización de los productos agropecuarios y brindar seguridad financiera a los productores. Estamos trabajando fuertemente para garantizar el acceso y la disponibilidad a una alimentación saludable con asistencia técnica, capacitación, transferencia de tecnología, inversión, infraestructura y facilitación de procesos en sanidad agropecuaria a agricultores de subsistencia y productores también que puedan generar cadenas de valor, especialmente entre pequeñas y medianas empresas en tiempos como los que estamos viviendo.

Nuestra lucha contra el hambre no ha parado y no deberá de parar. Guatemala es un país altamente vulnerable a los efectos del cambio climático y está atravesando una etapa pospandemia que, sin duda alguna, nos genera una oportunidad y un reto para poder cambiar nuestra dinámica alimentaria. También, lamentablemente, hemos sido víctimas de huracanes y fenómenos meteorológicos que han causado una irreparable pérdida en nuestros cultivos este año. Por supuesto bajo los efectos de La Niña y acrecentando los niveles de pobreza y seguridad alimentaria en los hogares guatemaltecos, lo que motiva una migración irregular.

Guatemala hace un llamado urgente, nuevamente, a abordar la crisis del hambre como una de las prioridades de la agenda internacional. Es necesario proteger a los más vulnerables y actuar de inmediato para salvar vidas, especialmente situaciones de emergencia, desastres y crisis, implementando acciones humanitarias enfocadas en construir comunidades más resilientes, uniendo esfuerzos para garantizar el suministro mundial de alimento.

Es así que apoyamos las recomendaciones que FAO ha dado a este respecto manteniendo abierto el comercio de alimentos y bienes agrícolas diversificando los suministros de alimentos e impulsando una producción local, ampliando redes de seguridad social y también debemos de recordar que es oportuno avanzar en el seguimiento de la Cumbre de Sistemas Alimentarios. Así, apoyaremos la implementación de los compromisos voluntarios que han emanado de este importante cónclave, en los cuales nuestro país ha tenido un rol sumamente activo.

Reconocemos también, la labor que la FAO ha venido realizando en Ucrania al llevar ayuda de emergencia en el sector agrícola, asistencia en efectivo, así como apoyo al almacenamiento de cereales y, especialmente, instamos a que se continúe proporcionando datos que colaboren y se coordinen con otras agencias del Sistema de Naciones Unidas para asesorar a los Miembros, para acceder a mercados de fertilizantes y hacer frente a la escasez de alimentos y el aumento a los costos derivados del conflicto. Valoramos los esfuerzos realizados para que se movilicen los recursos necesarios y dedicados en el Plan de respuesta rápida hacia Ucrania y llegar así a los más vulnerables para actuar de inmediato y salvar vidas.

Es importante reiterar que condenamos enérgicamente la invasión militar a Ucrania por parte de la Federación Rusa y, esto es muy importante ya que la Federación Rusa ha logrado que, durante el tiempo del conflicto, haya tenido este conflicto un impacto muy especial. Guatemala es un país de profunda vocación pacífica y promovemos, y siempre instamos a las partes hacia el diálogo, la negociación y la reparación y los medios pacíficos que nos otorga el derecho internacional para poder llevar a cabo un proceso importante donde todos tenemos que ser partícipes para hacer que este conflicto termine lo más pronto posible, especialmente respetando la paz y los derechos humanos.

Guatemala apoya el proyecto de decisión que aparece en el *Anexo I* del documento *CL171/3 Add.1* así mismo reafirmamos y reiteramos nuestro apoyo y solidaridad al pueblo y al gobierno ucraniano abogando por el respeto a la vida, la paz, la soberanía y la integridad territorial de las fronteras ucranianas.

Concluyo haciendo una invitación a todos los aquí presente y a quienes en forma directa o indirecta forman parte de la cadena alimentaria para que actuemos en conjunto de forma urgente y sin demoras para obtener resultados que nos permitan la sostenibilidad, la resiliencia y la inclusividad de nuestros sistemas alimentarios.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Minister, for being here. Since it is your first time here, I gave you more leeway in your statement when it comes to minutes. I do hope to see you more often in the Council.

I now turn to South Africa, followed by Israel; but I ask all Members to try to stay within the three or five minute limit because it helps us be effective and efficient, and in order not to have a session on Saturday.

Ms Nosipho Nausca-Jean JEZILE (South Africa)

South Africa associates itself with the statement made by Cameroon on behalf of the Africa Regional Group.

FAO is commended for their proactive response to addressing the impact of the global food crisis, especially in providing factual and neutral information on the state of agriculture commodity markets, and aiding those countries in need. These actions have contributed to FAO being recognized as a reliable partner in the global food security governance, as clearly outlined in the update provided to the Council.

It is recognized that the current global food crisis is the result of a combination of multifaceted and interconnected factors, including continued impact of COVID-19, climate change, conflicts, including in Ukraine, as well as other conflicts. These factors have contributed to high energy and food prices, leading to rising inflation and diminishing economic growth.

It was noted that the spike in the food price index has continued in a downward trend from an all-time high in March of this year. It is also encouraging that the shortages of fertilizers and wheat resulting

from the impact of the conflict in Ukraine are being addressed with shipments and fertilizers being facilitated for delivery to those in need of them.

In this context, the continuation of the Black Sea Grain Initiative is contributing to decreasing the price index of wheat and underlines the importance of this initiative for the developing world. However, it is of concern that the decrease has not been reflected in national food prices. That continues to rise, thereby making food unaffordable and increasing the number of those suffering from hunger. FAO should therefore cooperate with relevant mechanisms in Africa, such as the Africa Fertilizer Development Financing Mechanism, managed by the African Development Bank, which has an objective to provide financing for increase of use of fertilizers in Africa.

South Africa also recognizes that embargos and unilateral coercive measures impede the development of the people of Cuba and Zimbabwe, and calls for the end of such measures and the need to address longstanding conflicts, such as in Palestine. Conflicts are best resolved through political dialogue, as clearly illustrated in the recent signing of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement between the Governments of Ethiopia and Tigray People's Liberation Front. It is recognized that these matters need urgent address in the competent international and regional forum mandated to do so.

South Africa stands ready to cooperate with FAO to address the impact of global food crisis, including the appropriate action on mitigation of climate change and on biosecurity in agricultural sector. Such actions include multi-hazard early warning disaster risk reduction measures, and strengthening animal health systems.

In conclusion, it is essential that the FAO continue to address the impact of global food crisis within its technical mandate and that the Council forge a consensus on this guidance and on steps needed to be taken in this regard.

With these comments, South Africa takes note of the update provided and of this Item.

Ms Yael RUBINSTEIN (Israel)

I would like to begin my remarks by thanking the Chief Economist and his team for the dedication they put in providing us with the application formation as presented here today in the document in front of us. My deepest regret is that the global events did not and probably will not allow your department a moment of grace. Six months have passed since we discussed the issue of global food security.

Sadly, here we are again as the situation has only deteriorated. We have all read the Reports, we all see the numbers. Every night millions of parents have to send their children to bed hungry. Other millions of people suffer from health problems driving from malnutrition. We are obliged to Agenda 2030 and to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 by then. We are committed to putting an end to hunger, but we are failing as food and fertilizer prices are soaring and the global economy growth is descending.

Israel reiterates FAO's critical role in supporting and reacting to the global food crisis through the transformation of agri-food systems to be more efficient, resilient and sustainable. We appreciate the neutral, timely and up to date information provided by FAO. We, as the rest of the world, are deeply concerned about the soaring prices. We appreciate FAO's efforts to assist decision-makers at the global level including co-leading United Nations (UN) response group for addressing this crisis.

We welcome the meeting held by the Director-General with the UN Security Council and with the Group of Twenty (G20) leaders. However, we recommend FAO to investigate more options to accelerate innovation and technology for food systems transformation and to improve productivity and profitability of food. We encourage FAO to expand a variety of products and alternative options to improve agriculture into extreme conditions, and to increase the resistance to shocks and transportation. In this way, we can ensure healthy nutrition, affordable and accessible food to all.

We welcome FAO's efforts to promote an international code of conduct for the sustainable use and management of fertilizers. We are looking forward to more information regarding its application. We would like to recall another policy proposal from the previous Council proposing to work on reducing food loss and waste. We request management to provide updates on the matter as well.

Mr Jan BJÖRKLUND (Sweden)

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and my own country, Sweden. We fully align ourselves with the European Union (EU) statement.

Unprecedented levels of food insecurity show that the aim of Zero Hunger and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 is slipping further away with hundreds of millions facing hunger.

Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine has caused a huge setback and the Nordic countries condemn Russian Federation's actions in the strongest possible terms and call for the immediate end to this aggression. We also condemn the attempts by Russian Federation to divert attention from the fact that they are solely responsible for the war in Ukraine and its effects on global food security. We therefore strongly oppose the Russian draft decision.

The Nordic countries are all co-sponsors of the draft decision submitted on 17 November for adoption by the Council. In this decision, we - like numerous other co-sponsors, call on FAO to continue focusing on how the Organization, within its mandate, best can address the negative impacts of the Russian war in Ukraine on global food security and ask that the matter remains on the agenda of the FAO Council. We agree with the United States of America and other previous speakers to adopt the decision *en bloc*.

We take the opportunity to express our strong support to The Black Sea Grain Initiative, which has helped stabilize food prices and ensured humanitarian deliveries of food and fertilizers to countries at risk of famine, and we welcome its continuation. We recall that the sanctions by EU and others do not target food and fertilizers.

In addition, we underline that the transit of fertilizers through the Nordic ports has not been interrupted but move on without disruptions. It is critical that fertilizers reach those countries who need them the most.

We want to thank FAO for the document *Update on FAO's work on the global food crisis*, which we found to be a useful and informative overview of FAO's role and activities. The assessment that we are at risk of a global food availability crisis is deeply worrying. We support all measures aimed at increasing availability and affordability of fertilizers, including the Global Fertilizer Challenge.

We appreciate FAO's contribution to the global governance for food security, providing both expertise and concrete measures in support of actions to address the global food crises. In this regard, we underline FAO's role in addressing the drivers of food insecurity and in preventing further worsening, with an emphasis on measures for the most vulnerable.

At the same time, we recognise the importance of increased long-term resilience and therefore highlight the importance of a food systems approach.

In addition, the Nordics consider that FAO has an important role to play in development-humanitarian-peace nexus-work and urge FAO to collaborate with the Rome-based Agencies and other parts of the UN system, to strengthen this work.

We take the opportunity to inform the Council that the Nordic countries are among the largest donors to the UN-system in terms of humanitarian and development aid, often in the form of flexible funding.

In addition, since the war, the Nordics have provided well over EUR 450 million in financial humanitarian and acute support to Ukraine and in particular to populations in developing countries that are directly affected by price hikes, supply challenges and rising food insecurity as a result of the war. This includes support to WFP for financing the transport of grain from Ukraine, the FAO Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities and other measures to fight hunger, particularly for the most vulnerable.

Finally, we want to thank FAO staff for their hard work in providing Members with timely and useful analysis, information and support and call on FAO to do so on a regular basis, also in the future.

Mr Purnajaya TRI (Indonesia)

Overlapping crisis, conflicts and wars, including in Ukraine, have disrupted the global food supply chain. Immediate actions and common and diverse are indeed needed to mitigate the impact and to strive for recovery. Therefore, Indonesia wishes to share its views in this regard.

First and foremost, peace is the prerequisite for global recovery. Ending the war in Ukraine immediately should be our utmost priority. Without peace, our plan to prevent global food crises and achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will fail. Second, we must ensure the flow of food and agricultural inputs and eliminate restrictive trade measures. We shall ensure that food is accessible for all. In this regard, multistakeholder collaboration is required to ensure food affordability and availability for all.

Indonesia applauds the extension of the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which has positively contributed to bringing down the price of food and fertilizers. It is pertinent for all parties involved to keep up their commitments to elevate their support for the initiative implementation. In the long run, the resilience of our food and energy supply chain shall be strengthened. We have to make sure that agricultural inputs, particularly fertilizers, are available and affordable.

Third, it is imperative to create an enabling environment to strengthen global food security. Investment in agriculture productivity, capacity building on good agricultural practice and digitalization of agriculture for the development of precision farming are essential. To this end, Indonesia support FAO's short-term, mid-term, as well as long-term responses to mitigate the global food crisis and also to strengthen the whole transformation of agri-food systems to be more efficient, inclusive, resilient, sustainable, and leaving no one behind.

Sr. Junior Andrés ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)

En primer lugar, queremos agradecer, queremos alinearnos plenamente a la declaración realizada por Cuba en nombre del grupo de América Latina y el Caribe.

Nicaragua agradece la información actualizada sobre la situación de la seguridad alimentaria y la respuesta de la FAO, quien ha liderado acciones puntuales, para ir superando la espiral de las crisis como consecuencia del aumento de los conflictos, los fenómenos meteorológicos extremos y la inestabilidad económica agravada por la pandemia.

Reconocemos el rol de la FAO como institución del conocimiento y alentamos a que siga proporcionando asistencia, datos y análisis exhaustivos sobre los mercados, precios de los productos alimenticios, así como información sobre la iniciativa y estrategia que, en conjunto con otras instituciones financieras internacionales y de organizaciones regionales, se implementan en apoyo a los gobiernos nacionales.

Acogemos con agrado la respuesta en materia de políticas, en particular, el servicio de financiación de las importaciones de alimentos, un mecanismo que, por su naturaleza, debería ser lo más flexible posible en cuanto a la condicionalidad de los créditos y supuestos de elegibilidad y extenderlos a las importaciones de fertilizantes y otros insumos agrícolas. Asimismo, consideramos positiva la iniciativa sobre las exportaciones de cereales por el Mar Negro que debería ampliarse para alcanzar a un mayor porcentaje de países de ingresos bajos y medio bajos, junto a otras medidas encaminadas a superar los obstáculos al comercio que impiden, de hecho, garantizar la disponibilidad y el acceso a los alimentos para muchos países.

Al respecto, reiteramos nuestra preocupación por las repercusiones negativas de la aplicación sistemática y sostenida de medidas coercitivas unilaterales que siguen perjudicando el comercio internacional, el abastecimiento de alimentos, las operaciones internacionales de los sectores financieros, energéticos y de transporte, sacudiendo importantes pilares del sistema alimentario mundial en un contexto ya de por sí precario.

Alentamos a que FAO, en sus evaluaciones e informes periódicos sobre la situación de la seguridad alimentaria a nivel mundial, considere los impactos no secundarios de las medidas restrictivas, coercitivas, unilaterales que afectan e impiden de forma discrecional la plena realización de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS), sobre todo el ODS 2 y el derecho a la alimentación, e informe a los Miembros a este respecto.

En conclusión, hacemos un llamado a encontrar soluciones constructivas, a fortalecer la cooperación y la solidaridad entre las naciones. Debemos actuar con urgencia constante y en coordinación para responder a las necesidades humanitarias inmediatas y lograr la seguridad alimentaria para todos.

Sr. Jorge Federico ZAMORA CORDERO (Costa Rica)

Nuestra delegación se adhiere en toda su extensión a lo manifestado por la Presidencia pro tempore del Grupo de países América Latina y el Caribe ante las Naciones Unidas en Roma (GRULAC) relacionada con el tema que hoy nos compete. Agradecemos la labor que FAO ha venido realizando para informar constante y puntualmente sobre la situación de la seguridad alimentaria mundial y dar respuesta a través de varios mecanismos y programas a los desafíos actuales que ponen en riesgo a millones de personas en todo el mundo. Sabemos que la seguridad alimentaria ha ido en aumento debido a varios factores sociales, económicos y de crisis que vivimos actualmente. Tenemos ante nosotros un panorama no muy alentador y con un futuro cercano incierto ante la recesión que nos espera.

Tomamos nota de la información contenida en el documento *CL 171/3* y deseamos que los trabajos por parte de la FAO, así como las discusiones en los diferentes comités y foros de esta Organización, se concentren en el mandato específico que tenemos. Además, esperamos el debido enfoque en este seno sobre el tema de la inseguridad alimentaria para que de una manera técnica especializada se brinden las soluciones que todos esperamos, particularmente los países en desarrollo.

Como ya lo hemos expresado en otras ocasiones, mi delegación preferiría no tener que referirse a conflictos armados en este plenario al no considerarlos el espacio pertinente para deliberar al respecto. Sin embargo, para un país como Costa Rica el conflicto actual ha afectado aún más las carencias sobre las cuales hemos tenido que ir enfrentando en medio además de la pandemia de COVID-19. Esto ha causado graves consecuencias económicas y, por tanto, afecta la seguridad alimentaria de la mayor parte de la población, además de agravar la desigualdad.

Al igual que nosotros, otros países se encuentran en la misma situación. Sabemos que la seria afectación que están padeciendo los sistemas alimentarios no tiene una única fuente. Es por eso que nos vemos reunidos hoy para encontrar soluciones de forma pacífica, pero también eficaces, que brinden una verdadera respuesta particularmente a los grupos más vulnerables que sufren las consecuencias de los diferentes conflictos y guerras.

El pasado 1 de diciembre, Costa Rica celebró su 74 aniversario de la abolición del ejército. Esta trayectoria de paz y democracia nos enorgullece en medio de la coyuntura mundial. Creemos en ella y luchamos para que, como nosotros, otras naciones se unan para que los presupuestos de los países se dediquen a mejorar las condiciones sociales y económicas de la población. Estamos seguros que solo así dejaremos un impacto positivo para la juventud y futuras generaciones.

La Federación Rusa y Ucrania tienen un papel fundamental en cuanto a procurar alimentos a nivel mundial. Solicitamos que FAO continúe trabajando en el monitoreo de la situación de la seguridad alimentaria mundial, así como en el suministro de información neutral, oportuna y actualizada y que continúe sus trabajos de respuesta ante la emergencia actual.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

We appreciate the preparation of document *CL 171/3*, which provides an update on FAO's work on the global food crisis.

Rising food insecurity levels have been a source of great concern for the international community, in particular after the COVID-19 pandemic, and this situation has been aggravated by the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Brazil deeply deplores the violence in Ukraine and the humanitarian crisis faced by the civilian population in that country. We praise the fact that the UN Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) are putting in place measures to provide technical and humanitarian assistance in Ukraine and neighbouring countries. At the same time, as we support the search for a peaceful solution to this conflict, we remain deeply concerned with its serious consequences on agriculture and on global food security.

Brazil believes that FAO offers valuable contributions to addressing the global food crisis in an effective manner. Therefore, it is crucial to protect FAO's mandate and to avoid politicization and polarization, which could hinder the capabilities of the organization at these challenging times.

We acknowledge that the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict have had a major impact in worsening the current global food security situation, but we are also aware that the path to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was already disrupted before these events. The drivers of hunger and malnutrition are complex and range from acute to chronic in their nature.

We should not ignore, therefore, the structural weaknesses of the food sector, which are the result of multiple causes, such as agricultural subsidies, as well as tariff and non-tariff barriers, that negatively affect the production capacity and the competitiveness of so many developing countries. As highlighted by the most recent Agricultural Policy Monitoring and Evaluation report published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), distortive forms of agricultural support "have negative implications for global food security, as they hamper the efficient allocation of resources and weaken the balancing role of trade in ensuring the necessary product flows from surplus to deficit regions".

For this reason, Brazil suggests that these elements should not be ignored by FAO in the discussion on the global food crisis, taking into account their relevance in the transformation of agrifood systems to be more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

La France appelle à adopter en bloc le projet de décision déposé par 52 Membres de la FAO et à rejeter de la même manière le projet de décision déposé par la Fédération de Russie.

Les raisons en ont été exposées dans la déclaration prononcée par la République Tchèque au nom de l'Union européenne (UE) et de ses États Membres, à laquelle la France souscrit pleinement - tout en ajoutant ce qui suit à titre national et la version qui fait foi pour le verbatim est celle qui est en envoi à l'écrit.

Depuis février, nous n'avons cessé de condamner l'agression brutale et illégale de la Fédération de Russie contre l'Ukraine, qui est contraire au droit international et à la Charte des Nations Unies, comme l'ont notamment affirmé la Cour Internationale de Justice (CIJ) et l'Assemblée Générale des Nations Unies (AGNU). La Fédération de Russie cible systématiquement les infrastructures civiles, y compris agricoles. Il s'agit des crimes de guerre.

Les membres de l'Organisation des Nations unies ont, à trois reprises, condamné massivement, l'agression russe contre l'Ukraine, ainsi que les annexions illégales de territoire.

C'est aussi le cas du Conseil de la FAO qui, réuni en Session Extraordinaire le 8 avril dernier, a affirmé que l'agression de l'Ukraine par la Fédération de Russie est contraire aux buts et aux objectifs énoncés dans la Constitution de la FAO et contraire aux obligations souscrites par la Fédération de Russie comme Membre de cette Organisation. Je rappelle ces obligations, car nous entendons parfois que la FAO ne devrait pas parler de ce sujet. Je cite: *«les Nations acceptant cette Constitution sont déterminées à promouvoir le bien-être commun, ... et à contribuer à libérer l'humanité de la faim»*.

Au contraire, la Fédération de Russie instrumentalise l'alimentation comme arme de guerre. L'invasion russe de l'Ukraine a aggravé de façon dramatique une situation alimentaire déjà préoccupante. L'onde de choc créée sur les marchés alimentaires a été ressentie en particulier par les populations les plus vulnérables, qui ont souffert de l'envolée soudaine des prix alimentaires, des prix de l'énergie et des pénuries d'engrais.

Répondre aux conséquences de cette guerre sur la crise alimentaire est donc au cœur du mandat de la FAO. Son rôle est crucial pour analyser les impacts de la guerre en Ukraine sur la sécurité alimentaire mondiale et prévenir une nouvelle dégradation. C'est donc une question de crédibilité, d'efficacité, et de professionnalisme pour la FAO.

La France, avec ses partenaires, a fait le choix d'une solidarité en actes avec les pays les plus touchés. Plus de 17 millions de tonnes de céréales ukrainiennes ont déjà été acheminées vers le reste du monde grâce aux couloirs de solidarité de l'UE. Nous finançons l'acheminement, par l'Initiative de la mer

Noire, de céréales données par l'Ukraine à plusieurs pays particulièrement affectés: la Somalie et, bientôt, le Soudan et le Yémen dans le cadre de l'Initiative *Grain from Ukraine* du Président Zelensky.

La crise des engrais menace également les récoltes futures. C'est pour cela que le Président de la République, avec l'Union Africaine (UA) et l'UE, a souhaité mobiliser rapidement les organisations internationales compétentes avec l'opération *Save Crops*. Nous finançons l'acheminement d'engrais vers les pays qui en ont le plus besoin – d'ores et déjà, nous finançons une expédition d'engrais russes depuis Tallinn à destination du Tchad.

Ces mesures d'urgence complètent les actions de court et moyen terme que nous menons via l'initiative européenne *Food and Agriculture Resilience Mission* (FARM).

Deux projets sont soumis à son conseil. Le projet – ou plutôt le contre-projet – porté par la Fédération de Russie n'est, au fond, qu'une entreprise cynique visant à détourner l'attention des Membres du Conseil de la principale raison de l'aggravation de l'insécurité alimentaire: la guerre en Ukraine, dont la seule responsable est la Fédération de Russie. Nous appelons donc ce Conseil à rejeter le texte russe.

Le projet de décision coparrainé par la France et 52 États Membres de la FAO décrit la feuille de route concrète pour la FAO. Il prend en compte les préoccupations des pays les plus affectés, mais également les développements positifs comme la prolongation de l'Initiative Céréalière de la mer Noire, auquel la France apporte son soutien.

Alors que le 2023 risque de connaître un nouveau record dramatique en matière d'insécurité alimentaire, nous devons accélérer notre réponse collective. Seuls les actes comptent.

Nous appelons les Membres du Conseil à approuver en bloc le projet de décision coparrainé par 52 Membres de la FAO et à rejeter le projet soumis par la Fédération de Russie.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Agradecemos la información actualizada provista por el equipo del Economista Jefe de la FAO, así como el gran compromiso en la acción en el terreno por parte de la Organización llevada adelante en este contexto crítico de inseguridad alimentaria creciente.

Quisiera, en primer lugar, ratificar todo lo expresado por Cuba en representación del Grupo de países América Latina y el Caribe ante las Naciones Unidas (GRULAC) y también quiero adherirme específicamente a los puntos planteados por Brasil. Mi intervención, teniendo en consideración que el punto de Agenda es un punto general tendrá también una aproximación general, en la cual tendrá la perspectiva por ser parte del mundo en desarrollo.

El último informe sobre El estado de la seguridad alimentaria y la nutrición en el mundo (SOFI) nos brinda datos muy críticos respecto de la situación de la inseguridad alimentaria global. Todos sabemos que ese informe no incluye --no captura todavía--, las consecuencias de la situación en Ucrania como factor acelerador de esa crisis. Creo que lo más importante que nos deja el SOFI es que parece que no será posible alcanzar los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) 1 y 2 para el año 2030. Ello representa un gran fracaso para la comunidad internacional, a pesar de los enormes esfuerzos realizados por el Sistema de Naciones Unidas, en particular por la FAO y los otros organismos con sede en Roma en el ámbito de sus respectivos mandatos.

En cada reunión que hemos mantenido aquí en los últimos meses hemos dedicado una enorme cantidad de tiempo a discutir más las crisis coyunturales que las crisis estructurales. Las crisis coyunturales son factores aceleradores de las crisis estructurales, pero no son las causas profundas de la inseguridad alimentaria global. Esas causas profundas son previas a las diferentes crisis coyunturales y seguirán estando después que ellas pasen, lamentablemente, y que explican, en gran medida, nuestra imposibilidad de cumplir con los ODS 1 y 2.

Por lo tanto, ello me lleva a preguntarme, ¿por qué si todos queremos poder llegar a los ODS 1 y 2 no invertimos mucha más energía y esfuerzo en aquello que nos puede permitir lograrlo? No creo que exista una sola respuesta, pero quizá, como algunos colegas aquí en la FAO me han expresado, parece ser que uno podría entender los conflictos desde una teoría de la proximidad que permita encontrar alguna lógica que explique esta situación. Cuando me refiero a la teoría de la proximidad intento

expresar que los países perciben a los conflictos como más relevantes cuanto más cerca de sus propios países se encuentran. Quizás eso hace que no se diferencie lo que es coyuntural o estructural.

Frente a este enfoque ya escucho en mis oídos la reacción de aquellos que indican que no es que los conflictos son importantes por la proximidad, sino por sus efectos sistémicos. No significa que mi país no reconozca que en muchas de estas crisis coyunturales hay efectos sistémicos. Lo reconocemos y lo hemos condenado oportunamente.

Pero creo que es imprescindible visibilizar todos los conflictos porque me pregunto --y les pregunto--, ¿la crisis en Haití, los movimientos migratorios forzados por las asimetrías económico-social en América Latina y el Caribe o la inestabilidad en los sistemas democráticos como efecto de las necesidades básicas insatisfechas en nuestras poblaciones, no son conflictos con efectos sistémicos? ¿Los diferentes conflictos que existen en África o en el cercano Oriente que, como resultado, provoca generaciones de seres humanos pauperizados, desplazados, sin futuros, y/o procesos migratorios hacia países desarrollados, no son conflictos con efectos sistémicos? ¿Las consecuencias del cambio climático y el COVID-19 que victimizan aún más a las poblaciones más vulnerables en los países en desarrollo no tienen efectos sistémicos? ¿La continuidad de la existencia de subsidios agrícolas a producciones ineficientes que perjudican a las producciones eficientes de los países en desarrollo no tienen efectos sistémicos? O, ¿en realidad, pensamos que los únicos conflictos que tienen efectos sistémicos son los conflictos armados? Para los países en desarrollo no es así.

Para terminar, estoy disponible y creo que es imprescindible discutir las causas profundas que hacen que hoy sea imposible cumplir con los ODS 1 y 2, y también todos aquellos conflictos que lo agraven. Aquí nos encontramos nuevamente con una situación polarizada que dificulta buscar soluciones de consenso entre los Miembros, pero cuanto menos consenso alcancemos, menos probabilidad habrá de acercarnos a los ODS.

Quiero reconocer los esfuerzos realizados por el Presidente, quien ha intentado durante todas estas semanas tratar de encontrar una solución que permita capturar las preocupaciones de todos. Soy absolutamente testigo de sus esfuerzos. Realmente lamento muchísimo que tengamos que reconocer que no hemos podido entre todos encontrar la voluntad política para poder llegar a una solución de consenso. Nos debilita como Organización, nos debilita en nuestros objetivos, al menos es mi interpretación. Lamento muchísimo que tengamos que empezar este Consejo reconociendo nuestra incapacidad de construir consenso.

His Excellency Franklin Mithika LINTURI (Kenya)

It is an honour for me and my delegation to attend the 171st FAO Council on behalf of the Government of Kenya. I wish to convey my warm greetings to all Members of the Council, the FAO family and in particular the Director-General, not forgetting the Government of Italy, for facilitating this dialogue and giving the platform for Member Countries to come together and deliberate over one of the critical matters the world is facing today – Food and Nutrition security.

The Horn of Africa region including Kenya has in the recent past, been plagued with one emergency after the other ranging from floods to desert locust invasion and now, the worst drought in 40 years. Four consecutive seasons of failed rains and now staring at a fifth one.

The challenges to ending hunger, food insecurity, and all forms of malnutrition keep growing. For instance, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the fragilities in our agrifood systems and the inequalities in our societies, these are compounded by high cost of living occasioned by poor economic performance, the recently controlled desert locusts invasion, human conflicts, land degradation and re-emergence of transboundary crop diseases and pests, like the fall armyworm.

The extreme climate change events being witnessed globally has compromised food security, even in some parts of the developed world economies.

Our country is caught in the grip of higher food prices brought about by a combination of adverse weather, rising input costs of fertilizers, which have been worsened by the Russian Federation-Ukraine conflict. These disruptions have increased also the costs of imports to Kenya.

In spite of the mentioned challenges, I believe that there are both short- and long-term solutions that, the 171st FAO Council can facilitate dialogues that are geared towards not only realizing the same but putting them into practice.

If we are to address food challenges expeditiously then efficiency and effectiveness must be the hallmark of our agrifood systems. As was highlighted from the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) last year, the use of technology is key to achieving efficiency, safety, transparency, and avoiding waste.

I am glad to observe that the above-proposed solutions to food and nutrition security challenges do align adequately with the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031 and embraces both the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the four Betters: Better Production, Better Nutrition, Better Environment and Better Life. In Kenya, FAO is presently working closely with the Government and other stakeholders as they write their next Country Programming Framework (CPF) 2023-2028, whose key objectives are already revolving around addressing climate change effects and increasing food production and productivity. Kenya commits to continue working closely with FAO and other development partners on this front.

Finally, we once again call on a concerted global effort to defeat hunger and malnutrition by transforming our agriculture in the face of ever-changing climatic conditions.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, Minister for Agriculture and Livestock. Your presence and your statement show the strong commitment of Kenya to the work of FAO and the achievement of global food security.

Mr Kiryl PIATROUSKI (Belarus) (Original Language Russian)

In Russian we have an expression which is a dialogue amongst the deaf, and I think we are having this kind of dialogue on sanctions for the past year.

The United States of America, first of all, said that there is no such thing as sanctions on fertilizers, then the concept changed that there would be sanctions on fertilizer, but the goal has been to say that Russian Federation was guilty of all this when Belarus said that sanctions against our fertilizers and our producers were introduced well before February 2022, the rhetoric changed again.

Then we were told that there were no sanctions on Russian fertilizers.

I would not like to have a repeat of the Committee of Food Security, but we did not agree then because Belarus, Russian Federation, Venezuela and other countries did not want to avoid this issue of sanctions and their impact on food security.

What we are saying here once again is do not mislead the whole world. There are indeed sanctions on fertilizers and they have an impact on food security and the FAO has to take this into consideration.

We have on the table the proposal from the Russian Federation. We fully endorse it after full consultations, but explaining why billions of people have been suffering from malnutrition because of the conflict in Ukraine is easy to say that, but it is wrong. Russia more than once has said that the conflict in Ukraine does not have an impact on food security, but the opposite side is constantly saying that there are no sanctions or that they do not have any impact.

Well, who is being the most honest in this situation? Belarus is tired of repeating the same thing, that there is a whole series of reasons we have to recognize this. I have a proposal to make, until there is a common wish to overcome the problems, we will be beating our heads against a brick wall, and everything will be happening time and time again. So let us put the proposal to the vote, adopt a decision, and take matters further.

Sra. María De Lourdes CRUZ TRINIDAD (México)

Agradecemos a la Secretaría por la preparación del documento que actualmente se debate y que, de manera muy gráfica, nos presenta, por una parte, el panorama de la situación alimentaria en el mundo y, por otra, respuestas de la FAO a los retos que se enfrentan en este tema.

Tomamos nota del contenido de este documento que es muy rico en datos e información sobre la situación de la seguridad alimentaria mundial, de manera que nos sirve para dilucidar sobre este tema tan relevante. Conflictos, clima y economía, tres ámbitos que en fases adversas resultan letales y contra esa adversidad tenemos que actuar como Estados, en lo particular, y en conjunto guiados por el espíritu de la cooperación internacional para el desarrollo.

Los conflictos y las tensiones geopolíticas afectan el flujo normal de suministros, los desajustes económicos afectan el acceso de las personas y el cambio climático afecta ciclos productivos y productividad. Es importante que nos sirvamos de documentos como el presente y con ello estaremos aprovechando el reservorio informativo de la FAO y su importancia en la identificación de alternativas, así como la ejecución de acciones y soluciones concretas para aliviar las crisis alimentarias mundiales.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

Malaysia appreciates and commends FAO for their excellent analysis and information contained in Council document *CL 171/3* on the *Update on FAO's work on the global food crisis*. This document helps to generate much focused discussion that is timely, relevant, and significant for developing a probable future plan of action.

At present, agriculture, global food security, and nutrition are under immense pressure due to the continued multidimensional and interrelated factors, including impacts of COVID-19 pandemic, loss of biodiversity, climate change, and ongoing conflicts all over the world, including in Ukraine. Thus, it becomes more difficult and challenging to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, to provide enough food for everyone, to end hunger and ensure access by all people, particularly people in vulnerable situations. Our work must therefore be directed to the vulnerable people that suffer the devastating impact of food shortages, soaring food prices and input prices. Malaysia calls on FAO to increase their coordination with the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) and other relevant international organizations to accelerate efforts to push for the *four betters: better production; better nutrition; a better environment and a better life*.

Malaysia supports in principle FAO's policy proposals contained in section 3, subparagraph 22 – 26, particularly with regard to the Food Import Financing Facility (FIFF) and the development of a Fertilizer Trade Tracker. The decision by the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to approve a Food Shock Window under its emergency financing instruments is timely and this new window will assist Member countries that have an urgent balance of payment needs caused by acute food insecurity, an increase in their food import bill and a shock to their cereal exports. We urge FAO to work together with the IMF to offer the necessary advice in the implementation of this instrument. Malaysia also looks forward to receiving concrete proposals from both FAO and World Trade Organization (WTO) in their paper to track recent trends and assess trade restrictions in global fertilizers markets, including fertilizer needs in vulnerable countries.

Malaysia calls on FAO to further promote evidence-based decision-making in their analysis and continues to play a leadership and significant role in analysing, monitoring, and regularly reporting the effects of the current situation to Member States. Malaysia strongly encourages FAO to ensure any implementations and strategies have to be tailored to the local context and be able to respond to local realities, in line with Members' national policy and avoid one-size-fits-all solutions.

In ending, we would like to urge all Members to work together with FAO in the spirit of consensus and cooperation to overcome this crisis. I would also like to commend what was done by the ICC preceding the Council. I know you are working very hard to achieve a consensus.

Mme Michèle PRANCHÈRE-TOMASSINI (Luxembourg)

Luxembourg s'associe à la déclaration faite par la République tchèque au nom de l'Union Européenne. Ce matin encore, il y a eu des attaques aériennes de la Russie contre Kyïv et d'autres villes ukrainiennes. Les populations civiles et les infrastructures économiques en payent le prix.

Ces attaques détériorent aussi la capacité de l'Ukraine à exporter sa production agricole, ceci au détriment des pays les plus vulnérables, qui dépendent de ces exportations. Le Luxembourg, Monsieur

le Président, sollicite l'engagement continu de la FAO et demande l'adoption en bloc du projet de décision *CL 171/3 Add. 1*.

Les sanctions européennes sont fondées en droit. Ceux qui sont visés par ces sanctions le sont individuellement. Ils ont la possibilité de se pourvoir en justice. Les sanctions européennes ne visent pas l'exportation vers des pays tiers de produits agricoles ou de fertilisants russes.

L'Union Européenne accompagne ces sanctions d'un important travail d'information, et, s'il le faut, procède à des ajustements. Je remercie l'appréciation exprimée ici pour ces efforts importants dont ma collègue française a fourni un aperçu.

Vous comprendrez que le Luxembourg s'oppose à l'adoption du projet de décision *CL 171/3 Add. 2*.

Mr Thomas John KELLY (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

FAO's paper on this Agenda Item lays bare the challenge facing us in improving global food security conditions.

All the data indicate that food security conditions will get worse before they get better. The world's poorest people are already struggling with the impact of conflict, climate change, COVID-19 shocks, food and fuel price inflation. The last thing the global food system needs is further stress. But this is what the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine this year has done. It has stoked those pre-existing pressures. The latest updated FAO's strategic objectives for Ukraine report, published in the last few days, underlined this point. The United Kingdom objects in its strongest terms Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine and we call on Russian Federation to end the war immediately.

The United Kingdom has joined other Council Members and Observers in submitting draft decision language for this Item. The decision welcomes and encourages a wide range of work that FAO is already working on, including supporting the Food Shock Window established by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in September 2022, which is developed from an FAO proposal, continuing to monitor fertilizer markets and to provide policy advice, in partnership with others, supporting the most vulnerable countries to access international fertilizer markets and providing political and technical support for sustaining the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which is critical to ensure food availability and access, particularly for the most vulnerable people in the poorest countries.

We call on Council to adopt the proposed decision language in its entirety *en bloc*. This would also help to avoid a prolonged line-by-line discussion and would train our focus on the global food security issues that this Council needs to provide.

We strongly oppose the language proposed by the Russian Federation. On sanctions, as we have said several times here in FAO and elsewhere, the United Kingdom's sanctions have always included specific licences to allow for Russian exports of food and fertiliser. The general licence we announced early last month sends an even stronger signal to industry to help avoid overcompliance with sanctions. The United Kingdom issued a joint statement, together with the United States of America and the European Union (EU), on 14 November clarifying these latest positions.

The overlapping crises we are facing show that FAO's role in providing reliable, timely data, analysis, and evidence-based policy advice is more important than ever. We need that to prioritise both FAO's work and guide us in strengthening international partnerships to improve our collective response to hunger and malnutrition.

We want to recognise the good work FAO has done this year led by FAO's Chief Economist and the Trade and Markets Division.

The information and the data trackers FAO have provided, including on fertiliser, are critical to ensuring that the facts and evidence are set out clearly for all Member States and partner organisations to see and act on. We also commend FAO for its work on fertilisers and tracking fertiliser imports, like in the analysis outlined in the joint FAO/WTO report published this month. We look forward to furthering timely updates that can inform our discussions in FAO and elsewhere in the UN system.

FAO's early policy recommendations set out earlier this year, underlining the need to avoid export restrictions, keep trade open, and help countries deal with increased import prices were important and

timely. They have helped to influence wider policy responses and they remain key areas of advice for us to follow and support.

Ms LI Xi (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China would like to thank FAO especially its Chief Scientist for its work, for its introduction and analysis. China would also like to express its sincere concerns regarding the problems of famine and malnutrition worldwide particularly in developing countries. China would like to stress that FAO should operate in strict accordance with its purpose, policies and procedures as a specialized agency within the United Nations system responsible for affairs on global food and agriculture.

The Organization should closely follow its authorisation and terms of references specified in the basic documents focused on global account facilitating the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Zero Hunger and no poverty and ensuring its impartiality as a technical platform for intergovernmental policy and communication coordination.

China commends FAO's role in utilizing its organizational advantages and technical expertise and the various timely and effective measures taken on the FAO's mandate. We recognize FAO's continued and broad cooperation with UN governments, UN organizations, financial institutions and to the private sector as well as the emergency and the humanitarian assistance provided.

China supports the policy proposals and affirms that transparent and vital communication by FAO with its Members during the implementation of policies. China encourages FAO to continue close monitoring on global food security under its mandate and to undertake comprehensive analysis on the supply and demand, prices and trade of agricultural commodities and inputs in support ensuring food security for the Members in particular the developing countries.

In 2021, the Chinese President Mr Xi Jinping proposed that global development initiative at the 76th UN General Assembly which prioritizes food security and poverty reduction as a key area of cooperation. In July 2022, Mr Wang Yi, the State Councillor and Foreign Minister, put forward to the cooperative initiative on global food security. By July this year, China has provided over 15 000 tons of emergency humanitarian food assistance to the developing countries in need.

China is prepared to strengthen its cooperation with FAO and its Member States in our collective efforts to overcome the global food security crisis.

Mr Mina Rizk ATTIA RIZK (Egypt) (Original Language Arabic)

Allow me to please thank Management and the Chief Economist who drafted the document. This is definitely a step in the right direction and these efforts are greatly appreciated by Egypt.

These efforts have been made by FAO since May of last year and we also appreciate everything that was done by FAO to allow countries to bolster their national capacities to counter the global food crisis.

These different, continuous and multiple global crises are a new reality. Of course, on top of them all, we have a global food crisis and the energy crisis and then of course the various cuts in the supply chains and now more recently of course the war in Ukraine.

Now, everyone, all countries have been affected by these crises. However the least developed countries and developing nations have been affected the most. These are countries that have not yet even come out of the COVID-19 pandemic and that are trying to quash consequences of climate change.

I would like to reiterate an appeal that was launched by his Excellency, President El-Sisi during 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) and that was held in the month of November in Sharm El Sheikh, and according to the President, we have to focus our attention on conflicts especially.

Egypt is an importer of food commodities and we have been greatly affected by the food crisis because we import the largest amount of wheat in the world. That is why Egypt expresses its appreciation for the efforts made by the various countries to counter the global food crisis and

uncertainties in the cereal markets and inputs and fertilizer markets, including FAO's proposal to create a mechanism to finance imports that the Food Import Financing Facility (FIFF).

We therefore encourage all International Financial Institutions (IFIs) to reduce the effects of the food crisis including importing countries. And we also call upon countries to alleviate debt in order to draw investments and reinforce cooperation with development partners so as to further develop the industrial sectors and agriculture in these nations.

Once again Chair, we emphasize the fact that of course the climate crisis has had a very threatening effect on the global food crisis. This is reflected in international trade and in the demographics globally. During the COP27 that was held in Egypt we have definitely tried to introduce this Item on the Agenda. We have launched an initiative on food and climate in collaboration with FAO.

In conclusion, we believe that it is truly important as you have said in your introduction to protect the technical nature of FAO and not politicise its deliberations.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much Egypt for your statement and for hosting a very successful COP27 in your country.

Mr Joachim BLEICKER (Germany)

Germany aligns itself with the statement given by the Czechia on behalf of European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States.

Germany welcomes the updated information provided by FAO on Global food security risks as well as on FAO's work to address the food crisis. We call upon FAO to continuously monitor the global situation and provide timely and objective information as well as ways to mitigate risks.

The alarming number of people facing acute food insecurity and chronic hunger is reflected with high priority in Germany's foreign policy. We will continue to be an advocate for the right to adequate food and increase our global efforts to put it into action.

In this context, Germany is strongly concerned about conflicts and geopolitical tensions, extreme and more frequent climatic events. Economic slowdowns and downturns and increasing inequalities as key drivers of hunger and malnutrition in the world.

Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine has exacerbated the already severe situation of global food security and nutrition. Germany is asking that FAO keeps a strong focus on the negative impact of Russia's war in Ukraine on world food security and we call upon all Members to adopt the draft resolution concerning the update on FAO's work on the global food crisis signed by over 50 co-sponsors en bloc.

Russia is the sole country that started the war and can stop the war immediately and thereby its impact on world food security, which is in Russian Federation's hand to change the situation. Russia has prevented the United Nations from putting in place United Nations (UN) sanctions through its veto in the UN Security Council in reaction to its breach of the UN Charter by invading a neighbouring country. It is cynical that Russia now complains about unilateral measures taken against it.

No EU sanctions targets the export of food products and fertilizers, and no EU sanctions target Russian fertilizer transport to third countries. Therefore, we call on all colleagues to vote against the Russian proposal for Item 3.

Germany supports the work of the Global Crisis Response Group on food, energy and finance in coordinating the global response to the worldwide impacts of the Russian war of aggression.

The Global Alliance for Food Security, initiated by Germany and the World Bank within the Group of Seven (G7), is an agile platform for exchange and innovative cooperation. Partners from G7, Group of 20 (G20), international organizations like the FAO and the other Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), the European Union, African Union and others work together to give a coordinated response and crisis reaction.

A key instrument is the Global Food and Nutrition Security dashboard, which was developed by the World Bank with data support from the FAO and other organizations. The dashboard is critical for a rapid and coordinated policy response and is therefore an indispensable tool for addressing the global food crisis.

Through FAO's rapid response plan, Germany supports Ukraine's agricultural production and exports. We also support the EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes facilitating the export of agricultural goods and call on FAO to advocate for the continuation of the Black Sea Green Initiative.

Finally, for the German Government, sustainability is fundamental for ensuring food systems resilience. Therefore, Germany has significantly increased its support of projects focusing on sustainable food system transformation, considering the local needs in 2022.

We ask FAO to intensify cooperation with other UN organizations and create synergies in order to accelerate food systems transformation.

Mr Winston PINNOCK (Bahamas)

I wish to express my delegation's gratitude for the comprehensive update on the FAO's work on the global food crisis.

We commend FAO in its *"food and agriculture-related response to the global food crisis"*. Consistent multilateral action is required to effectively combat global food insecurity, which has been caused by economic disruption and fragile food markets resulting in food shortages around the world.

In The Bahamas, we believe that *"food security is a fundamental need of our nation"* and we remain committed to combatting this crippling challenge. We look forward to our ongoing cooperation with FAO and exploration of existing and potential opportunities with partners to address this critical issue.

The report states that *"the reduction in economic growth in many parts of the world is affecting demand for food, especially in low- and low middle-income countries, with negative consequences for food security and nutrition."*

The Bahamas and countries within the Caribbean region continue to face challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, global conflicts, soaring food prices, and economic downturns, which have all contributed to the ongoing food security crisis.

In addition, the high costs for shipping directly correlate to the short- and long-term implications for food availability within our region. We would welcome more concrete efforts by FAO to address these unique challenges facing the Caribbean countries.

An example of this could be dialogues facilitated by FAO with the major shipping companies and countries in the region in view of alleviating the burden of high freight costs, which adds to the food security crisis faced in our countries.

Another great negative impact on soaring food prices is the war in Ukraine. It is unacceptable for any independent state to have its sovereign territorial borders encroached unprovoked. In this regard, The Bahamas has co-sponsored the draft proposal contained in document *CL 171/3 Add 1*.

The world, especially countries like The Bahamas and our sister countries in the Caribbean region, requires concrete action to address the crisis in the existing and expanded frameworks while working to scale up efforts to bring us up back to pre-pandemic food supply flows, in keeping with the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of Agenda 2030.

In closing, there have been many references to things, and I wish to commend the same to my colleagues in the Council, those who feels and knows it most.

M. Mohamed Nassir CAMARA (Guinea)

La Guinée s'associe à la déclaration faite par le Cameroun, au nom du Groupe Régional Afrique, sur le point de l'ordre du jour intitulé Informations Actualisées sur les Activités de la FAO Relatives à la Crise Alimentaire Mondiale.

Nous apprécions la production par la FAO de ce document qui donne des informations actualisées sur la situation alimentaire, en matière de sécurité alimentaire et sur les risques associés, ainsi qu'une vue d'ensemble des activités menées par l'organisation en réponse aux défis qui se posent actuellement sur le plan de la sécurité alimentaire.

Nous partageons l'analyse que les conflits et les tensions géopolitiques, les phénomènes météorologiques et climatiques extrêmes qui sont devenus de plus en plus récurrents, les conséquences de la COVID-19, le ralentissement économique général et l'aggravation des inégalités constituent des déterminants majeurs de la faim et de la nutrition dans le monde.

La Guinée prend note que la FAO a contribué de manière décisive à fournir des réponses adéquates, et à viabiliser la réponse des différents acteurs de la sphère alimentaire et agricole à la crise alimentaire mondiale en fournissant en temps utile des informations fiables et objectives sur le marché de la sécurité alimentaire et la nutrition. Dans le cas de l'appui qu'elle apporte à la transition vers les systèmes agroalimentaires plus efficaces, plus inclusifs, plus résilients et plus durables, ne laissant personne de côté, nous exhortons la FAO à poursuivre le déploiement de mesures qu'elle met en œuvre, à court et à long terme, destinées à mettre les atouts de son cadre stratégique au service de la riposte à la crise actuelle.

La Guinée pense que la baisse des tensions internationales, la résolution pacifique des conflits, le renforcement du dialogue et de la coopération entre les différents partenaires et dans toutes les sphères des systèmes agroalimentaires, le ciblage des plus vulnérables constituent des moyens efficaces et inévitables pour juguler la crise que nous connaissons.

Avec ces observations, la Guinée prend note et accueille favorablement le document relatif aux informations actualisées sur les activités de la FAO relatives à la crise alimentaire mondiale.

Sra. Natalia ESCOBAR (Chile)

Estamos siendo testigos de un escenario de retroceso en el cumplimiento de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible de la Agenda 2030 y, por cierto, del acceso a la alimentación a nivel mundial. Tal como lo consigna el Estado de la seguridad alimentaria y la nutrición en el mundo (SOFI) 2022, 828 millones de personas padecieron de hambre crónica en el mundo en 2021 y unos 2 300 millones aún se encuentran en situación de inseguridad alimentaria moderada o grave.

Es nuestro deber trabajar urgente y mancomunadamente para cambiar estas cifras y generar certezas en las poblaciones de nuestros continentes que ansían desarrollo social, paz y estabilidad. En este contexto grave, nuestra Delegación hace un llamado en el marco de la FAO a materializar una acción multilateral, cooperativa y eficiente que tenga como ejes la promoción de la cooperación internacional y la ayuda humanitaria, el fortalecimiento del comercio de alimentos y fertilizantes, de acuerdo a las reglas acordadas en la Organización Mundial de Comercio (OMC), la intensificación de las coordinaciones y colaboraciones entre el sector público, privado y la sociedad civil fomentando la asociatividad y evitando la duplicación de esfuerzos.

En último lugar, el respaldo al Secretario General de las Naciones Unidas y al centro de coordinación conjunta en la Iniciativa granos del Mar Negro en sus esfuerzos y gestiones para prolongar cuanto sea necesario su vigencia en respuesta a la crisis en la región y su positivo impacto en los mercados internacionales.

Frente a ello, Chile, desea compartir algunas iniciativas en las que nos hemos comprometido para aportar y promover estas acciones colectivas. Primero, durante el primer semestre de 2023 albergaremos la Segunda Cumbre Parlamentaria Mundial contra el Hambre y la Malnutrición, la cual tiene por objeto fortalecer las alianzas alimentarias y así facilitar los compromisos globales y el intercambio de experiencias para dar respuestas eficaces a la crisis global de alimentación. Junto a FAO y a España en su rol de coorganizadores se buscará impulsar que los parlamentos fortalezcan sus legislaciones y permitan la modernización y transformación de nuestros sistemas alimentarios.

Chile también será sede de la Conferencia Ministerial de Carbono y Neutralidad en los Sistemas Alimentarios en marzo de 2023, que reunirá a ministras y ministros de agricultura y medio ambiente de más de 30 países.

En tercer lugar, queremos anunciar que nos mantiene muy entusiasmados la celebración de la Segunda Cumbre de Ministros por la Alimentación Escolar que se celebrará en París en octubre de 2023, la cual reunirá a los 74 Estados Miembros de esta Coalición. Es nuestra responsabilidad reforzar los programas, hacerlos más nutritivos y saludables y expandirlos a la población más necesitada.

Finalmente, nos asiste la convicción de hacer más y mejores esfuerzos para fortalecer nuestros sistemas alimentarios locales y regionales transitando hacia patrones más juntos, inclusivos, sustentables y saludables. Por eso, trabajamos actualmente en el Plan de contingencia alimentaria que ha entregado la Comisión Nacional de Seguridad y Soberanía Alimentaria de Chile que nos permite poner los acentos en iniciativas tales como la creación de más de 70 nuevos microbancos de alimentos a nivel nacional, que se implementarán en todas las regiones para entregar frutas y verduras a personas y familias que más lo necesiten o el acceso a fertilizantes que incorpore acciones para mitigar dicha falta debido a su alto costo.

Por último, deseamos señalar la necesidad de que se retomen las negociaciones del Acuerdo de Agricultura de la Organización Mundial de Comercio. Reafirmamos nuestro compromiso de mantener mercados agrícolas justos, abiertos e inclusivos para garantizar el flujo continuo de productos agrícolas, así como insumos esenciales para la producción.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

If we are to follow the practices, I had to take the floor each and every time when the delegations are making their statements and the information is either a lie or it is incorrect. That is why I will take this floor or try to take this floor only one time as a point of order intervention.

I would like to commend you, Independent Chairperson, for your efforts prior to the Session in order to fight the consensus among us on very sensitive issues like crisis and sanctions and others, but I see unfortunately all those efforts they failed and from the statements we have just heard by some delegations, inevitably we are going to vote on certain decisions.

On the conflict thing, so I see the intention from Western countries to see the conflict in Ukraine as the only problem for the world food security. I just want to remind the colleagues that the Minsk Agreement was signed eight years ago, in 2014, and it is when the conflict started. Germany and France together with Russia, where the guarantors of that agreement. I have not heard for eight years now in this room any discussions about the implications to the food security emanating from Ukraine and the efforts by Germany or France to promote the implementations of those agreements.

At the very same time over those eight years, we saw other conflicts. Afghanistan, what about 22 million people left on the verge of starvation as a result of the occupation or what was called an antiterrorist operation leading both to the terrorists and the hungry people? What about Yemen? 18 million people? What about the invasion in Syria? What about Libya and other conflicts?

I believe that for many countries in all over the world, those conflicts are of also big concern. And of course, millions of people are suffering from hunger as a result of those conflicts.

If we are to be objective, so I think that we need to take and to consider the implications of all the conflicts. And as far as I am concerned, of course I speak for the end of all the conflicts and all wars as soon as possible.

Then our colleagues who proposed the addendum one document. They insisted on taking this decision en bloc and once again they are taking this decision en bloc only because of one thing, they want to single out the conflict in Ukraine and not to address the other conflicts.

And at the very same time, they are also putting aside some of the issues which are contained in their draft resolution which do not match the truth. For example, the paragraph D in the proposed decision speaks about the implementation of the Black Sea Grain Initiative and the extension of the initiative on the safe transportation of the grain from Ukraine. But the decision on the Black Sea Initiative was also taken en bloc and it was taken together with Memorandum of Understanding between Russian Federation and the Secretariat on promoting the Russian food products and fertilizers on the world markets.

They want to extend just one part of this basket or they have other views. Because if they want to extend this deal, I just want to remind you that Russia for three or four days, suspended its participation in the Black Sea Initiative because of one simple reason. Our Navy was attacked by the drones, the sea drones delivered according to this initiative by the United Kingdom and supposedly those drones were supposed to demine the ports of Odessa and other ports of the sea, the Black Sea, in order to allow the safe passage of transportation.

Instead, those drones were used to attack Russian military. And all those nine drones were found, and the navigation system were produced in Canada. And the study of this navigation system, they showed that the drones were exactly used in those safe lines which were dedicated specifically for this Black Grain Sea Initiative.

So if you want to extend this initiative, please be aware and do not provide arms, otherwise there will be no initiative any longer.

For the second draft resolution.

We introduced the draft resolutions on the impact of sanctions and in my information note that was also attached to this draft decision, you will see that the sanctions we were talking about were introduced decades ago, and this was a blockade on Cuba. Sanctions on Nicaragua, sanctions on Syria, sanctions on Venezuela and other countries, and I can go ahead with this list.

There is not a single word about the sanctions on Russian Federation. I hope that this decision will also be adopted by this forum.

CHAIRPERSON

I turn now to the Observers.

Monseñor Fernando CHICA ARELLANO (Santa Sede) (Observador)

La Delegación de la Santa Sede ha estudiado con atención el documento Información actualizada sobre el trabajo de la FAO en relación con la crisis alimentaria mundial. Su lectura confirma la dramática situación de inseguridad alimentaria aguda y moderada que golpea inicualemente a multitud de personas en el mundo, obligadas a vivir sin aquellos recursos que permiten su existencia digna y serena.

No podemos permanecer indiferentes al grito de auxilio de cuantos solo se ven rodeados de miseria y falta de oportunidades. Su penuria no puede ser simplemente objeto de estudio, parte de declaraciones solemnes o de estadísticas abocadas al olvido, porque son hermanos nuestros, miembros de la gran familia humana, “y cuyos sufrimientos y necesidades nos afectan a todos, porque ‘si un miembro sufre, todos los demás sufren con él’” Por el contrario, hemos de salir a su encuentro de manera eficaz, sin negarles un bien tan básico como es el alimento, elemento del que depende su supervivencia y el resto de sus derechos fundamentales.

La Delegación de la Santa Sede valora todas las iniciativas que la FAO ha puesto en marcha para hacer frente a la actual crisis alimentaria mundial. Gracias por proporcionar información oportuna al respecto y subrayar la urgencia de ampliar la programación humanitaria y de resiliencia que garantice una asistencia agrícola urgente, rentable y que salve vidas. Esto es una contribución imprescindible, pero no será suficiente si no va acompañada de una firme voluntad política que lleve a la práctica las estrategias formuladas, de modo que se acabe con las injusticias y conflictos que tanto mal están causando a numerosas regiones del mundo y brote por todas partes la fraternidad, la solidaridad y la paz, factores que requieren para su consecución trabajar mancomunadamente con ahínco y convicción.

Dentro de esta plataforma de diálogo y discusión que es la FAO, debemos tener presente lo que el Papa Francisco reclamó en el mensaje enviado recientemente a esta Organización con ocasión del Foro Mundial de la Alimentación, a saber, que todos estamos llamados «a no dar simplemente de comer sino a darnos a nosotros mismos en el servicio a los demás, reconociendo y garantizando la centralidad de la persona humana».

Que esta vehemente invitación de Su Santidad ayude a adoptar decisiones consensuadas, al margen de ideologías o intereses sesgados, de forma que no se exacerbén todavía más las desigualdades y

tensiones geopolíticas actuales, que minan sobremanera los esfuerzos de la comunidad internacional para alcanzar lo que es verdaderamente importante: socorrer a quienes padecen cruelmente el hambre en el mundo. Que quienes ejercen la responsabilidad del gobierno de las naciones no consientan que los pobres sigan aguardando medidas incisivas y adecuadas que los favorezcan y que, por desgracia, no llegan a materializarse, no obstante, se multipliquen las reuniones, promesas y proyectos. Es tiempo ya de actuar sin vacilación.

Ms Stefania COSTANZA (Italy) (Observer)

Italy fully aligns itself with the remarks delivered by the Czech Republic on behalf of European Union and its Member States. Italy wishes to thank FAO and the FAO Chief Economist for the update provided.

Reports give us a clear and sombre picture of the emergency we are facing. Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine deepened an already fragile food security situation. Italy has since reaffirmed several times its commitment to multilateralism and to finding a way forward together. We support the multiple initiatives and pledges presented by the international community to address the food security crisis, such as Global Alliance for Food Security and the Food Agriculture Resilience Mission.

Last Saturday, Italy hosted in Rome the second edition of the Ministerial Mediterranean Dialogue, chaired by Minister of Foreign Affairs Antonio Tajani, together with Türkiye and Lebanon, with the support of FAO and the commitment of International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and World Food Program (WFP). We do support the Black Sea Grain Initiative, and last week we announced fresh funds to help WFP in mobilizing the grain generously donated by Ukraine to Sudan and Yemen.

Italy is also committed to strengthen the Agricultural Market Information System, as we firmly believe that the transparency of global commodities market is critical.

We are among the co-sponsors of the draft decision submitted on November 17 that requests that FAO continue to monitor the consequences of the war in Ukraine on food security and we advocate for this decision to be adopted *en bloc* by the Council.

Mr Ayman RAAD (Syrian Arabic Republic) (Observer) (Original Language Arabic)

I would like to thank you very much for your wise leadership of our Session. I should like also to thank the Director-General and others for the continued efforts as well as the very important initiatives in order to achieve and noble objectives.

I would like to suggest what has been said by the Director-General and the statement by you, Chairperson. The FAO should not have discussions of the political cases, but after a number of interventions I would like to speak about the charges given to the Russian Federation. You forget that among the crises are the sanctions against the Russian Federation and providing Ukraine with arms instead of initiating dialogue or listening to the concerns of the Russian Federation.

When the food security is threatened in a country, it is the threat of the international and global food security. Our food security in Syria is threatened due to terrorism over a period of 10 years as well as the barbarian activities of terrorists. It is also threatened by the COVID-19, climate change and it is aggravated by the occupation and attacks against Syria. It is very critical to use double standards. We did not hear any condemnation of the United States of America or others that are smuggling the treasures of the country outside or those who are destroying the agricultural land.

The Syrians are suffering a lot from the lack of energy and foodstuff. In addition to the Turkish occupation of the northern parts as well as cutting energy and water in Hasakah and other parts. This is a war crime and a crime against humanity.

Recently the villages were attacked, many civilians were killed. All the vital institutions were destroyed in Malakia village. There is also the occupation of the Israelis of the Golan Heights since 1967. There is also the looting of the land there.

I would like to join my voice to the South African ambassador that all unilateral illegal sanctions should be lifted.

I would like to say that we support that decision of the Russian Federation to add an Item regarding the unilateral sanctions. We support the draft resolutions submitted by the Russian Federation in its totality.

Sr. Gonzalo EIRIZ GERVÁS (España)

España apoya la declaración hecha por Chequia en nombre de la Unión Europea (UE) y sus 27 Estados Miembros. España coincide con lo dicho esta mañana por muchos Miembros de todas las regiones representadas en FAO y, en este sentido, quisiéramos expresar nuestra preocupación por los efectos de la agresión rusa ilegal contra Ucrania sobre la seguridad alimentaria mundial y la nutrición.

España, además, apoya la continuidad de la Iniciativa sobre los cereales del Mar Negro que, entendemos, está suponiendo un alivio siquiera parcial para Ucrania y para los países más vulnerables. Asimismo, valoramos el trabajo realizado por FAO y su Economista Jefe para el seguimiento del impacto de la agresión rusa no provocada y animamos a la Organización a continuar y reforzar su empeño.

Por último, subrayo, como otros lo han hecho antes, que sencillamente no existen sanciones de la UE que prohíban la exportación rusa de productos agroalimentarios ni fertilizantes a ningún país fuera de la Unión Europea. No las hay. Debe quedar, por tanto, claro para todos que las sanciones a Rusia solo afectan a su capacidad militar y hemos de parar la desinformación que dolosamente está tratando de difundir mensajes en sentido contrario.

Sra. Haifa Aissami MADAH (Venezuela, República Bolivariana de)

La Delegación de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela desea agradecer al Director General de la FAO por su Reporte inicial. Y nos hacemos eco de su reafirmación en lo atinente a que la FAO es un organismo independiente que vela por la seguridad alimentaria mundial y la producción de alimentos saludables. Es esa la esencia de su mandato.

De igual modo, nuestro país se asocia a la declaración realizada por Cuba a nombre del Grupo de países América Latina y el Caribe ante las Naciones Unidas (GRULAC) y deseáramos destacar algunos elementos en capacidad nacional.

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela copatrocina como Miembro observador del Consejo el proyecto de decisión contenido en el documento *CL 171/3 Add.2* propuesto por la Federación de Rusia. Como país que padece las graves consecuencias producto de las medidas coercitivas unilaterales impuestas consideramos que sus efectos deben ser discutidos por esta Organización y su existencia no debe ni puede ser invisibilizada.

La FAO como un organismo independiente que lidera el esfuerzo internacional para lograr el Hambre Cero no puede estar ajeno a las dificultades que transitan un gran número de países, incluido el nuestro, producto de la aplicación de acciones por parte de otros países que se traducen en medidas extraterritoriales, ilegítimas y contrarias al derecho internacional.

Las medidas coercitivas unilaterales han sido un instrumento perverso aplicado por parte de algunos países que han optado por el unilateralismo, desconociendo acuerdos internacionales, siendo estas medidas violatorias del derecho internacional, del estado de derecho, de la Carta de Naciones Unidas y de las normas y principios que rigen las relaciones pacíficas entre los Estados.

La Agenda 2030 para el desarrollo sostenible, la Declaración de Roma sobre la seguridad alimentaria mundial de 1996, así como las resoluciones aprobadas por la Asamblea General de Naciones Unidas referente al derecho a la alimentación invitan a los Estados a abstenerse de aplicar medidas unilaterales que pongan en peligro la seguridad alimentaria y nutricional.

En este sentido, y a modo de ejemplo, si tomamos tan solo un grupo de 20 países de los muchos sancionados o que sufren algún tipo de medida coercitiva, se ven afectados directa o indirectamente al menos unos 470 millones de personas por la congelación de activos, bloqueo económico, restricciones a las importaciones y exportaciones de bienes y servicios, sanciones comerciales y bloqueo financiero.

Adicionalmente se debe considerar que los países no sancionados ven afectado su comercio bilateral por el excesivo cumplimiento de las sanciones con lo cual estos países se abstienen de exportar o importar bienes y materia prima, incluidos alimentos y medicinas, para prevenir posibles sanciones que lleven al bloqueo de sus activos, tal como ocurre con los países sancionados.

Es por esto que Venezuela propone el levantamiento de las medidas coercitivas unilaterales impuestas ilegalmente contra los Miembros de las Naciones Unidas como una acción urgente que forme parte del plan global que debe adoptarse para frenar la crisis alimentaria inminente.

Reafirmamos una vez más, la necesidad de defender los principios enunciados en la Carta de Naciones Unidas salvaguardando la esencia técnica de esta Organización y preservando este espacio multilateral tan importante e imprescindible para el cumplimiento de la Agenda 2030, en particular, el Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) 2, Hambre Cero.

Finalmente, alentamos a los Miembros a trabajar con un espíritu de buena voluntad y cooperación para la conclusión exitosa de esta sesión, además reiteramos que la práctica de la toma de decisiones basadas en el consenso por parte de los órganos normativos es el enfoque correcto para lograr el objeto y propósito de la FAO. Por lo tanto, Venezuela insta a todos los Miembros a no polarizar ni politizar el trabajo de la Organización.

Sra. Claudia GONZÁLEZ TOLEDO (Cuba)

Agradecemos la información actualizada sobre la labor de la FAO en relación con la crisis alimentaria mundial al tiempo que compartimos la preocupación por la situación mundial actual.

Como se ha mencionado en esta sala, el informe El estado de la seguridad alimentaria y la nutrición en el mundo (SOFI) 2022 reflejó que el mundo está retrocediendo en sus esfuerzos por acabar con el hambre. Esta situación se ha visto agravada por diversos factores, como son el impacto de la pandemia de COVID-19, las consecuencias del cambio climático, los diversos conflictos existentes y, también, la imposición de medidas coercitivas unilaterales, entre otros.

Para enfrentar esta situación, resulta imperativo la respuesta coordinada de las Naciones Unidas. Alentamos a la FAO a continuar trabajando en estrecha coordinación con los gobiernos para abordar las necesidades que pudieran surgir en los diferentes contextos, previendo los efectos a corto plazo, mediano y largo, sobre todo en poblaciones más pobres. Como refleja la Nota explicativa de la propuesta CL 171/3 Add.2, propuesta que cuenta con nuestro apoyo, Cuba enfrenta los efectos negativos del prolongado bloqueo económico, comercial y financiero impuesto por el gobierno de los Estados Unidos de América, lo cual constituye nuestro principal obstáculo al desarrollo, incluido el desarrollo de la alimentación sana y adecuada refrendando en la Constitución de la República de 2019.

Reiteramos nuestro rechazo a la promulgación y aplicación de este tipo de medidas y sanciones contrarias al derecho internacional, a la vez que consideramos que los trabajos de la FAO deben enfocarse en encontrar soluciones constructivas para lograr la seguridad alimentaria para todos, como establece el objetivo fundamental de su mandato.

Solo a través del multilateralismo, la solidaridad y la cooperación internacional podremos enfrentar los desafíos de nuestro tiempo.

Mr Yaroslav MELNYK (Ukraine) (Observer)

First of all, I would like to express our gratitude to FAO and all of our partners for helping to overcome challenges caused by Russian aggression in Ukraine. Particularly for the grain storage strategy as well as increasing the export capabilities of grain and food commodities through strengthened laboratory facility for certifying exports.

We express our gratitude to our partners for joining humanitarian initiative, Grain from Ukraine. Following the first international summit on Food Security in Kyiv, more than USD 180 million dollars has been raised to purchase and deliver food for countries in Africa and Asia suffering from hunger.

For our part, we are ready to ensure the provision of humanitarian aid goods like wheat grain or corn grain with a total volume of up to 125 000 tons for Nigeria, Sudan, Kenya and Yemen.

We welcome the grain initiative is extended, but Russian Federation is still using the tools to artificially limit its capabilities. More than 70 vessels with food on board are waiting for inspection in Türkiye. Deliberate destruction by Russia of agricultural and energy infrastructure in Ukraine is a part of the Kremlin strategy to deepen the current food global crisis.

Indirect losses in Ukrainian agriculture due to the war reached more than USD 34 billion. Since February 24, Ukraine has exported 29 million tons of agricultural products, but this is 10 million tons less than in the same period of the previous year.

Over 12 million tons of food have been exported with Black Sea Grain Initiative. Our country, in cooperation with international partners, is ready to provide agricultural products to those in need and to continue the grain exports. Despite all the difficulties, Ukraine remains the guarantor of the global food security.

In conclusion, we believe that the only draft decision submitted by 16 Members of the Council and supported in total by 50 FAO Member States must be endorsed by the Council under the Item three of the Agenda.

Mr Valdemaras JUOZAITIS (Lithuania) (Observer)

I am speaking on behalf of the Baltic countries – Estonia, Latvia, and my own country, Lithuania. We fully to the European Union's (EU) statement delivered by Czechia.

Ukraine continues suffering from Russian Federation's brutal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression. The war has a disproportionate effect on global food security. It has exacerbated an already critical situation, casting a shadow over the state of global food security and nutrition, as clearly stated by FAO.

Baltic States are among the signatories of the Letter requesting that the draft decision submitted by 52 FAO Council Members expressing concern over the negative impact of Russian Federation's war in Ukraine on world food security. We would like to invite the Council to adopt this decision *en bloc*. We also strongly reject the draft decision submitted by the Russian Federation.

FAO has an important role to play in analysing and addressing the impact of the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine through various channels and means.

Somme of issues need further attention. FAO's Ukraine Rapid Response Plan should be updated and extended. A comprehensive impact assessment of the war in Ukraine in all global regions should be updated.

We need a comprehensive assessment of the damage to Ukraine's agriculture and food sector within Ukraine's internationally recognized borders, as well as the anticipated reconstruction costs.

FAO should also provide political and technical support for sustaining the Black Sea Grain Initiative.

In the same context, we underline the EU sanctions target only Russian Federation's war machine and not the trade in agricultural and food products, including fertilisers, between Russian Federation and third countries.

Finally, FAO should keep a strong focus on the matter. It should be included in the Agenda of the next regular Session of the FAO Council.

Mr Marcel BEUKEBOOM (Netherlands) (Observer)

The Netherlands fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. We are amongst the 52 signatories of the draft decision and invite the Council to adopted *en bloc*.

We are gathering here today as the Council of the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, the multilateral body addressing matters affecting food security. The Constitution of FAO states that Members accepting this Constitution are determined to promote common welfare by furthering separate and collective action on their part for the purpose of raising levels of nutrition and standards of living of the people under their respective jurisdictions. It is therefore logical the first

programmatic Agenda Item of our meeting deals with the global foods crisis. Dealing with this crisis should be the priority of the Organization and all its Members.

FAO has provided us with an overview of its efforts to do so, and many Members are supporting these efforts to the best of their abilities. Following last year's Food System Summit, many countries have been working on food system transformation pathways.

Government funding for this purpose has reached unprecedented levels, including contributions to the Rome-based Agencies. There is one Member State though, that has forgotten what obligations and responsibilities come with the Membership of the United Nations (UN) in general, and with FAO in particular.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine has increased world food insecurity and malnutrition. It has reduced availability and affordability of food to fertilizer and energy. And the effects of this on already growing food crisis have been devastating. And as always, the most vulnerable people are hit hardest. Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine we have also witnessed the tactics of the Russian Federation in our Governing Bodies.

Contrary to their promises at the time of the establishment of the UN, they choose to throw sand in multilateral machinery, spread false information, create smokescreens, and try to divert the attention from a clear root cause of the worsening food crisis, their own aggression.

Blaming sanctions is part of these tactics and having been involved in facilitating the shipment of Russian fertilizer from the Netherlands to Malawi I know how complicated such facilitation can be. Sanctions are a very precise instrument targeting the Russian war machinery. They do not target agricultural or food products or humanitarian goods. Do not let us mix up cause and effect here. The easiest way to get rid of this problem is to stop the war immediately.

The same applies to the Black Sea Grain Initiative, an agreement that has the full support of my government. This initiative tries to reopen trade corridors that have been closed almost completely as a result of the war. This initiative, apart from bringing food to markets, also functions as an x-ray of our global food system. It shows us the many shortcomings the system already had.

The agreement itself is a band aid, it stops the bleeding, but it is not capable of fixing the system and exactly that last challenge is what we should spend our time on here in this Council. Instead, we are thrown back considerably and distracted from finding solutions.

I agree with the Russian Federation that we should stop immediately with the sanctions. It is in their hands.

CHAIRPERSON

The Member of the Council, United States of America, has asked for the floor. Therefore, in conformance with the Rules and Procedures, I give the floor.

Ms Cindy MCCAIN (United States of America)

The United States of America (US) stands with the Cuban people and seeks to support their pursuit of freedom, prosperity and a future of greater dignity. It is important to stress that the US law includes exemptions and authorizations relating to exports of food, medicine, and other humanitarian goods to Cuba.

Since these exemptions have been in place, the Cuban government has regularly approved the importation of goods exempted under the US embargo, such as agricultural products, medicine, and medical equipment as well as humanitarian goods shipped to Cuba from US exporters.

Last year alone, US companies exported USD 295 million worth of agricultural goods to Cuba, including food to help the Cuban people. Every year we authorize billions of dollars of other exports to Cuba, including medicine, medical devices, telecommunications equipments, consumer goods and other Items to support the Cuban people.

Those authorizations result in hundreds of millions of dollars worth of US exports to Cuba every year.

Ms Ratchanok SANGPENCHAN (Thailand)

We understand our deep concerns for the multiple implications on the global food security, nutrition, health, and stability. Thailand emphasizes the importance of ensuring smooth functioning of the global agriculture commodity markets, and full operativity of global supply chains.

We advocate to prevent trade restrictions and distortions in the world of agricultural markets and to implement measures to strengthen the resilience and sustainability of agriculture and food systems.

We recognize FAO's important roles as neutral platform to promote, and where appropriate to recommend, actions to safeguard global food security and nutrition, and fully support FAO's continued engagement in open and constructive policy dialogue and coordination among Members.

Mr Hasan Enes MABOCOGLU (Türkiye)

We reject the allegations of the Syrian regime representation. We want to see our neighbor, Syria, as a stable, prosperous, and democratic country that is governed in line with the legitimate aspiration of its people. Türkiye's presence and operations in Syria are in line with the international law, in accordance with our right of self defence, as outlined in Article 51 of the United Nations (UN) Charter, and with relevant UN Security Council resolutions on international terrorism and in full respect of Syria's territorial integrity and unity.

Türkiye's efforts to clear bordering Syrian territories of terrorist groups not only brings back security and stability to these territories, but also encourages displaced Syrians to return to their homes in this area. Our presence in Syria is not only a barrier to the humanitarian crisis and renewed mass migrations, but also secures voluntary returns.

CHAIRPERSON

With that, we have concluded our discussion on the Item 3, *Update on FAO's work on the global food crisis*. I give the floor to Mr Máximo Torero Cullen for answering some of the questions.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

Let me only raise very few points, based on what has been addressed.

We have updated the Information Note on the impact of the crisis. We also have updated the complementary note on Gender Impacts, on Labor Impacts, on Land Impacts, and also on Social Protection, as well as the Humanitarian Esponse Reports. All of those are on our website. All our information is constantly updated, especially all the trackers (the two fertilizer trackers that were mentioned by the United Kingdom) as well as all the other information, such as the food price captured by the FAO Price Index.

One of the core topics that we are raising is the significant increase on the food import bill, which has increased USD 180 billion since 2021. This is a consequence mainly of the increase in prices, and therefore is crucial to analyze it. If we look at the 62 most vulnerable countries in the world, there has been an increase of 15 percent with respect to 2021 and 39 percent with respect to 2020. Similarly, if we look at the input import bill, there has been a substantial increase, by nearly 50 percent in 2022, reaching USD 424 billion.

That requires immediate support to those vulnerable countries so that they can have access to the food and the fertilizers that they used to import; the Food Import Financing Facility and the Food Crisis Window provides part support. The Food Crisis Window only covers 45 countries, so we need to find ways to work together to extend that.

The Black Sea Initiative has been successful for what was done. It was supposed to move grain out of Ukraine, to pay the farmers for that grain that was moved out, to release storage capacity and to increase food availability. But the distribution of the 12.7 million tons that have been moved out is not reaching necessarily all of the poor countries because of food access, not because of food availability. We need to be very clear, and that is why my reference initially to the food import bill, and the importance to support those countries. If they have more capacity to purchase, their accessibility will be significantly higher and the proportions that we are observing will be significantly higher.

Let me finalizewith some responses to issues regarding the activities that we are doing, which I think is important to recapitulate.

First, the strengthening of agricultural market information system: we believe that it is central. We have support of the Group of 20 (G20) and the Group of 7 (G7), but we need to keep getting constant support, so that the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) initiative can be strengthened.

Second, we need to expand the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Global Food Crisis Window to cover more countries.

Third, we need to find ways to use the information that we are providing in prioritization of where fertilizers need to go in the situation of emergency. And that is a tracker that we have developed to use the information that we have from the gap on fertilizers. We need to expand the coverage of the soil nutrient maps, because that will help enormously to use fertilizers which are scarce in a more effective way and to reduce fertilizers waste.

We need to expand the social safety net protection; we have just updated the proposal that we have in place. And we also need to improve the targeting for the food insecurity experiences scale, for which we are still looking for support to be able to implement, because that will help to increase the efficiency in the targeting at the sub national level.

Finally, there was a request about food loss and waste. We issued a proposal that we need to implement. We are trying to accelerate through different mechanisms as we did in the World Food Forum, but we need to scale that up more through different commitments on reduction of food loss and waste because, as the Director-General mentioned, we are sure that that is really a triple win we need to keep improving.

On the AMIS expansion, we are also looking at the logistical component, which is response to what was referred, if I am not incorrect, by a member.

I will stop here, but these are the issues that we have at this point and this is where we are trying to find progress.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Mr Máximo Torero Cullen, for your answers but also for the very hard work you and your team are doing on this very sensitive and difficult issue. I think the global food crisis with all its elements is the unprecedented crisis we are facing at this moment.

Based on the Rules and Procedure I give the floor to the observer Cuba for right of apply.

Sra. Claudia GONZÁLEZ TOLEDO (Cuba)

Quisiéramos recordar que desde 1992 se presenta en la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas la resolución cubana Necesidad de poner fin al bloqueo económico y comercial impuesto por los Estados Unidos de América contra Cuba.

Este año se presentó por 30ª vez, 185 países votaron a favor, dos en contra y hubo dos abstenciones. Esto demuestra la vigencia que tiene esta política contra nuestro país. Como decíamos, no queremos extendernos en estos temas, entendemos que la FAO debe concentrarse en encontrar soluciones constructivas para lograr la seguridad alimentaria para todos.

CHAIRPERSON

I now see the Syrian Arabic Republic for the floor. But, I do not want to turn this Council into a Security Council. So, let us not go into issues, which are not within the mandate of FAO.

Mr Ayman RAAD (Syrian Arabic Republic) (Observer) (Original Language Arabic)

Ever since I took the floor I said that I do not want to delve in to political issues. I have just described the situation and what is going on in Syria as a result of the occupation. I would have talked about the international violations if I were to talk about political issues.

The prosperity of Syria can be achieved when these troops are withdrawn. These troops are supporting terrorists that are internationally recognized as terrorists, such as the al Sham Liberation Body.

CHAIRPERSON

Distinguished delegates, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends. Over the last couple of weeks, I have tried to see whether we could find a compromise on the delicate issue of the two decisions, which are in front of us.

I tried to work with compromised language to see whether we can bridge the gaps within the mandate of FAO. As I said before, many issues are especially related to the conflict and war in Ukraine, which are not within the mandate of FAO but belong to the Security Council.

In the 169th session of the Council, we made a decision, and we adopted recommendations. In the 170th session, we proceeded with a follow-up decision by consensus. I tried to find a basis for a consensus for a decision by consensus today. However, as you heard during the course of today, it is not feasible at this moment. The positions of Members at this moment are not breachable. For that reason, I am going now to put forward the two decisions, the draft decisions, which were put forward by Members of the Council for decision.

This means that we are going to take the decision by a vote because there is no feasible consensus. Given that we are in a hybrid session, it is a roll call vote.

The Secretary will explain how it will work because we have almost all Members in person here in the room. However, not all are present because some are connected virtually and that means that we cannot vote by pushing the button but that we will have a roll call vote.

I want to propose first the decision to be adopted by the Council and I see a point of order of the Russian Federation.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

I understand that there was an intention by some delegations to put to a vote the draft decision contained in *Addendum 1*.

I do fully concur with you that this is not matter for FAO, especially the definition of the war. I have to attract the attention of the Members of FAO, that the Resolutions that have been adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly as well as the resolutions by the UN Security Council does not characterize this conflict as a war.

CHAIRPERSON

Sorry, may I interrupt you because we are not at the decision itself. I give you the floor later on, but I put the decision forward for a vote and then you can make your remarks.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

I want to make an amendment.

CHAIRPERSON

I interrupted you because, first, in accordance with the Rules and Procedures, I have to put forward the draft decision to the Council before we can make amendments. That gives me the opportunity to put forward the draft decision, which is proposed by 60 Members of the Council

We are now going to put on the screen the text of the draft decision contained in document *CL 171/3 Add.1*, which is proposed by 60 Members of the Council.

It was clearly stated that the 60 Members want to adopt this decision *en bloc*. I give the floor back to the Russian Federation.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

I wanted to say that in any event, and I want my view to be reflected in the notes, that the Russian Federation opposes the adoption of this decision because it does not fall within the FAO's mandate.

My second proposal, and we can put it on vote, and it goes to the last line. It is subparagraph (k) of this draft decision. The proposal will be as follows: "*the impact of the wars, and conflicts, including*".

CHAIRPERSON

In accordance with the Rules and Procedures, which we carefully checked, when a decision is put to a vote, if there are amendments to the decision, we first have to see whether or not the amendments to decisions are agreeable, before going into a vote. That means that unless this amendment is agreeable, we have to vote first on the amendment, before voting on the whole decision.

Unless everybody can agree to the change of this text, we have to vote on the amendment proposed by the Russian Federation in subparagraph (k).

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

On behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States, we oppose whatever changes and proposes for amendments in this draft decision, and we reiterate our call for a vote *en bloc* without any additional amendments or changes to the text itself.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

Comme vient de l'indiquer mon collègue de la République tchèque, nous nous opposons à tout amendement, et nous demandons de nouveau l'adoption en bloc de ce projet de décision.

CHAIRPERSON

With that, unless the Russian Federation would like to withdraw its proposal, we first have to vote on the change.

I see that Nicaragua asked for the floor but I do not want to have a long discussion because anyhow, we are going to vote on the amendment as well because there is no consensus on whether or not to contain it.

Sr. Junior Andrés ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)

tengo aquí anotadas sus primeras palabras cuando hizo su intervención de presentación en este Consejo en donde nos hizo un llamado a no politizar el trabajo de la FAO.

En nuestro discurso hablamos en términos generales de la situación de la crisis mundial, que eran múltiples. Por ese mismo motivo, no quisieramos centralizar todo este tema en un solo conflicto, apoyamos la propuesta de la Federación de Rusia que sea abarcado en un término general.

CHAIRPERSON

As there is no consensus on this amendment, I will bring this amendment to a vote now. I give the floor to the Secretariat on how the vote on the amendment will be carried out.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

Delegates will be called to vote one by one, that is both for the Council Members present in the Plenary Hall as well as the Council Members participating virtually. In accordance with Rule XII, Paragraph 7 (a), the vote of each of the Council Members will be inserted in the record of the meeting.

Therefore, before proceeding to the vote, it is necessary to determine the quorum. In order to establish the quorum, I will open the voting system in a few seconds, and once it is open, I will ask you to press any of the blinking buttons on your desk, which means either the green, the red or the orange button.

I have now opened the electronic system. Please press any button, so that we may check the quorum.

I have now closed the electronic system. As we can see on the screen, the quorum has been reached. There are 36 Members present in the Plenary Hall. We therefore have reached the quorum, which is more than 25 Council Members needed.

We shall now proceed to vote on the proposal, which is the amendment to the draft decision contained in *CL 171/3 Add.1*.

I should like to recall that once the beginning of voting has been announced, no one may interrupt the voting, except to raise a point of order in connection with the conduct of the vote. In line with normal practice, if a Member of a delegation presents themselves to cast a vote on behalf of the delegation, it will be assumed that they are duly authorized to do so.

Once the voting begins, Members of the Council will be called in English alphabetical order. The name of the first Council Member to be called to vote will be designated by a lot drawn by the Independent Chairperson of the Council.

When voting, the persons casting the vote virtually should unmute themselves and turn on the video camera. Council Members voting in the Plenary Hall, please turn on your microphones. The delegates should reply 'yes', if they wish to vote in favour of the proposal, 'no' if they wish to vote against, and 'abstention' if they wish to abstain on the vote.

If technical issues arise, preventing the person casting the vote from being clearly seen and heard, the name of the delegation will be called a second time. If no response is provided, the vote will progress to the next Member of the Council.

Members are requested to wait until their microphone has been turned on before casting their vote, so that the vote is heard by everyone in the meeting.

At the conclusion of the first call, the names of Member Nations whose delegates or representatives failed to answer will be called again.

We shall now proceed to vote on the proposal which is the amendment to the decision contained in *CL 171/3/Add.1*. I will now ask the Independent Chairperson of the Council to draw a lot to determine the first Member to be called.

CHAIRPERSON

There is a point of order from Argentina.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Voy a presentar una cuestión de orden. Quiero pedirle diez minutos para que los colegas puedan hacer sus consultas. Es muy complicado, en un contexto como este donde tenemos un escenario donde hay que tomar una decisión donde las instrucciones que tenían los colegas las tenían respecto de determinado escenario.

El escenario cambió y me parece que correspondería al menos la posibilidad de un margen. No quiero pedirle media hora, una hora, pero al menos tener un margen para hacer algunas llamadas a aquellos colegas que necesiten hacerlo. No sé si esto está dentro de los procedimientos legales. Si está dentro de los procedimientos legales, le pido que lo tome en consideración. Si los viola, obviamente me someto a los Textos Básicos.

CHAIRPERSON

There is also a point of order of from Egypt and Brazil.

Mr Mina Rizk ATTIA RIZK (Egypt)

We would like to reiterate and support the request made by our dear colleague from Argentina. I think we were not informed about this amendment from the colleague from the Russian Federation, and that is why we need more time to consult.

I also understand that the Session was supposed to finish at 16:30 hours. Therefore, I think this also comes in line with the requests made by our colleague from Argentina.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

I would like to support both point of orders of Argentina and Egypt and ask a question since I am new here. We are voting first the amendment and then the whole text?

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Indeed, it is established practice, when there is a proposal for a decision by the Council, if an amendment to that proposal is offered by a Member of the Council, there is first a vote on that proposed amendment, followed by a vote on the original proposal. This is established practice in line with the Rules and Regulations of FAO. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

Given the fact that it is 16:40 hours and that a snack is waiting for you, you always have to look to the bright side of life when there are difficult times. I am going to suspend the meeting until 17:10 hours and then we will start with the vote on the amendment.

The meeting was suspended from 16:38 to 17:10 hours

La séance est suspendue de 16 h 38 à 17 h 10

Se suspende la sesión de las 16.38 a las 17.10

CHAIRPERSON

Distinguished delegates, dear friends, you certainly must be energized now for the vote. We continue our vote on the amendment proposed by the Russian Federation, before we vote on the first draft decision on a whole. I give the floor back to the Assistant Secretary-General.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

The name will have to be drawn by yourself.

CHAIRPERSON

The Philippines.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Council Member designated to cast the first vote is the Philippines. I will now proceed to call out the names of Council Members and ask for their vote – either ‘yes’, ‘no’ or ‘abstention’.

Vote

Vote

Votación

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

I will pass the floor to the Independent Chairperson who will read the results.

CHAIRPERSON

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, dear friends, the results of the vote on the amendment to the draft decision in *CL/171/3 Add. 1* is as follows:

Numbers of votes cast 23. Majority required 12. Votes in favour of for 3. Votes against 20. Abstentions 18. This means that the result is that the Council has rejected the amendment to this draft decision. So, decided.

منظمة
الأمم المتحدة
للزراعة
والغذاء

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



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

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная
организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la
Agricultura

5/12/2022 17:23

Vote on: Amendment to Draft decision in CL 171/3 Add.1
Vote sur:
Votación para:

RESULT SHEET/RESULTATS/RESULTADOS

Nominal vote/Vote par appel nominal/Votación Nominal

Number of votes cast/ Nombre de suffrages exprimés/ Número de votos emitidos	23
Majority required/ Majorité requise/ Mayoría requerida	12
Votes for/ Votes pour/ Votos en favor	3
Votes against/ Votes contre/ Votos en contra	20
Abstentions/ Abstenciones	18

Votes for: Belarus, Nicaragua and Russian Federation.
Votes pour:
Votos en favor:

Votes against: Australia, Bahamas, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Costa Rica, Côte D'Ivoire, France, Germany, Guatemala, Israel, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom and United States of America.
Votes contre:
Votos en contra:

Abstentions: Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, China, Congo, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Guinea, Indonesia, Kenya, Kuwait, Malaysia, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and South Africa.
Abstenciones:

No Reply: Afghanistan, Angola, Cameroon, Ethiopia, India, Mauritania and Tunisia.
Aucune réponse:
Ninguna respuesta:

REJECTED/ REJETÉE/ RECHAZADA

Elections Officer/ Fonctionnaire électoral/ El oficial de elecciones

CHAIRPERSON

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, dear friends, now we go to the second vote, and that is the vote *en bloc* on the draft decision contained in document *CL171/3 Add. 1*, and that is the draft decision which you have found in all languages as I read out in the document.

We start again the voting procedure where we need first to establish a quorum again, and then we do the same as we have done for the first vote.

I give the floor to the Assistant Secretary-General for the voting.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

Before we proceed into the vote, it is necessary to determine the quorum. In order to establish the quorum, I will open the voting system in a few seconds, and once it is open I will ask you to press any of the blinking buttons on your desk, which means either green, red or orange.

I have now opened the electronic system, please press any button so that we may check the quorum.

I have now closed the electronic system. As you can see on the screen, the quorum is reached. There are 38 Members present in the Plenary Hall. Therefore, we have reached the quorum, which is more than 25 Council Members needed.

We shall now proceed to vote on the proposal, which is the adoption of the decision contained in the document *CL 171/3/Add 1*.

I will now ask the Independent Chairperson of the Council to draw a lot to determine the first Member to be called.

CHAIRPERSON

Mexico.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Council Member designated to cast the first vote is Mexico. I will now proceed to call out the names of Council members and ask for their vote – either ‘yes’, ‘no’ or ‘abstention’.

Vote

Vote

Votación

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

I will now pass the floor to the Independent Chairperson of the Council to read out the results.

CHAIRPERSON

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, delegates, here we have the results of the vote on the draft decision in document *CL/171/3 Add. 1*:

Number of votes cast 29. Majority required 15. Votes for 26. Votes against 3. Abstentions 12.

With this result the Council has adopted the draft decision contained in *CL171/3/Add. 1*.

منظمة
الأغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



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Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная
организация
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Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la
Agricultura

5/12/2022 17:36

Vote on: Draft decision In CL 171/3 Add.1
Vote sur:
Votación para:

RESULT SHEET/RESULTATS/RESULTADOS

Nominal vote/Vote par appel nominal/Votación Nominal

Number of votes cast/ Nombre de suffrages exprimés/ Número de votos emitidos	29
Majority required/ Majorité requise/ Mayoría requerida	15
Votes for/ Votes pour/ Votos en favor	26
Votes against/ Votes contre/ Votos en contra	3
Abstentions/ Abstenciones	12

Votes for: Argentina, Australia, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, France, Germany, Guatemala, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Votes against: Belarus, Nicaragua and Russian Federation.
Votes contre:
Votos en contra:

Abstentions: Brazil, China, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Guinea, Kenya, Kuwait, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and South Africa.
Abstenciones:

No Reply: Afghanistan, Angola, Cameroon, Ethiopia, India, Mauritania and Tunisia.
Aucune réponse:
Ninguna respuesta:

ADOPTED/ ADOPTÉE/ ACEPTADA

Elections Officer/ Fonctionnaire électoral/ El oficial de elecciones

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

We have been instructed to make a vote justification, if you allow.

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, of course.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

First of all my delegation would like to express our sincere gratitude for all the commendable efforts you have made in trying to reach a possible consensus among members in order to avoid a voting process. A consensual text would be preferable.

Brazil expresses its concern about the polarization tendency within FAO regarding the treatment of the situation in Ukraine. Brazil believes that the United Nations Security Council is responsible for dealing with issues relating to peace and international security. As a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Brazil has been working in favour of reaching a long-standing solution for the conflict in Ukraine.

In this context, my delegation would like to recall that Brazil voted in favour of the draft resolution examined by the Security Council on 25 February 2022 on the Russian Federation-Ukraine conflict.

CHAIRPERSON

Your explanatory position will be footnoted in the decision.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

Like many other countries, Malaysia has grave concern on the multifarious crises affecting global food security. Global conflicts, armed conflicts, wars and extreme and more frequent climate events, continued impacts of COVID-19 pandemic, to name a few, have culminated in the distortion of the complex global food supply chain, which undermine our ability to timely achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 and 2.

Against this backdrop, and in cognisance of FAO's mandate and expertise, we take this position because we highly support FAO's past and necessary ongoing and future efforts in responding to the crises.

Further, we are also convinced that FAO could scale up initiatives providing the needed technical support and assistance to members facing multiple impact of crisis and conflicts. To this end we call members to give due importance and respect to FAO's apolitical neutral functions and mandate in responding to global food security challenges.

Malaysia believes that only by working collaboratively, constructively and professionally and in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration, we can weather the global food crisis successfully in this difficult time with FAO's assistance. This is possible contingent upon our genuine intent, focus and emphasis on identifying and bringing solutions to help countries address the interlinked crises related to food.

CHAIRPERSON

Your explanation of position will be footnoted to this decision.

Mr Purnajaya TRI (Indonesia)

I would like to also provide an explanation of vote as following.

Indonesia voted in favour of draft decision *CL 171* because we believe immediate action is required to end the war. Peace and resilience are prerequisites to establishing global food security, we must therefore spare no efforts to continuously foster dialogue and consensus-building. Unfortunately, consensus has, however, become increasingly difficult to reach and seems to be a luxury in FAO.

Even on important matters such as addressing the food crisis, Indonesia deeply regrets how divided we are in FAO on matters of such great importance. Once again, the Council is not able to speak with a

strong and united voice that is urgent and vital as the basis for our commitment to addressing global food security.

It is indeed a failure when we do not have inclusive consultation and ample time and room for dialogue among ourselves. This is self-evident that we do not demonstrate our political will to conclude a draft decision that will effectively address this issue in a balanced manner.

Indonesia hopes we can do better and strive for consensus going forward to uphold the spirit and long tradition of consensus at FAO.

CHAIRPERSON

Your explanation of voting position will be footnoted to this decision.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

We also wanted to thank you for the efforts you have made to not lead the situation to a vote and to find compromise. Unfortunately that was not possible. The delegations who insisted on a vote and its outcome clearly show that. In fact, it has led to us having a divide in terms of the main problems that we have come here to address – namely to resolve the issue of hunger.

Adopting this decision in no way impacts the situation and it goes against the decisions taken in other relevant bodies of the UN system and that is very, very sad. Thank you, I hope my statement will also be added to the report on today's session.

CHAIRPERSON

Indeed, also your statement of position and explanation of position will be footnoted to this decision.

With that we have concluded the decision-making on this decision and we continue our voting for on now the draft decision contained in *CL 171/3 Add. 2*, and we follow the same procedure as we have done for the previous two votes.

I turn the floor back to the Assistant Secretary-General.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

Before proceeding to the vote, we need to determine the quorum. In order to establish the quorum, I will open the voting system in a few seconds, and once it is open I will ask you to press any of the blinking buttons on your desk which means green, red or orange button.

I have now opened the electronic system - please press any button so we check the quorum.

I have now closed the electronic system. As you can see on the screen, the quorum is reached, there are 39 Members present in the Plenary Hall, which was more than 25 Council Members needed.

We shall now proceed to the vote on the proposal which is the adoption of the decision contained in document *CL 171/3/Add 2*.

I will now ask the Independent Chairperson of the Council to draw a lot to determine the first Member to be called.

CHAIRPERSON

Argentina.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Council member designated to cast the first vote is Argentina. I will now proceed to call out the names of Council members and ask for their vote – either 'yes', 'no' or 'abstention'.

Vote

Vote

Votación

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have concluded the list and will pass now the floor to the Independent Chairperson of the Council to read out the results of the vote.

CHAIRPERSON

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, dear friends, here are the results of the vote on the draft decision contained in *CL 171/3/Add. 2*:

Number of votes cast 24. Majority required 13. Votes for 5. Votes against 19. Abstentions 17.

With this result the Council has rejected the draft decision contained in *CL 171/3/Add. 2*.



Vote on: **Draft decision in CL 171/3 Add.2**
Vote sur:
Votación para:

5/12/2022 17:55

RESULT SHEET/RESULTATS/RESULTADOS

Nominal vote/Vote par appel nominal/Votación Nominal

Number of votes cast/ Nombre de suffrages exprimés/ Número de votos emitidos	24
Majority required/ Majorité requise/ Mayoría requerida	13
Votes for/ Votes pour/ Votos en favor	5
Votes against/ Votes contre/ Votos en contra	19
Abstentions/ Abstenciones	17

Votes for: Bangladesh, Belarus, Egypt, Nicaragua and Russian Federation.

Votes pour:
Votos en favor:

Votes against: Australia, Bahamas, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Germany, Guatemala, Israel, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Votes contre:
Votos en contra:

Abstentions: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Guinea, Indonesia, Kenya, Kuwait, Malaysia, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and South Africa.

Abstenciones:

No Reply: Afghanistan, Angola, Cameroon, Ethiopia, India, Mauritania and Tunisia.

Aucune réponse:
Ninguna respuesta:

REJECTED/ REJETÉE/ RECHAZADA

Elections Officer/ Fonctionnaire électoral/ El oficial de elecciones

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much distinguished delegates, dear friends, for these difficult three decisions, but today when you all intervened about the *FAO's response to the global food crisis*, you not only referred to the war in Ukraine and the sanctions. There were broader issues tabled by many of you and for that, as we have done also in the 169th and 170th Sessions of the Council, we have draft conclusions, and I do hope that we can regain the spirit, as many of you have referred to, that we can conclude these draft conclusions with consensus, avoiding a vote.

I will put now on the screen the general Draft Conclusions on the *Update on FAO's work on the global food crisis*, and of course, the text of the two decisions will be contained in the conclusions because they are draft decisions, following the same practice as we have done in the 169th Council.

I will put it now on the screen. Indonesia, perhaps for an explanation of the decision.

Mr Purnajaya TRI (Indonesia)

We wish to once again express our explanation of vote. We concur that the use of unilateral measures may impede our common efforts in addressing today's global food insecurity. It is however, one issue among multiple and interlinked factors that we must take into account in order to formulate concrete solutions for the global food crisis.

Indonesia believes that we must support FAO to allocate its limited resources to timely address the pressing global challenges and transform agrifood systems to be more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable, leaving no one behind, as well as integrating short-term and long-term measures. It is imperative for us to set aside our differences and strive for a delicate consensus on setting priorities for implementation of a strengthened global food security.

We therefore reiterate our call to push for lasting peace by rebuilding trust to enable a positive and conducive outcome that could pave the way for ending the global food crisis. For those reasons we abstained once again.

CHAIRPERSON

Your explanatory position will be footnoted to the decision.

Going back to what I said before, only the adopted draft decision will be seen in the Report of Item 3.

I now present to you the general Conclusions on the *Update on FAO's work on the global food crisis* and we put them on the screen. Of course, I will read them out in total, and then we go one by one and hopefully we can adopt those by consensus.

You see 14, but don't be scared - this is only for the report because before that, of course, you have the text of the decision.

Now I am going to read out the draft conclusions:

1. The Council appreciated the update on FAO's work on the global food crisis and in particular, noted the Organization's role as a provider of timely information, analysis and early warning on food and agriculture markets, food security and nutrition as a reliable leader and partner in achieving global food security;

- (a) welcomed the progress on the targeted policy proposals and the emergency and humanitarian response measures in countries;
- (b) highlighted the value of the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS), and Integrated Food Security Phase Classifications (IPC) in informing decisions and guiding policy responses and interventions, and called upon Members to support these initiatives, including through the provision of timely data and information;
- (c) underlined the importance of continued strengthening of FAO's data and statistics as well as its market monitoring and outlook work, which are critical for enhancing market transparency and informing policy decisions;

- (d) commended FAO for its leadership and contributions to food security-related deliberations and decisions in international fora, including in the UN Security Council, the UN Global Crisis Response Group, the Committee on World Food Security, and the G20 and G7 processes, as well as through the work of the Global Network Against Food Crisis;
- (e) welcomed FAO's collaboration with other international organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank Group, the World Food Programme, and the World Trade Organization, to raise awareness about the challenges and advocate for solutions respecting their own mandates and maximizing complementarities;
- (f) highlighted the importance of integrated short- and long-term measures in the support that FAO provides to Members for transforming agrifood systems to be more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable, with the objective to leave no one behind; and
- (g) reaffirmed that the focus on agrifood systems' transformation embedded in the FAO's Strategic Framework provides a promising entry point for a comprehensive response to the global food crisis.

2. The Council highlighted the importance of the role of FAO which falls under the purview in addressing the current challenges for food security and agriculture and underlined the need for FAO and its Governing Bodies to focus on matters pertinent to the mandate of the Organization.

With that, I would like now to go to the adoption of the draft conclusions.

Can we agree to the chapeau of this paragraph? I see no objections.

We go to subparagraph (a). Can we agree to subparagraph (a)? I see no objections.

We go to subparagraph (b). I see no objections.

We go to subparagraph (c). I see no objections.

We go to subparagraph (d). I see no objections.

We go to subparagraph (e).

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Puede no ser importante, pero quizás ahí yo incluiría primero el G20 antes de "*Committee of World Food Security*". Es una sugerencia en términos de orden.

CHAIRPERSON

Argentina proposes to put the G20 before the Committee on Food Security (CFS). Is that agreeable?

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

The logic is understandable but the consequences are not because we were talking about the Group of Twenty (G20) and (Group of Seven) G7 processes which is World Food Security. It is not a process, it is a body, so then we either need to use the word processes twice or retain the word as it was proposed.

CHAIRPERSON

At this late hour, could we not stick to the text as it was proposed to avoid difficulty in the language? Thank you, Argentina for your flexibility.

We go to subparagraph (f).

Mr Asmerom KIDANE (Eritrea)

I do not want to take too much time but on that "*collaboration with other international organizations such as.*"

CHAIRPERSON

Back to subparagraph (e).

Mr Asmerom KIDANE (Eritrea)

Full stop, we do not need to include “*including...*”.

CHAIRPERSON

Your suggestion is to delete everything after “*international fora*”.

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

I raised my flag for subparagraph (f), so when you go back to subparagraph (f).

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first go back to subparagraph (e) – the proposal is to delete everything after ‘*decisions in international fora*’. Can we agree to the deletion? I see no objections. So, deleted.

We go to subparagraph (f).

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

I do not know the criteria for naming the international organization, for example, but I think it is better to include the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) for the collaboration with FAO, if it is acceptable to all of you.

CHAIRPERSON

We include also the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD). Is that agreeable? I see nodding.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

We have not seen the full text because I believe that in one of the other subparagraphs we will be talking about the Rome-based Agencies collaboration and then we also had the World Food Programme (WFP) as well. Therefore, I do not know whether we need to mention twice the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) when we are talking about collaboration. “*Among the Rome-based agencies (RBA)*” will be sufficient.

CHAIRPERSON

In these conclusions, we do not have a reference to the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) collaboration. Can we not keep it as it is? Okay, thank you.

We go to subparagraph (g).

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

If it is acceptable for other Members, I would like to add one other international organization in subparagraph (f). That is the International Grains Council (IGC), because it is important for the crisis issue, especially for the commodity issue.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

En el subpárrafo (f) para ser, me parece, técnicamente más preciso cuando hablamos de colaboración con las otras organizaciones internacionales quizás deberíamos incluir ahí también “*programas y fondos*” porque, técnicamente hablando, el Programa Mundial de Alimentos no es una organización internacional, es un programa desde el punto de vista técnico.

Entonces quizás para zanjar el tema y lo mismo con el FIDA, digo, para evitar cualquier tipo de cuestiones técnicas podríamos incluir en la parte inicial, “*la colaboración con otras organizaciones internacionales, programas y fondos*” y con eso podríamos perfectamente dejar incluido el resto de las agencias si le parece bien.

CHAIRPERSON

We will include that in the first line.

M. MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroun)

Like what our colleague from Eritrea did for subparagraph (e), we will suggest a shorter version of subparagraph (f) as follows: “*Welcome FAO’s collaboration with other relevant international*

organizations to raise awareness". We delete everything before "*raising*" and then we keep the rest. "*Welcome FAO's collaboration with other relevant international organizations to raise awareness about the challenges and advocate for solutions respecting their own mandate in maximizing complementarities.*" So, we do away with from "*programmes and funds*" as it is now to "*World Trade Organization*".

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

Just to support this proposal not to go into details because we have so many specialized organizations on animal diseases, Codex Alimentarius and others. Then, we will be selective with whom we cooperate, but I believe that in FAO platform we cooperate with relevant organizations.

Mr Asmerom KIDANE (Eritrea)

Let us cancel everything, but we can insert the relevant international because there are so many other international organizations, so we cannot divide them and that is appropriate.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I would put, just for the sake of clarity, "*with other relevant international organizations and bodies*", which may cover all those which are not necessarily organizations as such.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

En el siguiente subpárrafo para agregar después del subpárrafo (f). Si me da posibilidad de hacerlo, lo acabo de enviar a la Secretaría para que sea más fácil.

Lo leo en inglés a velocidad de dictado. "*Recognized the importance of trade for contributing to the availability, accessibility and affordability of food as well as the stability of markets and the limitation of extreme food price volatility, , and recalled and underlined the importance that, in line with the World Trade Organization rules and in keeping with their commitments under the WTO agreements, members correct and prevent unjustified trade restrictions and distortions as well as eliminate and not create unnecessary and unjustified barriers to trade in agricultural markets.*"

Este texto proviene del anterior Consejo y me parece que captura lo que han mencionado varios países en las intervenciones durante la problemática de la seguridad alimentaria vinculado con la cuestión del comercio internacional.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first deal with subparagraph (f), not to mix up two subparagraphs.

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

Subparagraph (f). I again emphasize the importance of FAO collaboration with International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the International Grains Council (IGC) but in the spirit of compromise and cooperation, Japan can go along with sentences without the bracketed part, I would like to say just for the record.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

Just quickly on subparagraph (f). I think the logic from our Eritrean colleague and others makes sense. I would just propose deleting the word "*other*" because other programmes and funds, FAO is not a programme or fund, so I think just "*collaboration with relevant international organizations*" makes more sense.

Just quickly while I have the floor before we get to subparagraph (g), just the United States cannot agree to that and we would propose that with all due respect to our Argentine colleague, if you delete it in its entirety.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first deal with subparagraph (f). We can delete the yellow part. If we can clean up the text. Delete "*such as*".

M. Moungui MÉDI (Cameroun)

If we delete “*programmes and funds*” and we leave “*bodies*”, it will cover everything.

CHAIRPERSON

That was what I was going to suggest, “*with relevant international organizations and bodies to raise awareness about the challenges and advocate for solutions.*” Could we have only one subparagraph (f)? This is the clean subparagraph. Hopefully, we have agreed to it.

We go to subparagraph (g), which came from the Council report subparagraph 20 (i). There was a request from the United States of America to delete this subparagraph.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

I would like to remember that this subparagraph comes from a former meeting of the Council and Brazil gives full support to the suggestion of Argentina.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

En general yo trabajo todo el tiempo para facilitar el consenso y no para tener más confrontaciones. Creo que ya hemos tenido varias confrontaciones, y también creo que los colegas fueron muy claros que no existe un solo conflicto sino que hay diversos factores que han influido y algunos que son de carácter estructural que afectan o siguen afectando la seguridad alimentaria.

Me gustaría entender cuál es la lógica que está detrás de la oposición a un párrafo acordado en el último Consejo del mes de junio. Para poder estar en desacuerdo con algo que fue consensuado, sería importante entender cuál es la rationale, para ver si podemos, obviamente con siempre el espíritu constructivo, buscar la manera de encontrar consensos.

Es difícil encontrar un consenso cuando empezamos con el estilo de "no me gusta" o "no estoy de acuerdo", y decirlo no es lógico si es algo acordado por los miembros en el último Consejo. Entonces pido, Presidente, por su intermedio con mi estimadísimo colega de Estados Unidos para que me puede explicar cuál es la razón de su oposición.

Mr Kiryl PIATROUSKI (Belarus) (Original Language Russian)

We propose if certain countries will be against the text, which was already adopted by consensus by the Council, we could once again put it to a vote and vote on it.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us not make it a Council of voting. Because I think for the history of at least 40 years we work now in the Council with consensus and there is exceptional circumstances. We need to have a vote because we could not reach consensus. But I really would like to vote for the rest of the week with consensus, in a spirit of inclusivity, in the spirit of unanimity, in a spirit of solidarity. So, let us find consensus.

M. Seydou CISSÉ (Côte d'Ivoire)

Je voudrais, puisque c'est la première fois que je prends la parole, vous féliciter, Monsieur le Président pour la manière dont vous conduisez nos travaux. Mais, je voudrais dire ceci, aux égards de la proposition de l'Argentine.

Ce paragraphe est un acquis, puisque la 170ème Session l'a approuvé, donc c'est un acquis. Ici, nous sommes en train de construire quelque chose de nouveau, sur la base d'un texte de propositions qui ont été faites et que nous sommes en train de discuter, ce sont vos conclusions Monsieur le Président. Moi je souhaiterais que le premier paragraphe qui a été suggéré par le Cameroun et appuyé par l'Erythrée, soit maintenu puisque ce paragraphe appartient à la 170ème Session, et c'est un acquis.

Donc, forcément, nous allons vers la Conférence, ça va être pris en considération. Donc je ne comprends pas ici qu'on veuille pratiquement répéter les mêmes choses à chaque session. Justement, je voulais faire cette remarque, pas parce que je suis contre qu'on maintienne effectivement ce paragraphe, mais je voudrais tout simplement, je me répète, c'est un acquis. C'est un acquis de la 170ème Session, donc laissons-le où il est.

Et puis avançons avec de nouvelles propositions.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

Speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. On this particular subparagraph, if we give the first three lines referring to the “*availability, accessibility, affordability, stability of markets, and the limitation of extreme food price volatility*”, I think that is a very good reference, those issues which are rather currently running throughout the world.

The rest is covered by the subparagraph (j) in the decision we just adopted whereas subparagraph “*underlined the importance of keeping open the trade of food and agriculture inputs and products to obviate the negative impact of food security globally and avoid trade barriers*” in this respect, I would say that the rest of the subparagraph is already covered by subparagraph (j). So, I would keep this subparagraph until “*price volatility*” and delete the rest of the text. In the sake of compromise and not to having two similar texts in Item 3.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Quite a similar observation from what Czechia just made. Also recommending to perhaps end at “*price volatility*”. Then, two other small adjustments. Given that this is something that we have a statement along the lines of which we had in CL170, to change from “*recognized*” to “*reiterated*”, and just for clarity perhaps, “*as well as the stability of markets and limiting extreme food price volatility*”. So instead “*and limitation of*” because it reads a little bit awkward it would read “*as well as the stability of markets and limiting extreme food price volatility*” and then ending the subparagraph there.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

This as a compromise is something that we could definitely live with. Ending at “*extreme food price volatility*” is something that we could agree to.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Es muy difícil trabajar borrando lo que firmamos en junio simplemente por razones que no están explicadas ni explicitadas, porque de ninguna manera puede plantearse que un proyecto, como el que fue presentado y que fue votado en este Consejo, no tuvo consenso. Tuvo lugar una votación que tenía implicancias de carácter geopolítico. Las razones pueden tener que ver con distorsiones que no están capturadas en ese proyecto que fue aprobado en el Consejo, repito, por una votación, porque no hubo consenso entre los miembros.

Me parece absolutamente sorprendente que quienes hayan votado y aprobado resoluciones en el Consejo de junio ahora las opongan, salvo que me puedan probar que terminaron las restricciones comerciales en el mundo, o que las diferentes distorsiones que hay en el marco del comercio internacional han desaparecido y por lo tanto los países en desarrollo ya no tienen esa problemática y no pueden denunciar esta problemática, o que haya algo que no nos notificaron, y que, por lo tanto, esos factores no son más factores que afectan y son disruptores y que tienen consecuencias sobre la seguridad alimentaria.

Lamentablemente, ni de parte de Estados Unidos ni de la Unión Europea escuché un solo argumento, ni un solo argumento, que pueda justificar que estos elementos, presentes en junio, ahora desaparecieron. Repito, insisto e invito, que si queremos buscar un consenso, la única manera es entendernos. Quiero entender cuál es la lógica que está detrás de plantear que este párrafo no debería ser incluido. Porque en definitiva si todavía alguno cree que en el proyecto que fue aprobado está incluido de alguna manera, si nosotros planteamos incluirlo de acuerdo a lo que dice el Consejo de junio, tampoco me parece que estoy cruzando la línea roja de nadie.

En definitiva, estamos reiterando algo que ya fue expresado en el Consejo y que lamentablemente sigue siendo un problema estructural de la comunidad internacional que no hemos podido resolver. Por lo tanto, no veo argumentos para poder sacar este párrafo tal cual está. Salvo encontrar algunos hechos que me puedan explicar una razón, pido ¿por qué no?

Entonces, no hablemos de salidas de consenso, o de soluciones de compromiso, mientras que estamos restringiendo lo que hemos acordado en el Consejo de junio, porque no me parece un buen argumento. Como soy una persona abierta a buscar mecanismos de consenso, lo único que pido es que me

expliquen dónde están las líneas rojas que afectan la posibilidad de incluir este texto que fue acordado en junio en el Consejo.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

Earlier today we heard a lot of reassurances that there are no restrictions, no limits, no barriers, no nothing. Now it becomes a problem for some countries again. I want to say yes, we already agreed on this text in June, so we are reopening this text, but it is not only the text that we adopted in June. This is the text that was adopted by the General Assembly Resolution before. The very same countries who voted in favour of this text. If we are here to rewrite previous decisions, okay, let us rewrite all of them, but again, I also opt for a consensus and for understanding rather than to create new barriers.

CHAIRPERSON

We went quite quickly through the first subparagraphs, and I think we contained again the spirit of compromise and the spirit of consensus in the Council. Let us maintain that and not to go away from each other but try to bridge.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

We would need more time if we are going to discuss new language on the screen today. I would ask that the Chairperson perhaps get an opinion from Legal Counsel about whether this language implies topics that we just voted down 20 minutes ago. I would like an opinion on that before we continue the conversation, about whether this is even appropriate for us to be discussing, since we just voted this down 20 minutes ago.

Mr Mina Rizk ATTIA RIZK (Egypt)

I would like to reiterate your call to have consensus as our method of approving our conclusions for this session and to have voting as an exceptional measure and to not turn into a norm for us to vote on these sessions.

Last year, I think the Council session of December, we have had an argument on the importance of using a multilaterally agreed language. I see today that the argument moved to approve a language that was already approved in the Council itself, not even in other multilateral fora and organizations. That is why I see it is a matter of [XX] to refrain from negotiating a language already approved by the Council itself a few weeks ago. I would say a few months ago or a few weeks ago.

I support having the language of subparagraph (g) as was included in the report of the Council session last June.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Legal Counsel.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

I understand that the United States of America has requested my opinion as to whether the proposed text for subparagraph (g) is in contradiction to the provisions of the decisions that the Council has just adopted, as was contained in *CL 171/3/Add 1*. Here I would recall that the language that was currently, prior to amendment at this moment in the Session that was under discussion, was set out at paragraph 20 of *CL170/REP*.

That is “recognized the importance of trade for contributing to the availability, accessibility, and affordability of food, as well as the stability of markets and the limitation of extreme food price volatility and recalled and underline the importance that in line with World Trade Organization (WTO) rules and in keeping with their commitments under the WTO agreements, members correct and prevent unjustified trade restrictions and distortions as well as eliminate and not create unnecessary and unjustified barriers to trade in agricultural markets”.

Of course, this decision that you have just taken is a proposal which was put forward by certain Members. I have not had the opportunity to analyse it in depth, nor to look at it in context with the other matters that you have already been considering and approving.

At first glance, and with this caveat and of course understanding that it would be for Members, ultimately, to be interpreting and addressing many of these recommendations, I would note that the decision that has just been adopted does indeed refer to welcoming and encouraging FAO's continued commitments to, and here, in a subparagraph 3, "*collaborating with the WTO and others as appropriate on a joint endeavour to study fertilizer markets and policies with the aim of supporting countries with policy advice on refraining from introducing export restrictions on fertilizers*". There may be other elements of that nature.

Of course, that is a request addressed to FAO. Here, what is before you currently, is a statement made by the Council. It is difficult to say definitively at this stage, because of these rather different elements, as to whether or not there is a contradiction because the phrasing is somewhat different. But nevertheless, there are indeed references to the WTO, there are indeed references to export restrictions in the decision that the Members have just adopted.

I would, again, return to the fact that you have indeed approved the paragraph that has been proposed before. You may wish, of course, when you see the language and the entire paragraph in its entirety have more of an opportunity to consider this language. But, at this moment in time, while you go through the conclusions and while you go through the text, it is somewhat difficult to provide any definitive legal statement.

CHAIRPERSON

Would it not be a way out of this discussion, before we go to changing text or partly changing text, just to say "*recalled subparagraph 20 (i) in the report of the 170th Council*" so that we avoid and make clear that we already decided on this issue? We recall that paragraph and leave it to that.

M. MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroun)

I keenly listened to the Legal Counsel and I might bring up another question to her which may help us to understand better what we are aiming at. First, the Council took a decision one year ago, or six months ago, and today has taken another decision which one prevails among the two?

Therefore, I wish to have your guidance on this that may help us to move ahead. If I were to give my proposal, it is that, let us deal with what Argentina proposed and copy and paste it here. I think that is what we are doing.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Legal Counsel.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

Here I would recall that paragraph 20 subparagraph (i) of the last Report of the Council was not time-limited. The paragraph here is a statement of recognition by the Council. It is not an instruction for a particular activity by Management or the Secretariat. Thus, in the absence of a contradictory or a changing position, this remains a recognition by the Council of a certain position.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

I think that the solution, as you described it, referring back to the paragraph before, could work for us as long as our explanation is put into a footnote. The explanation is as follows: "*This statement inaccurately portrays WTO obligations. It is our view that FAO must respect the independent mandates of other processes and institutions, including trade negotiations, and must not involve itself in decisions and actions in other forums including at WTO*". As long as that is in a footnote explaining why we would disassociate from this paragraph, we could accept it with your proposal to say recalling paragraph number from the last thing.

CHAIRPERSON

I see Argentina nodding. Therefore, I put the text on the screen. We are going to say "*recalled paragraph 20 (i) of the Report of the 170th Session of the Council*" and then we do document CL 170/REP. Then, of course, we put the explanation of position of the United States of America as a

footnote. Would that be agreeable as a way out of this text? I see, hopefully, nodding. I do not see any objections.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Agradesco la actitud constructiva de Estados Unidos en entender que ciertas cuestiones, que son importantes para muchos países en desarrollo y que fueron expresadas, debían estar también en este report.

CHAIRPERSON

I hope that the United States of America can send us the exact language for the Report. If you can send it to us, we will put it in the report. That is the best way forward. And we delete the text which is now. That is the best.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

We have sent it to the Secretariat. We will send it and have it there later. I would agree and thank my colleague from Argentina for his patience and his wisdom, as always.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much also for your flexibility. I will put your text as a footnote to this subparagraph and then we delete subparagraph (j). We continue our work to subparagraph (i).

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

Speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States, I agree with your wise decision and suggestions in the previous paragraph. It is a very well, narrated decision. Thank you very much to our colleagues from the United States and Argentina, so that we have a very good compromised language on that.

On this particular subparagraph, I had some wording, but I may perhaps suggest a completely new subparagraph which may be better. Not just putting additional wording in this subparagraph because it may be a mix. I do not want to actually have it. Therefore, I would suggest perhaps a new subparagraph after you deal with this subparagraph.

Mr Moungui MÉDI (Cameroon)

In fact, I had a new subparagraph before (i), which came from the statement of the Africa Group this morning. *“Recognized the role of the Food Import Financing Facility (FIFF) as an important tool to support countries to shoulder the soaring cost of food imports and and improve access to food at country level, including addressing the issue availability of and access to fertilizers.”* Because this, we are dealing with a report that was presented by... And then all these elements... I have been going through your summary, I felt that this key element that came straight from that report should be highlighted, and especially as the concern, a statement by Regional Group.†This is my submission.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first deal with this one. Can we agree to the text proposed by Cameroon?

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

Perhaps we may even go further with the Cameroon proposal. If I understood correctly, this Food Import Financing Facility has now been approved by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and called the Food Shock Window. Hearing our Chief Economist saying, I think the call is to further expand this. Maybe we could even go further. If our esteemed colleague from Cameroon would agree, we could even say *“recommend that FAO continue advocating for the expansion of this window”*, which was developed from FAO policy proposal.

CHAIRPERSON

A specific text proposal. Otherwise it will be difficult to understand what you exactly mean.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

Maybe we could say, “*Recommend that FAO continues to advocate for the expansion of the Food Shock Window established by IMF in September of 2022*”. And then “*recognizing the role that this window can play as an important...*”

CHAIRPERSON

You do not have two separate paragraphs? Because otherwise it becomes a very long subparagraph, probably not understandable anymore.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

Yes. I am just trying to pick up the rest of the proposal of Cameroon and use it here.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us deal with it in two separate paragraphs. Otherwise it will become quite complex.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

No, what I am saying is that from this time on, we will just copy paste what is in subparagraph (i). But, yes, please put it in subparagraph (j). Therefore, “*recognizing the role that this window can play to shoulder the soaring costs of food imports,*” etc. As I recall, many Members have talked about this window.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

I just wanted to point out that we have already covered this point off in the decision which we endorsed. There may be a little bit of confusion just because of the change in the name to the Food Shock Window. If I can bring people's attention to subparagraph (i) point 2 in the decision that was endorsed, where we have got supporting with data and appropriate coordination of the Food Shock Window established by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in September 2022 for low condition emergency loans and so on. I would suggest we may have already covered off and we don't need to include it again here.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Given what Australia just said, I think we could support that. Since the Food Import Financing Facility does not actually exist, but it got transformed into something else, I was going to offer to recognize the potential for a Food Import Finance Facility and then blending that to the continuing support to the IMF's Food Shock Window. I think perhaps Australia's recommendation to just go with what was just adopted in the earlier session, maybe in a less duplicative way. But failing that, to recommend recognize the role of the potential for a Food Import Financing Facility.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us be consistent, not to complicate our work because we just took a decision, so we cannot embark from that decision, as was said by Australia.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

Australia made a point there, but I believe that also others can also recognize that this decision was adopted by a vote. And that we want to, when we are reporting, we are reporting on what was decided by consensus, essentially. I do not know if there is a problem agreeing to discuss that in the summary of the report and keep the decision as it is. It will be helpful for maybe countries to leave it to treat it here.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

We would agree that there is a little duplication, I would say, but for the sake of compromise, we can leave subparagraph (j) as it is and just delete (i), which is rather obsolete right now. The rest of the text is not obsolete but it is already displayed in the (j). If we can keep (j) it may cater for concerns of all the members. In this regard it call FAO for some action, to promote and advocate. There is a little added value to this subparagraph therefore, we can keep it like that.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

I am afraid that we are going back to square one. If we are going to refer to the decisions that had been taken by a vote, and I want to remind you that for this decision 26 countries voted in favour and 15 either voted against or abstained, so if one country or one and a half countries voted against or abstained, this decision has never been passed. Now we are trying to build a consensus text on something that was voted. If we are going to do the same thing, I am afraid that my Belarussian colleague is right. Let us put all the paragraphs to a vote once again.

CHAIRPERSON

I do not think there is an appetite for voting on each subparagraph because then certainly we will not even finish on Saturday, probably not even on Sunday, and nobody wishes that. Let us see where we are. Let us first try to capture the other subparagraphs and then we come back to these two subparagraphs. We go now to subparagraph (k).

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

Thank you for your efforts to reach a consensus. I would like to remind my colleagues that Brazil starts playing in one hour and I would very much like to be there. Having said that, for subparagraph (k) I would like to add something that comes from the Strategy on Climate Change about the transforming agrifood systems. I would like to add after “*sustainable*” something on the lines of “*be made in a coherent manner, as appropriate in accordance with and dependent on national context and capacities*”, and then with “the objective to leave no one behind. I will repeat:

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Doy gracias a Brasil, porque por primera vez no fui yo el que lo dice en el medio de una orden de Consejo.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

This is actually about (j).

CHAIRPERSON

We come back to that. Can we agree to subparagraph (k) now? I do not see any objections. I give to floor to the Czechia for a new subparagraph.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

On behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States, the subparagraph would read like that: “*invited FAO to intensify cooperation with other UN organizations to promote the Food systems transformation agenda advocated in line with Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement, in order to mitigate the current food crisis and avert future crises, underlining the important role of CFS*”.

CHAIRPERSON

I look around the room, whether or not we can agree to this subparagraph.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

We could agree with this subparagraph but dropping the final clause: “*underlining the important role of CFS*”. I think that the rest of this subparagraph is separate from that and different from that. We would propose deleting that but keeping it ending at “*avert future crises*”.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

I heard you and our colleague from Belarus requesting votes. We are in the 171st session of the Council, and if I count, I am on my 55th session today. I just want to say that it is difficult for me to embark into a process of voting in resolutions and so on. In the past it was not common process, to go to a vote for this.

I would plead with our colleagues that we come back to our ordinary way of working and adopting resolution by consensus. It is helpful for everybody and does not divide the Council. That is the key word. When the Council is divided, you achieve very little. I am afraid you saw our position today. We did not want to embark on anything that can divide the Council.

That is the reason why we adopted the attitude adopted today.

Let us go back to this suggestion of the European Union. We can agree with this. Though we are looking into the document reference here, this promotion of *The Food system transformation agenda* is not treated there and so on. We can accept it because we cannot think outside the box. That is what we are trying to do.

I agree with the United States that the last part does not add any value to this. We are accepting it because it is a genuine suggestion. We are not against it. It is just that it is good not to have the last part in the text.

CHAIRPERSON

Certainly, I echo your words about the spirit in which we have to work, and that is the spirit of compromise and consensus.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

We are at the late hour anticipating some important football matches but, if we have time, maybe over the night and look a little bit, we see so many subparagraphs which say about importance of corporation, coordination with the UN agencies, with other agencies, with respective bodies and organs in transforming these food systems, I do not know whether this *Paris Agreement* has a lot to do with this transformation, but maybe we can look at several paragraphs and combine the very same idea about our cooperation in one paragraph rather than to split it into 20 paragraphs. Now I'm waiting for applause. I will support the proposal just made by the United States of America.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Siempre se puede ser testigo de situaciones que uno jamás se iba a imaginar. Primero, estoy de acuerdo con la sugerencia de Estados Unidos y de Camerún, en términos generales, sobre el texto. Creo que el concepto de "*food systems transformation agenda* no existe. Por lo tanto, mantendría en todo caso *food systems transformation*" con el caveat que ya ha sido claramente reconocido y aprobado en los diferentes consejos.

Con respecto al tema del Acuerdo de París, sin entrar en los argumentos planteados por mi estimado colega de Rusia, creo que hace eje en un aspecto de las tres dimensiones de la sostenibilidad, y esto abriría una caja de Pandora para discutir cuestiones económicas y sociales. Podríamos también incluir el tema de las responsabilidades comunes, pero diferenciadas. Podríamos abrir una caja de Pandora, pero creo que no sea el momento, y que pondríamos muy nervioso a mi estimado amigo de Brasil en estos momentos de la noche.

Por lo tanto, creo que lo ideal sería tampoco incluir the *Paris Agreement* porque hay muchos otros acuerdos, y mantendría la propuesta original sin the *Paris Agreement*, con el caveat en transformation, y sin la última parte del texto.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

In line with Argentina and the United States, we prefer to delete reference at the end of the paragraph to the Committee on World Food Security (CFS). And regarding the whole paragraph, we believe that and make a reference to what Argentine mentioned.

Instead of repeating the caveat for transformation, and we do not know what is transformation agenda. Our suggestion is to make shorter to say, to promote the sustainable food systems and delete transformation and agenda and put it into practice transformation agenda in line. You should delete advocate in line with Agenda 2030 and it is free dimensions. With that I believe that the concern raised by the European group in mentioning Paris agreement is fully covered. And so in line with Agenda 2030 and it is free dimensions, the free dimensions relates to Agenda 2030, not the Paris Agreement. So it comes first or could be improved and the free dimensions of sustainable development.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

I made similar observations along the lines of what Argentina and Brazil have said. It seems that subparagraph (l) and subparagraph (m) could usefully be combined because in subparagraph (m) we reaffirm the importance of agrifood systems transformation. And then we could end that subparagraph (m) with end invited FAO to intensify cooperation on sustainable food systems in line with Agenda 2030 and the three dimensions of sustainable development. And that brings together the concepts of subparagraph (l) with subparagraph (m). I can read that again. At the end of subparagraph (m) and “*invited FAO to intensify cooperation on sustainable food systems in line with Agenda 2030 and the three dimensions of sustainability.*”

CHAIRPERSON

Could we agree to power subparagraph (m) because it contains also what is said in subparagraph (l), now?

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

In this case, with maintain “transformation” we have to go back to the subparagraph above to insert the caveat that we always use here at FAO. So the suggestion we made today be “*made in a coherent manner as appropriate in accordance with independent on national context and capacity*” should be include also on the new subparagraph (m) after “*agrifood systems transformation*”.

Mr Moungui MÉDI (Cameroon)

I think what we have here is acceptable. I think Canada made a very good suggestion, which we can support, which we do support. And with the caveat added by Brazil, I think we are okay.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

Still speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States, I always admire actually capacities of my colleagues changing into something completely different. I may perhaps add some wording from my original wording and together with, let us say a compromised one. So, what I am missing actually from our original proposal is the cooperation with United Nation (UN) organizations.

So, “*intensify cooperation with UN organizations*”. If I can already extend it. And then I am missing the reason. So, you can put it at the end in order. The two last lines actually from the previous subparagraph starting with “*in order*”, you can just copy and paste it. . And in the sake of compromise, we can leave Committee on World Food Security (CFS) for this time. So, in order to mitigate the current crises and other future crisis.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Para no entrar en discusiones, prefiero que vayamos al lenguaje acordado. Entonces, en la segunda propuesta de República Chequia: “*with all relevant United Nation agencies, funds and programmes*”.

CHAIRPERSON

Argentina, in the previous paragraphs, we agreed to “*international organizations and bodies*”.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

¿Dónde? Creo que habíamos puesto: “*relevant international organization, some bodies*”.

Mr Rodney HUNTER (United States of America)

Just grammatically, I think it has to say, “*reaffirm that the focus on agrifoods systems transformation, made in a coherent manner as appropriate in accordance with independent,*” , because the provides is the verb here.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Along similar lines, I would just recommend adding “*and*” in front of “*invited for legibility*”. And when I had proposed moving this around it was not to change the sense of it, but I had left out the all relevant United Nation (UN) organizations because with a view that we would like FAO to intensify cooperation in general, including with the private sector, including the civil society.

Perhaps, a way to do that is in particular with relevant UN organizations and bodies because I think we do not want close the door to intensifying cooperation with private sector and civil society.

CHAIRPERSON

We are almost getting a perfect subparagraph. Could we agree to this subparagraph? I do not see any objections. Then, we can delete the previous one. Thank you so much. Then we go scroll down. We go to paragraph 15. Can we agree to paragraph 15?

Mr Mougui MÉDI (Cameroon)

I was trying to see if we can change “*Governing Bodies*” into “*its Members*” because we see what is happening here today and everything. So it is we need to focus on the Members essentially who need to focus on matters pertinent to the mandate of the Organization. So, the Governing Bodies we can leave that probably and say, “*its Governing Bodies and Members to focus*” because it is important also for us to take that into consideration.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to the insertion of “*Members*”? I do not see any objections then we have agreed to pair as well.

Then we only have to deal with subparagraphs in yellow. We scroll up where we had the reference to the food import facility and the Food Shock Window. Any ideas or suggestions on the way out?

Mr Mougui MÉDI (Cameroon)

We can do away with subparagraph (i) and only deal now with subparagraph (j). And subparagraph (j) then I think everything is covered there because the first proposal has, that was our first proposal. So we are coming back now to the former subparagraph (J), which is becoming subparagraph (i) and we can work on that.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

I think in order to have a discussion on this subparagraph, we would need to have a little bit more information first from the Legal Counsel whether or not a Council decision that has been made by a vote has less validity or different validity under the Rules than one that has been adopted by consensus, per the Basic Texts.

I would also ask Mr Máximo Torero Cullen or someone from the Secretariat or from the Management to brief us on whether the Food Shock Window has anything to do with fertilizers. Then I think once we know that information, we could have a better discussion from our side on this subparagraph.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

I believe that we should do the same differently, I think the proposal that had been made by Cameroon and it was based on the proposal from the Secretariat. And there were no problems in accepting this text. As for the text we have right now, it was voted, there was no consensus. And definitely we need more time to look at the text and it will not take 10 minutes, five minutes. It definitely will take a longer time. So if we can agree on the text that had been proposed by Cameroon and delete this text, so then maybe we will satisfy our ambitious.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

I was going to support Cameroon's point to go with subparagraph (j) and having reread the text that was in the voted section of our conclusions, which foresaw that there would be engagement on the Food Shock Window. That text speaks of supporting with data and analysis, the work of the Food Shock Window.

This subparagraph (j) speaks of advocating for the expansion of the Food Shock Window. So, I think they are different and complimentary and I think that they can coexist peacefully in this document. So I would support Cameroon's suggestion to delete subparagraph (i) keep subparagraph (j) which is substantially different and was something that was mentioned by other members to consider

expanding the Food Shock Window and recognize that can complement what was in the voted text earlier this evening.

Mr Mina Rizk ATTIA RIZK (Egypt)

In fact, I do not want to make that debate any longer, but I think we are in favor in keeping subparagraph (i), because our understanding is that Food Import Financing Facility (FIFF) is a totally different programme than the Food Shock Window. We are also endorsing keeping subparagraph (j). We understand that the idea of the Food Import Financing Facility is to be in contact with international financing institutions to support and to establish an import, a tool to support countries for the different, the increase in the prices of the food imports. And that's why I don't see a lot of contradiction between subparagraphs (i) and (j). And I think we can give them both since both ideas should be supported by the council while discussing the impact of the war in Ukraine on the rising prices of food imports, especially for low and middle income countries.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

I understand the United States of America specifically requested an opinion on whether there is a differing legal validity as to whether or not, depending upon whether a decision was adopted by consensus or adopted by vote under the Rules of the FAO. In this connection, I would refer you to Rule XII, paragraph 17 of the General Rules of the Organization, which states: *"If a decision is to be taken on a matter, other than an election, for which a two-third majority is not required by the constitution or these rules, the Chairperson may submit to the Conference or Council that the matter be decided by general consent without recourse to a formal vote."*

The general consent is the usual practice of this Body. The adoption of decisions is by consensus. Where consensus is not available, there is recourse to voting. The outcome though, from a legal perspective would not be different.

I would also note that the Report and indeed the precedents to which reference has been made here are, and here I quote the Rules of Procedure of the Council, rule VI, paragraph 2, which refers to the report as *"embodying the text of all resolutions, recommendations, conventions, agreements, supplementary conventions or agreements or of other formal decisions adopted or approved by the council, including when requested a statement of minority views."*

Thus, in the report irrespective of elements thereof, irrespective of how it is reached from a legal formal legal position, do not have a differing legal validity. But I would note that in this forum, traditionally, matters, of course, have been agreed by general consent.

CHAIRPERSON

Mr Máximo Torero Cullen help us out of the facility and the window.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

The concept of the facility and the window is exactly the same. If you recall correctly, when we started the Food Import Financing Facility (FIFF), we explicitly refer that it could be expanded also to fertilizers. But the concern, and why we did not push too much on that is because the fertilizer problem is a supply constraint problem.

Therefore, if you expand support to the demand side, you can exacerbate the problem. Now, the Food Shock Window that is under the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and I can give you exactly the text that they have right now. It is in addition, the new foot truck window provides increased access and the emergency financing instruments for countries that have origin, balance of payments needs associated with secure food insecurity, the rising cost of food and fertilizer imports, or substantial serial export shortfalls.

So, they include the possibility for also procuring or covering the balance of payment deficit because of the expanding cost of fertilizers.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you. And if you look to the formulated two subparagraphs, is the language correct? Also, when you refer to the first subparagraph (i) is consistent and paragraph (b) to those.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

Both of them are consistent with existing one.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

Unfortunately, I have to, and I know I lose credibility as he did earlier, but I have to agree with my Russian colleague that we will need more time to be able to discuss this back in Capitals to come to an agreement, given that it is new language and it is a little bit different than what we have looked at or agreed to before. We would need more time overnight to discuss this with capital if we are going to continue discussing this subparagraph. Apologies to everyone.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us certainly not make it a practice that if we have new language that we always go back to Capital, because then we will not end up on time on Friday or Saturday evening. If we want to maintain this text, then we have to keep it in yellow and come back to it tomorrow.

Mr Moungui MÉDI (Cameroon)

Respectfully to our colleague from the United States and our colleague from the Russian Federation. I know that they can collide at some point from time to time, but I do not think there are two different, there are new paragraphs or new language. It is subparagraph (i). It is an extract of the Report presented to the Council on Item 3. It is an extract of that. We were just, because they reported on the food import financing facility.

If for those who read that Report it might not appear here as a new language. What could be a new language is the Food Shock Window, but from the explanation of the Chief Economist, we can also probably consider it as an element of a consensus among ourselves. I agree with you that people may want to consult. We have nothing against that. The message we wanted to send is that that is not new language because it is in the document.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

I understand that my Brazilian colleagues and the Argentinean colleagues will kill me, but I will simply encourage all of you just to open the text of the decision that had been just adopted and read the full paragraph sub item (i), and then you will understand that if you borrow this Food Shock Window and you insert it in the text, it is totally unacceptable to my delegation. It means that I will have to make a footnote with reference to the vote on this decision.

Since Russian Federation is one of the biggest producers of fertilizers together with Belarus, I think that we will not be able to support this initiative be it under the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or any other body. From the very beginning here in the FAO, instead of solving the problem, we will be creating a problem. While the proposal just made by Cameroon it was reflected in the report, have no problems with us. Why not take something which is acceptable to everyone and not go for another round of discussions with zero result?

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

What I understood from the Chief Economist statement, was that there is no Food Import Financing Facility and there will not be a Food Import Financing Facility. What exists and will continue to exist is the Food Shock Window. That is how I understood it, because that is what it evolved into from FAO's proposal. I am happy to hear the response on that.

In that regard, to clarify, subparagraph (j) could be modified that "*FAO advocates for the Food Shock Window, which resulted from the proposal for a food import financing facility*". Right now we have two different things. We do not really make the link between the two and probably we need to sleep on this. That may be a way to bridge between subparagraphs (i) and (j). Two thirds of the text of (i) is the same as what is in (j) at the moment. We should be able to find a way to bring that together. My

proposal for subparagraph (j) would be to go “*to advocate for the Food Shock Window, which resulted from the proposal for a food import financing facility*”.

Then perhaps the little sub-phrase after “*September 2022*”, add, “*which resulted from the proposal for a food import financing facility from the FAOs proposal*”.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

Exactly. We did a proposal, which is the Food Import Financing Facility, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) took that proposal after a lot of discussions and call it the Food Shock Window because their board has to call it differently. However, as we said, if it looks like a rabbit and walks like a rabbit, it is a rabbit. In any case, the important thing is that they are the ones implementing the facility. Our proposal has some differences compared to what they are implementing because they have another structure that they have to comply with. But I think keeping to advocate for the expansion is reasonable because we were advocating for 62 countries. They can only operate right now with 42, I think.

CHAIRPERSON

But to at least make our life less difficult probably for tomorrow morning. In this respect, we can then delete subparagraph (i).

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

Yes, exactly.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we at least agree then that we delete subparagraph (i) because it is evolved into what was correctly said by Canada. Russia Federation. Could you agree to delete subparagraph (i), because it evolved in what was said by Mr Máximo Torero Cullen.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

No, subparagraph (i) is the only basis for the compromise because subparagraph (j) is leading us to nowhere because this idea, as it is said, opens shock window emanated from the consequences of the war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. Shall I support the concept of this open window which emanated from the war? Do you read the documents? Maybe we shall go back and read first and then make some certain introductions. I do not know how it was adopted in the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Maybe it was also voted. I do not know who supported this idea, who will provide fertilizers if they are blocked.

Well, maybe our wise colleague from Mexico, he is always putting the right accent. You remember that we had certain consultations regarding the Draftin Committee. Maybe the Drafting Committee with all the experts that Mr Máximo Torero Cullen and his team will bring will work on the language, which is acceptable.

We will not waste our time because no one here read the decision taken by the IMF. At what ground this decision was taken, who was proposing this decision, who is going to finance this decision and how we can here, sitting in FAO, not in Washington D.C., but here in Rome, decide on the initiative that was made by the IMF.

Therefore, let us focus on the issues we can resolve here in Rome, here within these walls. If we need some expertise, let us look, listen to this expertise, but in a minute or two, with no instructions, with nothing, we have to adopt something which simply cannot be adopted or cannot be implemented.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

Simply to say that in the time that this is dragged out, I was able to get instructions. We can agree to Canada's proposal in subparagraph (j).

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

The decisions that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has taken to adopt it are outside of our purview. That is a fair point, but it does exist, and it does pertain to food security. It reflects on the fact

that it exists, and on the point that expanding it to other countries would serve it. What was the trigger for its existence? That could perhaps be something for a discussion, but this doesn't speak to what triggered its existence. Therefore, as stated, we can with subparagraph (j) but if this is too pointy an issue, maybe we drop both and leave it out. That would be unfortunate because it is an important element. However, for the sake of moving forward, perhaps we leave them all out.

Mr Moungui MÉDI (Cameroon)

Chairperson, for the record, we suggested subparagraph (i), please take note. I come back to one element, which we always speak of here. That we are not here to instruct FAO to do something which is untaken by another body or to give instruction to follow up on what is done by another body. I am a bit reluctant when it comes to something which is operated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and we instruct our Organization to go and work with, you know, it is a little bit... We have always said that it is not good if we have to instruct the Organization to do something. It should be within its mandate and something that itself is doing.

Having said that, we suggested subparagraph (i) and now that I see that the suggestion from... I do not know whether it was Indonesia? Philippines? I do not remember who made the suggestion. We see that it is becoming politicized, and we do not want that. Again, because it will divide us, the Council. We are not part of anything that is becoming politicized. Therefore, we withdraw from any suggestion that we could make on subparagraph (j) and keep our suggestion because it is in the document. It is an extract of the document. You do not see other things related to Food Shock Window in the *CL 171/3*.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

Apologies for proposing this paragraph, but there is value to it because we have clarified that the Food Import Financing Facility turned to be the Food Shock Window. In the interest of compromise, if we can leave with subparagraph (i) then yes. It is just the idea of FAO continuing to advocate for expansion. We thought we were responding to their call, but if it would not be agreeable to the group, we can also withdraw this proposal. If subparagraph (i) would be okay to everyone.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Philippines, for your flexibility. Would that be your way out that we delete subparagraph (j) and keep subparagraph (i) ?

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Just to suggest in that case then to change "*the role of the Food Import Finance Facility*" to "*a Food Import Finance Facility*". That leaves it undefined and perhaps there will be a Food Shock Window someday. Change that to "*a*".

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to keep subparagraph (i) as it is now and delete subparagraph (j)?

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

Mr Máximo Torero Cullen just told us that the Food Import Finance Facility does not exist. How can we adopt a decision that recognizes the role of something that FAO just told us does not exist?

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

Let us keep this very simple. The Food Import Financing Facility was a proposal that FAO developed and provided all the technical information for its design. FAO worked with their partners to try to influence the development of that proposal because it has to be implemented by a financial institution. FAO is not a financial institution. The proposal was designed for balance of payment support and that's what the International Monetary Fund (IMF) does.

And the IMF decided to follow the concept and developed the Food Shock Window and that is what is in our report and it is in all our reports. The concept of course exists, it is in the website, the data is in the website- but they implement, we do not. We are not a financing institution. We do not do balance of payment support. That is exactly what IMF does. That is why the proposal was designed for an entity like the IMF to implement. And that's the effort we did to make them implement.

When we say we advocate, I assume because our design was for the 62 most vulnerable countries. The IMF cannot, with their own rules that they have designed, expand this right now to the 62 most vulnerable countries. They are 45, maybe 42. That is the only difference. The concept was designed by FAO, and they are the ones implementing that concept within their own rules and regulations. They had to change the name because the IMF board cannot approve a proposal coming from another institution. That is what they told us, legally they cannot, and that is why they call it the Food Shock Window.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

Yes, I was just about to say exactly what the Chief Economist said. The instrument exist, it was developed, but because of the limitation in its implementation, it has to go somewhere. But it exists. The concept is there. Another organization can take it up and use probably the same name tomorrow. The concept exists. That's why I'm not so sure that I will buy the idea of a Food Import Financing Facility.

Because it is the instrument already developed by FAO, which is there available. And it was reported in this Item 3. That is a big issue for me there. Why do we have to discuss something which is reported? If it were not there, we would have said, well, it does not exist, but it is there. Therefore, we will suggest that our proposal be maintained of the Food Import Financing Facility.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

I honestly do not understand. What is the confusion? We have reported this fone year and a half now because this is started in March. We had a document where we have a design of something called the Food Import Financing Facility. We were very clear from day one that FAO cannot implement the Food Import Financing Facility because we are not a financial institution.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) took our concept and implemented what they call the Food Shock Window and they put the money to it, and they are delivering it to certain countries. That is what the Director-Ggeneral reports, what we have officially reported is correct. Tomorrow International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) can decide to develop something similar and take the same concept and create their own Food Import Financing Facility. But what it is, is a concept with the validation and the information showing that it was not creating a distortion to the market.

CHAIRPERSON

Could we not, to make it a little bit clearer, say "*recognize the design for*", because then it is clear for the concept of, because here now states that we have a food import facility. But you said clearly it is the design or the concept for food.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

It is the concept and design of the Food Import Financing Facility.

CHAIRPERSON

Would that not be the trigger to get us out of here?

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

Our thinking is heading in the same direction "*Recognizing the concept and design for role of the food import financing such facility for developing an important tool*" (because one tool was already developed). As Mr Máximo Torero Cullen just said, there may be other tools developed by other institutions taking the concept and design of food import financing facility as a kind of example and basis.

"*The Council recognized the concept and design of the Food Import Financing Facility (FIFF), an important tool*", even we can say yes, tool or tools if you're looking into the future. But for the timebeing we have just one tool. If we are recognizing the concept and design at the moment, we have only one tool developed. I would leave it "*for developing an important tool*", and of course then as an important tool, this should be put into the brackets or just deleted.

CHAIRPERSON

Would it be agreeable United States?

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

We could probably agree to this. It could be made simpler even, I am not sure what still exists and what does not up there, but if this could fly, we might be able to agree to it. If it cannot, I have a simpler proposal.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

It feels like our angst is a little bit around the title of the Food Import Finance Facility, which sort of feels like a bit of a nothing burger at this point. Maybe taking it back to something simpler along the lines of what was proposed, was recognized the role of food related balance of payment supports, because that's what it is. And so we do not worry about the title.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us keep it now as it is because you are now departing trying to find a compromise. If we get new language in, we will never arrive at it.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation)

Can we leave this text till tomorrow, sleep it over, and come with more wise ideas. I believe that we are still working on the principles that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. Then we make those small tricks at the very end, rather than to spend another two hours or three in splitting the hair.

CHAIRPERSON

Of course, nothing is still agreed until everything agreed. And that means Friday or Saturday evening. But I first want to see whether or not we can send everybody home with a compromise proposal to get structure from Capital so that we do not have too many different compromise proposals.

M. Seydou CISSÉ (Côte d'Ivoire)

Je m'abstiens à ce stade du débat. Je préfère peut-être laisser passer ma proposition, puisqu'il me semble que trouver un compromis ce soir va être difficile. Donc, je préfère m'abstenir.

Mr Winston PINNOCK (Bahamas)

At this stage, I have lost most of my thoughts. I believe that after listening to Mr Máximo Torero Cullen's explanation we are splitting hairs. I had a language, it is off the screen now, so I cannot see it anymore. I really do not see why recognize the concept of "a", I think Canada had some language. It is so confusing. There are so many things that were added since I had my thoughts. I want make this other point though on behalf of Small Island Developing States. I sense that developed countries seem to be insensitive. This actually is something to benefit small developing states. I can't see why there is such a difficulty. If I were in the Chairperson, I would keep everybody here until we get something done.

For all those who want to go home and watch football, we should stay here. It is ridiculous. I really believe that we are splitting hairs and I think it is a simple matter of just aligning words. I think the Food Import Financing Financing (FIFF) seems to be the issue. Yes, the FIFF and so I am saying I do not see what the issue is. The content of what we are doing is providing support and a mechanism to provide support for countries that need financing. Really, this puzzles me.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for your wise words even at the late evening. We have to wrap up in a couple of minutes, my suggestion would be to give one subparagraph for fair consideration to Capitals. And then we come back to tomorrow morning.

I have now four speakers on the list, which certainly I cannot facilitate in five minutes time because we will lose interpretation in about five minutes, unless everybody is very brief. I will come back to this issue tomorrow morning anyway because I cannot keep everybody here because we do not have any interpretation anymore.

Mr Miguel Jorge GARCÍA WINDER (Mexico)

I have a suggestion for the writing on this paragraph, but I can submit that later on for your consideration. I have been sitting here for the entire day, most of the entire day. Last year when I came to this board I was educated very fast. You all told me that wherever we put in this recommendation is what we discuss in everything.

Today we spent about 10 hours and there are 10 recommendations, which are okay, neutral. They are not going to cause any damage, but we never discuss any of those. We spent 10 hours discussing the two declarations and that is all that we did. In fact, we had failed to discuss this, and I think we need to do an exam of conscience. When FAO presented the document, FAO presented the document on the progress on three great issues, governance, and global governance.

We have not discussed anything about the global governance participation of FAO. We have not asked FAO to report to this board precisely on what they have done on global governance. We have the second point is emergency, a humanitarian response. There is nothing about that that we have discussed.

We have discussed policy issues and with exception of the Philippines, he is the only one who put the financial facility, but we have not discussed anything about the fertilizer assessment, the soil nutrition maps and so on and so forth. We had to be very clear on what we have to do and we can go with this declaration. It is fine. It is going to be for the records. It is going to be something to discuss again next time. However, we have failed to discuss this issue. We need to put the time to discuss these issues.

In my opinion, we have failed to make a progress. If we are honest, the conclusion should be we spent 10 hours discussing two decisions and we did not reach an agreement. We had to go to a vote. That is the reality of what we did. We have not discussed on any of these things. My apologies. I can go with this.

We have not discussed. The fact that we have indeed discussion on the financing facility is that we did not discuss the document. We approved this financing facility in the last Council. In the best case scenario, we can say we welcome the progress report presented by FAO regarding the FIFF and encourage FAO to continue to be part of the network of institutions working together to address the issues of fertilizers and prices. My reflection is that we have failed, on reviewing FAO work properly in this location.

Ms Nosipho Nausca-Jean JEZILE (South Africa)

I have also lost a trail of my thoughts, but just to highlight that the proposal made by Cameroon comes from a policy proposal paragraph 22 on Food Import Financing Facility. Probably, what we can do at best in terms of that paragraph is to recognize the progress that has been achieved by FAO.

If we frame a recommendation in those lines, we should be able to avoid the rest of the detail until further work is undertaken in that respect. The essence of that policy proposal is that there is already a policy, a facility that was presented in April, 2022 on the proposal of FAO on this import facility that supports countries to shoulder the soaring costs of food imports and to improve access to food at country level.

This is the essence of what the developing countries wanted to have as a decision that is recognized in terms of that progress. We can find a language that just limits us to that so that we do not necessarily have other debates as to whether this is appropriate or not. In terms of it being a policy proposal, this Council has the responsibility to reflect on it.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Vice-Chairperson of the Africa Regional Group. With your wise words, you gave the basis for a compromise proposal for the course of this evening. I will work on a compromise proposal for this paragraph because we do not have any time with interpretation anymore. As we said, we have the principle of multilingualism in our Council, which means that we have to work with interpretation. With that, I really would like to thank everybody for the hard work of today on a very difficult issue when it comes to the global food crisis.

We come back to each other to the Council tomorrow morning. I hope to propose to you a compromise proposal for the last paragraph, so that we can close this issue and continue with Item 4, because we have to continue also in the spirit of compromise with dedication for the other Items.

I thank you so much for today, for your hard work. I would like to thank the interpreters for giving us some more time this evening. I thank the messengers and technicians. Have a very good rest, come back energized tomorrow morning for hopefully an even more fruitful day of the Council. Meeting adjourned.

The meeting rose at 20:10 hours

La séance est levée à 20 h 10

Se levanta la sesión a las 20.10

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Seventy-first Session Cent soixante et onzième session 171.º período de sesiones
Rome, 5-9 December 2022 Rome, 5-9 décembre 2022 Roma, 5-9 de diciembre de 2022
THIRD PLENARY SESSION TROISIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE TERCERA SESIÓN PLENARIA
6 December 2022

The Third Plenary Meeting was opened at 09:37 hours
Mr Hans Hoogeveen,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La troisième séance plénière est ouverte à 09 h 37
sous la présidence de M. Hans Hoogeveen,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la tercera sesión plenaria a las 09.37
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Hans Hoogeveen,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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Item 3. Update on FAO's work on the global food crisis (*continued*)**Point 3. Informations actualisées sur les activités de la FAO relatives à la crise alimentaire mondiale (*suite*)****Tema 3. Información actualizada sobre la labor de la FAO en relación con la crisis alimentaria mundial (*continuación*)**

(CL 171/3)

CHAIRPERSON

Distinguished Excellencies, distinguished delegates, dear friends, ladies and gentlemen, welcome back at the second day of our Council. I hope you have refreshed yourself during the evening and also you had a very good rest.

Let us start our work today in a positive and constructive manner and attitude, to work by consensus. We have, again, a very full day with important Reports and decisions to be made. I count on your spirit, I count on your dedication, I count also on your flexibility and willingness to compromise. Let us start our work of today.

Ms Cindy MCCAIN (United States of America)

In the spirit of working together and compromising, after further discussions overnight, the United States of America can show a bit of flexibility on subparagraph (h). In the spirit of compromise and in the support of our colleague from Argentina, we withdraw our footnote.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, United States, for your sign of flexibility and certainly it is a good start of the Session of today. Let us follow this example.

I would like to go to the remaining subparagraph but I see that Argentina has asked for the floor.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

No puedo dejar pasar la oportunidad para agradecer a la Embajadora de Estados Unidos su mensaje constructivo y de flexibilidad. Ya ayer habíamos agradecido la capacidad de comprender nuestra lógica en el planteo y creo que este es el símbolo del espíritu con el cual habíamos intentado empezar este Consejo. Que es el de entender que dialogando nos íbamos a entender y dialogando, seguramente, vamos a encontrar cada vez más consenso. Esto es lo que necesitamos, así que, permítame, agradecerle la actitud absolutamente constructiva por parte de Estados Unidos en este punto.

CHAIRPERSON

I turn to the remaining subparagraph of yesterday, subparagraph (h). Over the course of last evening, I tried to work on a compromise. I follow to propose one made by the wise words of the Vice-Chairperson of the Africa Regional Group, the Ambassador H.E. Ms Nosipho Nausca-Jean Jezile of South Africa, to recognize the work on the facility and to continue its cooperation with international organizations. I will ask the Secretariat to put the compromised proposal on the screen.

My proposal would be "*recognize the progress made with the concept and design for Food Import Facility as an important tool to support countries to slow the soaring costs of food imports and improve access to food at the country level, including addressing availability of access to fertilizers and requested FAO to continue its cooperation with relevant international organizations and bodies in this regard.*" Would this be an agreeable compromise?

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

We appreciate your effort. I think it is absolutely in order. Apart from the fact that the word "*a*" is not satisfactory to us, "*a Food Import Facility.*" The concept is there and the design is there.

CHAIRPERSON

The proposal would be to replace the word "*a*" in the first first line by "*the*". Would that be agreeable so that we have a compromise? I see no objections. Thank you so much. With that, we have finalized our work on Item 3. Thank you so much.

- Item 5. Integrated water resources management for food security and climate resilience**
Point 5. Gestion intégrée des ressources en eau au service de la sécurité alimentaire et de la résilience face au climat
Tema 5. Gestión integrada de los recursos hídricos en favor de la seguridad alimentaria y la resiliencia al cambio climático

(CL 171/6)

CHAIRPERSON

We turn now to Item 5, *Integrated water resources management for food security and climate change* and we are on schedule of our Council.

We all remember that we had a very positive and fruitful day last week on water management, not only focusing on water shortages but also focusing on flooding to get the management aspect on the table. The relevant document is *CL 171/6* and the introduction by Mr Lifeng Li, Director, Land and Water Division has been circulated to you.

Introduction to Item 5: Integrated water resources management for food security and climate resilience

Mr Lifeng Li, Director, Land and Water Division

Agriculture accounts for 72 percent of all freshwater withdrawals in the world. Water is therefore central to agriculture and the entire Sustainable Development Agenda. Sustainable agriculture depends on integrated water resources management and innovative solutions, addressing climate change risks and poor water governance. There is a need for more effective and consistent actions, coupled with strong political will, in recognizing, valuing and managing water in a holistic and integrated manner to achieve all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The year 2022 has witnessed the greatest water challenges due to climate change and ineffective water governance. The floods in Australia, Madagascar, Pakistan and South Africa, as well as the long-lasting unprecedented droughts in China, the United States of America, East Africa and Europe took thousands of lives, destroyed villages and towns and other infrastructures, massively affecting agriculture and livelihoods.

The annual amount of freshwater resources available per person declined by more than 20 percent in the past two decades. This trend is projected to continue. There is urgency to support farmers to efficiently produce food and increase production of high-value and nutritious food with optimal water use. Integrated solutions and policies at all levels are needed to improve food security, nutrition and resilience.

The 133rd Session of the Programme Committee welcomed the Evaluation of FAO's contribution to availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all (SDG6) and Management's Response; underlined the fundamental importance of sustainable management of water resources to FAO's core mandate and the need for the Organization to articulate a strategic and coherent approach to water-related activities; stressed the urgent need to address the links between agriculture and water quality and pollution, within FAO's mandate, in collaboration with relevant UN agencies; and called for water issues to be considered with a cross-sectoral perspective within FAO's mandate, in particular by encouraging its discussion by relevant Governing Bodies.

Following this guidance, that of the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture and the 170th Session of the Council, the document provides an overview of the ongoing FAO actions in support of integrated water resources management and presents the planned programmatic water-related initiatives to address the challenges, and support the transformation of agrifood systems and the achievement of the SDGs.

These programmatic initiatives include strengthening FAO's work on integrated water resources management, supporting the development of national water roadmaps through country-led dialogues and participatory processes, and organizing a Rome Water Dialogue to catalyse innovation and mobilize political will towards integrated water resources management for food security and climate resilience.

The Council is invited to endorse water resources management as the topic for the General Debate of the 43rd Session of the Conference and as the biennial theme for Governing Body sessions in 2024-2025.

CHAIRPERSON

The Item was discussed at the Joint Meeting of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and the 194th Session of the Finance Committee for which you will see the reflections in the Report, which we discuss later.

Now I would like to open the floor for the Members to reflect on what is on the table.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I just had a little observation to the previous subparagraph. There was one word missing in the full title of the Food Financing Facility but I think the Drafting Committee can tackle it when having the Session.

CHAIRPERSON

We will put the word “*financing*” into the text because that is what is missing, indeed.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, Norway, the Republic of North Macedonia, and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

In line with our statement at the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) in the context of the discussion on the “*State of the World’s Land and Water Resources for Food and Agriculture 2021*” (SOLAW 21), we would like to highlight the importance of a human rights approach that takes into account poverty and food security monitoring.

A sustainable, integrated and efficient management of water resources, based on an inclusive, territorial and systemic vision of rural development helps in the fight against poverty.

The sustainability of food systems depends to a large extent on the effectiveness of water management. Similarly, integrated water management is not possible without full involvement of food system actors. It is at this interface that FAO’s added value should be found and built.

We take note of the elements provided in the background document for this Item on the FAO actions in areas related to integrated water resources management. We agree that FAO is in a key position to support sustainable integrated water resources management, within its mandate and in close collaboration with relevant UN agencies such as the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), linking water to major threats that are jeopardizing the environment, and food and agriculture systems. We would like to underline the importance of the work of other UN agencies on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and the importance for FAO to reinforce coordination on its activities in this field.

Furthermore, considering that many developing countries already have institutionalised bodies for inter-ministerial exchange on water issues, more information is needed on the added value of the newly proposed initiatives, including on how to support national water roadmaps and on FAO’s engagement in policy processes such as the Global Dialogue on Water Tenure. We need to avoid duplication of work. Furthermore, we would like to know how FAO plans to work together and coordinate with other relevant international organisations.

Finally, we support the proposal to address the implementation of sustainable and integrated water resources management in the context of the Agenda 2030 and to include this as the topic for the general debate at the next Conference in July and as the biennial theme for FAO Governing Body sessions in 2024-2025 as the “*Sustainable and integrated water resource management for food security and climate resilience*”. It is also important to address the interlinkage between IWRM, food security and climate resilience as a priority in the UN 2023 Water Conference. We call for strong, action-oriented commitments to address this link.

Ms Cindy MCCAIN (United States of America)

On a personal note, before I give our statement, I would like to let everyone know that the water issues that we talk about as we progress in all of this is very near and dear to my heart because I was raised in schools and in an environment where we had no water. We counted every drop. I know everyone understands the importance of water but water management and the things that we are going to be talking about throughout the day today are most extremely important and very near and dear to the folks of Arizona.

We commend FAO for raising the profile of this important topic and bringing it to the attention of the Council. Water security is under increasing threat worldwide, stressed by poor water management amid significant and variable climate change. The United States has made water priority at home and around the world and launched a first ever White House Action Plan on Global Water Security in June this year to elevate water as a national security, global health and climate action imperative.

We strongly support water resources management to be considered as the priority topic for general debate at the 43rd Session at the Conference in June of 2023 and as the biennial themes of the Governing Body Sessions 2024 through 2025. We appreciated FAO's comprehensive update of the Organization's work on water resources management for food security and climate resilience.

As we highlighted at the recent Session of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees, we encourage FAO to continue to seize the growing momentum ahead of the UN 2023 Water Conference to highlight the increasing water-related challenges to agriculture production and to boost consideration of water management in the agro food systems.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

Brazil would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing *CL171/6* on integrated water resources management for food security and climate resilience.

In the interest of time, we will not repeat the statement we made during the latest Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees, which took place earlier this month. Brazil attaches great importance to all matters related to water resources and we welcome the FAO initiative to promote further action and discussion on this topic from a cross-sectoral perspective within its mandate.

We take this opportunity to reiterate the complexities involved in the discussion of water, which are inextricable linkage to the three pillars of sustainable development – social, environmental, and economical. There is no panacea or one size fits all solution to integrated water resources management and, as FAO moves forward in this area, we must ensure that there is no overlapping of efforts. Collaborations with other relevant UN agencies is therefore very important.

Besides that, we have already indicated that conceptual precision is key in adequately dealing with this issue. Multilaterally agreed language must be preferred choices at all times and care must be taken when using concepts that are related but not interchangeable, such as water management, water governance, water tenure, etc.

Finally, having water resources management as the topic for general debate of the next FAO Conference and as the biennial theme for its Governing Body Session of 2024/2025 will provide a great opportunity to reiterate that more must be done to answer the calls of the current UN General Assembly (UNGA) and Human Rights Council (HRC) resolutions on the right to water, for more financial resources, capacity building and technology transfer through international assistance and cooperation to developing countries.

Ms Siti Normaznie ABDUL MUTTALIB (Malaysia)

Malaysia would like to give the floor to Thailand to deliver the joint statement on behalf of Asia Regional Group.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to Thailand.

Ms Supajit SRIARIYAWAT (Thailand)

Thailand delivers this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. Our Group appreciates this clear, concise and comprehensive document, *CL 171/6*. The world's population has reached 8 billion and still grows with ever-increasing demand for food and ever-concerning depletion of natural resources.

The fundamental role of agriculture and especially water management in it cannot be overemphasized. Due to climate change, Asian countries face all kinds of water challenges, floods in some countries and droughts in others. Hundreds of millions of people in Asia do not have access to basic water supplies.

Water pollution is also becoming a problem. Water security is deeply in decline. Therefore, we are pleased to see that following the recommendations of 131st Session of the Programme Committee, the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture and the 170th of the Council. FAO has taken further constructive programmatic initiatives to advance effective and integrated water resources management in agrifood systems, for food security and climate resilience.

It is well worth highlighting FAO's support in driving agriculture productivity and profitability through strengthened digital information, innovation and water management, such as FAO's Global Framework on Water Security in Agriculture (WASAG), the solar water information system (SolarWise) Initiative, the water productivity, rainwater sensing portal. Going ahead, we encourage FAO to fully leverage its unique position and continue doing the following things:

First, providing countries, as requested, with needed finance, guidance and toolkits for improvement in capacity building and infrastructure and institution development, including on producing data on available and actual use of water resources for agriculture as guided by the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031 and the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy. Special attention should be given to people who live under high and critical water stress, in particular for smallholder farmers, marginalized people, indigenous communities, women, children and youth.

Second, organizing dialogues themed around integrated water resources management and which countries with which experiences would share their good practices and vision on how to improve water efficiency and resilience. The Rome Water Dialogue held on 29 November sets a very good example.

Third, collaborating with Members, partners and other UN agencies while also sticking to its core mandate to find innovative ecosystem-based solutions to address water quality and pollution induced by agriculture as well as improved access to water for increased agricultural productivity.

In conclusion, Asia Group looks forward to FAO's future work and stands ready to support water resources management as a topic for general debate of the 43rd Session of the Conference and as the biennial theme for the Governing Bodies' sessions in 2024 to 2025.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

Integrated water resources management is crucially important to achieve food security and climate resilience. We, therefore, note with appreciation document *CL 171/6*, which outlines FAO's actions on integrated water resources management in agrifood systems. The Philippines encourages FAO to enhance its programmatic initiatives on water and welcomes FAO's support in refining and boosting the Philippines' initiatives in this regard. These initiatives should address the impacts of the three key pressing water issues confronting our agrifood systems today, namely, drought or scarcity, floods, and pollution.

Recognizing the importance of water to agriculture, the main source of livelihood for about 25 to 30 percent of the Philippines' labour force, the country has updated its National Small Scale Irrigation Projects (SSIP) Masterplan for 2023-2030 and National Irrigation Master Plan (NIMP) for 2020-2030 to guide its delivery of this crucial natural resource, particularly for the crops sub-sector. The objective of these irrigation roadmaps is to achieve food security and reduce poverty through enhanced farmers' competitiveness and sustained irrigation development under diversified crop production systems.

In September 2021, the Philippines also launched the Philippine Water Supply and Sanitation Masterplan to achieve universal access to safe, sufficient, affordable, and sustainable water supply, hygiene, and sanitation by 2030. This national action plan includes integrated interventions from the local and the national government and other stakeholders, such as the private sector, as it aims not only to provide safe water supply and sanitation services for all Filipinos but also to ensure that these services can withstand disasters and protect the environment.

Since water is essential to all life forms, managing our water resources effectively requires a comprehensive strategy that connects and integrates land, biodiversity, and technology across all relevant stakeholders. The Philippines, therefore, appreciates FAO's efforts in highlighting the necessity of strategic and coherent responses to water-related activities as well as the fundamental significance of sustainable management of water resources.

The Philippines also welcomes collaboration with Member countries and other UN agencies in sharing best practices and strategies for the use of water in a sustainable crop, fisheries, livestock, poultry, and forestry production systems, addressing water pollution, and tackling the deterioration of biodiversity.

In closing, may we highlight that the Philippines aligns with the Statement of the Asia Regional Group delivered by Thailand.

With regard to water resources management as the subject for general discussion of the 43rd Session of the Conference, and as the biennial theme for the Governing Body meetings in 2024-2025, the Philippines further suggests sub-topics for discussion such as: on the utilization of renewable energy sources for water generation, particularly for agriculture; on technologies and best practices that can produce more crops with less water; and on innovative approaches such as Integrating Watershed Ecosystem Management in Landscape Planning.

Ms Yael RUBINSTEIN (Israel)

First, I would like to express my gratitude to Director of the Land and Water Division, Mr Li Lifeng for the document and presentation. The last months, no matter where on the planet, one could not escape from experiencing what the Global Risk Report from 2020 forecast. This report foresees water crises as one of the five risks that will affect the world.

On the one hand, many countries are suffering from severe floods covering extensive lands while wiping out cities, villages and agricultural fields. On the other hand, others are suffering from extreme drought that are causing water stress across entire continents. With this implication of the climate crisis together with the growing populations, competition for water resources will only increase.

Israel appreciates FAO's efforts to manage water in a holistic and integrated manner and welcomes the action towards integrated water resources management in agrifood systems. We agree that addressing this crisis is essential to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 2, *Zero Hunger*, SDG 6, *Clean Water for All*, and SDG 13, *Climate Actions*. We acknowledge the necessity to conduct it via a multidisciplinary management approach and a multistakeholder collaboration.

We commend the line of seizing the momentum created by the upcoming United Nations 2023 Water Conference and we welcome the reevaluation of FAO's ongoing efforts to support integrated water resources management. We appreciate FAO's proposal for a Rome Water Dialogue, and we encourage all Members to participate and develop their national water road maps.

Moreover, we appreciate the implementation of the recommendations made by the 133rd Programme Committee (PC) and the 28th Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Session. The PC asked to emphasize the importance of sustainable water management to FAO's core mandate and COAG asked to emphasize capacity building. We welcome FAO's action to drive agriculture to prevent water pollution and to shift to a circular economy. We encourage FAO's support not only by promoting digital and innovative irrigation but also by sharing knowledge and good practice.

Israel has always struggled with water issues. Despite the challenges, we developed a blossoming agriculture industry. We overcame natural limitation, not only by inventing drip irrigation but also by using treated wastewater. Today almost 90 percent of the wastewater in Israel is recycled, mainly for

agriculture irrigation purposes. We would be delighted to share our know-how and experience to assist other Members to build resilient and sustainable agriculture.

Israel commends FAO for its programmatic initiative to be carried out in collaboration with the Members and looks forward to receiving from FAO ongoing updates via the Governing Bodies and the Technical Committee on progress.

In a world where the climate crisis is taking its toll on natural resources, we have no other option but to produce more food with less water. In order to achieve that, we need to work together and fast.

Sra. Carla SIERRA ZÚÑIGA (Costa Rica)

Nuestra delegación coincide en que el agua es uno de los desafíos más grandes que tenemos para los años venideros. Este elemento es, sin duda, fundamental para la agricultura y forma parte de manera transversal para todos los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible. Ante la situación actual, es vital que se apoye a los agricultores para que se dé un uso más eficiente del agua, de forma que se puedan producir más alimentos con menos agua, que se tenga en cuenta el uso adecuado para la irrigación, la postcosecha, la producción animal, la limpieza de instalaciones, la agroindustria, así como menos descarga de aguas contaminadas con material orgánico o elementos químicos en los cuerpos naturales de agua.

Sobre el párrafo 5, consideramos que las medidas que se tomen requieren acciones para mejorar la disponibilidad de agua para sus diversas funciones, pero además son esenciales prácticas como la reforestación, el mantenimiento de la cobertura vegetal del suelo y la reducción de la erosión. Sobre el párrafo 16, se requiere también apoyo técnico para que los países tengan información sobre el estado de los recursos hídricos, para que se puedan poner medidas prácticas para su uso sostenible aplicando el enfoque de gestión integral del recurso. Sobre el párrafo 19, consideramos que las acciones deben ser preventivas y para esto se requiere investigación sobre medidas para evitar la contaminación de los cuerpos de agua, tanto subterráneos como superficiales.

Con estos comentarios, acogemos el documento *CL171/6* y apoyamos para que la propuesta sea el tema del debate general del 43 período de sesiones de la Conferencia y tema bienal para los períodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores 2024-2025.

Mr KIM Hyungsik (Republic of Korea)

The Republic of Korea aligns itself with the joint statement of the Asia Group which was delivered by Thailand. The Republic of Korea agrees with the Report that recognizes the need for effective and consistent measures on overall and integrated water management in order to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030. Korea would like to raise concerns of the factors including chronic water shortage and disasters such as floods and droughts could become continuous threats to agriculture production and global food supply chains.

Integrated water resources management requires a balanced consideration to enhance agricultural production as well as to promote sustainable use of water resources. For this Korea supports activities carried out by FAO, including strengthening water management using digital information, strengthening sanitary controllable water covering biodiversity and ecosystems and strengthening global governance. Furthermore, Korea would like to highlight the integrated water management in line with the middle to long-term strategic plans, including FAO's Climate Change Strategy.

Korea has been making efforts, including the establishment of the first integrated water management plan, promotion of sustainability of agricultural water, building safety foundations for climate response, establishment of governance for cooperation with local farmers and research and development of information and communications technology (ICT)-based smart water management technologies.

We hope FAO would play the role as a platform for sharing best practices of water management policies of each country and promoting international cooperation.

Ms Marija MILIVOJEVIC (Sweden)

I am honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and my own country Sweden. We align ourselves with the European Union (EU) statement.

We thank FAO for the timely emphasis on water and water management for food security, climate resilience and food systems transformation.

We support the overall recommendations, actions and proposals in the document. Access to safe water is a human right, and adequate management of water resources is fundamental for all countries in ensuring food security and food safety.

We fully support the initiative to develop and implement climate actions for effective agricultural water management, addressing the impacts of water scarcity, drought, and floods on food systems, as guided by the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031.

Competing priorities put safe water resources under pressure, which leads to the deterioration of water quality in all sectors. To address this, evidence-based resource management is essential. As an expert organization on this matter, FAO has great potential for a positive impact on the ground.

We further emphasize the importance of close collaboration with relevant UN agencies, including the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), under the coordination of UN-Water. Linking to national pathways for transformative food systems and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) in the countries is also key to success. In addition, we look forward to FAO's active participation in the UN Water Conference in March next year.

Sustainable management of natural resources is fundamental in our common efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

In the strive towards achieving sustainable food systems, safe food and water, we welcome the use of science and innovations related to climate-smart agriculture and soil and water management, such as innovative data collection and knowledge diffusion.

Furthermore, we would like to underline the importance of FAO addressing the area of governance of water tenure, as recommended by the Committee on Agriculture (COAG).

We, the Nordic countries, restate our commitment to the proposed recommendations. Safe water and well-managed water resources are key to transforming our food systems to become greener and more sustainable.

Mr Shingo FUTAMI (Japan)

Since this is my first intervention at this Session of the Council, please allow me to have a moment to express my gratitude to the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC), and the Secretariat for great efforts to organize these Sessions. I am very happy to be here with you all in person to have a discussion on various Agenda Items, all of which are very important.

Japan aligns itself with the Asia Regional Group statement delivered by distinguished delegates of Thailand and apart from the joint statement, we have two points to make as our national statement.

First, we underscore the huge regional difference when it comes to water-related issues. Some struggle with a water scarcity and drought whereas the others are concerned more about floods or the water pollution. We envision FAO to work on all aspects of water issues in a balanced manner to leave no region behind.

In most of Asian regions we have both a rainy season and a dry season in a year. In the rainy season, we have experienced heavy rains which is prone to cause floods and thereby cause damage to agriculture.

In fact, the Asia Pacific experienced three times as many water-related disasters in 2021 as that of 30 years ago. Bearing that in mind, we stress it is not enough to just consider the total amount of water resources. Significant seasonal change in precipitation could cause both droughts and water scarcity in the same place. Therefore, an effective circulation system of water resources needs to be developed with a view to realize the resilient water resource management.

In this regard, the 4th Session of the Asia Pacific Water Summit (APWS) took place in April of this year in Kumamoto, in my country, where the leaders and the relevant ministers of many Asian and Pacific countries and the international organizations, including FAO, got together to discuss how to solve the water-related issues we face in Asia and the Pacific.

At the outcome of the Summit, leaders of Asia and Pacific issued the Kumamoto Declaration in which they expressed their support to the Kumamoto Initiative for Water announced by our Prime Minister, Mr Fumio Kishida, with total financial contributions of JPY 500 billion over the next five years to develop the quality infrastructure with our advance technology.

Japan stands ready to continue our concrete actions towards resilient and sustainable society against water-related disasters from both a climate mitigation and adaptation perspective. We envision FAO to work together with us on this matter.

Last but not least, we endorse the proposals to set water management as a topic for the general debate of the 43rd Session of the Conference and the biennial theme for the Sessions of the Governing Bodies in 2024 to 2025. It is totally aligned with the direction of our country. We place water at the centre of the political Agenda, which it said in the Kumamoto Declaration as well.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Gracias, Sra. María Helena Semedo, por el documento y un reconocimiento al trabajo profesional que está llevando el Dr. Lifeng Li en la División de Tierra y Agua de la FAO.

La Argentina tiene un particular compromiso para superar estos desafíos y, en ese sentido, ha desarrollado un conjunto de buenas prácticas y herramientas tecnológicas que impulsan la eficacia hídrica a lo largo de los distintos componentes de sus sistemas agroalimentarios, teniendo como eje el triple nexo entre agricultura, uso sostenible de agua, y seguridad alimentaria.

Mi país cuenta con un Plan Nacional de Riego 2018-2030 cuyo objetivo es fomentar el desarrollo integralmente sustentable de la agricultura irrigada en todo el territorio nacional.

Acompañando los alcances del Plan, los expertos del Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria (INTA) han desarrollado, en el marco de las buenas prácticas agrícolas, un conjunto de pautas de manejo de cultivos que brindan recomendaciones a los productores para enfrentar la combinación de factores climáticos, como sequías y/o heladas, que tienen una injerencia directa sobre el uso eficiente de los recursos naturales y la minimización del impacto de la variabilidad climática.

En paralelo, entendemos que la articulación de esfuerzos de investigación y desarrollo de tecnologías y soluciones digitales también son esenciales para la promoción de la gestión eficaz y eficiente de las acciones requeridas para el uso, la expansión, la renovación, y el mantenimiento de los distintos sistemas de irrigación. Técnicas como riego gravitacional, goteo, aspersión y *fertirriego* están siendo desarrolladas por el INTA con resultados exitosos que, a la luz de nuestro espíritu de Cooperación Sur-Sur (CSS), estamos dispuestos a compartir.

Al mismo tiempo, gracias a un enorme esfuerzo público y privado, mi país pudo diseñar la semilla de trigo HB4 con características de resistencia al estrés hídrico. Esta innovación juega un papel fundamental para la seguridad alimentaria, puesto que brinda un mayor poder de resiliencia a los cultivos frente a la irregularidad de las precipitaciones y a la volatilidad climática.

Por otro lado, en cuanto al enfoque de la temática en FAO, pensamos que, en tanto órgano que custodia los indicadores 6.4.1 y 6.4.2, sus trabajos se deben enfocar en atender las causales de estrés hídrico agrícola y, a la vez, promover el uso sostenible del recurso agua en la agricultura buscando una articulación virtuosa con ONU Agua en su rol de guardián del Objetivo 6.4. Hay que evitar trabajar en silos, pero también es importante evitar la superposición de actividades.

Abordando los debates del Diálogo del Agua de Roma, encontramos algo confusa la referencia que hace FAO a los *alimentos intensivos en agua*, puesto que el concepto, en principio, podría generar una narrativa negativa sobre la producción, o los niveles de eficiencia, de los sistemas ganaderos que generan alimentos ricos en proteínas animales fundamentales para los países en desarrollo. En todo caso pensamos que, para evitar caer en confusiones, es mejor seguir trabajando con el lenguaje acordado a nivel multilateral.

También, nos gustaría indicar que, para facilitar un abordaje holístico en la materia, pensamos que sería importante que FAO tratara los impactos de los subsidios agrícolas y su consecuencia en el uso ineficiente del agua. La lógica es simple. Si se subsidian esquemas agrícolas insostenibles y a la vez se abarata el acceso al agua a través de subsidios, difícilmente se podrá promover el manejo sustentable de este recurso.

Para terminar, en paralelo, creemos que sería importante presentar análisis sobre la relación biótica y abiótica entre suelos y agua. FAO, a través de la Alianza Mundial por el Suelo (AMS), posee ventajas comparativas para llevar adelante este trabajo.

Finalmente, creemos que es claro que estos diálogos conducentes no se deben soslayar elementos como transferencia de tecnología, creación de capacidades, financiación y derecho al desarrollo, puesto que representan la realidades básicas del Sur Global.

Ms Laura HOLDSTOCK (Australia)

Australia supports the recommendations of the Joint Meeting, and we are pleased to endorse “water resources management” as the topic for the general debate of the 43rd Session of the Conference, and as the biennial theme for Governing Body sessions in 2024-2025.

Water resources management is crucial for boosting climate adaptation and resilience as well as for achieving global food security and sustainable agri-food systems, and we welcome FAO’s increased engagement in this priority area, in close collaboration with relevant UN agencies. In this regard, we highlight the importance of promoting the intrinsic linkages of water resources management to a range of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under the custodianship of the FAO, as well as the 2030 Agenda as a whole.

As we outlined during the Joint Meeting, Australia takes this opportunity to reiterate the importance of incorporating Indigenous People’s perspectives and knowledge for water resources management. The Australian Government has made key commitments to increase First Nations’ water holdings and to ensure that the cultural authority, deep knowledge, and expertise of First Nations people are better incorporated into water decisions. We note FAO’s proposed initiatives to strengthen FAO’s work on integrated water resources management and reaffirm that Australia is well-placed to share our significant experience and expertise and look forward to engaging in future processes over the coming biennium.

Mr Foyya Yusufu AQUINO (Indonesia)

At the outset, Indonesia shares the same view regarding the importance of reaffirming commitment and actions on integrated water resources management in agriculture and food systems, in light of the current global challenges posed by climate and demographic change.

Climate change is likely to have significant effects on the hydrological cycle that affects water, food, and energy availability. The hydrological cycle will intensify, with more evaporation and precipitation, but the extra rainfall will be unequally distributed around the globe. In this regard, securing access to water for all is crucial for achieving food security and improving rural and peri-urban livelihoods.

To support global efforts towards more sustainable food security to meet the growing demand for food in changing climate, Indonesia has taken a set of holistic and strategic actions, including: develop organic farming through the application of organic fertilizer and pesticide use; improve land and water conservation and water harvesting techniques through the establishment of dams, farm ponds, long storage and canal irrigation infrastructure; develop lowland agriculture which has suitable characteristics for agriculture cultivation; expand Agricultural land based on environmental sustainability principles.

With regard to FAO’s work, Indonesia appreciates FAO’s ongoing actions and welcomes its programmatic initiatives on water that will be implemented to support member countries in advancing effective water management in agriculture and systems for food security and climate resilience.

We also welcome the work of the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG), to support members in building and developing capacities to produce data on available and actual use of

water resources for agriculture; and in close collaboration with relevant UN agencies, to initiate a Global Dialogue on Water Tenure.

Further, we encourage FAO to support countries in implementing their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and other relevant development plans, programmes, and projects contributing to the adaptation to climate change and water scarcity in agriculture. Through strengthening collaboration with resource partners, we hope for more joint proposals for projects and programmes on water scarcity in the agricultural sector will be developed to support Members' achievement of SDGs, including SDG 6, *Sustainable management of water and sanitation for all*.

With these statements, we support water resources management as the topic for the general debate at the 43rd FAO Conference and as the theme for the 2024-2025 biennium.

Sra. Natalia ESCOBAR (Chile)

Con agrado, Chile confirma su apoyo a la invitación que se ha cursado al Consejo para hacer suya la propuesta de gestión de recursos hídricos para que esta sea tema del debate general del 43 período de sesiones de la Conferencia y el tema bienal de los períodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores que se celebrarán en 2024-2025, ya que constituye un elemento esencial para avanzar en el desarrollo de nuestros sistemas alimentarios sostenibles y, por cierto, en la inocuidad de los cultivos a través de la seguridad hídrica.

Quisiéramos reiterar la importancia de la gestión de los recursos hídricos para la seguridad alimentaria y la resiliencia ante el cambio climático y, a su vez, agregar la responsabilidad de los Estados en asegurar su disponibilidad para el consumo humano y cultivos, entendiendo el agua como un alimento indispensable para la sobrevivencia humana y asegurar su calidad como un elemento fundamental para la inocuidad de los cultivos. Cantidad y calidad del agua, como alimento esencial de vida, debe ser nuestro norte.

Chile acoge favorablemente la propuesta de elaborar y aplicar medidas relacionadas con el clima en favor de una gestión eficaz del agua en la agricultura a fin de abordar las repercusiones de la escasez de agua, las sequías y las inundaciones en los sistemas agroalimentarios siguiendo la orientación a la estrategia de FAO sobre el cambio climático. Al mismo tiempo, quisiera señalar que Chile ha incluido esta temática en su nuevo Marco de Programación País 2023-2027 que establece las líneas de trabajo conjunto con la oficina nacional de FAO, principalmente para apoyar a la agricultura familiar campesina.

En este marco, saludamos con agrado las propuestas de iniciativa para abordar la escasez del agua en la agricultura y medio ambiente y la iniciativa del sistema de información integrada sobre suelos, tierras y aguas de FAO que vienen a apoyar otras múltiples medidas e innovaciones para una mejor gobernanza de los recursos hídricos.

Quisiéramos relevar el trabajo que el FIDA junto a FAO están desarrollando en relación a los vínculos entre agua, alimento, nutrición y cambio climático, así como la celebración de la Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Agua en marzo próximo para examinar los progresos realizados en la aplicación del Decenio Internacional para la Acción "Agua para el Desarrollo Sostenible" de las Naciones Unidas.

Mr HUANG Fei (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China aligns itself to the statement made by Thailand on behalf of the Asia Group. We appreciate the relevant work of FAO on the integrated water resources management in agri-food systems and welcomes the series of constructive measures put forward by FAO in response to the urgent situation of water resources governance, including the development of soil and water information systems, conducting global irrigation needs mapping, organizing a Rome water dialogue and so on.

China welcomes the pragmatic actions taken by FAO based on the relevant discussions and suggestions on the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 evaluation report at the last Programme Committee Meeting. We encourage FAO to, firstly, make full use of relevant information and digital platforms, strengthen the monitoring of global water resource utilization and governance in food and

agriculture sector and continuously improve the level of integrated water resources management and global agriculture water use efficiently.

Secondly, through water dialogue and other means to promote technical exchanges and experience sharing among Members in water resources management.

Thirdly, to carry out work within the scope of FAO's responsibilities, the relevant dialogues and process should be led by Members. China supports the inclusion of water resources management as a General Debate Item at the 43rd Session of the Conference and there is a biannual theme for the 2024-25 Sessions of FAO's Governing Bodies.

Mr Asmerom KIDANE (Eritrea)

Eritrea appreciates FAO, the Secretariat and Independent Chairperson of the Council for preparing the 171st Session. Eritrea aligns itself with the statement presented by the Africa Regional Group.

Water is essential to enter sustainable agriculture and efficient use depends on integrated water resource management, innovative solutions by addressing climate change risks and poor water governance. Hence, the main concern on FAO's Strategy on integrated water resource management for food security and climate resilience is urgency to act on climate change impact on agriculture and food systems.

Eritrea is located in the Sahel region where its location makes it prone to recurrent drought as a major agricultural challenge. Lack of enough and regular rainfall and moisture is the main limiting factor for food production. Therefore, the first priority of Eritrea has been implementing soil and water conservation programmes, both on and off farms. Hence, to mitigate these challenges, the State of Eritrea has implemented a number of soil and water conservation programmes as the construction of different size water reserves which have led to improved irrigated agriculture and increase in agricultural production.

Eritrea underlines the fundamental importance of sustainable management of water resources to articulate a strategic and current approach to water relation activities and stress the urgent need to address the links between agriculture and water quality and polishing. The year 2022 has witnessed the greatest water challenges due to climate change and the ineffective water governance. In East Africa, it took thousand of lives, destroyed villages and towns and other infrastructure, massively affecting agricultural livelihoods.

Therefore, there is an urgency to support the farmers to efficiently produce food and increase production of high value nutritional food with optimal water use. Eritrea works actively on integrated water resource management and presents the planned pragmatic water-related initiatives to address the challenges and support the transformation of agrifood systems and achievement of the sustainable development goals.

Eritrea underlines the valuable input of the implementation or integrated water resource management for food security and climate resilience and appreciates FAO for further support and consideration of Members, especially for the developing countries at country level.

Mr Oliver MELLENTIN (Germany)

We align ourselves with the statement given by Czechia on behalf of the European Union. The importance of water and food security has already been addressed in the special event on the road to the UN 2023 Water Conference, the Rome Water Dialogue on 29 November.

For Germany, the UN 2023 Water Conference is a watershed moment for turning the tide on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 implementation. Germany already contributes to the preparatory process, for example through the Bonn Water Dialogues and our support to UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and the UN Regional Economic Commissions.

We acknowledge that this topic is important and taken on board of FAO prominently for this Council and for the next FAO Conference. With respect to the planned activities of FAO regarding water, we

want to highlight that many countries already have existing institutionalized bodies for Inter-Ministerial exchange on water issues.

Therefore, we are of the view that our focus should lie on implementing existing frameworks and initiatives without duplication of work.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much Germany also for your financial support to the process leading to your activities as well as the UN Conference next year.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

We very much appreciate the document developed by the Land and Water Division and the recent valuable discussion that was held at the Joint Meeting on Greater Water Resource Management.

We note that Canada fully supports the proposal for the FAO Conference and the Governing Bodies in 2024 to 2025, to include a focus on Water Resources Management in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Canada is home to about 20 percent of the world's freshwater, of which 70 percent is easily available and we have the benefit of the third largest renewable supply of freshwater in the world. But despite this abundance, freshwater management remains complex in Canada with a vast territory, regional disparities and multiple jurisdictions and stakeholders and we recognize the essential need to manage freshwater resources to use them efficiently across sectors to ensure people have access to water and to protect the myriad benefits that freshwater provides to the environment, to our economies and to human health.

The impacts of climate change on water are clear with spring seasons wetter than normal and drier in summers, our farmers are facing challenges similar to those of farmers elsewhere in the world, and our government recognizes that water is essential for food production and is committed to helping the agriculture and agrifood sector to develop and implement innovative solutions that protect the environment, including water resources, and enhance resilience while continuing to feed a growing population.

Over the years Canada has built experience in researching, developing, and promoting the sustainable management of water resources, and this includes conducting and funding collaborative agricultural research and technology development, working with partners to accelerate adoption of practices, programming that enhances environmental sustainability and addresses climate change, and enabling effective business risk management for producers including the need to address floods, droughts, and other extreme events on agrifood systems.

Jointly with all stakeholders including civil society, the private sector and Indigenous Peoples, Canada collaborates on programmes to identify and mitigate environmental risks including incentives to support the adoption of practices that combat climate change and protect water resources.

With this in mind, we recognize and welcome the FAOs proposals to support national water dialogues and national water roadmaps.

Looking to the future, the Canadian Government has given itself the mandate to establish a Water Agency, which will foster promotion of effective management and production of water resources and eco systems in Canada, to address current and future challenges and opportunities including adapting to climate change.

In conclusion, we look forward to further engagement on this central issue in a more targeted fashion at the 2023 Conference and the various Governing Body Session in the next bi-annual.

Ms Nosipho Nausca-Jean JEZILE (South Africa)

FAO is commended for their work on Water Resources Management in agrifood systems. Also, the timely initiative to hold the Rome Water Dialogue is welcomed as a valuable contribution to the preparations for 2023 United Nations Water Conference.

South Africa believes that the responsible and viable management of water, freshwater withdrawals by all stakeholders, is not only a critical element of the attainment of the 2030 sustainable development goals, but it is also inextricably linked to climate change and the advancement of food security and is therefore central to FAOs mandate.

South Africa is a water scarce country with unpredictable rainfall and its water demand will soon exceed reliable supply. Agriculture uses more than 60 percent of our available water resources. Many other countries share similar challenges, which therefore means that we have to attend to these matters, in particular acknowledging the irregular precipitation that therefore requires innovative solutions in terms of efficient use of water.

The regulation, protection and management of water resources is therefore of paramount global importance if hunger is to be ended by 2030. The key focus areas that I outline include enhancing water productivity, rehabilitation interventions that would improve productive potential of land, protecting and restoring ecological infrastructure for the green economy, managing water under the changing climate, promoting international cooperation, enhancing research, knowledge, development, and innovation, and addressing legislative and policy gaps.

In all these areas, FAO has a critical supporting role to play to assist especially for the developing countries, with the establishment of the partnership to unlock investments in the water and sanitation sector and to effectively manage water resources, including through the development of national water roadmaps.

In this regard, it is important and appropriate that water resources management should be the topic of the General Debate at the 43rd FAO Conference, as well as the bi-annual theme for the Governing Bodies' sessions in the period 2024 to 2025, which is fully endorsed as outlined in the document.

Sra. Mónica ROBELO RAFFONE (Nicaragua)

Agradecemos a FAO por la presentación del documento sobre Gestión Integrada de los Recursos Hídricos en favor de la Seguridad Alimentaria y la Resiliencia ante el Cambio Climático. Durante el pasado Comité de Agricultura, señalamos que la intensificación de las presiones sobre los sistemas de tierra, suelo, agua dulce y biodiversidad están llegando en la actualidad a su límite. Por ello reiterábamos la necesidad de tomar acciones rápidas con una visión global y a escala local.

El Gobierno de Nicaragua reconoce los recursos hídricos como elemento transversal para el cumplimiento de las metas planteadas en los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) de la Agenda 2030, entre los cuales están la reducción del hambre y la pobreza, la sostenibilidad medio ambiental, la reducción de riesgo climático, el desarrollo socioeconómico y la salud de nuestra población.

En este sentido nuestra constitución política establece en su artículo 102 la categoría de patrimonio nacional a los recursos naturales. Bajo este principio rector en el año 2007 fue aprobada la Ley General de Aguas Nacionales y sus reglamentos con su reforma en 2020. Además, en el año 2019 se estableció la Comisión Interinstitucional y Sectorial del Agua, Saneamiento e Higiene compuesta por más de 18 instituciones interesadas.

La Comisión cuenta con subcomisiones específicas entre las que resalta la Subcomisión de Gestión Integrada de los Recursos Hídricos, encargada de desarrollar un plan de acción nacional basado en la formulación de medidas prioritarias que sirvan como respuesta a los desafíos de la gestión de los recursos hídricos sobre la base de nuestras necesidades.

Nicaragua es un país con una gran vocación agropecuaria y comprende la importancia de la buena gestión de los recursos hídricos para el desarrollo actual y futuro de este sector y su contribución imprescindibles para lograr la seguridad alimentaria. Consideramos que las dos recién aprobadas estrategias de FAO sobre cambio climático y ciencia e innovación, junto a otras iniciativas originadas por los miembros y relacionadas a la gestión hídricas, deben ser orientadas hacia la mejora de los sistemas productivos con resiliencia al cambio climático, en particular, aquellas acciones que promueven el impulso de innovaciones, aplicación de sistemas eficientes de riego, la siembra y cosecha de agua, el manejo de cuenca, entre otros, para aportar con acciones concretas a la preservación y uso sostenible de este vital recurso.

Señalamos que para realizar toda esa iniciativa es necesario que FAO continúe apoyando a los países según solicitado en sus esfuerzos en individualizar y movilizar recursos a través del Fondo Verde para el Clima, el Fondo de Adaptación y el Fondo para el Medio Ambiente Mundial, entre otros, promoviendo además la asistencia técnica cuando sea requerida impulsando la cooperación Sur-Sur y Triangular.

Con estos comentarios hacemos nuestra la propuesta de que la gestión de los recursos hídricos sea el tema del debate general del 43 período de sesiones de la Conferencia y tema bienal de los periodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores 2024-2025.

Mr Thomas John KELLY (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

The United Kingdom welcomes this Report and the focus on Water both for the upcoming 43rd Session of FAO's Conference and subsequent sessions for the Rome Based Agencies' Governing Bodies until 2024-25.

The United Kingdom is fully supportive of these Water Dialogues. We also want to ensure they are as inclusive as possible. Given the critical role women play in feeding their communities and contributing to national food security outcomes, we would like to see the specific inclusion of women as key decision-makers in the Dialogues.

The United Kingdom's Government is supporting the Global Water Partnership (GWP) to develop a simple snapshot tool to allow country governments to track water use. We are also supporting the Alliance for Global Water Adaptation (AGWA) Water Tracker. These tools encourage inclusive, locally-led, multi-sectoral, and multi-stakeholder processes that are co-designed by the countries concerned.

We have been working closely with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties (COP) 26, with the current COP27, and we want to cooperate with COP28 in the United Arab Emirates to make sure that we continue to focus on food systems and agriculture in the context of climate change discussions.

In alignment with the national water roadmap process, the COP26 Fair Water Footprint Declaration brought together 28 businesses, governments, civil society organisations (CSOs), and committed partners to ambitious water management targets such as zero pollution, sustainable abstraction, nature-based solutions, water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH), and adaptation targets.

Progress on this initiative will be measured using an improved water stewardship standard for food, textiles, and mineral supply chains in Malawi, Madagascar, Peru, and Panama, linked to demand side measures. This partnership is open to more signatories.

When discussing to irrigation, we need to be mindful to address the impact on health and nutrition, for example the risk of contamination, as water used for irrigation can increase pollution risks. This is especially important as wastewater is increasingly used in irrigation schemes due to increasing scarcity of freshwater for irrigation schemes. The Israel Ambassador also commented on this point.

Finally, the United Kingdom welcomes the specific links made between Water and Nutrition in the document. As the Chile delegation mentioned, we would welcome the opportunity to learn more about FAO's work with IFAD and WFP on nutrition and water-sensitive agriculture. That would allow us to learn lessons about how we build resistance to these stresses, focused on the links between water, food, nutrition, and climate change. This approach would also help us build up a strong evidence base for us to attract more funding, including international financial institution (IFI) funding, to support this work.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much United Kingdom also for your continued work as former Chairperson of COP27 and related to food systems.

Mr Yousef JUHAIL (Kuwait) (Original Language Arabic)

We also would like to commend the Organization's effort regarding the integrated Water Resource Management and the launch of the Rome Water Dialogue.

We emphasize the importance of this issue for us both in Kuwait and in the near East. As you know the water shortage in our region, are part of the day-to-day challenges, which we face, and therefore we look very carefully at the use of each and every bottle of water. Water is the very essence of the meaning of life, and in Kuwait we sanitize water, we purify it in order to make it as drinking water, and we use it for irrigation purposes.

However, that is not enough. We have to establish new, innovative solutions in technology for the use of water and the production of water, and these solutions should be available to all. We need proper water resource management in all walks of life, not only in agriculture.

In concluding, we aspire to a strengthening of the regional initiatives for the management of the scarcity of water and for cooperation between Members, in order to achieve concrete results which will be useful in the build up to the UN Conference next year, and we would agree to having this as part of the General Debate.

Sr. Miguel Jorge GARCÍA WINDER (México)

México da la bienvenida al documento y reconoce que el tema del agua es un tema bastante importante y demasiado complejo que requiere de acciones conjuntas para todos los sectores. Sin embargo, permítame hacer una reflexión.

Yo creo que como consejo tenemos que hacer un esfuerzo para que FAO focalice sus trabajos en un pequeño número de objetivos que resulten de verdadera importancia para el cumplimiento de la misión de la Organización. Por lo tanto, yo creo que hay que elegir objetivos que sean de mayor relevancia y evitar dispersarnos tanto porque el problema del agua cruza en todos los niveles, desde mi casa hasta la casa de cualquiera de ustedes en todo el mundo.

Para esto yo quisiera sugerir a este honorable consejo que le pidamos a FAO focalizarse en cuatro cosas: primero, instruir a FAO en participar activamente en los procesos de diálogo sobre la gobernanza global e informar a este Consejo de manera oportuna de los resultados y de los compromisos adquiridos en los distintos foros en los que participa. Notoriamente la Conferencia del Agua que tendrá lugar en marzo, la administración de FAO tiene que reportar oportunamente.

Segundo, yo creo que es importante que FAO, como dice el dicho, dedicarse, "zapatero a tus zapatos". FAO debe fortalecer las capacidades de los ministerios de agricultura. En un estudio podemos ver que el agua se maneja por otros ministerios que no son los ministerios de agricultura. Los ministerios de agricultura, en general, tienen una alta deficiencia para atender y dar seguimiento al tema del agua en la agricultura. Yo creo que es muy importante que se trabaje en el fortalecimiento y las capacidades de los ministerios.

Tercero, pedirle a FAO que fortalezca los procesos de ciencia e innovación para lograr un uso integral del agua. Este uso integral del agua no puede ser visto solamente desde el agua, sino que tiene que ser considerado dentro de un sistema que incluye el suelo, las plantas, los animales y los sistemas de producción. Tenemos que pedirle que nos ayude con eso, esa es la función de FAO. Personalmente — este es mi sesgo—, considero que FAO debe tomar un liderazgo más activo en el tema de agua de temporal o de secano, el 70- 80% de la producción se da en eso y estamos muy retrasados en la innovación y en la ciencia. Particular atención debe ser dada a rescatar el conocimiento tradicional y ancestral en el manejo del agua.

Finalmente, el cuarto punto que le pediríamos a la FAO es que se enfoque en colaborar con los Países Miembros y las instituciones financieras internacionales para desarrollar portafolios y programas de inversión para mejorar la infraestructura de riego y manejo de agua de acuerdo a las realidades y necesidades.

Una de las virtudes de ser viejo es que uno tiene memoria, es importante recordar que este tema no es nuevo, en 2013 los ministros de agricultura de toda América y el Caribe se reunieron en Argentina y desarrollaron un programa hemisférico para el manejo del agua en la agricultura. Es importante que se rescaten todos esos compromisos. En ese compromiso está con cinco temas de acción. Entonces no podemos empezar de cero y construir de cero.

Termino preguntando a la FAO algunas cosas. Primero, ¿cuánto recurso va a poner a este programa? Quisiéramos saber cuánto dinero tiene, a dónde lo va a poner y cuál es la estructura de personal que va a hacer para llevar estos programas a cabo. De otra manera serán solamente buenos deseos. Es importante que tengamos claridad en recursos, personal y estructura de cómo vamos a avanzar. Esta es una cuarta estrategia; tenemos la estrategia de cambio climático, de innovación, del sector privado y ahora la del agua que requieren una respuesta en términos de recursos y de personal.

Sin esto, creo que todo lo que haremos será una declaración de buenos principios.

Mr Addisu Melkamu KEBEDE (Ethiopia)

Let me begin by thanking FAO, particularly the Water and Land Division for bringing this document, *Integrated Water Resource Management for Food Security and Climate Resilience* in front of us.

Ethiopia welcomes FAO's Technical Briefing on the Integrated Water Resource Management for Food Security and Climate Resilience. We underscore the importance of water resource management to promote the coordinated development and management of water and related resource in order to maximize economic and social benefits in an executable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital eco systems.

Though the importance of water resource management has a universality feature, for countries affected by recurrent droughts like my country Ethiopia, it is not an alternative issue. Despite being known as the Water Tower of Africa, home to the head waters of transboundary rivers and numerous freshwater lakes, Ethiopia's water resources prove significant challenge for the growing country's prosperity.

The country is naturally exposed to highly variable rainfall, a challenge that is compounded by growing water demands, climate change and watershed degradation. Considering these facts, Ethiopia has developed a Water Resource Development Policy in 1999 to ensure the efficiency of water quality and quantity for the country's economy and the social benefits of the people.

We reiterate the crucial role of the integrated water resource management to ensure water quantity, quality and stability that enables agrifood system transformation.

Finally, as water is central in achieving global food security and nutrition, which needs an integrated approach of cooperation and collaboration, Ethiopia supports FAO's move to present this issue into the high-level debates.

CHAIRPERSON

We have concluded the interventions of the Members of the Council. I now turn to the Observers.

H.E. Frida KRIFCA (Albania) (Observer)

The challenges faced by the agricultural systems all over the world, led by an ever-changing climate, scarcity of food products and drastic changes in global food prices, were not just due to the lack of production but rather by a large scale of market dysfunction caused by war that happened in Ukraine, and the effects of which are felt all across the globe.

We reconfirm our alignment with the statement of the European Union (EU) and its position. Today in Tirana, the capital of Albania is a very big day as all the European leaders are gathered to discuss further integration of the western Balkans in the EU, but also what can be further done to tackle consequences of this aggression, from a common viewpoint and through a common perspective from and for the people.

Albania is also a Member of CIHEAM, the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies, and I am happy to share with you that as Minister of Agriculture of Albania I have been just recently appointed as President of the Governing Board of this organization, as first female of this organization being a President, and which shares the values of the collaboration through a bottom-up approach and implements the UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean in this specific field.

The last month have been a clear example of the need for an inclusive and stocktaking cooperation, the role of the food and agricultural organization as the leading agency on increasing food security in the

world, and as an interlocutor on sustainable food systems, is very much welcome in these challenging times.

Albania takes note on the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture, and we are glad to say that findings and recommendations are in line with the challenges and needs that the Albanian agricultural sector and Albanian food systems face. We share the same approach for food security in Albania as well.

I would also like to give you a little bit of an update of where we stand, where Albanian agriculture experiences a new phase of consolidation and modernization after the decollectivization of the '90s. Agriculture is crucial for our economy and development goals for more than 40 percent of people currently living in the rural space.

We are currently producing and exporting excellence in fruits and vegetables as well as medicinal plants and fisheries, to more than 80 countries across the world, and are committed to ensure that increasing Albanian exports of agricultural products are developed based on the four principles of better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life for our people.

To make this possible and as technology continues to evolve, we are dedicated to promoting innovation in agriculture, we are working on the development of fully fledged digital systems that support agriculture, food security, as well as food safety.

Resilience remains key to us, resilience of farmers, of our systems, tools, large- and small-scale agriculture, resilience of food systems, and we shall work to ensure that this is on top of our policy Agenda for the next decades.

Conflicts have and will always be a very costly option. Conflicts are disruption to everyone and for farmers in particular. Peace, cooperation, and synergies are stronger factors for success. Respect to territorial integrity, respect for international law, and common sense pay off faster and longer.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much Minister for your active role during the last FAO Conference for Europe. With that, I turn the floor to the Member of the Council, the Russian Federation.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

The Russian Federation has requested the floor regarding the Declaration that has been made by the Representative of Albania.

We have taken note of the information on the events, or the taking under the wing of the Balkan countries by the European Union. Russian Federation welcomes the integration of the countries in the Western Balkans in this regard. We would like to see at this event, a full assessment of the situation in the Western Balkan region. If the Representative of the Balkans has raised the issue of integration, well we would like the delegates that are taking part in the event to give an honest answer regarding how the Western Balkans were divided. This concerns first of all the total integrity of Serbia, which is also a country in the Western Balkans. The representative of Albania has recalled international law regarding respect for the principle of territorial integrity.

I would like to ask the following question: does this concern also the territorial integrity of Serbia, or as usual are our partners trying to apply, yet again, double standards here.

CHAIRPERSON

I do remind everybody that we are working within a mandate of FAO and not to address issues that go beyond the mandate of FAO.

Mme Traore Halimatou KONE (Mali) (Observateur)

C'est la première fois que je prends la parole au cours de cette session. Je félicite le président pour la conduite des travaux. Je souhaite une bonne session réussie à tous.

Merci au département en charge de cet important document.

Le Mali accueille favorablement l'initiative visant à aider les Membres à mener des dialogues nationaux sur l'eau et à élaborer au besoin, sur ce sujet, des feuilles de route nationales à l'appui des objectifs de développement durable.

Les états jouent un rôle premier et primordial dans la gestion des ressources en eaux. La gestion des ressources en eaux demande un changement de comportement de chacun et de tous. Le changement doit tenir compte de l'aspect qualitatif et de l'aspect quantitative.

Le Mali, comme beaucoup d'Etats du monde en particulier africain, souffre d'un manque de dispositif adéquat relatif à la gestion de l'eau. Avec sa nouvelle politique de décentralisation, le Mali s'ouvre à une Gestion Intégrée des Ressources en Eau (GIRE). Cette dynamique repose sur des principes internationalement reconnus et des aspirations nationalement sollicitées. En cela, la GIRE propose des véritables mécanismes de gestion des conflits liés à l'eau d'une part, et de l'autre part elle pourrait être source d'un développement durable. La GIRE sert de base aux différentes structures ainsi qu'aux usagers pour une gestion efficace des ressources en eau gage d'un développement durable.

Nous demandons à la FAO plus de créativité dans la recherche de solutions aux différents défis posés dans la gestion des ressources en eau.

Le débat sur les ressources en eau doit être central car l'avenir y dépend. C'est ainsi que nous appuyons l'idée de faire en sorte que la gestion des ressources en eau soit considérée comme le thème du débat général de la 43^e session de la Conférence et comme le thème biennal des sessions des Organes Directeurs en 2024-2025, et recommander au Conseil de faire sienne cette proposition pour que la Conférence l'approuve à sa 43^e session.

Sr. José Ángel BUCARELLO GUZMÁN (Venezuela, República Bolivariana de) (Observador)

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela agradece al señor Lifeng Li, Director de la División de Tierras y Aguas de la FAO, por la presentación del documento y felicitarlo por las últimas reuniones preparatorias con miras a la Conferencia de Naciones Unidas sobre el tema a realizarse en Nueva York el próximo año.

Compartimos la preocupación por la escasez del agua a nivel global y la necesidad de que exista una gestión sobre los recursos hídricos para la seguridad alimentaria y la resiliencia al cambio climático. Venezuela, como país en desarrollo, reitera su compromiso con la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible, el Acuerdo de París, el Convenio Marco sobre el Cambio Climático, entre otros marcos que hemos suscrito y refrendado, bajo nuestra visión humanista de que otro mundo mejor y más solidario es posible.

consideramos que el trabajo de FAO en este tema debe contribuir con la accesibilidad, disponibilidad, calidad y mantenimiento de los recursos hídricos, así como el acceso a la información, emprendimiento y buscando alternativas de soluciones viables para todos.

Esperamos seguir participando en los debates futuros con nuestra experiencia y aportes nacionales siempre respetando un lenguaje multilateralmente acordado en un problema donde como se señaló en las conclusiones del evento especial sobre agua del 29 de noviembre, ningún país puede decir que tiene seguridad hídrica.

Mr Marcel BEUKEBOOM (Netherlands) (Observer)

I thank you for putting water on today's Agenda and on the Agenda of the next FAO Conference. As the accompanying document states in its first line, water is central to agriculture and the entire sustainable development Agenda. If one looks through a water lens, one sees water everywhere. Water indeed is a crucial element for all sustainable development goals.

At the same time, water is a binding constraint to all. If there is too much water, or too little water, if it is too dirty, or too salty, nothing works and nothing grows. It is therefore surprising that water does not really have an institutional home and often lacks focused attention. For too long we have taken the availability of usable water for granted. Many UN Agencies deal with water, none is the prime responsible. But that is about to change. As many colleagues have already mentioned next year's UN Water Conference aims to focus political attention on water. This will be the second Conference of its kind and the first one in almost 50 years.

The Netherlands has the honour to co-chair this conference together with Tajikistan. Together we have experience with many dimensions of water, from the high mountains of Tajikistan to our low-lying delta in Europe and the small islands in the Caribbean that are part of our kingdom.

This is important experience to know what questions to ask, but also important experience to realise we do not have all the answers. The Conference intends to deliver an action Agenda, as a conference as such will not deliver the concrete changes that are needed. It has to happen on the ground, or in the water if you wish.

I applaud FAO and especially Director Mr Lifeng Li and his team for already stepping up. Last week's Rome Water Dialogue was an important stepping stone that highlighted the relevance of water for food, agriculture, climate, biodiversity, nutrition and many other themes that are central to FAO's mandate. This Rome Water Dialogue underscored the distinct roles, governments, UN Agencies, knowledge institutions, private sector and civil society have to play.

We intend to take these findings into next year's Water Conference and hope this will translate into continued collaboration afterwards.

As we all know, colleagues, water is best contained in bottles and silos, but exactly that should not be the outcome of this process. It should highlight a role of water in all existing processes, from the food system transformation pathways, nationally determined contributions, to national adaptation plans. I am happy many of your interventions were along the same lines. This gives me confidence the attention for water is here to stay. The Netherlands looks forward to work with the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), fellow Members, and all other stakeholders on this important matter.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much Netherlands for co-hosting the UN Conference next year.

Mr Mamoun BARGHOUTH (Palestine) (Original Language Arabic) (Observer)

We would like to welcome the efforts of the Organization that has placed a focus on the importance of integrated water resource management with a view to achieving food security and climate resilience.

Please allow me to share with you what is happening in my country, Palestine. The people of Palestine cannot manage their natural resources. The Agricultural Sector in Palestine is suffering from many hurdles and problems due to the Israeli occupation, which hampers the agricultural sector.

The occupation places a number of constraints on our agricultural sector – our land has been claimed, colonies built and many areas have been destroyed. Military zones have been built, hampering Palestine's access to natural resources and their sustainable use. The wall of apartheid has led to many problems as well as the destruction of farming and infrastructure.

The people of Palestine cannot manage their own natural resources due to the occupation, which steals natural resources. Eightyfive percent of natural resources, including water resources in Palestine are under the control of the Israeli occupation. This occupation takes measures that increase the level of pollution and lead to material and human damages.

The occupation pillages resources and allow armed terrorists in Palestine to perpetuate the terrorism that they exercise in the country. I would simply like to give you an idea of what is happening in Palestine. We do not accept to hear the representative of Israel say that the situation in Palestine is normal. That is not the case. On a daily basis, we face killings at the hand of the Israelis.

By way of conclusion, if we are not capable of resolving this injustice, we should at least inform the world about what is happening.

Mme Mariam ALI MOUSSA (Tchad) (Observateur)

Je remercie et félicite le Directeur Général de la FAO, les responsables tant au niveau du siège à Rome, que ceux qui opèrent dans les différentes représentations à travers le monde. Et tous nos partenaires pour leurs engagements et le développement, et leur détermination dans la lutte contre la faim et la pauvreté.

Je félicite aussi les experts de la division de l'eau pour la pertinence de données recueillies, l'objectivité de l'analyse et le professionnalisme dans la production de ce nouveau rapport sur l'eau. Comme il s'agit de l'eau potable, buvable, et cetera, le Tchad récolte une quantité énorme de ressources en eau douce avec ses nombreux lacs et rivières. Mais, l'avancement du désert, l'une des conséquences directes du changement climatique qui menace notre existence sur cette planète, rend difficile la gestion de l'eau, tant au niveau de son exploitation, de sa préservation et de sa conservation. L'exemple du lac Tchad qui a perdu presque 90 % de sa superficie est très éloquent.

À la place des grandes productives rivières, le lac Tchad, nous avons aujourd'hui, des dunes de sables ou de simples lagunes qui luttent encore pour leurs survies. Le gouvernement du Tchad et ses partenaires ont initié et financé plusieurs projets et programmes dans ce domaine, mais la force et la volonté de la nature prend souvent le dessus sur nos souhaits et nos actions humaines. La population tchadienne affectée par le changement climatique a pu dans la mesure du possible, développer une certaine résilience, face à la pénurie d'eau.

Mais nous avons été surpris cette année, par des inondations dues à une forte pluviométrie, qui a négativement affecté la vie de plus d'un million de personnes qui ont presque tout perdu, habitations, biens et récoltes, la plupart n'ont pas pu récolter le fruit de leur dur labeur car leurs champs ont été inondés par l'eau. Je voudrais ici remercier tous nos partenaires, en particulier la FAO et la France qui ont répondu positivement et promptement à la sollicitation de mon pays, lors des rencontres que nous avons eues ici à Rome, lors de la mission du Ministre du Développement Agricole, en octobre dernier.

Face aux énormes dégâts occasionnés par ces inondations, le Tchad a déclaré l'état de catastrophe naturelle. Afin de soutenir mon pays, et l'aider à juguler les effets néfastes de cette abondance d'eau pluviale, prévenir les prochaines inondations, lutter contre l'avancement du désert et sauver ce qu'il reste de nos lacs et rivières, surtout le lac Tchad qui fait vivre plus de 40 millions de personnes, le Tchad demande qu'une attention particulière lui soit réservée dans le cadre de l'engagement de la FAO dans l'ODD 6 pour garantir l'accès de tous à des services d'alimentation en eau et d'assainissement gérés de façon durable et lors de la toute prochaine tenue de la Conférence des Nations Unies sur l'eau en 2023.

Ms Yael RUBINSTEIN (Israel)

Israel left Gaza in 2005, 18 years ago. I realize it is quite difficult to finance both terrorism against Israel with Hamas help, and at the same time to build a civil society and to try to help build water systems. I suggest Palestine will decide which direction they prefer to go - build a civil society with water systems or continue with the terrorist attacks against Israel.

CHAIRPERSON

I turn the floor to the last Observer for this Item. I am not going to give the floor back to Palestine because I do not want to have a long discussion about an issue, which is not within the mandate of FAO.

Mr Matej HUDEC (Slovakia) (Observer)

I am speaking for the very first time in this Council, allow me to express our gratitude for a smooth organization and excellent coordination of you, your team and the Secretariat as well.

We fully align ourselves with the European position and European statement, which was given by Czechia in the beginning. In Slovakia, we think that the role of water should not be neglected, especially nowadays when we are trying our utmost in order to decrease the global average temperature rise, we understand the different effects, the detrimental effects of greenhouse gases on global warming. However, we shall focus as well on the role of water and its cooling effect on local, regional, national, or continental area.

In Slovakia, we are planning to implement a new national initiative which is called soil, bank of carbon and water. This initiative is supposed to incentivize those who operate on soil for increasing water retention capacity of every inch of the soil, as well as for sequestration of CO₂.

We are happy to share with all of you our expertise and experience.

Finally, let me express our full support for water as a theme for the next year's United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), as well as a theme for 2024/2025 for Governing Bodies.

Mr Ayman RAAD (Syrian Arab Republic) (Original Language Arabic) (Observer)

The Syrian Arab Republic attaches a great deal of importance on the sustainable integrated water management. We believe that it is highly important to achieve sustainable agriculture and we pin our hopes on further technology transfer to the benefit of developing countries.

We believe that the Syrian people lost a great deal in terms of rain fed and arable lands. This is due to the internal and external terrorism against Syria – external terrorism cut the Euphrates River in Türkiye and this brought about major losses to the farmers in Syria.

In addition, the American occupation in addition to its allies under the pretext of supporting Al Hasakah, this led to the lack of use of many hectares of arable land.

Other factors affected farming in the Syrian Arab Republic. Sixty percent of crops in the Syrian Arab Republic rely on wells and underground water resources and this is linked to the Euphrates River. However, the destruction of water infrastructure affected land reclamation and the investment in agriculture in general in the Syrian Arab Republic.

I will not talk at length but I would only stress the need for FAO to extend its support to the Syrian Arab Republic so that we can reclaim what has been destroyed during the previous years.

CHAIRPERSON

May I urge you to try to stay within the mandate of FAO and not to go beyond that and address issues which I think should be addressed in the Security Council.

I give the floor first, also for the right to reply, to the Representative of Palestine, followed by Türkiye and Benin.

Mr Mamoun BARGHOUTH (Palestine) (Original Language Arabic) (Observer)

I do not want to delve into politics, however when we talk about natural resources and water resources, we believe that Palestine is entitled to address this issue and relate what is happening in Palestine. Now I have talked about natural resources in Palestine. Actually, we are not given the right to use and profit from our natural resources. We are talking about agriculture and not politics. The theft of our natural resources falls within the remit of this Organization. The farmer in Palestine is affected by this on a daily basis.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to the Observer Türkiye.

Mr Hasan Enes MABOCOGLU (Türkiye) (Observer)

We reject the allegations of the presentation of the Syrian regime. Water is supplied from the Balok station to the region through water pumps which operate on electrical power. Therefore, the power cuts undermine the proper functioning of the Balok station and eventually restrain the water supply to the Shatt Al-Arab River basin (SARB) despite the regular maintenance machines at the station.

In light of these allegations against Türkiye and the Syrian allegation that the water supply to their region is deliberately cut is without basis. The allegations are motivated by an ill-intended political campaign. We are ready to work with the UN in order to address these humanitarian problems in a comprehensive and durable manner.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Observer Benin.

M. Eusèbe AGBANGLA (Benin) (Observateur)

Par rapport au thème en débat, la gestion de l'eau est très complexe, quelle que soit la forme. La République du Bénin dispose de, toutes proportions gardées, d'importantes ressources en eaux, qui, moyennant une gestion rationnelle, lui permettent de couvrir ses besoins à moyen et long termes.

Cependant, et malheureusement, les conditions actuelles d'exploitation de l'eau dans tous les secteurs de la vie, et les divers aléas climatiques amènent souvent notre pays, le Bénin, à soutenir les propositions qui sont envisagées lors du dialogue sur l'eau à Rome. Également, nous soutenons l'initiative de la Conférence des Nations Unies de Mars 2023, aux côtés des Pays Bas et du Tadjikistan pour que des résolutions puissent être prises de manière rationnelle pour une gestion intégrée des ressources en eaux dans les pays en voie de développement.

L'eau c'est la vie, compte tenu de tout ce que vous en savez.

Mr Ayman RAAD (Syrian Arab Republic) (Original Language Arabic) (Observer)

What has been stated by the delegate from Türkiye lacks of credibility. What I have indicated is accurate. The water resources in the Northern part of the Syrian Arab Republic are under the control of Türkiye and the same applies to the region of Hasaka, and all water resources coming from the Euphrates.

Those who know about the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic are well aware of this. You may be well aware of the destruction that was waged against our infrastructure and our water resources infrastructure.

CHAIRPERSON

With this, we have concluded our deliberations on the Item 5. I really would like to compliment you for your dedication and your commitment to the water management issue. Listening to your statements you have clearly shown how important the issue of management of natural resources is for sustainable food systems and achieving global food security.

Furthermore, I would like to compliment you for your discipline this morning when it comes to the time for your statements. Only three statements out of the 29 statements went over one minute overtime. I think we should continue this practice during the course of this week because we certainly will arrive at Friday evening at the conclusion of the Report.

With this, I would like to give the floor to Ms Maria Helena Semedo and perhaps also to the Director for a brief answer, but hopefully, it can be very brief.

Ms Maria Helena Semedo (Deputy Director-General)

Let me give first to Mr Lifeng Li, and then I will conclude.

CHAIRPERSON

Perhaps Mr Lifeng LI, could you wait a minute because Observer Türkiye asked for the floor. Let us not focus on what divides ourselves, but let us focus on what we combine ourselves.

Mr Hasan Enes MABOCOGLU (Türkiye) (Observer)

I do not want to go out of the topic, but I have to reply to the Syrian representation. Türkiye has always been of the view that the utilization of the water of the Tigris and the Euphrates should be in an equitable, reasonable and optimal manner in the interests of riparian states. However, it should be noted that not only upstream countries but also downstream countries in the basin have the responsibility to utilize the waters in a sustainable and efficient manner.

Furthermore, notwithstanding the claim that dams are causing problems to the downstream countries, dams are crucial structures to regulate flow of rivers, to protect downstream from seasonal floods. Without a doubt, water infrastructure investment made by Türkiye provides benefits to the downstream countries. Due to Türkiye's geographic structure with V-shaped valleys, Türkiye has the chance to construct deep reservoirs with a small surface area, which covers less surface and evaporation.

The dams on the Euphrates River have provide a regulated water supply to downstream regardless of seasonal conditions. Türkiye has been able to release an amount of water exceeding the natural flow, including in the dry season, to downstream countries.

Mr Lifeng LI (Director, Land and Water Division)

Excellencies, distinguished guests, I also thank the Ambassador from the United States of America to share her personal note, which I also share the similar experience. When I was a small kid in the village, I remember how my parents suffered from the water challenges and that is still in my mind. Then later, I witnessed all the water challenges in terms of drought, flood, pollution in other continents.

I think I heard at least 24 Members intervene, in addition to another 10 Observers interventions. I really think I hear the support to a number of the proposals in this document.

It is clear that we have to adopt a holistic and integrated water resource environment, recognizing that we cannot just stay within the water bottle, and we have to take a holistic approach. At the same time, recognizing that no one fit all solutions, and all the solutions will have to be tailored to the local context or national context, especially to try to address the three major challenges that we are facing: drought, flood and pollution.

Firstly, I see an overwhelming support to all the programmatic initiatives mentioned in this paper, and at the same time also hear very clear that FAO will continue to develop these initiatives, implementing them from the dialogue to water road map, solar, irrigation, soil and water management and green water management, regional water initiatives and water dialogue. We also need to link all these initiatives with the Strategy on Climate Change, with the Strategic Framework, with the Science and Innovation Strategy that are approved at the Organization level. Certainly, all these initiatives will be further detailed and designed and hopefully will contribute to all these strategies.

It is very clear from the water perspective and the way we look at water and climate change, the water community very often says that if carbon is one side of the coin, then water is the other side. Hopefully for the rivers initiative, we will be able to contribute from data from a capacity, from innovation, from finance, from governance perspective, those are the five accelerators developed by the UN agencies to speed up the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.

Secondly, I also heard the overwhelming support that water being the theme for the 43rd FAO Conference as well as the theme for the 2024-2025 debate by the Governing Bodies. Thirdly, also we hear the request from FAO to actively participate in UN 2023 Water Conference next year, bringing water, bringing agriculture to New York, but also bringing any solutions and mandate back to Rome to continue the dialogue with all the related stakeholders.

I am also grateful to hear the sharing of the Member States regarding their best management practice from the irrigation plan of Argentina as well as the HP4, that is ready for being skilled up, as well as the knowledge and the perspective of the local community, as well as the indigenous people from Australia and a number of other countries as well as the national water plans by Ethiopia. I cannot summarize all the best practice solutions shared this morning, I am really grateful for that and we will look for further details and also come to all the Member States in the future to seek more information and exchange. At FAO, we stand ready to facilitate this sharing and learning.

There were a number of questions regarding the substates and the collaboration with other UN agencies, we are looking carefully into these issues. For example, the collaboration with the UN agencies, certainly water is the overall coordination mechanism at the UN level. However, UN water is not the decision-making body, that is why FAO is very actively participating to the UN water and recently we started to jointly lead the country level engagement taskforce so as to support the UN water at the mechanism and use that mechanism to support countries to advance their national water dialogue and the national water road map exercise.

In addition to the UN water level collaboration, we also have a specific collaboration agreement and MOUs with the WMO, with UNESCO, CPD and UNEP, and we are also increasing our collaboration with the UNDR to try to address the water disasters, because they contributed to 80 percent of the national disasters we are facing.

I cannot summarize all the discussions, and hopefully I answered some of the questions that were raised on the floor.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to Maria Helena Semedo.

Ms Maria Helena SEMEDO (Deputy Director-General)

I would like to thank all the Members for their contribution. I think we have a very lively and consistent debate. Water is part of my childhood. I remember, I am from a country where I had to use a cup to bath, where we did not, we have a story of recurrent droughts, migration and disease, how water is important for me, as several of the colleagues here.

I also work in Niger, I know how the Sahel has been affected by drought and the importance of sustainable management of water. I just wanted to say that we can assure you that FAO will be working on the framework of the other UN agencies, but keeping in mind that we have the mandate on agriculture and being agriculture using 70 percent of the water we draw, FAO has a part and I can say an important part in this debate; but for sure working in the framework of UN water, UNEP and the other agencies. We will be collecting all the guidance we have today, the inputs, in the preparation of the team for the FAO Conference, but also the 2023 United Nations Conference on Water.

Just two points that I think are important and we did not refer today is water salinity. I believe it is important that we consider it in our debate and the solutions we have behind me someone who has specialist on water salinity and coming from Cape Verde I know how important it is. The second point is the financing. It was referred, but if you want to move this Agenda forward, we really need substantial and appropriate financing resources. We will be working in the framework with what we have, the green climate fund, the DEF and other funds, but we might need additional contributions from our Members to move this Agenda forward.

Just to conclude to say that we cannot have food security without water security. Without water security, we do not have health security. It is an important debate, it is an essential debate for our survival. Looking forward to a very fruitful 2023 water debate from Rio to New York and New York back to Rome.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Ms Maria Helena Semedo. With this response, we turn now to our draft conclusions on Item 5, *Integrated water resources management for food security and climate resilience*. We put the draft conclusions on the screen, as we do in our usual practice.

I will first read out the conclusions and then we go through them one by one.

1. The Council appreciated document *CL171/6* integrated water resource management for food security, climate resilience, and in particular:
 - (a) reiterated the response, the importance of water resources management for food security and climate resilience, and welcomed the initiative to develop and implement climate actions for effective agricultural water management, addressing the impact of water scarcity, drought and floods on agri-food systems as guided by FAO's strategic study on climate change 2022 to 2031;
 - (b) aligned the need to implement programmatic action on integrated water resource management with sufficient resources from global financial institutions, resource partners and voluntary contributions by Members;
 - (c) noted the importance of human rights approach that take into account poverty and food security monitoring, and acknowledge in this regard the importance of FAP's initiative within its mandate on the complexity of water rights, sustainable water management and allocation systems to improve the governance of water tenure;
 - (d) encouraged FAO to continue seizing the growing momentum of the 2023 UN Water Conference, including consideration of indigenous people approaches; and
 - (e) recommended FAO, in close collaboration with relevant UN agencies and within its mandate, to support Members in their request in their country-led efforts to conduct national dialogues and develop their national water road maps towards the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as building and developing capacities, technical support,

research and innovation, and to produce data on water resources for agriculture as appropriate.

With this, I now turn to the heading of the paragraph. Can we agree to the heading? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (a). Can we agree to subparagraph (a)?

Ms Marija MILIVOJEVIC (Sweden)

Picking up on what Ms Maria Helena Semedo said, I wondered if we could add, after "*food security*", "*health and climate resilience*," if that would be acceptable to all.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

No es que tengamos un problema con el concepto en sí. Sí lo tenemos aquí en FAO. No es mandato de FAO el tema de la salud, en todo caso es un tema de *healthy diets*, no *health*, en general.

CHAIRPERSON

Could we work with "*healthy diets*"?

Ms Marija MILIVOJEVIC (Sweden)

I do not want to get into a long debate on this, but it is hardly the same thing. However, yes, better than nothing, I suppose, but it is not really the same thing. Healthy diets is something else. Here we talk about sanitation and health, food safety. Maybe we could use "*food safety*". Is that better?

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to "*food safety*"? I see nodding. Then I think we have an agreement on subparagraph (a).

We go to paragraph (b).

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am still on subparagraph (a), the European Union Member States would like to perhaps include three words there, "*food systems transformation*." I am just wondering whether to put it before or after "*food security*", because it is rather more general perhaps. So, "*importance water resource management for food systems transformation*," and then keeping the rest of the text.

Mr Miguel Jorge GARCÍA WINDER (Mexico)

I am in line 8, it says, "*to implement climate action for effective agricultural water management*." I wonder if it should be the other way around, develop and implement agricultural water management in favor of climate actions. What is the cause and what is the effect? Because here climate is the effect for water, or water is the effect on climate? I think water management effects on climate. So what is the cause and what is the effect?

CHAIRPERSON

Could you repeat your proposal?

Mr Miguel Jorge GARCÍA WINDER (Mexico)

My proposal is, "*initiatives to develop effective agricultural water management for climate action*." What is the cause and what is the effect? If we want to move the climate for water, that is more difficult.

CHAIRPERSON

I think now we are going into miswording. To develop and implement?

Mr Miguel Jorge GARCÍA WINDER (Mexico)

"*To develop and implement effective water management for promoting adaptation and mitigation of agriculture to climate change*." Because that is the end we are looking for

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Le doy la bienvenida a la sugerencia de México que enriquece el texto. Lo único que sugeriría para poder ser balanceados es, en lugar de *effective* poner *sustainable* porque estamos hablando, justamente, de las tres dimensiones que creo que deben ser siempre indivisibles y presentes. Y el otro tema, a partir de la propuesta de República Checa que no tengo particular objeción, en tanto y en cuanto incluyamos el *caveat* luego de *transformation*.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

I think all additions are very interesting, apart from the fact that we will have lots of "ands" and I am a bit lost here. I would like to suggest, in line with Argentina, if we want to keep what the colleague from Czechia has suggested, we will have to put a caveat. I was wondering whether, in the spirit of conciliation and consensus, we can strike out "*transformation*" and put "*sustainable food systems*," so that we can leave without a caveat if Argentina is okay with that. Put "*sustainable*" before "*food*." "*Sustainable food systems*."

CHAIRPERSON

I see nodding from Czechia. I think, with that, we could have hopefully an agreed subparagraph. If we implement "*sustainable agriculture*", that proposal of Argentina, would it be agreeable? I do not see any objections. With this we have then an agreed subparagraph.

We go then to subparagraph (b).

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

I was just going to suggest a few commas, thinking ahead to Drafting Committee, in subparagraph (a). So, after "*food safety*"; after "*climate resilience*"; and before "*addressing*"; on the second to last line an "*and*."

CHAIRPERSON

I would say we have to leave some work for the Drafting Committee, but thank you so much, it certainly helps.

I go to subparagraph (b). Can we agree to subparagraph (b)?

Mr Miguel Jorge GARCÍA WINDER (Mexico)

I cannot agree with that because I think we need to be very clear in requesting FAO to assign the proper resources, humans and materials, to conduct this Strategy, and to decide on a strategy to come up with the resources. That is what we are discussing. My suggestion, ""*Request FAO to assign the proper resources to conduct the work in water as proposed and encourage the Organization to develop a Strategy to this end*."

CHAIRPERSON

Do you want to have that as a separate paragraph? Is your proposal to replace this subparagraph (b) by subparagraph (c), or is it a separate subparagraph?

Mr Miguel Jorge GARCÍA WINDER (Mexico)

To replace the original subparagraph (b), because it really does not say much. We already have approved and that is the action. We are requesting to have the proper resources.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

The original subparagraph (b), we can live with that if we put a word "*including*" after "*resources*." That would not be limited to those three versions of resources. About the suggestion of Mexico, as far as I understand, it is to replace the original subparagraph (b) with your subparagraph (b), we do not think we have discussed a Strategy as mentioned by Mexico in this paragraph. I do not have a problem if we start to discuss at some point, but I do not think that we have done it, so I think that assign resources is a bit premature at this point.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Me parece bien el comentario sobre el subpárrafo (b) planteado por Brasil y respecto de la propuesta de México, yo quizás entendí mal. Me gustaría que México pudiera clarificar si cuando habla de estrategia en realidad está hablando de estrategia financiera y no de una estrategia sobre el agua. Pero no estoy seguro si es eso. Es lo que yo interpreté, pero si es así, sería bueno que sea clarificado para que todos entendamos lo mismo.

Sr. Miguel Jorge GARCÍA WINDER (México)

“...contar con los recursos adecuados.” Sí, y no podemos solamente restringirlo a las instituciones globales financieras. FAO es quien necesita los recursos y tiene que desarrollar una estrategia, cualquiera que sea esta. Pueden ser recursos de instituciones financieras, del sector privado, de charities, cualquier cosa, pero es la responsabilidad de FAO tener los recursos.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

We add "*financiamiento*" before "*Strategy*," I think it would clarify it.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you, and could we not combine both subparagraphs, because I think there is support for subparagraph (b), and of course then say, "*and requested FAO to assign the proper resources*," etc. I think it is not only to get resources, but it is also to implement programmatic action. I see Mexico nodding. Would it be an agreeable subparagraph?

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

I feel like the language at the beginning of the alternate paragraph is maybe a little premature, requesting FAO to assign resources to something that does not exist yet. I worry where those resources come from. I understand what our Mexican colleague is saying that they could come from anywhere, but that is also covered in the subparagraph above, with the including, so why we would need to either try to micromanage or push them to assign resources that could come from places that would be problematic, it seems like we have not discussed this, this was noted by our Brazilian colleague, and I am a little worried about where this is going.

Mr Miguel Jorge GARCÍA WINDER (Mexico)

We are asking FAO to work on water management. FAO will require resources, personnel and structure. How do we write that in this conclusion? What are we looking for? We are already giving instructions, but what we need to do is ask FAO to develop a Strategy to implement this water policy that includes where to find the resources, what is the structure, and I recognize what United States of America said, we do not know when the resources are going to come, but somebody needs to start doing this, otherwise we are asking FAO to do more with less resources.

That has been the problem all the time. We need to protect FAO too. Within two years we are going to ask for results and FAO is going to answer that they did not have the resources, and they will be okay, and we have failed. So how do we put that? I am not an expert on writing, but that is what we need to put.

CHAIRPERSON

I think, in this respect, we have to be very careful because we have to also look to the governance, when it comes to allocation of resources, because if it goes beyond what is what is now in the Programme of Work and Budget, it has to go via the Governing Bodies, for example, the Finance Committee. Could you not say, "*request FAO to develop the allocation of proper resources*," because that I think is what we are asking FAO.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

I think we could even go simpler than that. In the subparagraph above, "*underline the need for FAO to develop a Strategy to implement programmatic actions on integrated water resource management*," then they present that Strategy to us, the Finance Committee can take that up, and we could actually move forward in the spring if they did that.

I think you could solve it possibly just in subparagraph (b), "*underline the need for FAO to develop a Strategy to implement programmatic actions,*" then we get that Strategy and we can actually move forward on something that is real. I think that could solve it.

CHAIRPERSON

I try to conclude this subparagraph, and then we break for lunch.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

One option, blending those, to take at the tail end of the current subparagraph (b), "*and requested FAO to assess or analyze the resource implications.*"

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am a little bit puzzled here, but perhaps those pieces of the puzzle may then be developed when further clearing up the text. I think that the first line, we should not perhaps ask FAO to develop a completely new Strategy, because we already have this kind of Strategy developed in the climate change Strategy.

I do not think that we should ask for the completely new Strategy on the programmatic actions. We are asking FAO to implement, just implement programmatic actions. So I would not put the new wording there.

I think that the Canadian proposal actually at the end of the subparagraph (b) is what we actually wanted, to have the analysis of the resource implications being human resources, be financial implications, and after that while going through the appropriate Governing Bodies, like Finance Committee, Programme Committee, with the impact on the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) and we can decide whether FAO needs additional resources to implement those programmatic actions.

CHAIRPERSON

Could we just live with the proposal made by Canada, because if we have the analysis, it can be brought back to the Governing Bodies and then to the Council if necessary.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

I think that could work. I just want to make clear, I did not say "*programmatic Strategy*", I just said "*Strategy*" originally, but I think Canada's proposal actually walks the line between what many of us were saying. It could actually just be at the top then, "*underline the need for FAO to analyze the resource implications of implementing,*" or however the Drafting Committee fixes that to work, and take off "*develop a Strategy*" then, because that is what we need. We need to know what the resource implications are so that the Finance Committee can take this up and decide how to figure this out, right? I am asking my Mexican colleague. I think that is what we are talking about here is getting an analysis of the resources needed so that we can take action on this. Is that accurate?

CHAIRPERSON

I see nodding from Mexico. Hopefully, Brazil can agree to it as well.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

I can leave if someone that is a native English speaker tells me that the 'so many meanings of resources' are well understood in the paragraph. Since we have resources for water and resources for money in the same paragraph.

CHAIRPERSON

No, but resources could also mean of course human resources.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

Yes, but the resources can be water resources also.

CHAIRPERSON

With that, I think we have an agreed subparagraph. Let us grab this and let us break for lunch now. We come back after lunch to subparagraph (c). I really would like to thank the interpreters again for their hard work of this morning and giving us overtime, very much appreciated. I try to stop earlier some time so that you can get back those ten minutes.

We will adjourn the meeting until 14:00 hours this afternoon. Have a very good lunch.

The meeting rose at 12:09 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 09

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.09

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

<p>Hundred and Seventy-first Session Cent soixante et onzième session 171.º período de sesiones</p>
<p>Rome, 5-9 December 2022 Rome, 5-9 décembre 2022 Roma, 5-9 de diciembre de 2022</p>
<p>FOURTH PLENARY SESSION QUATRIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE CUARTA SESIÓN PLENARIA</p>
<p>6 December 2022</p>

The Fourth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14:09 hours
Mr Hans Hoogeveen,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La quatrième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 09
sous la présidence de M. Hans Hoogeveen,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la cuarta sesión plenaria a las 14.09
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Hans Hoogeveen,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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- Item 5. Integrated water resources management for food security and climate resilience**
(continued)
- Point 5. Gestion intégrée des ressources en eau au service de la sécurité alimentaire et de la résilience face au climat** *(suite)*
- Tema 5. Gestión integrada de los recursos hídricos en favor de la seguridad alimentaria y la resiliencia al cambio climático** *(continuación)*

(CL 171/6)

CHAIRPERSON

I hope you are refreshed after your lunch break and I hope in a great afternoon in which hopefully we can make a lot of progress.

We continue our work with the conclusions of Item 5 and we are now at subparagraph (c). Can we agree to subparagraph (c)?

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

I think Brazil would prefer the subparagraph to finish in “*systems*”. So to strike out “*to improve the governance of water tenure*”.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to that suggestion?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Solo para apoyar la sugerencia de Brasil.

Ms Alison STORSVE (United States of America)

We are fine with the edit proposed by Brazil. I wondered if the beginning of this subparagraph (c), can we take out the word “*approach that takes into account*” and just say “*noted the importance of human rights, taking into account poverty and food security monitoring*”.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree with those changes? I do not see any objections.

We go to subparagraph (d).

Ms LI Xi (China)

Regarding subparagraph (c). Can we delete the first half, “*noted the importance of human rights approach and taking into account poverty and food security monitoring*”. We only say that acknowledge and we agree with the deletion from the Brazil’s proposal.

CHAIRPERSON

We have now a proposal from China to delete the first part of subparagraph (c). Can we agree to the deletion of the first part? I do not see any objections. We have agreed to subparagraph (c).

We go to subparagraph (d).

Ms Marija MILIVOJEVIC (Sweden)

It is a really small edit. I think the apostrophe between “*e*” and “*s*” should be moved to after “*s*” so that it is plural.

CHAIRPERSON

It seems small but it is important because I know many UN discussions, not only here in Rome but also in New York and Nairobi, that this is the right wording.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

We can support the move of the apostrophe proposed by Sweden. We were going to propose an additional subparagraph between (c) and (d). I do not know if you would like to hear that now or finish with (d) first.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first finish with (d) and then we go to the additional subparagraph because I know that there will be another additional subparagraph as well.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Solo para sugerir un subpárrafo que podría estar antes del (d). O depende, digamos, de lo que funcione mejor, nosotros entendemos que podría estar antes del (d), pero en definitiva yo propondría el subpárrafo y, en todo caso, evaluamos donde, por consenso, sería más apropiado. Si me permiten lo haría. Canadá había pedido primero la palabra sobre la posibilidad de sugerir un subpárrafo.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first finalise subparagraph (d) and then add two subparagraphs on the screen and we will see where we will put them.

I do not have any request for the floor on this, so we have I think agreed on subparagraph (d).

Now we go to Canada for an additional subparagraph. Please, read it out at dictation speech so that Secretariat can follow.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Preferably between (c) and (d) but that can be less tangible. It would read “*underscored the importance of science and innovation to support, strengthening integrated water resources management guided by the FAO strategy for Science and Innovation*”. While I have the microphone, would it be possible just to scroll down a little bit just so we can see how the deletion that took place on subparagraph (c) in the meantime.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to Argentina to read out the subparagraph.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Voy a leer en inglés a velocidad de dictado. “*Encouraged FAO to fully engage in the United Nations 2023 Conference on Water, as well as in other water related dialogues as custodian of Indicators 6.4.1 and 6.4.2 of SDG 6 and within its mandate, and report back to Members with relevant information regarding the discussions on water management for agriculture*”.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first start with subparagraph (e) and then we will see where we place it.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

We are very efficient, but in subparagraph (c) where I would like to go back, we were too fast. There was a little bit of puzzlement when deleting the first line of this subparagraph. I think “*human rights*” should be kept in that. I do not know why it was deleted in such a hurry because I do not see any human rights approach in the follow-up of the text and I do not understand why it was deleted. I am sorry to come back to this subparagraph, but first, I would like to hear some reasoning behind that, because we fully support keeping that line

Ms Alison STORSVE (United States of America)

On the lines of the Czechia’s intervention, I think we would prefer to keep the importance of human rights. We had suggested the deletion of human rights approach as that is, I think, not a defined term, but we would be perfectly happy to keep “*noted the importance of human rights*”.

I will just note that if this clause falls out, then, “*in this regard*” in the second line no longer makes sense because it refers to the first clause. So we do need to clean up the text if this indeed falls out, but we would prefer to keep it.

Then, if I may, while I have the microphone, where we dropped down to the complexity of water rights, it strikes us that what we are referring to here is actually water access, next to the sustainable water management and allocation. So we wonder if we can change the word “*rights*” to “*access*”.

Ms Marija MILIVOJEVIC (Sweden)

I just wanted to support what was just said by Czechia on behalf of the European Union and also supported by the United States of America to maintain the reference to human rights here.

Mme Celine JURGENSEN (France)

Je voudrais soutenir l'intervention de mon collègue de la République tchèque, pour le maintien des droits de l'homme.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

Further of consensus, “*noted the importance of international human rights conventions*” or “*international human right declarations*” or something along those lines.

CHAIRPERSON

Is there flexibility in the room in agreement to delete this to improve the governance of water? Because, I think, there was no disagreement with that. Therefore, we can at least clean up the text by deleting that last part.

Then we go to the first part. Is there flexibility in the room to agree what is stated here?

Ms Alison STORSVE (United States of America)

I think we can be flexible on the first clause. I just wanted to note that the edit we suggested for complexity of water rights and replacing the water “*rights*” with “*access*” was not reflected on the screen.

Ms LI Xi (China)

Sorry that we still propose to delete the first sentence. The rationale behind is that because we know that human rights, and of course, it is a concept that we all respect, but there might be a different understanding. I also understand the request from our colleagues. Maybe, we can make it more specific. For example, “*note the importance*”, like when they mentioned about the access to food or the basic rights to food. Something like this, instead of to use this kind of broader explanation. Otherwise, it will really make this discussion complicated because human rights is not a concept in the Basic Texts of FAO and we do not think that this is a right place to discuss it.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us keep it pending and let us first deal with subparagraph (e) and (f).

Can we agree to subparagraph (e)?

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

Still on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. On subparagraph (e), it might be useful to add also the Strategy on Climate Change because there is a big part in the Strategy relating to this matter.

While I am having microphone, back to the subparagraph (c). I have one additional word to put there.

CHAIRPERSON

We will come back to subparagraph (c).

Mr Shingo FUTAMI (Japan)

I have no objection to adding the paragraph. I have minor suggestion to make about the name of the Strategies. It is about FAO. It should go at FAO Science and the Innovation Strategy and the FAO Strategy on Climate Change.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

I am just going to suggest a comma again after “*integrated water resources management, guided by the FAO Strategy*”. We have no objection to the Strategy on Climate Change but I believe in subparagraph (b) above, potentially, we already have a cross reference to the Strategy on Climate Change. So I do not know if we need to duplicate that.

CHAIRPERSON

It is up to the Members. For me, we can keep it here, but I do not think we do as an agreement on this subparagraph. Thank you so much.

Then, we go on to subparagraph (f). Can we agree to subparagraph (f)?

Ms Alison STORSVE (United States of America)

I think we appreciate the sentiment of this addition but having not had the chance to read through the background on whether FAO is custodian of additional indicators as well, I wonder if less is more here. We might just take out the specific reference to indicators, but at the end of “*other water related dialogues*”, “*within its mandate*” so that we are a little bit less specific and then we do not need to go check the references in the meantime.

CHAIRPERSON

It is a flexibility to delete the part?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Tardamos 30 segundos en buscar en Internet cuáles son esos indicadores. No es tan difícil poder verlos y seríamos mucho más precisos y exigentes con nosotros mismos en la medida que podemos incluir dentro de los subpárrafos aquello que básicamente tiene que ver. Podemos preguntarle si le parece bien a la Consejero Legal si esos son los indicadores que están bajo la custodia de FAO y con eso podemos cerrar el tema. Si es así, se confirma lo que estamos diciendo. Me parece que lo deberíamos incluir. Y si no es así, yo no tendría problemas en ser flexible.

No es un tema de no tener tiempo para leerlo, pero podemos preguntar a la Consejero Legal si les parece bien.

CHAIRPERSON

I do not think it is a legal question but I give the floor to Ms Donata Rugarabamu.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

I would be grateful if, before I respond, you could just recap the question.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

No sé si es una cuestión jurídica. Quizás es una cuestión técnica, no estrictamente legal. Lo único que nosotros sugerimos es colocar cuáles son los indicadores en los cuales FAO es custodio. Simplemente eso. Esto podría ser contestado quizás por la división técnica y no necesariamente por la Consejería Legal. Yo simplemente interpreté que podía ser a través de la Consejera Legal pero quizás podría ser a través de la división técnica. Lo que queremos verificar y corroborar es si es correcto que los indicadores 6.4.1 y 6.4.2 son indicadores custodios a cargo de FAO.

Eso es lo único que estábamos queriendo verificar.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

Thank you very much for the clarification. I would see no barrier to reflecting the indicators for which FAO is a custodian. This is public information, which is reflected in UN instruments, as well as FAO instruments. As far as the specific indicators, my recommendation would be that we double check with

the technical departments that we have completely the correct indicator, but a reference to indicators for which FAO is the custodian, I do not see any challenge to that.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

De todas maneras, la preocupación, por lo menos para mi delegación, es que figure específicamente dentro de su mandato. Por lo tanto, si alguna delegación tiene alguna dificultad con ello, no tengo problema de ser flexible en la medida que quede claro que FAO debe trabajar dentro de su mandato específico, que repito, está ahí explicitado. Pero de todas maneras no hay ningún problema y soy flexible sobre eso si la Delegación de Estados Unidos o alguna otra pueda tener objeciones sobre esa cuestión.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Just a proposal for clarity. “*Water related dialogue*” seems particularly specific, so perhaps “*engagements*” would be a broader concept. Then, perhaps, there is a way to get through these indicators point engagements, in particular, as custodian of indicators because of those other engagements or dialogues that FAO would need to be engaged in.

Ms Alison STORSVE (United States of America)

I think that the addition from Canada is helpful. . Keep the two indicator references.

CHAIRPERSON

Would that work also for Argentina?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

No me queda claro cómo sería la redacción final delevel subpárrafo.

CHAIRPERSON

Canada, quickly repeat your proposal?

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

“Encouraged FAO to fully engage in the United Nations 2023 Water Conference as well as other water related engagements, in particular as custodian of indicators 6.4.1 and 6.4.2 of SDG 6 and within its mandate”

CHAIRPERSON

I think, with that, we could have an agreement. I see also nodding from Argentina. We clean up the text now just to make sure that we have what we want to have. Is the agreement on this subparagraph now? I do not see any objections, so agreed.

Let us go to subparagraph (g).

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

May I propose a new subparagraph before (g)?

CHAIRPERSON

Yes.

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

“Recommended FAO to step up the work of the global framework on water scarcity in agriculture to support Members, upon request in building and developing capacities to produce data on available and actual use of water resources for agriculture and in collaboration with the relevant UN bodies to initiate a global dialogue on water tenure.” This is something that was already agreed in the Committee on Agriculture (COAG). This is in reference with the statement of Chad this morning on the loss of water in Lake Chad. That is why I think this is important for us.

This was already in agreed language. I presume that may not create too many contentions here, so this is our suggestion. It is partly considered in subparagraph (h) but not per se, because there in (h) it said, “*national water dialogue*”, there is “*global dialogue on water tenure*”. So it is a bit different.

CHAIRPERSON

To be specific, I think we need a comma in the third line after agriculture. Can we agree to this paragraph, which was already agreed by the Committee on Agriculture (COAG)?

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

No comment this time. Just from “*available*” to “*availability*” on the third line, “*to produce data on availability and actual use*”.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Tengo una sola duda, pero quizás Camerún podría clarificarme. En esa propuesta, al final, habla de iniciar un diálogo global, pero en el Comité de Agricultura (COAG) ese diálogo ya se realizó, tengo entendido, en Roma. Creo que, no sé si es así cómo deberíamos colocarlo e incluirlo en este texto. Me refiero, si es correcto, y por ahí estoy equivocado en lo que estoy diciendo. Simplemente pido una clarificación sobre eso.

Mr Moungui MEDI (Cameroon)

Thank you, Canada, but I think the exact wording of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) is “*available and actual use*”. I am quoting from the COAG 28 Report. It is just a few months behind us. If we have agreed this language in the COAG 28, then I think even if we have already initiated some dialogue here, the statement stands.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and its Member states.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I do not need to repeat. I have just a little modification after the word “*agriculture*”, the second line just to add “*forestry*”.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this subparagraph with the language proposed, at least agreed by the Committee on Agriculture (COAG)?

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

As for the suggestion of our colleague from Czechia, I was trying to find here online the official name of the framework mentioned by my colleague from Cameroon. It seems to be The Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture, no forestry here. Recognising the contribution of Czechia, I think we should strike out the “*forestry*” here and keep the official name of the framework.

CHAIRPERSON

I see the Czechia nodding with that. Hopefully, also the 27 noddings behind him.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Creo que lo que yo planteé sobre el diálogo en Roma se hizo. No tengo objeciones, en principio, en incluir el planteo de Camerún. Lo único es que quería sugerir que al final pusiéramos, “dentro del mandato de FAO”. Es decir, simplemente es algo que creo que todos estamos de acuerdo porque lo venimos planteando en el contexto de toda la conversación del texto. Entonces para evitar ninguna discusión específica y mantener el texto tal cual viene del Comité de Agricultura (COAG), como pidió Camerún, simplemente incluir al final: “dentro del mandato de FAO”.

Creo que eso no debería ser un problema porque nadie pretende que FAO trabaje por fuera de su mandato, pero expresarlo tampoco debería ser un inconveniente para nadie tampoco, me parece.

CHAIRPERSON

We maintain the word “*available*” because that is the language of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG). With that, do we have an agreed subparagraph? I do not see any objections. Thank you so much.

Then, we go to subparagraph (h). Can we agree to subparagraph (h)? I do not see any objections.

Then, we have only one remaining. If you can scroll up and let me go to subparagraph (c) where we still have the brackets.

Would it be a possibility to find a way forward? What was suggested to reference two specific rights which are also found in many of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolutions. That is the right to water and sanitation, as well as right to adequate food in the context of national food security.

Would that do the trick? Instead of “*we note the importance of international human rights*” we say “*we note the importance of the right to water and sanitation and the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security*”. That is the official title.

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

Can we scroll up from the beginning of the chapeau? I would like to summarise a little bit some elements of our discussions. Since we repetitively have been quoting that in many of our subparagraphs below, if we put “*in particular within the mandate of FAO*”, we will not be repeating it all the time down there. If that may flag, I want to suggest to work along that line, if that could fly among Members. I am putting it up to you, Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first see whether or not we can agree to the suggestion made by Cameroon, and in particular “*within the mandate of FAO*”. Then, we delete in this subparagraph where we refer to the mandate. Would that be agreeable?

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Maybe just to simplify on the human rights.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first do this mandate.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

The mandate. Yes, that is fine.

CHAIRPERSON

We will delete the reference to mandate.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

We were just going to propose that perhaps “*noted the importance of relevant international human rights instruments*”. Otherwise, we get into the specific wording of each of those different rights. We can work on that too but relevant human rights instruments might be relevant to catch on.

CHAIRPERSON

Is your flexibility with China to say “*noted importance of relevant human rights instruments*”?

Ms LI Xi (China)

We talked about “*within FAO’s mandate*” but the human rights is not within FAO’s mandate. This kind of expression is not even in the Basic Texts. So I would agree that you make it more specific. I think, this is the way we can find out if we want to solve a specific problem with your specific expression instead of use this broader concept.

CHAIRPERSON

Would there be an agreement?

Ms Alison STORSVE (United States of America)

Like Canada, we were going ahead in the direction of a catch-all phrase and we would support the “*relevant human rights instruments*”. We do think that that has a belonging here at FAO. We do talk about human rights frequently in our discussions related to food security. As an alternate, rather than getting into the specific language, I think we could just say, “*noted the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*”. Then, in this regard, acknowledge to move on and that would avoid the progressive realisation bit which, I think, we have the clauses in backwards there. So if we are going to negotiate that, then we would look for the Verbatim Records. We could support either the general reference that Canada proposed or a reference to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

The European Union and its 27 Member States, close to 28 already. Hopefully, our family will not enlarge in due time in this Plenary meeting Session. On this subparagraph in particular, we support what Canada and the United States of America just said so no need to repeat all the arguments.

At the last line, given the discussion we already had in the other paragraph, I would add, “*the complexity of water access and water tenure*”. So it may just complete the whole picture.

CHAIRPERSON

Dear friends, still a lot of time for the other issues so let us not get bogged down on one issue. Is there flexibility to make reference to the Universal Declaration? I see China not agreeing to that? Is there any suggestion to get out of this deadlock? Because I cannot imagine that we will be sitting here on Friday evening still discussing this. Any suggestions?

Ms LI Xi (China)

I think that our position has been quite consistent. We find a problem we want to solve and then we express the way to solve it. That is what you propose. If we want to address the right to clean water and sanitation, this kind of issue, we express it in this way instead of enlarging it in a broader concept.

Otherwise, it will be another political debate here and the human rights is not an issue that we should discuss here. So our proposal is that still to avoid the lengthy discussion about this case and we focus on the discussion about to deal the water management issue itself. So our proposal is simple, just to delete the first half of this paragraph so that we can focus on the actual issue discussion.

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

If I may suggest something which may not be included in what is in red now, “*Noted the need to respect and protect the rights of individuals with respect to water within their national law, taking cognizance of the international relevant laws and acknowledge in this regard*” and so on it goes.

I want to quote the relevant part in the guidelines for the progressive realisation of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security. That is what I am quoting. I am just trying to adjust it here to respect what all of us want to achieve so that we do not get bogged in into declaration of human rights and so on. This is a great language within FAO.

CHAIRPERSON

Would this work for everybody “*noted the need to respect and protect the rights of individuals with respect to water within their national law, taking into account its national law and this agreed language within the rights to adequate food*”. Would it do the trick?

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

We are compelled to going along with the Chinese delegation and expressing those concerns. Certainly FAO is not the right forum to discuss human rights issues. We do not believe that human rights should be considered. What we do not like about Canada’s proposal is that the instruments... we can actual accept them or making mention of them only if they are agreed internationally.

If you actually mentioned them along with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that does not quite do it because it is rather a general declaration that covers many human rights and not just human rights in relation to water. With regard to the only way forward for us is to go along with your

proposal, which talks about specific rights. For example, sanitation rights and the right to adequate food in the context of food security.

As we go to Cameroon's proposal, I think that it leads us to an even greater impasse because if we mention of the national law in the context of water, when it comes to the protection of the rights of individuals, well, if we use that, we are going to have to consult our Capital.

CHAIRPERSON

What was proposed by Cameroon is agreed language within FAO and within the Right to Adequate Food guidelines. Would it be a way out to use that sentence?

Mr Mina Rizk ATTIA RIZK (Egypt)

We have been carefully following the debate on this subparagraph specifically, and we would like also to rate our possession in this Council Session as well as in previous Council Sessions that we are very keen on limiting the discussions and mandate of FAO to the topics where it lie within the mandate of FAO. That is why we want to refrain from the politicisation of the paragraphs mentioned in the Report and to be more specific.

We understand if the question is if the universal declaration of human rights is important. Yes, it is important but the question is, is it important to make the reference to the universal declaration of human rights here? I do not see the relevance in this paragraph specifically. In the spirit of trying to reach consensus and move forward, I think we can build up on the work from the proposal made by the dear colleague from Cameroon and putting into consideration also the position of the colleague from the Russian Federation.

I think, maybe I can also make a suggestion. I am not sure if it will fly or not but I will make it trying to reach consensus. We can stop right after the word "*water*". So we can say "*noted the need to respect and protect the right of individuals with respect to water*".

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

In response to the Russian Federation's comment, I think we have been entirely comfortable with "*relevant international human rights instruments*", if that makes it more broadly applicable. The point there that it is the relevant ones is trying to narrow it down. Obviously, we are happy with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but try to bring it back to the mandate to be "*relevant international human rights instruments*" or it could be "*relevant human rights frameworks*".

I think we could go with that as well. I think we would be more comfortable working off that, than subparagraph (d), recognising that (d) might be agreed within the FAO context. But if we are speaking of rights, we would rather go to the internationally agreed frameworks for human rights. In that regard, we recognise a right to safe drinking water, and not necessarily something that is a bit broader and wide open like rights of individuals with respects to water.

So I think, at that point, we would rather work off subparagraph (c) and add specificity there, but we continue to believe that "*relevant international human rights instruments*" or "*frameworks*" is a connection that we can make safely.

CHAIRPERSON

I am looking for see how we can get out of this deadlock because what I saw was it does not help us get nearer, and I do not know that we all want to work in New York. I do not transform the Council into the UN General Assembly (UNGA) discussing the UN rights, but I give the floor to Cameroon followed by the United States of America.

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

This topic, when it concerns water, it has always been a very difficult topic here in FAO. If we start now, I am sure we will not come out of it, because there are so many interests at stake. We better stay within what is agreed already and work on that. If you want to bring in language which sometimes could not tally with the interest of some Members, I am afraid, we will be here until tomorrow.

I am really pleading with some of our colleagues to come to a consensus on some of these issues. What we suggested, we felt we should not go out of what was already agreed. That is why we went, we dug into the guidelines to support the progressive realisation of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security.

I understand that probably the Russian Federation will like to consult, but I have confirmed that it is something already agreed and we spent nights and nights here negotiating the right to food. If we came up with this, it was upon very tough negotiations and it may not be today put in limbo and then we go for another aspect of it.

Please let us work on subparagraph (d) because there are continued and acknowledge in this regard in pursue of FAO's initiative on the complexity of water access and water tenure, sustainable management so that it fills in totally in the sentence and quoting relevant human rights. Everybody can go and do it.

CHAIRPERSON

I do remember the many nights we spent here in Rome on the right to adequate food guidelines because it was part of the negotiations as well. We had to find a way out. We had the UN Water for Food and Ecosystems Conference, which was organised by Ethiopia and the Netherlands in 1999, where we had also a long debate on this and we could find a solution by making a reference only to the specific items which refer to the mandate of FAO.

But perhaps, you can help us with the subparagraphs. We refer to the subparagraphs of the voluntary guidelines so that everybody knows it is coming from or as referred to in the voluntary guidelines of the progress realisation, etc. But we have to find a way out, otherwise, we get bogged down and we are already now losing a lot of time.

Ms Alison STORSVE (United States of America)

Quite like to Canada's suggestion "*relevant human rights instruments*" or "*relevant international human right instruments*", if that does not work, we could work from your suggestion that "the right to water and sanitation" as a component of the progress of realisation of the right to food in the context of national food security.

However, I think we are missing something here., I think the right to water and sanitation is part of the right to adequate standard of living, so I do not think we have the correct terminology. . If we are going to specifically quote, I think we just have to get it correctly captured.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

I would like to respond to the distinguished of Canada. The problem for our delegation with this proposal is "the relevant instruments on human rights". That is a very understanding in our view. They are relevant but they are instruments in the area of human rights which, for example, are adopted in the European Union (EU) and these instruments exists. There are other instruments on human rights which are also relevant but which apply to the Russian Federation or apply to other countries.

Each country or different groups of countries may have their own relevant human rights instruments. So in this case, the Council using these wording would open the door to take into account all human right instruments without explaining who they apply to, where they apply or what their scope is. So for us, it is important if we are not going to refer to "*relevant human rights instruments*". If we are going to make that reference, we need to explain that they are universal and agreed upon at the intergovernmental level. That is the problem with this wording that we have.

Now, as for the proposal on subparagraph (d), as we already said, if there is consensus in the room regarding this wording, I am prepared to consult with Capital. I am not rejecting this wording but at this time, I have doubts. I understand that it is agreed but this wording is taken from other instruments with different scope and we are trying to put it here in the text of the counter recommendations.

I would need additional time for that to control it with Capital. I am not rejecting it. If there is consensus in the room on this wording in subparagraph (d), I am prepared to consult. Although, the

proposal by Egypt of having the end of the sentence after “water”, in this case would make work easier since it would reduce that time of having to seek instruction.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

I would like to suggest we start with “*noted the intrinsic links between human rights and integrated water resource management*” and then we continue and acknowledge in this regard.

I make this proposal taking into account an FAO published document called *The Right to Water for Food and Agriculture*, which goes into a discussion about the links between integrated water resource management and a range of human rights. I think it shows that human rights are linked through to water. I think it shows that the FAO is considering this as a part of their mandate and it just highlights that having access to water is important and is a basic human right.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

On behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. I think that when we agreed on the old Sustainable Development Goal in 2015 by Resolution already in the preamble actually, we set all of the states. They seek to realise the equal rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

We already actually agreed upon that. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is an Organization within the whole United Nations system. We are rather discussing something which we already agreed on the general level. There is no need to find whatever other language and just to put simply human rights there in line with the resolution on sustainable development goal in line with the Agenda 2030. It is a general comment, so let us work on the the last proposal from Australia to find the agreement while acknowledging the importance of human rights and the water issue we are discussing right now.

CHAIRPERSON

I am looking to a compromise. Would the proposal of Australia bring us to a compromise?

Ms LI Xi (China)

We appreciate both the Cameroon and Australia’s contribution to finding a way out, but we want to go back to the starting point while we are sitting here to solve the providence. What is the problem we want to solve? If we say the right to water, nobody will question that and I think that this expression is simple and acceptable. This is exactly the providence we want to solve, but if we broaden this concept into a large human rights issue, this is something that we need to discuss just like the other delegates mentioned about.

What is the different interpretation for the human rights? To which extent and in which aspects? We need to protect it in which way will be totally irrelevant topic of Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations’ mandate. This is what we are concerned about. Here we want to go back to our discussion principle; we will try to solve the problem itself instead of focusing on tweaking the words to saying that different expression.

All of this expression is saying that only noted, noted this and noted that, without actual requesting what Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations should be doing. If we really want to have some action to be implemented here, we say what we want from Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and what is our starting point? That is to guarantee the right to water and that’s it. This is our position; we want to make it as simple, easy, acceptable, and understandable. Here we want to go back to the cleanest version, to delete the first sentence and keep the things and expressions simple and easy.

CHAIRPERSON

I make a last attempt to see whether or not we get out of it, otherwise we continue and we come back to it. Could we not work with the old (d), saying “*noted in line with Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals, the need to respect and protect the right of individuals with respect to water*” and then go on, “*and acknowledged*” etcetera. Then I think we have everything that we want to see in it. Would that not do the trick?

Ms LI Xi (China)

We agree with the addition you added, but please forgive my ignorance, may I ask that where you mentioned that “*protect the right of individuals with respect to water*”, it has already been used within FAO, it is in which context and in which document has been used within FAO?

CHAIRPERSON

Can put a footnote to the document of FAO here?

Ms LI Xi (China)

Could you please just tell us what is that?

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

It is Guideline 8 of the Voluntary Guidelines, so we can put that in the footnote.

CHAIRPERSON

My idea would be to make the footnote and make the reference to that paragraph. It is also the document of FAO which I just saw and that is in the text in the computer, we can also make a footnote too.

No, it is better to just “reflect to”, because that is an agreed document, the paragraph on the right to adequate food, as a footnote so then it is agreed language.

Ms LI Xi (China)

I just want to confirm with you, this is a publication reviewed by the Governing Body and agreed by all the Members?

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, the Right to Adequate Food is a document which was adopted by not only the Council but also the Conference.

Ms LI Xi (China)

We can accept that.

Ms Alison STORSVE (United States of America)

I believe it is a document of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)? Which I think we just need to be careful. Is it a FAO document or a CFS document?

CHAIRPERSON

It is a FAO document; it is not a document of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

Ms Alison STORSVE (United States of America)

Okay, thanks.

CHAIRPERSON

It was part of the negotiations in different capacity, but it is a FAO document. Not only a document but it is the Voluntary Guidelines, which were adopted by Council and Conference. Of course in the footnote we make the exact reference.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

Just a question if I may, are we saying “*protect the right*” or “*protect the rights*”? Can we make sure that the language is correct?

CHAIRPERSON

“*Rights*”, plural.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

Not being a native English speaker I was wondering if we do not need commas? “*Noted, in line of Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals,*”.

CHAIRPERSON

We get all specialists of commas now here in the Council. I think with this we have an agreement on this subparagraph, and with that, we have an agreement on the conclusions of Item 5. Thank you so much, we are making good progress so let us now maintain this good progress and go to Agenda Item 6.

Item 6. Technical Committees

Point 6. Comités techniques

Tema 6. Comités técnicos

Item 6.1 Report of the 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems (13-15 July 2022)

Point 6.1 Rapport de la soixante-quinzième session du Comité des produits (13-15 juillet 2022)

Tema 6.1 Informe del 75.º período de sesiones del Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos (13-15 de julio de 2022)

(C 2023/23)

CHAIRPERSON

We start with the Reports of the Technical Committees, and we start with Sub-Item 6.1, *Report of the 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP)*, which you can find in document C 2023/23. An introduction was provided by the Chairperson of the CCP, Ambassador Yaya Olaniran, and it has been circulated to you.

Introduction to Item 6.1: Report of the 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems (13-15 July 2022)

Ambassador Yaya Adisa Olaitan Olaniran, Chairperson of the Committee on Commodity Problems

The 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) was held from 13 to 15 July 2022 in hybrid modality. The Report is submitted to the Council under document C 2023/23.

The agenda of the 75th Session covered four substantive areas: i) World agricultural commodity markets; ii) Policy matters; iii) Programmatic matters; and iv) Governance matters.

Under world agricultural commodity markets, the Committee expressed concerns about the soaring prices of food, energy and inputs, particularly fertilizers, and high transportation costs, resulting from the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 containment measures and, more recently, the conflict in Ukraine. It expressed appreciation for FAO’s work on market transparency, and acknowledged the positive role of the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) in this regard. Moreover, the Committee reviewed and assessed the trends and prospects for food and agricultural commodity markets over the next decade. It expressed appreciation for FAO’s efforts to conduct ex-ante analysis and foresight studies, and requested FAO to continue and further strengthen its partnership with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in this area of work.

Under policy matters, the Committee took note of the report and the findings of the 2022 edition of *The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets (SOCO)* on the theme “The Geography of Food and Agricultural Trade: Policy approaches for sustainable development”. It underlined the role of trade in the needed transformation towards more sustainable food systems as well as the importance of a freer, fairer, predictable, non-discriminatory and rules-based multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization (WTO) and consistent with its rules, and recalled that sustainable agricultural development and sustainable production systems depend on local conditions and other relevant factors. The Committee expressed appreciation for FAO’s work in the area of agrifood trade, and underlined the importance of the technical assistance provided to Members. It appreciated the close collaboration between FAO and WTO, in line with their respective mandates. The Committee also

reaffirmed the importance of not imposing export prohibitions or restrictions in a manner inconsistent with relevant WTO provisions.

Under programmatic matters, the Committee appreciated FAO's achievements in the field of markets and trade during the 2020-21 biennium, acknowledged the identified global developments and trends that are foreseen to influence its work, and endorsed the presented priorities of FAO's work in these fields in the context of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and the Medium Term Plan 2022-25. It also expressed its appreciation for the work conducted by the Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS), acknowledged its increased significance and relevance, and appreciated its collaborative efforts.

Under governance matters, the Committee endorsed the Report of the 31st Session of the Intergovernmental Group (IGG) on Oilseeds, Oils and Fats, hosted by Indonesia and held virtually on 4-5 March 2021 and 5 July 2022, and the Report of the 24th Session of the IGG on Tea, held virtually on 23 February 2022.

Finally, the Committee reviewed the progress report on the implementation of its Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2021-23, approved the MYPOW for the period 2022-24, and provided guidance on the future work of the CCP.

I am pleased to present to you the Report of the 75th Session of the CCP for endorsement, and any guidance you may wish to provide.

CHAIRPERSON

I would like now to open the floor to the Members.

Ms Alison STORSVE (United States of America)

We very much appreciate the need for speed and moving on to the next Item. I did check quickly with my delegation and we did issue an explanation of position on the language that was described as "agreed language" in the last Item. We will go back to Capital for guidance, but in order not to have an issue at Report adoption time, we wanted to flag that there was actually an explanation of position on that language and it was not considered agreed text.

CHAIRPERSON

We will put the explanation of position into the text.

Ms Alexandra VALKENBURG (European Union)

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. The following countries align themselves with the statement; Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia, San Marino, Türkiye and Ukraine.

First of all, let me thank FAO for organising the 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) and for facilitating smooth and constructive discussions during the Sessions. In line with the conclusions of the discussions, in particular on the impact of Russian Federation's war against Ukraine in paragraph 27(d) of the *Report of the 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems*, we are calling upon FAO to access in a sound analytical study, the impacts of the war on market developments, and specifically monitor its affects on the availability and affordability of agricultural commodities, which are key concerns for global food security challenges.

The European Union and its Member States reaffirm the need to avoid export restrictions, particularly considering the important role of trade and markets in the context of increased food prices. The Committee also highlighted the need to ensure transparency in market developments, which could help avoid some of the problems mentioned during the discussions. From this perspective, we would like to reiterate the importance of open, predictable and rules-based trade for agricultural commodities and food items.

The European Union and its Member States underline the importance of the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS); hosted by FAO, and the public information it can provide to improve the predictability of market developments. We are supportive of proposals to include information on

fertilizers in the AMIS. We also express our appreciation for FAO's work on agrifood trade, including the provision of up to date information and data analysis in line with FAO's mandate. We also acknowledge the continued good collaboration with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the International Commodity Bodies and World Trade Organization (WTO), in full respect of the respective mandates.

With these comments, we recommend that the council endorse the *Report of the 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems*.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

En primer lugar, quisiera reconocer el valioso trabajo que se realizó durante el 75° período de sesiones del Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos (CCP), guiado por el Sr. Gustaf Daud Sirait de Indonesia, quien condujo de forma destacable las deliberaciones.

Entendemos que el punto nodal de este Comité radica en el rol clave del comercio internacional en los mercados alimentarios y agrícolas, sobre lo cual consideramos que existe aún un enorme potencial de trabajo que puede realizar la FAO, para seguir enriqueciendo las discusiones en un contexto de crisis superpuestas y de diversa naturaleza y una aceleración de la inseguridad alimentaria global, especialmente en países en desarrollo.

En este sentido, nos parece oportuno mencionar algunas de las conclusiones que consideramos merecen mayor atención:

Valoramos que la FAO haya reconocido que el comercio, junto con una productividad eficiente, mejorada y sistemas alimentarios sostenibles, desempeñan una función esencial en la mejora de la seguridad alimentaria mundial en todas sus dimensiones, a la vez que promueve el desarrollo agrícola y rural.

Celebramos que se haya destacado la importancia de contar con un comercio agrícola más transparente, en el marco de un sistema multilateral de comercio basado en reglas, más libre y más justo, predecible y no discriminatorio, al amparo de la Organización Mundial de Comercio (OMC) y sus reglas.

Apreciamos el papel positivo desempeñado por el Sistema de información sobre el Mercado Agrícola (AMIS) y sus miembros, en el monitoreo de los mercados, la mejora hacia una mayor transparencia en los mercados agrícolas, y las posibles acciones que pueden compartirse en materia de políticas.

A futuro, esperamos contar con más evaluaciones de productos básicos y perspectivas de mercado basadas en datos, así como también aspiramos a que se continúe estrechando la colaboración con OMC, a fin de fundamentar más y mejores debates sobre políticas entre los miembros.

Con estos comentarios, solicitamos que el Consejo haga suyas las conclusiones y recomendaciones del informe del Comité.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

Brazil supports the findings and recommendations of the *Report of the 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems* (CCP) presented to the Council today. In the last few years, the world agriculture commodity market has been impacted by different problems and challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine.

We praise FAO for all its technical work regarding the elaboration of market and trade analysis. Insufficient knowledge about how international markets work, especially in critical times, can assimilate the adoption of undesired, restrictive measures. It is very important that countries refrain from adopting unilaterally restrictive trade measures which pose market uncertainty and threaten food security all around the world.

Access to international agriculture markets are crucial to overcome underdevelopment, poverty and hunger. However, high tax, import quotas and non-tariff barriers still abound. Furthermore, developed countries must do much more in order to eliminate huge subsidies in all the product and trade distorting measures in the agriculture sector. Free and non-discriminatory agricultural trade is

paramount in order to ensure world food security and strengthen the resilience of farmers, especially in developing countries.

In this context, my delegation would like to recall FAO's Council discussions last June when Members, and I quote; *“underline the importance that in line with the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules and in keeping with their commitments under the WTO agreements, Members correct and prevent unjustified trade restrictions and distortions as well as eliminate and do not create unnecessary and unjustified barriers to trade in agriculture markets”*.

Mr Benjamin ROSS (Australia)

Australia expresses its appreciation to the Chairperson of the 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP), and we are pleased to endorse the findings and recommendations of the Report of the 75th Session in full.

We take this opportunity to again commend FAO for its consistent science and evidence-based advocacy for open markets and well-functioning supply chains, including through the provision of monitoring, analysis, and policy advice. This remains vital to effectively coordinate global efforts to respond to the deteriorating food security situation.

Going forward, as agricultural and input markets and trade will remain critical global issues of concern, we highlight that the contributions of the CCP must remain central to FAO's overall efforts to achieve Zero Hunger and we look forward to actively contributing over the coming biennium.

Mr Abdul Rahman ABDUL WAHAB (Malaysia)

We would like to first give the floor to Indonesia who will deliver the statement of behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We will come back for Malaysia's statement.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to Indonesia to give statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

Mr Purnajaya TRI (Indonesia)

Indonesia wishes to deliver this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We appreciate the findings and recommendations contained in document *C 2023-23* on the Agenda Item. We congratulate the Committee on the celebration of its 75th anniversary, as it was the first Technical Committee to be established at FAO. It is therefore our common responsibility to continue working together to make the work of Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) more impactful. In this regard, there are at least three points where we can assist as follows.

First, to support CCP to act with foresight to determine its priorities. Market transparency, assessments and coordination are critical for reducing uncertainty in today's and tomorrow's global agrifood markets. This is where the work of CCP matters; to inform better decision making and innovation in today's global food insecurity.

In this regard, Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS), hosted by FAO, continues to play a leading role. Continuous assessments on the short, medium and long-term prospects for agricultural commodity markets are also vital. The work should also extend beyond market monitoring and outlook and should include trade policy analysis and assessment of the linkages between agrifood, trade and sustainable development.

Second, to support the CCP to keep markets open and ensure a smooth flow of trade. In this context, we welcome that International Monetary Fund (IMF) executive board approved a food shock window which was probably based on FAO's proposal for a food import financing facility as an important step to ease the burden of soaring food import costs among low income countries. FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative should also be supported as a useful platform to promote trade, food security and nutrition by linking food surplus regions with those in deficit.

Lastly, to support the CCP toward more policy approaches for sustainable development. We recognise the positive contribution of food and agriculture products in trade for promoting economic growth, social wellbeing and environmental sustainability objectives. This is why we support future additions

of the State of Agricultural Commodity Markets to touch upon these important aspects in a balanced and comprehensive manner.

In conclusion, the Asia Regional Group stands ready to continue working together in an efficient, effective and coherent manner to make the work of the CCP even more impactful. With this statement we support and endorse the *Report of the 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems*.

Mr Abdul Rahman ABDUL WAHAB (Malaysia)

Malaysia associates itself with the Joint Statement of the Asia Regional Group, which was delivered by Indonesia.

Malaysia appreciates the comprehensive and insightful of the Report of the 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems, document *C 2023/23*.

Malaysia endorses the findings and recommendations of the 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems and in particular, places great interest on the State of Agricultural Commodity Markets and update on the World Trade Organization (WTO) agricultural negotiations and developments in regional trade agreements related to agriculture.

We join many in calling on FAO to continue supporting its Members in the implementation of these outcomes to foster a freer, fairer, predictable, non-discriminatory and rules-based multilateral trading systems, under the WTO and consistent with its rules, which in our perspective will accelerate the achievements of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1 and 2.

On the Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture (GIEWS), we support the recommendations for further communicating of the information and tools, as well as data dissemination provided by GIEWS to support Members and other stakeholders, and the provision of capacity development support to users. We opine that with intensified technical support to users on the ground, the GIEWS can bring more impactful outcome.

Turning now to governance matters. We applaud the successful conclusion of the Report of the 31st session of the Intergovernmental Group on Oilseeds, Oils and Fats (IGGOOF) hosted by Indonesia and held virtually from 4 to 5 March, 2021 and on 5 July, 2022. Like many Members, we underscore the importance of sustainable production and trade of vegetable oils in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its goals, in particular taking into account the latest global food crisis.

We fully support the suggestion to include an agenda item on sustainable vegetable oils production in support of, in particular SDGs 1 and 2 in a forthcoming session of the IGGOOF because vegetable oil is one of the solutions to reduce undernourishment towards achieving global food security including in Malaysia. We also echo the request for the IGGOOF to continue discussions to identify possible actions that vegetable oils including palm oil can continue to play in achieving the SDGs.

Palm oil production and palm oil exports have been major factors in Malaysia's ability to reduce absolute poverty in the country. The Malaysian palm oil is produced in a sustainable manner and its industry is committed to produce palm oil in conformity with sustainable principles and criteria under the Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) production certification scheme. MSPO is the national certification where oil palm plantations, independent and organised smallholders as well as palm oil processing facilities to be certified against the requirements of the MSPO Standards. The MSPO was implemented on a voluntary basis since 2015 and undertaken mandatory from January 2020.

Malaysia strongly commends the efforts towards advancing research and development (R&D) in agriculture and welcomes support in technology transfers, talent development and financial investment through collaboration among FAO Members.

Ms Ekaterina VYBORNOVA (Russian Federation)

The Russian Federation supports the *Report of the 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems* (CCP). We would like to highlight the need to support the constant work to support agrifood food chains and to abstain from unilateral sanctions when it comes to combating speculation in global agricultural markets. At the same time, the Russian Federation dissociates itself from point 9, subparagraphs (i) and (j), point 11, subparagraph (d), and point 26, subparagraph (d) of the Report.

We feel that in agreeing on these points the Committee exceeded its mandate as well as the mandate of the Organization as a whole. The Committee and FAO do not have the authority to qualify the conflict in Ukraine as a war. Authority to adopt such a decision falls to the United Nations Security Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations.

What is more, in the decision of the 169th Session of FAO Council, referred to by the Committee in point 9 subparagraph (j), which was adopted by a vote, the conflict in Ukraine is also not referred to as a war, thus the CCP, which is a Technical Committee, allowed itself to interpret the decision of the 169th Session of the Council.

Russian Federation expresses itself and will continue to express itself in favour of close adherence by the Organization; its governing bodies and its technical bodies, close adherence to the mandate of FAO. Thus, we must express our position; we ask that it be reflected in a footnote to this point.

Mr Sean COX (United States of America)

Thank you to FAO and to the Members of the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) for their work on this Report.

The United States welcomes the CCP Report and its recommendations and appreciates the Committee's continued focus on factual analysis. The Report makes clear that trade, along with efficient and enhanced productivity in sustainable food systems, plays a vital role in improving global food security in all its dimensions.

The United States concurs with this conclusion and supports further work in the CCP to highlight the positive contributions of trade and sustainable productivity growth for food security. FAO provides a strong platform for identifying the challenges facing agriculture as well as the problems that countries are currently facing in agriculture production, trade, distribution, and consumption today.

We remind Members that any discussion on what World Trade Organization (WTO) Members should be negotiating in agriculture must be undertaken at the WTO. We also support FAO's work on data and transparency, including the short and long-term commodity outlooks and FAO leadership in the area of food price monitoring and analysis through Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS).

We urge our fellow Members to commit to open and transparent sharing of market data to improve global coordination. Increased transparency, predictable policies and robust information systems are needed to increase market reliability. We look forward to working with the new Chairperson from Nigeria, Ambassador Mr Yaya Adisa Olaitan Olaniranduring the next biennium. Finally, we note that the CCP Report properly emphasises FAO's role in monitoring and analysing the impact on commodities of Russian Federation's illegal war in Ukraine on global food security.

Sra. Natalia ESCOBAR (Chile)

Chile apoya las conclusiones y recomendaciones del Informe del 75° período de sesiones del Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos. Tal como señalamos ayer, nos parece fundamental instar al comercio abierto, transparente, con respeto a las reglas de la Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC), en especial, el comercio de alimentos y, en particular, el comercio agrícola libre y no discriminatorio.

Fortalecer los sistemas alimentarios y las dietas saludables requiere de nuestro compromiso con el desarrollo de mercados agrícolas fuertes y sustentables, así como los esfuerzos de nuestros Estados para potenciar la agricultura familiar campesina. Muchas gracias.

CHAIRPERSON

I think the most focused statement until now in the Council.

Mr Shingo FUTAMI (Japan)

Japan fully aligns with the Asia Regional Group joint statement delivered by the distinguished delegates of Indonesia. We have four points to make.

First, Japan takes note with appreciation of what has been achieved by FAO through its excellent work on commodity markets in trade during 2022-2021 with particular attention to FAO's new activity to

develop the guidelines to help developing countries increase the resilience of their agriculture supply chains against a variety of shocks such as COVID-19, conflicts and natural disasters. We fully support its launch event by Agrifood Economics (ESA) and Markets and Trade (EST) of FAO to be scheduled to convene on the next Monday 13 December.

Second, we stress the significance of market transparency and of timely and credible market information. In this regard, we highly appreciated the G20 Agriculture Market Information System, AMIS, for its positive role to play in enhancing market transparency for agriculture products and its inputs and policy response for food security.

Also, Japan echoes, with the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP), the expressed concerns about soaring prices of food, energy and imports, particularly fertilizers. High transportation costs and the heightened concerns of our world food security as a result of the disruption caused by the COVID-19 contamination measures and more recently, the war in Ukraine.

Last but not least, Japan underscores the importance of a freer, fairer, predictable and non-discriminatory rule based multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization (WTO) in consistence with its rules for promoting the agricultural and the rural development of contributing to achieving food security and ending malnutrition in all its forms.

With these observations, I shall end my intervention. To conclude, we endorse the Report of the CCP.

Ms LI Xi (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China aligns itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

We welcome the *Report of the 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP)* and appreciate the comprehensive review of the CCP on the developments in International Agriculture Commodity Markets, Mid-Term Agriculture Outlook 2022-2031 and emerging issues, and on the State of the Agriculture Commodity Market 2022, as well as the associated recommendations.

Moreover, China highly appreciates FAO for providing its Members with comprehensive, accurate data and market analysis outlook and encourages FAO to further leverage its crucial role as the most important global agrifood technical platform and knowledge centre so as to timely provide its Members with public goods on food price, grain demand and agriculture commodity market outlook.

Finally, China supports the CCP in conducting its work in accordance with its term of reference and its multiyear programme of work.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Canada welcomes the Committee on Commodity Problems' (CCP) Report and the analysis carried out by the Secretariat to both prepare the State of Agricultural Commodity Markets' report and its extensive work for a successful CCP, and we thank the Chairperson for his leadership. Open agrifood trade is essential to fighting hunger and poverty and to achieving the SDGs.

Furthermore, strong and dynamic trade networks can help respond to the effects of climate change by enabling people who face droughts or floods to access food. Bearing these points in mind, Canada encourages FAO to continue producing further policy analysis and capacity building work to enable Member States to benefit from trade and trade networks, including for the next edition of the State of Agricultural Commodity Markets report.

More specifically, Canada would encourage FAO to continue to regularly update Members on the evolution of commodity prices, including fertilizers, in future governing body meetings. We also echo others in supporting the importance of the Agricultural Market Information System in this regard.

In conclusion, Canada recommends this Council welcomes the Report and endorse all its findings and recommendations, including in particular paragraphs 9(i), 11(d) and 27(d).

Sr. José Teófilo ESONO ASANGONO (Guinea Ecuatorial)

La República de Guinea Ecuatorial hace esta declaración en nombre del Grupo Regional Africano, los cuales agradecen a la Secretaría por la información y reconocen el papel central que desempeñan los

productos básicos en la superación de los desafíos a los que se enfrenta el mundo en el momento actual.

Este reconocimiento se hace más patente en el continente africano, dándole enorme potencial de su agricultura que constituye la fuente más importante de la economía. No obstante, la persistencia de la pobreza, el deterioro de la seguridad alimentaria debido a la financiación de los programas de adaptación y mitigación del cambio climático, en el marco de los acuerdos multilaterales de comercio agrícola, los conflictos armados, catástrofes naturales, la pandemia del COVID-19, el aumento en la malnutrición, la subalimentación está socavando la capacidad de los países africanos para lograr el crecimiento económico y la prosperidad.

Al mismo tiempo, el rápido aumento en la población, la urbanización y las dinámicas socioeconómicas están dando lugar a un aumento de la demanda de los alimentos y al cambio de los hábitos de consumo. Para hacer frente a estos desafíos, es necesario promover comercio bilateral, unilateral, multilateral, que sea universal, reglamentado, abierto, no discriminatorio, equitativo y previsible y la participación efectiva y el liderazgo de los agricultores y de los jóvenes, prestandoles más apoyo, como agentes de cambio, a la provisión sostenible de los alimentos.

La provisión de los alimentos básicos reúne todos los elementos y actividades relacionadas con la producción, la elaboración, distribución, incluidos los resultados socioeconómicos y ambientales para lograr una amplia diversidad de agentes en el sector público y privado, actividades interdependientes e instituciones responsables que impulsen la participación plena de los productores y sus organizaciones en todas las dimensiones de la elaboración de las políticas de seguridad alimentaria y nutricional.

La provisión en los productos básicos debe ser inocua y nutritiva, al mismo tiempo sostenible desde el punto de vista económico, social y medio ambiental. Los productos básicos tienen una relación recíproca con los distintos tipos de alimentos que se producen, por lo tanto, se necesita un cambio de paradigma en el que la producción agrícola quede equilibrada con la utilización eficiente de los recursos naturales mediante la biodiversidad y mitigación de los efectos negativos de relación con la producción.

En este sentido, la FAO debe seguir ayudando a los países a crear un entorno de políticas propicias a las tecnologías de información y comunicación digital para acelerar los avances en materia de comercio de los productos básicos, en ámbitos como la educación en cadena de valor, el empleo, el empoderamiento de la mujer, la prevención y la lucha contra la violencia de género para el logro de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) y promover la asociación, la inversión y soluciones innovadoras sobre el terrero, entre otras, pero fundamentalmente en pequeños productores y la población rural más pobre.

Sra. María De Lourdes CRUZ TRINIDAD (México)

Se agradece y aprecia la presentación de este Informe del 75° período de sesiones del Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos y las recomendaciones ahí vertidas.

Coincidimos en la necesidad de aumentar la productividad y la competitividad a fin de afrontar la creciente necesidad de alimentos, pero con un enfoque en la sostenibilidad. Compartimos la preocupación por la posible imposición de medidas que contravienen el libre comercio y las reglas de la Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC). Es importante la transparencia en los mercados para una mejor toma de decisiones y, en ese sentido, es relevante el papel del Sistema de Información Agrícola de Mercados (AMIS) y de la FAO en apoyo al análisis de información comercial de productos agrícolas.

Mi país respalda y apoya este Informe.

Mr Purnajaya TRI (Indonesia)

The multiple crises show us that it is important to strengthen our resilience and viable supply chain including sustainable vegetable oils to support global food security. In this regard, we urge the application of a universal sustainability standard that covers three aspects of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely social, economic and environmental development, which must be

on equal footings as well as uphold the spirit of free, fair, open, transparent, predictable rules based multinational trading system under the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules.

While we would like to concur with the statement made by Malaysia earlier, Indonesia is a palm oil producing country. Along with others, we have worked tirelessly with our stakeholders internationally as well as domestically to ensure that the industry meets universal sustainability standards. Moreover, the palm oil industry demonstrates a people centred industry that accelerates not only the producer, but also consumer countries alike, to achieve the Sustainability Development Goals 2030.

Indonesia therefore commends FAO's excellent work and achievements in the field of commodity markets and policies and urges FAO to continuously work together with other international partners to produce a reliable recommendation to avoid discrimination and to promote fair treatment.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

The Philippines fully aligns with the Asia Regional Group statement delivered by Indonesia, but just wanted to emphasise one point. This is to encourage FAO to continue its support to Members for effective participation in trade agreements and evidence based design of trade and trade related policies and strategies, such as through analysis and facilitation of policy, dialogue and trade, agriculture, food security and sustainability at the global and regional levels to inform trade policy discussions and trade negotiations.

CHAIRPERSON

With your statement we have concluded our deliberations on Item 6.1, *Report of the 75th Session of the Commodity on Commodity Problems*. I would like to give the floor to the Chairperson of the Committee whether or not he wants to make any comments or reflections.

Mr Yaya Adisa Olaitan OLANIRAN (Chairperson of Committee on Commodity Problems)

Since I am taking the floor for the first time at this the 171st Session of the Council, may I appreciate the good work and strong leadership, particularly the last two days. I also want to thank the Director-General and his team for work well done and leading in the direction of achievement.

It is important for us to note that we are in a world that is becoming more and more complex. Issues that needed to be tackled should be tackled with clarity of purpose and mind. I thank my predecessor as Chairperson of the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) and appreciate all that has been done.

Your comments, dear colleagues, are well noted and our request, as Members of the new Bureau, is to ask for your continual support and also, it is not exclusive to us, but that you as Members and having different angles and information channels, will help us to be focused and to work tirelessly in the next two years, so that all that has been lined up in terms of the Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) for the 76th Session in September 2024, will be diligently worked upon and achieved.

Your positive feedback has been very encouraging and I am sure the Secretariat, working so hard and committedly, will give Members of the Bureau all the necessary backing that we need. It will not be fair on all of us, if I do not make an appeal, that most of the conversation we had, not only in this 171st Council meeting in terms of the difficulties and troubles going on in the world, only makes it more difficult for the issue of problems piling on each other. Definitely anything that touches on food, touches the life of everyone across the world. The proverb in my language says "when you subtract food out of any problem, the problem is more than half solved".

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for your response and I wish you a lot of success with the next Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP).

Now I turn to the draft conclusions. This follows the practice that we will focus in our conclusions on the decisions and remarks which were referred to by the Committee to the Council to take a decision, to take note, to acknowledge or to appreciate.

In the draft conclusions, you will find the items which were referred by the CCP towards the Council, because we do not have to address all the issues discussed in the Report, but only those issues which were referred to by the Committee to the Council.

I will read first the draft conclusions and then we go through them one by one.

The Council welcomed and reviewed recommendations contained in the Report of the 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) on programme and budgetary matters, in particular:

- a) appreciated FAO's work on commodity markets monitoring, outlook and early warning, in particular in view of the increasing number of risks and uncertainties caused by conflicts, climate variability, pests and diseases and economic shocks;
- b) requested FAO to continue and intensify its efforts to support informed policy decisions and promote policy coordination by providing timely and objective data and information, market assessments and outlooks;
- c) acknowledged the positive role of the Agriculture Market Information System (AMIS) in enhancing agricultural market transparency and policy responses for food security, reducing extreme price volatility and promoting coordinated policy action, and called on Members to support the initiative, including through timely reporting of country-level data;
- d) appreciated FAO's efforts to conduct *ex-ante* analysis, scenarios and foresight studies, and encouraged the Organization to include a broader range of supply, demand and risk factors;
- e) commended the partnership between FAO and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on the medium-term projection work, and in close cooperation with the World Trade Organization (WTO), and encouraged FAO to strengthen it further;
- f) noted the findings of the flagship report *The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets (SOCO) 2022*, and highlighted the importance of future editions of SOCO continue to focus on the situation of agricultural commodity markets as they are impacted by current and emerging issues, developed through an inclusive input process;
- g) expressed appreciation for FAO's work in the area of agrifood trade, including through the provision of up-to-date data, information and scientific evidence to inform policy discussions;
- h) expressed appreciation for the work conducted by the Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) and its various products and services and emphasized the significance of geospatial and digital technologies in collecting and analysing data and information; and
- i) endorsed the priorities of FAO's work in the area of commodity markets and trade in the context of FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and the Medium Term Plan 2022-25.

You see also a footnote at the end of the text which was requested by the Russian Federation which states "*The Russian Federation dissociates itself from all references to war in Ukraine in the report*".

With that, I turn now to the chapeau of the conclusions. Can we agree to the chapeau of the conclusions? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (a).

Mr Sean COX (United States of America)

Recalling the conversation in last Council, the Council "*welcomed*" and I believe the draft advice is "*endorsed*", so we would seek to put "*the Council endorsed*".

M. Michel LEVEQUE (France)

Oui, c'est pour effectivement soutenir le terme "*endorse*", puisque dans le rapport du Comité, il y a bien marqué: "*The Council is invited to endorse the findings.*" Donc, nous devons "*endorse the findings*", et non pas "*welcome*". Donc, à la place de "*welcome*", nous voudrions "*endorsed*".

Ms Alexandra VALKENBURG (European Union)

I think that France has done the work of the European Union already with the right quote, so I think we should start the paragraph with *“the Council endorsed”* and then *“with the following comments”* or something like that, and then we can put all that follows under (a) etc.

Why would we deviate from what we are invited to do?

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVNIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

The Russian Federation is prepared to support the text that we see on this screen. However, with the statement that we made that the Committee exceeded its mandate. We cannot support the proposal that the Council *“endorsed”* the Report.

Mr Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Más allá de las dificultades de algunos colegas, nosotros también entendemos que el término más correcto sería *“endorse”*. Quizás habría que buscar la manera en la cual quienes de alguna manera objetaron o se desasociaron pudieran también expresarlo aquí. Pero, en definitiva, me parece que el concepto es *“endorse”*.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

A similar sentiment to what was just expressed by the Ambassador of Argentina that perhaps, we support the endorsement and we were quite clear on that, and perhaps a footnote here for dissociation would be an option to move forward.

Mr Shingo FUTAMI (Japan)

We would like to endorse the Report as well.

CHAIRPERSON

The proposal would be, *“the Council endorsed”*.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

I think we need to be legalistic here and then I would like through you, Chair, to request the Legal Counsel to tell us what is being said when it comes to the examination of the Report after the immediate plan of action, what does it say concerning the adoption or whatever of the recommendation so that we are in line with what was decided by the Members themselves after the reform of FAO?

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to Ms Donata Rugarabamu.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

I thank the distinguished delegate of Cameroon for this query.

I note that at this moment in time paragraph 18 reads, *“the Council welcomed and reviewed the recommendations contained in the Report of the 75th session of the Committee on Commodity Problems on programme and budgetary matters”*. You will recall that at its last Session the Council addressed reports where there was a division of responsibilities similar to that of the Technical Committees for the Regional Conferences. In that matter, what the Council was careful to do was it *“reviewed the Reports”*, but limited itself to *“endorsing the recommendations on programme and budget”*.

This is consistent with the Basic Texts. The Rules of Procedure of the Committee on Commodity Problems clarifies that *“programme and budgetary matters shall be referred to the Council, whereas policy and regulatory matters shall be referred to the Conference”*. Thus, care needs to be taken with respect to endorsement, ensuring that any element that is contained under here, any endorsement of the Council, would be limited to programme and budgetary matters.

Indeed, care has been taken most recently by the Council in ensuring that it clarifies which elements of the Report it is endorsing. But I would note, once again, there is this dual line. It is the Conference which will endorse the general recommendations, the policy and regulatory. This Council is only

addressing programme and budget. So, you would need to consider your chapeau in light of what you have below in the text.

CHAIRPERSON

I will come with a proposal based on this discussion, but first I give the floor to Brazil.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

I think it is a very good one. Just a small amendment at the end after “*matters*. In particular I think it goes with the previous discussion we had during the Council last June. I think just the “inclusion of” and “in particular”. The rest we could discuss further on.

CHAIRPERSON

Based on the proposal and remarks made by Ms Donata Rugarabamu, otherwise we have it in each of the reports, can we not say, “*the Council reviewed the Report of the 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems, endorsed the recommendations contained in the Report on programme and budgetary matters and in particular...*”

Would this be agreeable as a chapeau based on what also was said by the Legal Counsel?

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

I do not have a problem with your suggestion, but should the Council give its views on the Report first, relating to budgetary matters and then, subject to those comments, it endorses the Report. But we seem to be rubberstamping the Report in the chapeau and then going on to comments.

The Council should give its views on the Report and then, subject to those comments, it should endorse.

CHAIRPERSON

I agree with you, but some of the recommendations which we endorse are in particular paragraphs. So, to overcome a double quoting of those paragraphs, that is why I made it shorter, to say endorse recommendations and then go in specific those who need to be mentioned specifically, following also what you are saying to overcome duplication later on.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

Given the explanation given by the Legal Counsel, we propose that we leave this paragraph in brackets. I would like to ask the Legal Counsel, could she confirm the information that at the 168th Session, the Council on a number of Reports from the Technical Committees, in particular on the Finance Committee, the Report of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM), used the wording “*takes note*”. Could the Legal Counsel confirm that?

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Legal Counsel.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

I quickly refer you to document *CL 168/Rep* and I understand the Russian Federation has requested me to confirm whether or not that report refers to, “*taking note*” as, say, the action the Council took.

In this connection, I would first, however, observe that the Council Committees have a different role from the Technical Committees. The Council Committees do not report directly to the Conference on policy and regulatory matters. Therefore, there is a distinction between the action that the Council would take here on the Technical Committees as opposed to the action that the Council would take with the Council Committees.

I can, of course, advise, as is apparent on the website, that the reports of the Council Committees - the Finance Committee, the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) and the Programme Committee - there the Council considered the Reports. The Council then enumerated the decisions, recommendations that it made and then, in conclusion, they welcomed the Reports of those Committees.

As observed in my earlier intervention, the example of the Regional Conferences may also be helpful, just because you do have this dual reporting line.

Here, I would underline again the importance of recognizing the mandate of the Council in this context. Thus, anything that comes under this chapeau, one would need to confirm that the action that is under that chapeau is within the competence of the Council. That is what I wish to add.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

When I asked this question earlier, it is because sometimes I recall previous discussions and I know perfectly, more or less, what was discussed and approved. That is why I asked those questions primarily, so that we are in line with what is in the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO renewal (IPA) Report.

Now that we have this, I would like to build on what Pakistan said, that we can review the Report, in particular all elements that we deem necessary data, referring to programme and budgetary matters in the Council and avoid anything relating to policy and so on, and that may give us a lot of work, to decipher what is programmatic and budgetary and what is policy. We have to be very careful down there now.

But when you look at the document itself, it gives you what are the paragraphs that should be considered under the purview of the Council. The Report says it very well.

So, we propose that we say “*the Council reviewed the Report, in particular...*”. And then at the tail end we say, “with this, it endorsed...” Because endorse those aspects of the Report, if we do the work of the Conference here, we might be queried by the Conference itself.

Ms Alexandra VALKENBURG (European Union)

I wonder whether we have become more complicated in this Organization. In 2018, we may have been operating under the guidance of another Legal Counsel, but we have been quite clear in the conclusions of the Council, which was for all the Technical Committees, we said the Council endorsed the conclusions and recommendations contained in the Report of the x Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP). “*In particular*”, and then came all the comments.

I wonder why we are becoming more complicated here. This is not to say that I cannot go along with what we have now on screen, but I would say it is very important that we start the whole thing that the endorsement is upfront, because otherwise it is not a clear mandate to what we expect FAO Management to do with the Report.

If then the Conference for some issues believes that they need to overrule endorsements coming from Council, Conference is free to do that.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

It is true, I heard what the European Union has to say. It is bringing a bit of smile because who is complicating the Council? Those who are vying for voting all the time or those who want to go forward by consensus? We are complicating our life ourselves.

I said it yesterday. I am on my 55th consecutive Council and it is now that we see voting, which is a really difficult aspect for us, and we do not want to endorse. So, if we say this and now we say we are putting it to a vote, we are not making your life easy. And every Member can say, I do not agree on this, we put it to a vote.

So let us see things and agree with what was decided by Members. Please go back to the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO renewal (IPA) Report and see what was decided, because the new rules in the 17th edition or 18th edition, I do not know whether it is the 17th edition, the Basic Texts is based on the IPA Report and everything is there.

This is not a very good comparison between the former Chairperson and the next Chairperson. I know that you have been here for so many years, that you know perfectly what we are doing, including the discussion on the IPA.

I have submitted that the endorsement should come at the end. Unless you want to go for a vote for that.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us put the whole text in brackets and come back to it later on and put the text of Cameroon into the chapeau. Cameroon, could you help us repeating your proposal?

Mr Moungui MÉDI (Cameroon)

“The Council reviewed the Report of the 75th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) relating to programme and budgetary matters and in particular addressed the following”, or something like that. Or you can leave it, “in particular”, and then you name those. Then, as a conclusion, “with these comments, those aspects of the Report were endorsed”.

The Council endorse aspects of the Report relating programme and budgetary matters. So, there we are sure to be in line with what the consideration of the Basic Texts. Unless the Legal Counsel wants to say something different, but this is our view on that.

CHAIRPERSON

We put it and also the chapeau in brackets.

Mr Sean COX (United States of America)

We had tried that before hearing Cameroon’s proposal. I think it is something we can work with. Thank you, the Legal Counsel, for that explanation. I think the Chairperson’s original proposal could work.

Just going back, we did identify problems with straying away from the word endorsement and I think we all discussed this at length in the 170th.

I do question getting rid of endorsement in general. What is the role here? I think we heard from the Legal Counsel too. So, whether it comes first or at the end, I think we can work with that, but we would need to see the word endorsed in some part of this.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

We agree with the proposal made by Cameroon because there is a logic to it. We give our comments first and then based on those observations, or subject to those observations, we endorse. So, there is a logic to the whole thing.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Cameroon put it very clearly, in fact, the logic is there and I think the addition of the specificity around programme and budgetary matters in particular helps. Ideally, we will see the bottom of the page as well, where we do see the endorsement, that is fundamental, because we want to make these things active and real for the Council and for the Organization. But I think this as a starting point is good.

CHAIRPERSON

Could we have an agreement? For me that would be the best, before we break for the international snack to energize ourselves.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Soy absolutamente flexible con cualquiera de las alternativas que esté dentro de los procedimientos de la FAO. No me preocupa eso. Lo que me preocupa es lo que está detrás de esto: que esto pueda ser una tentación a reabrir discusiones que hemos cerrado en los diferentes comités técnicos.

Esto es lo único que me preocupa y creo que le preocupa a muchos Miembros. Entonces, soy flexible absolutamente con la idea de cuál es la fórmula, si es arriba, abajo o en el medio. No me preocupa tanto esta cuestión. Creo que hay colegas que son muy expertos y los respeto. Pero me preocupa lo otro: no reabrir discusiones que nos han costado muchísimo en los comités técnicos.

Ruego a los colegas que seamos muy cuidadosos en reabrir textos que hemos cerrado, negociado y esforzado en los comités técnicos porque esto no termina más, si es así, porque esto va a pasar en todos los comités. Entonces, sugiero - pido, que seamos muy cuidadosos con la idea de reabrir y ser creativos porque si somos muy creativos no terminamos más.

CHAIRPERSON

Could we work with the following? Because we have most elements. *“The Council reviewed the the Report of the Committee on Commodity Problems, and in particular”*, and then at the end we will use the word endorsement. Would that be agreeable?

That would be following the proposal of Cameroon. At the end we know because nothing is agreed until everything is agreed, that at the end we have certainly the endorsement. Is that agreeable? I see nodding in the room.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

Could the Secretariat once again bring us to the first sentence that you just read out? I can tell you right away that we do not have a problem with that first sentence as it is reflected on the screen.

Mr Benjamin ROSS (Australia)

I just wanted to propose something. I see in the second line, we say *“relating to programme and budgetary matters”*, that the Council is reviewing the Report only in relation to that and I am not sure that is entirely true. So, if we have got *“related to programme and budgetary matters”* in the closing clause now, where the endorsement is provided, perhaps we could remove it in this session here and put to Members that we actually reviewed the Report in a more holistic way than just limited to programme and budgetary.

CHAIRPERSON

I am flexible, of course, as long as we have an agreement in the room. We could have the *“in particular”* directly after the “CCP” and then at the end... Let us do that and then see at the end where we are. Because we reviewed everything. We reviewed the report because that was what was asked. We reviewed the report and we deleted *“relating to programme and budgetary matters”* and then we go on with the rest after the international snack.

Before I adjourn for the snack, I would like to remind everybody, because we have postponed it from yesterday due to the voting procedures, that after the break we have the Award Ceremony, which will take place in this Plenary Hall, to bestow the first FAO Innovation Award that was approved by Members at the 42nd Session of the Conference.

Therefore, we reconvene at 17:00 hours with a brief award ceremony and then continue our work on the Committee on Commodity Problems Report.

With that, I adjourn for 30 minutes.

The meeting was suspended from 16:33 to 17:13 hours

La séance est suspendue de 16 h 33 à 17 h 13

Se suspende la sesión de las 16.33 a las 17.13

CHAIRPERSON

We continue our work now.

We go back to the screen with the draft conclusions and we go to subparagraph (a). Before the break we agreed to the *chapeau* and of course with the ending with endorsement.

We go now to subparagraph (a). Can we agree to subparagraph (a)? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (b). I do not see any objections there.

We go to subparagraph (c). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (d).

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Antes del subpárrafo (d) quisiera incorporar una propuesta de texto que está en el Report Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos (CCP) en el subpárrafo (a) del párrafo 14. Voy a leer en inglés a velocidad de dictado. *“Underlined the importance of freer, fairer,”*

Continues in English

Perfect. This is the best Secretariat that we can have. I really appreciate that. With this Secretariat you cannot fail. *“The importance of a freer, fairer, predictable, non-discriminatory and rules-based multilateral trading system under WTO and consistent with its rules for promoting agricultural and rural development and contributing to achieving food security and improve nutrition for all.”*

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this paragraph which comes from the Report of the Committee on Commodity Problems?

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

We cannot be against this subparagraph because it comes from the Report. I wanted to see whether we can add something at the end which would read: *“while avoiding export restrictions and other unjustified trade distorting measures not in line with WTO.”*

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this subparagraph? I do not see any objections.

Mr Sean COX (United States of America)

We recall this sentence fondly, we spent a lot of time debating it, therefore we can accept that. Given that it was painstakingly agreed to, we would not support adding to that and changing it from what was previously agreed.

If there is something else we could pull from a Committee on Commodity Problems Report, we would be open to that, but we would prefer to keep it with the exact text as it is. If I am mistaken and that is there already, that is okay, but I do not believe it is.

CHAIRPERSON

Is there flexibility in the room to stick to the agreed language of the Committee on Commodity Problems Report? Which means that we will delete what is now within brackets.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

This time it was not a mistake. We support the addition proposed by the European Union as this edition, in fact, is taken from an analogous recommendation of the 170th Session of the Council which was adopted regarding measures to react to COVID-19 as the consideration under the Committee. The Committee on Commodity Problems was looking at the pandemic and its impact on these value chains and trade chains. This addition will reflect the discussion that was held in the Committee.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Yo sugiero una metodología. Mantener textualmente lo que viene del Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos (CCP). Si hay otros colegas que quieran hacer otra propuesta de texto adicional que no modifique lo que ya viene acordado del CCP, bienvenidos y estamos dispuestos a conversarlo. Pero no tocar lo que ya viene del CCP porque creo que es una buena práctica tratar de respetar lo que los colegas negociamos y acordamos con muchas dificultades en el CCP.

Entonces, repito, no hago juicios de valor sobre el agregado planteado por la Unión Europea y apoyado por la Federación Rusa, pero pido que mantengamos el lenguaje que fue acordado en el CCP y, en todo caso, si hay intenciones de proponer algún párrafo adicional estamos abiertos a escuchar y ver de qué manera podemos llegar a un acuerdo.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us keep the subparagraph pending and come back to it later on as we finalize the other subparagraph.

I continue with subparagraph (e). Can we agree on subparagraph (e)? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (f). I do not see any objections.

We go to subparagraph (g).

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

If I could suggest a subparagraph, a simple one after subparagraph (f) in line with my statement earlier, if there will be consensus. I sent the Secretariat a copy of our statement. It is just one paragraph. *“Encourage FAO to continue its support to Members for effective participation in trade agreements and evidence-based design of trade and trade-related policies and strategies such as through analysis and facilitation of policy dialogue on trade, agriculture, food security and sustainability at the global and regional levels to inform trade policy discussions and trade negotiations.”*

It is just basically an elaboration of subparagraph 15 (d) of the Recommendations of the Committee.

CHAIRPERSON

And replace your comma after *“Strategies”* on the second line. Can we agree to this paragraph?

Mr Sean COX (United States of America)

I am wondering if they would be amenable to rather than paraphrasing something and changing again, if we could pull from the language that was agreed to in the Committee on Commodity Problems? Because we are not sure if that exactly captures what was said.

CHAIRPERSON

What does it mean for the text? Could you give a reference to how it should be? Because that is the easiest way, so that we have a good interpretation.

Mr Sean COX (United States of America)

If I understood, they said subparagraph 15 (d) and so the suggestion would be subparagraph 15 (d) is *“expressed appreciation for FAO’s work in the area of agri-food trade including through the provision of up-to-date data, information and scientific evidence to inform policy discussions underlying the importance of the technical assistance provided to Members within the Organization’s mandate and competence and requested the Organization to increase resource mobilization to support the reinforcement of this work.”*

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Tratando de pensar en la intención en la propuesta de Filipinas percibía que, quizás, el que más se asemeja a esa intención es lo que está en el subpárrafo (j) del párrafo 14, del Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos (CCP). El subpárrafo sugerido por Filipinas nos trae algunos inconvenientes y quizás podríamos estar más cómodos con algo que ya hemos acordado en el subpárrafo (j) del párrafo 14 en el CCP. Puedo leer en inglés, si les parece. *“Underlined the potential of regional trade agreements equipped with legally binding environmental provisions and well-developed institutions, to effectively address environmental externalities and stress that multilateral agreements can effectively address global environmental externalities.”*

Eso fue acordado en el Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos (CCP) textual en el subpárrafo (j) del párrafo 14 y creo que podría capturar parte o gran parte de lo planteado por Filipinas para evitar tener que reabrir discusiones que por ahí son complicadas. Ojalá pueda funcionar algo así.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

My understanding is that in the Council we can give further comments and not just adopt what is in the Committee on Commodity Problems Recommendations. The reason I added that subparagraph, was an elaboration of subparagraph (d) because I think that subparagraph (d) does not capture the need

of the developing countries to have more capacity in understanding trade agreements, in negotiating, because we have few delegations. That is the intention of that subparagraph. I thought it would not be difficult to accept.

If there is any difficulty, may I ask those who might object to that what the difficulty might be, and we are open to making any modifications.

CHAIRPERSON

The Philippines would like to maintain the text that she proposed, and she is open to suggestions for changes to make it agreeable.

Mr Sean COX (United States of America)

Given what they mentioned, I wonder if they would be okay if, and we are flexible, before “*effective participation*” we added “*its support to Members in capacity-building for effective participation*”? It seems to me that would maybe capture that better.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Retiro mi propuesta. Cancelamos mi propuesta porque no voló, así que la dejamos sin efecto y mantengámonos a ver si hay consenso con la colaboración de los colegas sobre lo sugerido por Filipinas.

Ms Nosipho Nausca-Jean JEZILE (Vice-Chairperson of Africa Regional Group)

Philippines’ proposal is also in line with the Africa Regional Group on the need to be supported in respect of the trade within the region, how the rules are applied, and what policies can be realigned.

We think that the subparagraph is sufficient as it is, but maybe you could then say “*upon request*” or you can add “*as required*”, “*by request of Members*”, if that is going to satisfy the colleagues.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we now agree to the subparagraph (g) as it is on the screen? I see nodding in the room. We can then also delete subparagraph (h). Let me go to subparagraph (h).

Can we agree to subparagraph (h)? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (i). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (j). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (k). I do not see any objections.

Then we scroll up because before we go to paragraph 2, we first have to find the solution for the bracket. The proposal was, at the end, to stick to the agreed language of the Committee on Commodity Problems and not adding any new language. Is there flexibility in the room to delete what is within brackets? I see the European Union nodding. Thank you so much for your flexibility.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVNIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

Given that we have just worked on the Philippines proposal, I get the feeling that we have moved away from that principle now - the fact that we are guided by previously adopted texts. I would like to note that we have just agreed on the fact that the Council looked at the Report and given that there were comments in the room, we would reflect the entire debate that was held. Several delegations made statements as to the fact that we should abstain from all unilateral coercive measures that hamper supply chains. There were proposals to that end.

CHAIRPERSON

That is reflected in the Verbatim Records of the Council issued with all the statements made by the Members and Observers of the Council.

With this I would like to go to paragraph 2. Can we agree to paragraph 2? We underline “*endorsed*”. We have the footnote of the Russian Federation, as you can see if we scroll down.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVNIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

Indeed, there will be a footnote because we requested one. We explained our position, which should be reflected. However, we still cannot accept the term “*endorsed the recommendations*”.

There was a small break after the Award Ceremony, during which we conducted an in-depth analysis on the previous Report of the Session. We looked at the Report of the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) and the Legal Counsel did not say so but at the 164th Session there was, says the speaker, some language indicating that the Council considered. That was from the 164th Session of the CCP.

The same went for Committee on Fisheries. “*Considered*”, says the speaker, was the term used. I would also like to note that there were no reservations expressed on these reports or any specific comments from the Members of the Council. We disassociated ourselves from four subparagraphs and therefore cannot accept the term “*endorsed*” and would prefer to use the term “*considered*”.

Mr Benjamin ROSS (Australia)

We can support the use of endorsed in paragraph 2.

Secondly, I wonder whether “*aspects*” might be better replaced with “*findings*” to make it more consistent with the paper that we were presented with. It would read, “*the Council endorsed the findings and recommendations of the Report relating to programme and budgetary matters.*”

CHAIRPERSON

Would that be agreeable to replace “*aspects*” by “*findings*”? I see nodding in the room.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

I think “*aspects*” is best placed here. Because “*findings*” implies there is a research document or a research report. However, this is simply a document which analyses some elements. Unless you say “*analysis and recommendation*”, but “*findings*” here, it is a bit too much.

CHAIRPERSON

Is there flexibility to maintain the word “*Aspect*”? Thank you, Australia. I come back to the Russian Federation because there is, I think, now an agreement in the room, besides the Russian Federation. I saw the European Union. No? Okay. Because if the Russian Federation cannot live with “*endorsement*”, then I would like to propose to the Russian Federation that it disassociates itself and you put in a footnote for the subparagraphs which they cannot agree to.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVİK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

We will take note of your recommendation. We always listen very carefully to your advice, given your huge experience.

Now further to this, this is our basic position and at the very least I would ask you to reflect our proposal on the screen. Furthermore, on the previous subparagraphs where the European Union withdrew its reference to international trade, our delegation would not object to that.

We cannot agree until we have agreement on something. In this respect, I would ask you to reflect our proposal in both subparagraphs.

CHAIRPERSON

Russian Federation, we are here in the Council to find a consensus. We can reinsert again the brackets, but it does not mean that we get consensus, because there is now consensus in the Council with all Members except one, on how the text is on the screen.

The Council is of course here to delete brackets and agree on the text. I would really like to urge you to show flexibility on this, because there is an agreement on the subparagraph and the European Union could agree to delete their proposal.

I do not want to reinsert it because we agreed to this subparagraph. It is up to the Russian Federation whether or not they can disassociate themselves from paragraphs or from this consensus. I do not think we can prolong this discussion an uphold the Council because we have so much work to do still.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVİK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

I fully understand what you are saying, but first of all, we are on the Council on the second day, and, as you all know, and other delegations know this, that the most difficult question is that finding consensus takes time. Therefore, we would insist that our proposal be reflected on the screen and at the very least...

Until today there was no problem in reserving positions and taking a decision. Our request is that our text be considered and that we leave the non-agreed wording in brackets until tomorrow so that all relevant delegations are able to give it due thought and hold consultations. We can come back to this tomorrow morning.

CHAIRPERSON

I really would like to urge you not to continue working in this manner, because we will never finalize the Council at all, and I do not think we would like to not finalize the Council. And it is important not to keep text open until tomorrow because before you know we keep all the text open. We had a very difficult day yesterday where we found a way forward.

My proposal is to maintain the text as it is now. Do not insert new brackets. You know we work on the principle nothing is agreed until everything is agreed, and the proposal of the European Union was withdrawn because of finding the consensus. That is not on the table anymore.

On the endorsement, it is clear that all the Members prefer now how we work in the manner we have been working also in the last two Councils. I would really like to ask your cooperation not to block consensus. Go along with the text and, if needed, come back to it tomorrow but I am urging you not to insert brackets again.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVİK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

I hear you well. I will Report on this situation to the Alternate. It is for him to make the decision further to consultations with Moscow. At this point we cannot give our agreement to subparagraph 2 as we see it displayed on the screen. Furthermore, I would ask that we correct the wording in the footnote. We did not disassociate ourselves from references to war in Ukraine, but to all the subparagraphs, all of them in their entirety as referred to in the footnote.

At the end add *“In connection with the reference to war in Ukraine”*.

CHAIRPERSON

Russian Federation, could you please read out how you would like to see the footnote from the beginning.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVİK (Russian Federation)

“The Russian Federation disassociates itself from paragraphs in connection with the reference to the war in Ukraine.”

Continues in Russian

We disassociate ourselves from reference to the paragraphs where there are references to the war in Ukraine.

It is the present wording. I am not a native English speaker. It is if this wording reflects the wording of our statement in which we disassociated ourselves not from the term *“war in Ukraine”* but from the paragraph in its entirety because there is an inappropriate reference to war in Ukraine.

CHAIRPERSON

So, as I read your suggestion, it would read, *“Russian Federation disassociates itself from paragraphs 9 (i), 9 (j), 11 (d), and 27 (d)”*. Because then you disassociate yourself from all those paragraphs. I think that is what I understand.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVİK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

If that is going to be the wording, please add the fact that our statements on disassociating, when we dissociate ourselves, is to be found in the Annex to the Report.

CHAIRPERSON

We say “*The statement made by the Russian Federation on its disassociation can be found in the Verbatim of the Report*”.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

Not orally and not in the Verbatim, but in an actual Annex to the Report.

CHAIRPERSON

The statement made on the disassociation can be annexed to the Report as it was done in the Verbatim to the Report because it is a statement which you made during the discussions. That is why when you look at the common practice, which we have done in the previous Council, we always refer to the statement made by the Member as worded in the Verbatim.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

Could I possibly ask the Legal Counsel for clarification? Because at the 168th Session when we adopted the Report, the United States of America made a statement which they proposed to add as an Annex to the Report and insofar as the statement was made after the Adoption of the Report, it was included with the reference to it as mentioned in the Verbatim. There are other examples where statements made during the procedures are then subsequently added as Annex to the Report. Could I please ask the Legal Counsel for clarification on that point?

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

With respect to whether statements or explanations of votes are annexed to the reports, here I would note that the Rules of the Organization do provide for minority statements. In the last sessions of the Council, the practice of the Organization has been to refer to the statements as reflected in the Verbatim Records, rather than to annex them as part of the reports themselves.

This indeed happened in the 169th Session, the 168th Session, as the Russian Federation noted, and as well in certain other Governing Bodies when similar matters have arisen. Therefore, there is a practice of the Council to indicate that a statement has been made, but then not set it out in full as an annex to the report.

CHAIRPERSON

With this can we agree now to the footnote?

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

At this point and as on paragraph 2, I will consult with the Permanent Representative.

CHAIRPERSON

We will leave the text as it is, and we will hear from you tomorrow, whether we need an extra footnote.

With that we have concluded our work on Item 6.1, the Report on the Committee of Commodity Problems.

Item 6. Technical Committees

Point 6. Comités techniques

Tema 6. Comités técnicos

Item 6.2 Report of the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (18-22 July 2022)

Point 6.2 Rapport de la vingt-huitième session du Comité de l’agriculture (18-22 juillet 2022)

Tema 6.2 Informe del 28.º período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura (18-22 de julio de 2022)

(C 2023/22)

CHAIRPERSON

We turn now to Sub-Item 6.2, *Report of the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture*, which was held from 18 to 22 July, which can be found in C 2023/22.

The introduction by Ms Julie Émond, Chairperson of the Committee of Agriculture, has been circulated to you.

Introduction to Item 6.2: Report of the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (18 - 22 July 2022)

Ms Julie Emond, Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture

The Committee on Agriculture (COAG) held its 28th Session from 18 to 22 July 2022 and was conducted as a hybrid event for the first time. Of the 136 Members of the Committee, 118 registered for the Session, including nine Ministers. A total of 778 participants registered for the event.

The Report of the 28th Session of COAG is submitted to the Council in document C 2023/22. The Committee reviewed the 27 items on its agenda, as highlighted below.

COAG 28 endorsed the Report of the First Session of the Sub-Committee on Livestock and approved its revised Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2022-2025.

The Committee endorsed the proposed Strategic Priorities for Food Safety within the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and recommended that it be submitted to the FAO Council through the Programme Committee.

The Committee provided guidance on One Health and recommended FAO to strengthen cooperation between the Quadripartite and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) to consider plant health; to enhance data integration and sharing across sectors; and to assist Members on national One Health early warning frameworks for rapid risk assessments of animal and zoonotic disease threats.

The Committee requested FAO to continue the implementation of the FAO Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) 2021-2025, in close collaboration with the Quadripartite, and to support Members in the implementation of AMR actions, as well as AMR management throughout the food supply chain to reduce the need for and to promote the responsible and prudent use of antimicrobials in agrifood systems.

The Committee discussed the anticipated report *The Future of Food and Agriculture – Drivers and triggers for transformation*, and recommended FAO to reinforce its strategic foresight and Members to use these foresight products to inform national development strategies for sustainable agrifood systems.

With a view to enable smallholders and family farmers to access and participate in appropriate innovation, information and advisory services, COAG 28 recommended FAO to further develop and promote participatory approaches for agricultural research and pluralistic extension and advisory services.

COAG 28 welcomed progress made in the implementation of the UN Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028 (UNDF) and invited FAO to ensure family farmers are prioritized within the implementation of its strategies on Science and Innovation and on Climate Change.

The Committee discussed the item on agriculture and forestry linkages, presented to both COAG and the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO), in line with the Council's request to strengthen coordination on cross-sectoral matters and to present papers dealing with interrelated issues between agriculture and forests to both Committees. COAG recommended FAO to continue collecting and analysing science and evidence-based data on agriculture and forestry interdependencies, including on the direct and underlying drivers of deforestation and land degradation. In addition, the Committee invited FAO to conduct a global assessment of the status and scaling-up potential of agroforestry, and to report on progress to COAG 29.

The Committee welcomed progress in the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors and its 2021-2023 Action Plan, and requested to continue consultations for the finalization of the 2024-2027 Action Plan, taking into account developments under other relevant fora.

On the State of the World's Land and Water Resources for Food and Agriculture report, COAG 28 recommended to consider reporting these issues through a regular flagship publication to address the need for sufficient, reliable information and analyses for informed policy decisions and programmes.

With a view to address water scarcity, COAG 28 recommended FAO to step up the work of the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG), to undertake an assessment of existing water tenure arrangements, and to initiate a Global Dialogue on Water Tenure matters.

The Committee, acknowledging the need for improved intersectoral collaboration and governance to address plastic use throughout agrifood systems, recommended FAO to address knowledge gaps through inclusive consultations with Members and relevant stakeholders, and to develop, within its mandate, a Voluntary Code of Conduct on the sustainable use of plastics in agriculture, to be presented to COAG 29.

The Committee welcomed the progress on the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and recommended FAO to address the restoration of agricultural production ecosystems within its policies and programmes.

The Committee endorsed the new Global Soil Partnership (GSP) Action Framework 2022-2030. On the proposed institutionalization of the GSP, it recommended FAO to prepare an in-depth analysis to be submitted to the 11th GSP Plenary Assembly, and its recommendations to be provided to COAG 29.

COAG 28 commended the development of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031 and of the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (2022-25), and requested FAO to continue open consultation processes for refining, respectively, the action plan and the high-level framework for the development of regional action plans.

The Committee reviewed FAO's Programme of Work in the Agrifood Sectors under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, and encouraged FAO to maintain its efforts towards a reinvigorated business model to maximize impact at country level and to continue to strengthen its normative and standard-setting work.

The Committee commended the implementation of the recommendations of its 27th Session and approved its Multi-Year Programme of Work for 2022-2025.

Further, COAG 28 endorsed the draft Conference Resolution for the proposal for an International Day of Potato for approval by the 171st Session of the Council and adoption by the 43rd Session of the Conference.

CHAIRPERSON

I would now like to open the floor to the Members for any comments or remarks or reflections.

Mr Winston PINNOCK (Bahamas)

I wish to express my delegation's gratitude for the dedicated efforts of the Committee on Agriculture as detailed in the Report of its 28th session.

Our delegation notes with appreciation that the Committee "*invited FAO to ensure family farmers are prioritized within the implementation of its strategies on Science and Innovation and on Climate Change.*"

With respect to climate change, we take note of the Committee's commendation of the development of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031, which the Bahamas endorsed during the 170th session of the Council.

The delegation of the Bahamas welcomes further information on the proposed Action Plan and its proposed outputs for the effective implementation of the Strategy.

We note the request of the Committee for “*FAO to continue the open consultation processes*” and that the Committee recommended that the Action Plan “*sets out FAO’s priorities for climate action*”. We look forward to seeing its manifestation at the local, national, and regional levels, taking into account the unique realities faced by Caribbean countries.

I take this opportunity to observe that, as a Small Island Developing State, the Bahamas knows firsthand what FAO has highlighted: “*Climate change is a global threat to food security and nutrition*”, with negative impacts, which will “*disproportionately affect the Caribbean region*”.

As the Prime Minister, the Honourable Philip Davis noted at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP27) in Egypt, we must “*act quickly to address the systemic risk of climate change*”.

The Bahamas and our sister countries in the Caribbean region live daily with the effects of climate change. Recently, the Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable Clay Sweeting said that “*developed and developing countries must seek to work together to mitigate the effects of climate change. No other challenge poses a greater threat to our future, and it has made it more difficult for farmers to produce sizeable yields.*”

We must continue to explore and expand paths to a “*sustainable food future*”, including through “*climate smart technology*” and the deployment of “*new innovations to combat food shortages*”.

The Bahamas fully supports FAO’S efforts in this endeavor.

Mr Benjamin ROSS (Australia)

Australia expresses its appreciation to the Chairperson of the 28th Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP), and we are pleased to endorse the findings and recommendations of the report of the 28th Session in full.

Australia takes this opportunity to again recognise the importance of sustainable livestock systems to global food security and livelihoods, and to the development of resilient agrifood systems. In this regard, we consider the Sub-Committee a useful platform to ensure open discussion on global livestock policy in a manner which is science-based, context-appropriate, and considerate of all dimensions of sustainability. We are pleased to reaffirm our full endorsement of the Sub-Committee’s report.

Australia looks forward to contributing to a successful and forward-leaning programme of work over the coming biennium which is fully responsive and adaptive to developments affecting global agrifood sectors and global food security trends.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States.

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, San Marino, Türkiye and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

We would like to thank Dr Bommakanti Rajender for his excellent leadership in chairing the 28th the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) session. We congratulate Ms Julie Émond as the new Chairperson of COAG. The EU and its Member States appreciate FAO’s work on the new Food Safety Strategy, reiterating the need for close alignment of that work with the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and the work of the Codex Alimentarius. We would like to encourage all of us to remain actively engaged in improving national food safety policies and in promoting international food safety governance.

We welcome the initiative to develop a One Health Joint Plan of Action and look forward to contributing to its development and subsequent implementation. We reiterate the need for continued long-term and sustainable efforts for a strong One Health approach.

We reaffirm our appreciation for the first session of the COAG’s Sub-Committee on Livestock. The transition of the livestock sector to long-term sustainable and climate-friendly practices, including in terms of biodiversity, water and soil quality, is critically important to ensure the sector’s contribution to sustainable food systems, food security, nutrition and healthy diets. We support in this spirit the

development of the global assessment on the contribution of the livestock sector to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We note with appreciation the support for the need to implement the Codex guidelines/standards on antimicrobial resistance and for the development of guidelines on monitoring the use of antimicrobials at farm level with the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH). We stress once again the importance of multi-actor participation in the Antimicrobial Resistance Multi-stakeholders Partnership Platform, including through the Multi-Partner Trust Fund, and encourage members to engage actively in it.

We look forward to the finalisation of the report on *the Future of food and agriculture – Drivers and triggers for transformation* (FOFA-DTT). We support FAO's commitment to this work in the context of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. All actors need to contribute to the transition towards sustainable and resilient food systems, which is essential for combating climate change and biodiversity loss while ensuring food security and access to healthy and diversified diets for all. Broad cooperation is also necessary for ensuring sustainable use of the water resources that food systems depend on.

The EU and its Member States have greatly appreciated the COAG discussions on the many and complex relationships between agriculture and forestry, especially in the context of the transition towards sustainable food systems. We look forward to the global assessment of the status and scaling-up potential of agroforestry.

Finally, we encourage FAO to carry out further assessments to fill the global and regional knowledge gaps related to production, distribution, benefits, trade-offs, disposal, decomposition, recirculation and risks in agricultural plastics and their alternatives. We also encourage FAO to play an active role in the deliberations to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution.

With these remarks, the EU and its Member States endorse the Report of the 28th session of COAG.

Mr Sean COX (United States of America)

Thank you very much to FAO and the Members of the Committee of Agriculture for the work on this Report. The United States welcomes the Committee of Agriculture (COAG) Report and recommendations. We take note of the impressive number of impactful Agenda Items covered by COAG that will positively shape FAO's work in the coming years. We look forward to the upcoming global dialogue on water tenure and encourage FAO to work closely with other relevant United Nations (UN) Agencies in its Organization.

We are happy to see the science and innovation strategy regional action plans progressing, but we want to stress the need to ensure that these regional plans also solicit and incorporate global and interregional perspectives and that they do not limit the range of opportunities on science and innovation in agriculture in any region.

We would also request that FAO commits to providing regular updates to Members on the action plans across all regions similar to the update provided on the climate change strategy action plan.

We want to highlight requests from Members for regular consultations on important topics such as antimicrobial resistance and FAO's One Health work. Especially in work that takes place in coordination with other UN agencies such as the Quadripartite.

We note that it is imperative that Members are still given opportunities to provide feedback and oversight. The United States of America emphasises the importance of utilising a One Health approach to reduce the risks of animal and plant diseases. In the past year, we have donated USD 15 million to One Health initiatives at FAO in Rome, and we recently announced a grant to FAO of up to USD 250 million to help countries prevent, detect, and respond to emerging infectious disease outbreaks around the world.

We note COAG's request that FAO create a voluntary code of conduct on the sustainable use of plastics in agriculture. The United States of America believes that for many of the issues related to agricultural plastics no viable solutions currently exist and therefore there is a strong need for more

innovation, research and development and commercialization of new technologies. And we hope this will be reflected in the code of conduct.

We strongly encourage FAO to keep this work focused on agricultural plastics within FAO's mandate and avoid duplication with other ongoing efforts to address plastics pollution. From a logistics standpoint we would like to ask FAO to consider timing when scheduling these important technical meetings. COAG suffered from very low turnout. We need to make sure that as many delegations participate in these meetings as possible.

Finally, we look forward to working with the new Chairperson from Canada Ms Julie Émond during the next biennium.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Para comenzar, nos gustaría, primero, reconocer la gran labor de India, a través de Dr. Bommakanti Rajender, en la conducción exitosa del Comité de Agricultura (COAG) 28 y, en segundo lugar, felicitar a Canadá por su designación al frente del Comité. Estamos seguros de que la Sra. Julie Émond desarrollará una tarea extraordinaria como Presidenta del COAG.

El COAG 28, se percibió un fuerte mensaje de la membresía en apoyo de las acciones que FAO realiza en materia de inocuidad de los alimentos, insistiendo en que esta temática debe basarse en ciencia y, a la vez, estar íntimamente vinculada con los trabajos del Codex Alimentarius. Los estándares, guías y análisis del Codex son irremplazables en esta materia.

Al mismo tiempo, fue claro el interés de los Miembros en poder participar activamente de la evolución de las acciones que proponga el enfoque, ahora cuadripartito, "*Una Sola Salud*" y también sobre la importancia de evitar presentar visiones desbalanceadas, del tipo "*one-size-fits-all*", a través de esta línea de trabajo. Estaremos mucho atentos a ellos.

Encontramos que fue positivo el ejercicio de sinergia entre COAG y Comité Forestal (COFO) para abordar los vínculos entre los sistemas agrícolas y los esquemas forestales. Pensamos que estas experiencias deberían replicarse.

La temática del agua también estuvo presente en el COAG 28º, y ya nos hemos referido a ello con anterioridad.

En el Ítem sobre el nexo entre plásticos y agricultura también demostró ser sumamente importante. Como se plasmó en el informe, entendemos que, previo a promover cualquier tipo de negociación o documento en este campo, es necesario que FAO lleve a cabo mayores análisis científicos y evaluaciones empíricas para aportar ciencia sólida que permita guiar los debates en esta materia.

En paralelo, sobre los Planes de Acción para la implementación de las estrategias de cambio climático y ciencia e innovación, pensamos que, como se reflejó en el informe del COAG 28, es esencial que los Miembros tengan la posibilidad aportar insumos y sugerencias para robustecer la estructura y alcance de estos programas. Como lo manifestamos oportunamente, estamos a favor de organizar procesos de consultas abiertos, inclusivos y transparentes, quizás guiados por usted Presidente, para que los Miembros puedan enriquecer estos documentos.

Con relación a la Alianza Mundial por el Suelo (GSP), nos gustaría indicar que esta plataforma es una herramienta clave que posee FAO dada su fortaleza científica y contribuciones técnicas para la preservación y conservación de suelos. Así, alentamos que se sigan explorando opciones para institucionalizar el trabajo de la Alianza cuando ello sea conveniente. Asimismo, el carácter del Presidente del Subcomité de Ganadería expuso las primeras conclusiones de la primera reunión del Subcomité que fuera creado en el marco de la FAO después de más 70 años. Estaremos atentos a la intervención que realizara el Director de Producción y Salud Animal en este Consejo al final de la agenda.

Por último, nos gustaría destacar la importancia de la propuesta para el Día Internacional de la Papa en vistas a las contribuciones de este alimento para la seguridad alimentaria mundial y, por supuesto, encomiamos el trabajo del Partenariado Global de Bioenergía (GBEP).

Con estos comentarios, la Argentina se congratula por el trabajo del COAG 28 y adelante su apoyo a las tareas que llevará adelante Canadá en la presidencia del Comité en el próximo bienio.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

Brazil supports the endorsement, by the FAO Council, of the findings and recommendations of the 28th session of the Committee on Agriculture, held last July.

In particular, we welcome the results of the first session of the Sub-Committee on Livestock and the endorsement of the strategic priorities for food safety within the FAO strategic framework.

We look forward to an inclusive and transparent process of participation of Members in the elaboration of the voluntary code of conduct on the sustainable use of plastics in agriculture, to be presented to the Committee on Agriculture (COAG 29). We also look forward to the more detailed analysis on the possibility of establishing a sub-committee on soils and, at the same time, maintaining the Global Soil Partnership (GSP) in its current structure.

Finally, Brazil expects the Council to approve the draft conference resolution on the proposal for an International Day of the Potato, taking into account the global importance of this product for food security and nutrition.

Mr Harry K. KIMUTAI (Kenya)

Kenya, together with Côte d'Ivoire and Ethiopia, speaks on behalf of the Africa Regional Group on this Agenda Item.

The Africa Regional Group congratulates the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) for the detailed report that cuts across the entire spectrum of agriculture. We take note of the representation that is composed of both local and international participants. The Group welcomes the report and recommendations.

We note that the report recognizes that food safety provides key contributions to One Health, the development of sustainable agrifood systems, food security and nutrition, and constitutes an essential prerequisite achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We therefore support the endorsement of the proposed Strategic Priorities for Food Safety within the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 leading to *better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life*.

The Africa Regional Group acknowledges the progress made by FAO in implementing the Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) 2021-2025 and the support it has provided to countries in minimizing and containing AMR for more resilient and sustainable agrifood systems.

We urge FAO to conclude the development of the FAO Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring (In-FARM) data platform to support strengthened generation and usage of AMR data in food and agriculture sectors, and to keep Members informed of progress, including with regard to pilot testing activities, as well as capacity building on antimicrobial use (AMU) in plant protection.

The Africa Regional Group recognized the central role of national agricultural research systems (NARS) and extension and advisory services (EAS) to advance the agricultural innovation, through co-development of technologies and good practices and making them available to micro-, small- and medium-scale producers.

We recommend that FAO aligns the work on NARS and EAS with the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy, we further urge that FAO ensures family farmers are prioritized within the implementation plans of the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy and the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031.

The Africa Regional Group acknowledges the multiple linkages between the agriculture and forestry sectors and wishes to emphasize the need to achieve better synergies between them through inter-sectorial approaches, for more sustainable agrifood systems.

We call upon our Members to promote greater and inclusive policy coherence between the agriculture and forestry sectors, including through integrated land use planning, landscape approaches and secured

access to land, as well as support to small-scale producers, family farmers, women, youth, local communities and Indigenous Peoples.

The Africa Regional Group welcomes the progress made in the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors and its 2021-23 Action Plan, and we encourage FAO to continue to provide support to its Members in their efforts to mainstream biodiversity.

We recognize the importance of addressing water scarcity in the context of achieving food security and nutrition and recommend that FAO steps up the work of the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG) of water tenure for the sustainable management of natural resources.

The Africa Regional Group commends FAO for the development of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031 through a highly inclusive process and its endorsement by the 170th Session of the Council. In my own country's case, FAO has supported the development of a specific private sector-led strategy on climate change mitigation. We welcome the proposal of an action plan and take note of its proposed outputs for the effective implementation of the strategy.

We recognise the development of the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy 2022-25 through an inclusive process and its subsequent endorsement by the 170th Session of the Council.

The Africa Regional Group recognise the role played by indigenous agrifood systems in Africa contributing significantly to rural food security and nutrition and that there is need to have country-led support programmes aligned to UN Decade of Family Farming (UNDIFF) 2019-2028.

We encourage FAO to ensure that the regional action plans align with and contribute to the implementation of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031, the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors, and the FAO Strategy for Private Sector.

Engagement 2021-25, and are aligned and consistent with agreed texts in international fora.

The Africa Region Group requests FAO to continue to organize open, inclusive, transparent and timely consultation processes, to consider the guidance provided by Members in refining and further developing the regional action plans, and to ensure the action plans capture actions in the Strategy at all levels – global, regional and country.

In conclusion, the Africa Regional Group recommends the endorsement of the Report of the 28th Session of the COAG and its recommendations.

Sr. Gustavo Eduardo MOSTAJO OCOLA (Perú)

El Perú desea agradecer a la Secretaría por la elaboración del Informe del 28^o periodo de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura (COAG) de la FAO, el cual nos expone, una vez más, la importancia de abordar de manera conjunta y coordinada en el corto, mediano y largo plazo, cada uno de los desafíos globales agrícolas y alimentarios para alcanzar el desarrollo sostenible y resiliencia.

Al reconocer la labor de la FAO, deseamos resaltar la importancia de establecer metas e indicadores claros, tomando en consideración los contextos y capacidades nacionales, para garantizar su implementación progresiva, pero a su vez, duradera.

En ese sentido, nuestro país respalda las prioridades de la Organización respecto a la inocuidad alimentaria en consonancia con el Marco Estratégico de la FAO 2022-2031, los progresos en relación con el Plan de Acción de la FAO sobre resistencia a los microbianos y la aplicación del enfoque Una Sola Salud, esperando ansiosamente ver reflejada la incorporación de la sanidad vegetal de la mano con la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria (CIPF) y la consecución del Plan de acción conjunto sobre Una Sola Salud.

Las diferentes crisis globales están afectando considerablemente los sistemas alimentarios y podrían incidir con mayor significación en la seguridad alimentaria y nutricional si no se adoptan acciones de impacto global, es allí donde la FAO cobra relevancia al proveer data, evidencia científica, y mecanismos de respuesta para que los Estados Miembros puedan afrontar local, nacional, regional y globalmente estos desafíos.

Nuestro país respalda la aplicación de las Estrategias de la FAO para la integración de la biodiversidad en los distintos sectores agrícolas, sobre cambio climático, y para la ciencia y la innovación, reconociendo la importancia de implementar los Planes de acción conforme a los contextos y las realidades nacionales.

En línea con la declaración inicial de la Presidencia del GRULAC en este Conejo, queremos expresar nuestro agradecimiento a los Miembros del COAG por el respaldo a la propuesta del Perú de establecer el 30 de mayo como el Día Internacional de la Papa y esperamos que, luego de su aprobación por el Consejo, el proyecto de resolución prosiga con su aprobación en la 43ª Conferencia y finalmente adoptada en la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas.

Con estas palabras, nuestro país acoge con beneplácito el informe del 28º periodo de sesiones del COAG.

Mr Neil FOURIE (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

The UK would like to draw Council's attention to the 3rd Global High-Level Ministerial Conference on Antimicrobial Resistance recently held in Muscat, in preparation for the upcoming the *United Nations General Assembly* (UNGA) High-level meeting on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) 2024. The UK welcomes FAO's opening remarks made by the FAO Director-General, where he pointed out that 70 percent of all antimicrobials sold globally are used in animal production, making the contribution of the agrifood sector in tackling AMR crucial within the one health context.

We noted the Director-General's announcement that FAO will shortly launch a global 10-year initiative to reduce the need for antimicrobials, and to provide comprehensive support to Members in that endeavor. This aligns well with one of the UK's own priorities for the high-level event in 2024.

The UK is very much in favour of this FAO's initiative, understanding that it puts FAO in the lead on tackling AMR within the agrifood sector, fully aligns with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and would like to request FAO to ensure its Members are regularly updated on how FAO is making progress towards implementation of the 10-year initiative.

Mr Abdul Rahman ABDUL WAHAB (Malaysia)

Malaysia delivers this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

First, we would like to express appreciation for the Report of Committee on Agriculture (COAG) 28 contained in document *C 2023/22*. We endorse the findings and recommendations of COAG 28 and in addition offer further comments, particularly in relation to the following:

First, the proposed strategic priorities of food safety within the FAO Strategic Framework 2020-31. We place great emphasis on food safety capacities of public and private actors and technical support to Members. As an evidence-based risk assessment forms the basis of food safety policy, it is therefore logical that priorities of food safety should also be addressed by the action plan that will implement the FAO Strategy on Science and Innovation.

On the development of the One Health Joint Plan of Action under the quadripartite collaboration alongside the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), following the written consultation of joint action by the Quadripartite, in June this year, we are looking forward to receiving the outcomes of that exercise. On top, the Asia Group encourages FAO to consult with Members on its implementation plan and provide regular updates on its progress.

While acknowledging the importance of the One Health approach in addressing Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), we call for FAO to work with the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariat as appropriate, to prioritize the development of guidance on the use of antimicrobial agents for phytosanitary purposes.

On promotion of more coherent and integrated Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS), by strengthening national research and extension service systems, we look forward for FAO's strengthened support, including in resource mobilization to improve knowledge and exchange of

partnership among Members and boost agricultural research and extension advisory services for development and dissemination of the smallholder producers technologies, good practices, and innovation.

On ensuring sustainability of the UN Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028 (UNDDFF), we support the call for FAO to continue close coordination with International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to mobilize required financial resources to promote concrete actions on the ground.

On multiple linkages between agriculture and forestry we applaud the rich COAG discussions on this topic and to coordinate to have better synergies between the Committee on Forestry (COFO) and COAG through inter-sectorial approaches to achieve sustainable agri-food systems.

We took note with great interest the *Progress report on the implementation of the FAO strategy on mainstreaming biodiversity across agriculture sectors* and its 2021-2023 action plan and fully support the open, inclusive, and transparent consultation process to develop the 2024-2027 action plan.

We applaud FAO-led collaborative efforts as well as contributions from its key partners in launching *The state of the world's land and water resources for food and agriculture (SOLAW 2021)*. The key findings of SOLAW 2021 have been extremely important and helpful in understanding the unprecedented pressures on land, soil and water resources in the past decade in ensuring food security and livelihoods of a growing world population as well as providing solutions away from the *business-as-usual* approach.

On governance of the tenure of water resources for food and agriculture, we would like to stress the importance of FAO to step up the work of the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG) and to support Members upon request in building and developing capacities to produce data on available and actual use of water resources in agriculture. And, in close cooperation with relevant UN agencies, to initiate a Global Dialogue on Water Tenure.

On agrifood systems, which as we all know are highly complex, therefore we echo several calls made by COAG for improved inter sectoral collaboration and governance in numerous issues including plastic use throughout agri-food systems. In the same vein, we share the notion on the need for FAO to conduct further scientific and evidence-based assessments of the multiple aspects of plastic use in agriculture in view to support the possible development of a voluntary code of conduct on sustainable use of plastic in agriculture through an inclusive transparent consultative process.

We endorsed the new Global Soil Partnership (GSP) Action Framework 2022 to 2030 and support the recommendation for FAO to prepare an in-depth analysis on the option to establish a Sub-Committee on Soils and maintaining the GSP and its current structure.

On the development of regional action plans for the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy and Action Plan for the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change we reaffirm support for FAO to continue undertaking an open, inclusive, transparent, timely consultation process with regards to Members' guidance, regional and national specificities in developing the action plans.

We request regular updates on the development of the action plans and look forward for the effective implementation as soon as possible.

Finally, we support the draft Conference resolution for the observance of the International Day of Potato for final approval by the 43rd Session of the Conference.

Mr Purna Cita NUGRAHA (Indonesia)

Indonesia aligns itself with the statement delivered by Malaysia on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. The world has suffered from food unaffordability and scarcity due to multiple crises. In this regard, sustainable food and agriculture are deemed to be critical elements for global recovery and resilience.

For this matter, Indonesia's G20 presidency highlighted the promotion of resilient and sustainable agriculture and food system. The G20 leaders have conveyed their commitments to taking urgent actions to save lives, and prevent hunger and malnutrition, particularly to address the vulnerabilities of developing countries, and called for an accelerated transformations towards sustainable and resilient agriculture and food systems. This is also in line with the recommendations in the report of the 28th session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), which called for continued efforts in those areas.

Moreover, we welcome the endorsement of the proposed Strategic Priorities for Food Safety within the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031.

We call on FAO to continue implementation of the Action plan for antimicrobial resistance (AMR) 2021-2025 with the focus on the One Health approach and provide support to Members, upon their request, to raise awareness, strengthen monitoring, promote the responsible use of antimicrobials in food production, livestock and fisheries.

With regard to the UN Decade of Family Farming, we encourage FAO to increase its support to members in accelerating their efforts in leveraging family farmers potential towards resilient and sustainable agri-food systems, through effective participation and policy interventions, appropriate financing and implementation modalities.

With these brief comments, Indonesia endorses the report of the 28th session of COAG.

Sra. Carla SIERRA ZÚÑIGA (Costa Rica)

Nuestra Delegación quiere hacer solamente dos breves comentarios sobre el informe. En relación con el párrafo 17, Costa Rica teniendo actualmente la presidencia del *Steering Committee* del Decenio de las Naciones Unidas para la Agricultura Familiar desea continuar instando a los países para que sigan apoyando sus políticas en favor de los agricultores familiares a través de la elaboración, desarrollo e implementación de sus planes de acción. Como sabemos los agricultores familiares son fundamentales para la seguridad alimentaria y alcanzar los ODS 1 y 2. Solicitamos que FAO siga trabajando con el Fondo Internacional de Desarrollo Agrícola (FIDA) para movilizar recursos financieros que permitirán fortalecer la resiliencia de los agricultores familiares.

Sobre el párrafo 30 reiteramos nuestra adhesión a la declaración manifestada por la Presidencia Pro-Tempore del Grupo América Latina y el Caribe (GRULAC) al inicio de este Consejo para seguir apoyando la propuesta para declarar el 30 de mayo como el Día Internacional de la Papa. Con estos comentarios acogemos el informe del 28 período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura del pasado mes de julio.

Ms Nadine Rosario M. MORALES (Philippines)

The 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) held last July has worked on a broad range of recommendations for FAO to further support Members in accelerating the transformation of agrifood systems to become more efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable.

The Philippines particularly looks forward to the development and implementation of the action plans for the FAO Strategy on Climate Change and FAO Science and Innovation Strategy, where FAO is invited to ensure that family farmers are prioritized in the implementation of these plans.

The Philippines also looks forward to key deliverables envisioned for presentation to COAG 29 for consideration in 2024, such as the Voluntary Code of Conduct on the sustainable use of plastics in agriculture which will be informed by further assessments related to the distribution, benefits, trade-offs, and risks of plastics for agricultural use and their alternatives, and inclusive and transparent consultations. Tackling plastic pollution in agriculture is indeed paramount to achieving more efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable agrifood systems.

We also wish to take this opportunity to appreciate FAO's Corporate Strategic Foresight Exercise in 2020-2022 and the launch of its report: *The Future of Food and Agriculture - Drivers and Triggers for Transformation*, last December 2, 2022. We will endeavour to use FAO's foresight products to inform national development strategies for sustainable and resilient agrifood systems.

The Philippines aligns itself with the Asia Regional Group statement delivered by Malaysia in commending the work of the COAG in its 28th session, in offering further comments, and in endorsing its findings and recommendations.

Sra. María De Lourdes CRUZ TRINIDAD (México)

México agradece y aprecia el informe del 28 período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura (COAG). Respecto a los temas abordados en él y, en particular, las recomendaciones formuladas se puede destacar lo siguiente.

Es de suma importancia contar con el apoyo de la FAO para el diseño de estrategias que favorezcan la adopción de las innovaciones tecnológicas enfocadas en el aprovechamiento de los residuos y el desarrollo de nuevos productos a partir de estos. La estrategia deberá impulsar proyectos rentables que atraigan la atención de la industria privada e incluso la obtención de fondos internacionales.

La bioeconomía, en particular, deberá ser promovida como una nueva forma de creación de bioplásticos a partir de la biomasa obtenida de procesos agrícolas recuperando los desechos y residuos y aumentando la eficiencia y el valor de los recursos al sustituir el uso de recursos fósiles. La bioeconomía representa una gran área de oportunidad al aprovechar de manera innovadora los recursos naturales limitados para responder a la creciente demanda de alimentos.

La incorporación de la ciencia y las innovaciones tecnológicas a la producción constituye una herramienta para enfrentar los retos con el propósito de que esta sea más sostenible, equitativa y con mayor potencial con el propósito de generar crecimiento social. Cabe destacar que recientemente celebramos el Primer Congreso Interamericano de Agua, Suelo y Agrobiodiversidad en el que se compartieron experiencias, conocimientos, tecnología y buenas prácticas del continente para enfrentar los efectos del cambio climático y la degradación del recurso suelo-agua en el sector agroalimentario, así como la promoción, integración y difusión de conocimientos científicos y tecnológicos sobre la interrelación agua-suelo y agrobiodiversidad para favorecer el intercambio de experiencias de México y otros países.

Con gusto, Señor Presidente, respaldamos y refrendamos este informe y sus recomendaciones.

Sr. Junior Andrés ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)

No le confirmo que será menos tiempo del que hizo nuestro colega de Costa Rica que fue muy eficiente.

En primer lugar, permítame agradecer al Presidente y desearle éxito a la nueva Presidenta en el próximo período de sesiones. Refrendamos los resultados del Comité de Agricultura. Agradecemos y reconocemos el trabajo, el desarrollo, el informe del Subcomité de Ganadería guiado por nuestro querido representante de Argentina.

No voy a mencionar todos los temas. Voy a hacer referencia solo a un tema que tuvimos mucho interés de resaltar durante el Comité de Agricultura; en particular, el tema de Una Salud, orientación técnica y sobre políticas conexas como lo hemos expresado, en el Comité en julio pasado.

Coincidimos que esta iniciativa pueda apoyar la transformación de los sistemas agroalimentarios y favorecer el alcance de las cuatro mejoras establecidas en el Marco Estratégico de nuestra Organización 2022-2031. Subrayamos que la coyuntura actual nos demuestra cuán importante es la interrelación entre la salud de las personas, los animales, las plantas y el medio ambiente. Uno de estos cuatro elementos no se puede lograr sin la interrelación de los otros. En este sentido consideramos que la colaboración estrecha sin solapar ni esfuerzos ni recursos entre los organismos de Naciones Unidas debe ser desarrollada en una visión integral para permitir apoyar la Agenda 2030, sus objetivos y la aplicación del marco estratégico de la Organización.

En relación al Plan de Acción Conjunto sobre Una Salud por parte de la asociación cuatripartita, consideramos siempre en ámbito de integración y eficacia de las acciones indispensable aumentar, como ha sido mencionado por la Delegación de Perú y Malasia, la colaboración con la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria alojada en FAO aprovechando el trabajo a nivel nacional, regional y mundial que esta Convención realiza en beneficio de la protección y salud de las plantas, en beneficio de los millones de consumidores y usuarios, además de favorecer la conservación y uso de la biodiversidad.

Por último, para que la iniciativa Una Salud pueda lograr alcanzar sus objetivos y traducirse en resultados globales y nacionales, es necesario asegurar recursos financieros en cantidad y sostenibilidad, pero sobre todo, es necesario su transferencia a nivel territorial favoreciendo, entre otros, el desarrollo de capacidades, acceso a la innovación, de lo contrario la propuesta en práctica del enfoque quedará en un intento.

Por último, como lo expresó nuestro grupo regional, apoyamos la declaración del Día Internacional de la Papa el día 30 de mayo tomando en cuenta la contribución de este producto a la seguridad alimentaria mundial.

Mr LI Hanghao (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China aligns itself with Malaysia's intervention on behalf of the Asia Group. We support the Quadripartite mechanism formed by FAO, World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and World Health Organization (WHO) in their efforts to continue the implementation of the action plan through a One Health approach.

We look forward to the development of the One Health Joint Plan of Action. We hope that FAO can better support Members in their implementation of good production practices as well as antimicrobial resistance (AMR) management to reduce the need for and to promote the responsible and prudent use of antimicrobials in agrifood systems.

China applauds the publication of *The Future of Food and Agriculture - Drivers and triggers for transformation* which provides guidance to Members in the transformation of their respective agrifood systems.

We also appreciate that FAO regularly publishes the *State of the World's Land and Water Resources for Food and Agriculture* which provides adequate and reliable information and analysis to Member states.

We encourage FAO to continue to follow the 2022 to 2031 Strategic Framework to develop a Programme of Work in the agrifood sector. We fully consider the Committee on Agriculture's (COAG) findings and recommendations in the development of the Strategy on Climate Change as well as the Science and Innovation Strategy.

In light of the above, China endorses the Report of the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture. We hope that thanks to the leadership of Ms Julie Émond, COAG will focus on its mandate and conduct relevant work.

Ms Ekaterina VYBORNOVA (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

The Russian Federation endorses the Report of the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG). The Russian Federation disassociates itself from paragraph 15 subparagraph (g), paragraph 27 subparagraph (c), and paragraph 29 subparagraph (b) on the same basis as what we set out on the previous Agenda Item.

We repeat that given the agreement on this, the Committee exceeded its mandate and the FAO Committee does not have the authority to qualify the conflict in Ukraine as a war. This rests with the Security Council of the United Nations (UN).

Furthermore, at its 169th Session FAO Council, to which the Committee refers in paragraph 27(d) and paragraph 29(b) and which was adopted through a vote, the conflict on Ukraine is not termed a "war". Therefore a Technical Committee took upon itself to interpret the decision of the 169th Session of the Council.

The Russian Federation has intervened on this and will continue to speak in favour of close adherence by the Organization and its Governing Bodies to FAO's mandate, and we request that our position be reflected in the footnote to the Report on the Council's Session on this particular Item.

CHAIRPERSON

As we have done in the previous Item, we will make a footnote with your disassociation with the paragraphs you mentioned in our Report.

Mr Anatoliy SHATKOVSKYY (Canada)

Canada welcomes the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Report and the analysis and ongoing work of the Secretariat to support COAG. And we thank the previous Chairperson for his leadership.

Furthermore, we welcome and fully support the new Chairperson. We also support the proposal to commemorate 30 May of each year as the International Day of the Potato. Canada would also like to highlight subparagraph 27(e) of the Report, in which the COAG called on FAO to strengthen its normative and standards setting work. This work is essential to open trade, which as we heard earlier today regarding the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) is vital to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We also look forward to the action plans for implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change, and the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy as outlined in subparagraphs 25 and 26.

In conclusion, Canada recommends this Council endorse the programmatic and financial matters contained in the findings and recommendations of the Report, including in particular paragraphs 15(g) 27(c) and (d) and 29(b).

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

La France s'aligne sur la déclaration de l'Union Européenne et de ses états membres, prononcée par la République tchèque et souhaite ajouter les observations qui suivent à titre national.

Nous saluons les résultats de la 28e Session du COAG et félicitons Mme Julie Émond pour son élection. Il est nécessaire d'accélérer la transition vers des systèmes alimentaires durables et le rôle de la FAO est majeur à cet égard. Nous saluons la mise en place de la quadripartite entre la FAO, l'Organisation mondiale de la Santé (OMS), l'OIE et le PNUE, sur l'approche Une Seule Santé. Les travaux dans ce domaine sont extrêmement importants. Nous saluons en particulier les travaux du panel d'experts Une Seule Santé et les initiatives scientifiques dans ce domaine, comme l'initiative PREZODE.

Alors que nous sortons tout juste de la COP27 à Sharm El Sheikh, et que s'ouvre la COP15 à Montréal, nous soulignons l'importance de la mise en œuvre par la FAO des stratégies sur le changement climatique et la biodiversité. Nous réitérons notre appréciation pour la création d'un Sous-Comité de l'Élevage, et pour ces travaux sous la présidence de notre collègue l'Ambassadeur argentin. Nous soutenons le développement d'une évaluation de la contribution de l'élevage aux objectifs de développement durable et attendons le rapport pour le prochain Sous-Comité de l'Élevage.

S'agissant des plastiques, nous rappelons notre soutien à l'élaboration d'un code de conduite volontaire sur les plastiques agricoles. Nous encourageons la FAO à jouer un rôle dans les négociations d'un traité sur l'élimination de la pollution par les plastiques. La France accueillera une Session de négociation en mai 2023.

En conclusion, nous invitons le Conseil à approuver le rapport de la 28e Session du COAG qui, je le rappelle, avait été adopté par consensus.

Mr Shingo FUTAMI (Japan)

Japan aligns itself with the statement made by Malaysia on behalf of the Asia Regional Group and of course acknowledges FAO's key role on its normative work.

Japan supports the recommendations made by the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG). The COAG called on the Organization to continue to strengthen its normative work in the standard setting as stated in subparagraph 27(e) in the document *C 2023/22*. And we welcome recommendations made by COAG 28 on the agriculture and forestry linkages.

In particular, we reiterate the necessity of FAO's collaboration with Members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) in order to effectively tackle this issue.

For instance, the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) could be a great partner for FAO. In this regard, we encourage FAO to continue playing an active role in relevant international forum by promoting an open dialogue on enhancing and promoting sustainable agrifood systems and working with other international partners, including all relevant stakeholders, and particularly Members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, including ITTO, to upscale synergies between agriculture and forestry.

Lastly, I would like to mention FAO's Science and Innovation Strategy and FAO Strategy on Climate Change, mentioned in the previous Session of the Council. Now, the action plan for both strategies are under development if my understanding is correct. Japan reiterates the significance of the transparent and open process to develop them with formal and informal consultations with Members.

We seize this opportunity to kindly ask the Secretariat their view on the provisional timeline for the development of the action plans as a way forward. With these observations we endorse the Report of the COAG 28.

Ms Siti Normaznie ABDUL MUTTALIB (Malaysia)

Let me first thank Dr Bommakanti Rajender, Chairperson of the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), for his leadership, productive work, and for chairing the Session in the most appropriate and effective way. Malaysia also welcomes Ms Julie Émond from Canada as the new COAG Chairperson.

Malaysia places great importance on cross-sectorial, in-country coordination on AMR-related initiatives. National Antimicrobial Resistance Committee (NARC) has been established in 2017 as the National AMR coordinating mechanism with objectives to improve awareness and understanding of AMR through effective communication, education and training, strengthen the knowledge and evidence base through surveillance and research, reduce the incidence of infection through effective infection prevention measures and optimize the use of antimicrobial medicines in animal health. Currently, Malaysia is in the midst of finalizing the Malaysian Action Plan on AMR (MyAP-AMR) 2022-2026.

Malaysia welcomes the progress made by FAO in implementing the Action Plan on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) 2021-2025 in collaboration with the Quadripartite within the One Health framework. Malaysia appreciates the commitment of COAG 28 to ensuring that AMR will become a standing item on the COAG agenda and supports FAO's work to promote the prudent and responsible use of antimicrobials in food production. We noted with great interest the progress of the AMR Multi-Stakeholders Partnership Platform led by FAO, which was launched in 2019. On this, we would like to suggest the followings: for possible expansion of the global programme to more countries from the existing 11 participating countries; FAO to promote sharing of knowledge and experience of the global programme gained thus to a wider audience.

The current strategic priorities reflect the intersectoral nature of food safety. Malaysia acknowledges FAO's work in developing the Strategic Priorities for Food Safety within the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 with its mission to support Members in continuing to improve food safety at all levels by providing scientific advice and strengthening their food safety capacities for efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable agrifood systems. Malaysia's National Nutrition Policy of Malaysia (NNPM) 2.0 is developed with the goals of improving nutritional status, lowering the incidence of diet-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs), and bolstering food and nutrition security in Malaysia.

With regard to Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS), Malaysia emphasizes the importance of enabling access and enhancing participation in appropriate innovation, information and advisory services for smallholders and family farmers. Malaysia supports the promotion of more coherent and integrated AIS by strengthening national agricultural research and extension systems.

Finally, Malaysia supports the implementation of the recommendations of the 27th Session of the Committee and its Multi-Year Programme of Work of the Committee (MYPOW) for 2022-2025.

CHAIRPERSON

We now turn to the Observers.

Sra. Claudia GONZÁLEZ TOLEDO (Cuba) (Observador)

Agradecemos la presentación del informe del 28 período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura. Acogemos con agrado la celebración del primer Subcomité de Ganadería y encomiamos a la presidencia por la exitosa conducción de los trabajos de este Subcomité. Además, quisiéramos referirnos a la propuesta del 30 de mayo como Día Internacional de la Papa presentada por el gobierno

de Perú y que fuera apoyada por el Grupo América Latina y el Caribe (GRULAC) en la declaración regional en el primer día de sesiones.

Consideramos que el establecimiento de esta conmemoración estimulará la adopción de medidas en favor de su producción y consumo entre otras cuestiones importantes por lo cual Cuba reitera su apoyo a esta iniciativa.

Por otra parte, como pequeño Estado insular en desarrollo compartimos la preocupación expresada por la Delegación de Bahamas sobre los grandes efectos del cambio climático con un impacto cada vez mayor en nuestros sistemas agroalimentarios. Aguardamos con atención los Planes de Acción para la implementación de las Estrategias de Ciencia, Innovación y Cambio Climático, los cuales deben estar acorde a los diferentes contextos regionales. Muchas gracias.

Sr. José Ángel BUCARELLO GUZMÁN (Venezuela, República Bolivariana de) (Observador)

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela agradece la presentación del informe y destaca el trabajo constructivo durante este 28 período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura donde destacamos el aporte que desde el sector se realiza para el logro de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible, en particular el ODS 2, Hambre Cero.

Respecto al informe, quisiéramos resaltar el Plan de Acción sobre la Resistencia a los Antimicrobianos para 2021-2025 donde se destaca el papel del Codex Alimentarius y sus aportes para la inocuidad en los alimentos. Asimismo, valoramos de manera positiva la importancia del análisis prospectivo-estratégico del informe, el futuro de la alimentación y la agricultura, factores y desencadenantes de la transformación el cual vemos como un instrumento que aporta orientaciones para fortalecer los sistemas agroalimentarios de manera sostenible.

En cuanto a la función catalizadora del Decenio de las Naciones Unidas de la Agricultura Familiar 2019-2028, resaltamos la importancia de que se mantenga una estrecha coordinación con el Fondo Internacional de Desarrollo Agrícola, FIDA, para su importancia en el fortalecimiento de la resiliencia de los agricultores familiares y la movilización de recursos. Referente a la promoción de sistemas de innovación agrícolas más coherentes e integrados mediante los sistemas nacionales de investigación y extensión agrícola acompañamos a que la FAO refuerce su apoyo a los Miembros.

Expresamos preocupación por los efectos de la crisis climática que está afectando los sistemas alimentarios. En este sentido, apoyamos a que la FAO incremente la cooperación a los Miembros en proyectos orientados al fortalecimiento de la resiliencia ante estos crecientes fenómenos climáticos, como son las sequías y las inundaciones.

Destacamos la labor realizada por la Alianza Mundial por el Suelo como una plataforma que comparte recomendaciones a partir del conocimiento científico y basado en datos para contar con suelos saludables. Asimismo, invitamos a la FAO a seguir analizando a fondo el planteamiento de establecer un subcomité de suelo y mantener la Alianza Mundial por el Suelo con su estructura actual.

Destacamos el plan de acción para la aplicación de la Estrategia de la FAO sobre eCambio Climático 2022-2031 y la elaboración de Planes de Acción regionales para la Estrategia de la FAO para la Ciencia y la Innovación 2022-2025 como instrumentos que permitan una mejor coordinación con los Miembros en torno a estos temas que consideramos de importancia para el logro de la Agenda 2030 y los ODS.

Reafirmamos, como lo hicimos en el 28 período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura, nuestro respaldo al establecimiento del Día Internacional de la Papa.

CHAIRPERSON

With this we have had all our statements and our consideration of the Report of the Committee on Agriculture. I now turn the floor to the Chairperson Ms Julie Émond to see whether she wants to make some additional remarks.

Mme Julie ÉMOND (Présidente Comité de l'agriculture)

J'aimerais d'entrée de jeu exprimer mes remerciements et ma sincère appréciation pour le Dr. Bommakanti Rajender pour son leadership dans la préparation et la livraison de la rencontre de la 28e

Session du Comité sur l'Agriculture, en juillet dernier. Ainsi que l'équipe du Secrétariat, qui a su orchestrer une rencontre en mode hybride sans accroc, un peu comme nous cette semaine.

J'aimerais aussi remercier les représentants des groupes régionaux et les différents membres et observateurs pour leurs interventions aujourd'hui, et pour votre appui. J'en ai pris bonne note. Cela nous remet en mémoire l'agenda chargé que nous avons en juillet et l'ampleur du travail qui nous attend en vue du COAG 29.

Les deux prochaines années, je pense, vont passer très vite. Il y a du pain sur la planche. Certains termes resteront au centre de nos travaux inter-sessionnels, nous devons faire écho bien sûr à ce que plusieurs ont soulevé ce soir, quant à la mise en œuvre des stratégies sur la science et l'innovation et sur les changements climatiques dans le contexte du COAG. Je pense aussi à l'élevage durable, et je me réjouis de pouvoir appuyer l'Ambassadeur Cherniak dans son travail de Président du Sous-Comité sur l'Élevage à cet effet.

La liste des termes et enjeux sur lesquels travaille le COAG est vaste. J'ai commencé une liste au début de la Session, et j'ai arrêté d'écrire, parce que c'est toujours trop long. Mais ce sont des enjeux tous importants qui ont des dimensions transversales qu'il faut toujours avoir en tête. Je ne vais pas m'aventurer à tout lister, mais je voulais juste noter deux choses en particulier. D'abord le développement d'un code de conduite sur l'utilisation durable des plastiques agricoles pour lequel le bureau est déjà en échange avec le Secrétariat afin de se mettre d'accord sur la séquence qui nous permettra d'atteindre cet objectif, et ensuite, vous faire part des échanges actifs que j'ai avec le Président du Comité sur les Forêts, Mr Guenter Walkner, pour avancer le travail sur les liens entre l'agriculture et la foresterie.

Ce ne sont que deux exemples, il y aura évidemment beaucoup plus de travail au cours des prochains mois et années. De plus, nous avons parlé d'eau aujourd'hui, pendant une bonne partie de nos délibérations, et la mise en place du dialogue sur les régimes fonciers pourra contribuer à la contribution de la FAO au dialogue plus large. Enfin, juste pour l'anecdote, j'ai appris ce soir un acronyme en français, que je n'avais jamais utilisé pour la résistance aux antimicrobiens, la RAM, et j'ai bien l'intention de l'utiliser à l'avenir.

Autant que possible, et avec les membres du bureau, nous tenterons d'avancer sur ces enjeux et bien plus, avec en tête d'informer et mettre à contribution les membres qui seront intéressés à le faire au cours des deux prochaines années. Je compte donc sur vous tous au cours des prochains mois pour continuer informellement ces échanges et ce travail.

CHAIRPERSON

With that we finalized our deliberations on the Report of the Committee on Agriculture. And with our common practice, I will read out now the draft conclusions and then we take them one by one.

I follow now the same methodology as done previously, so I ask the Secretariat to put the draft conclusions on the screen. First the *chapeau*.

1. The Council reviewed the Report of the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture and in particular:

- (a) welcomed the Report of the first Session of the Committee on Agriculture's subcommittee on Livestock from 16 to 18 March 2022, and its multi-year programme of work for the period of 2022 to 2025;
- (b) welcomed the progress made in the adoption of the One Health approach and strengthen cooperation between the tripartite and recommended to enhance data integration and sharing across sectors, to strengthen global One Health knowledge and scientific information systems, and to assist Members on national One Health early warning frameworks for rapid risk assessments of animal and zoonotic diseases threats;
- (c) Welcomed the progress made in implementation of the Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance 2021-2025, in close collaboration with the Quadripartite, and encourage FAO to support Members in the implementation of good production practices, as well as in the AMR management throughout the food supply chain;

- (d) emphasized the role of agricultural innovation systems and recommended to further develop and promote participatory approaches for agricultural research and realistic extension and advisory services to enable small holders and family farmers to access and participate in appropriate innovation, information and advisory services;
- (e) welcomed the progress made in the implementation of the UN Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028 and stressed the need to mobilize financial resources in this regard;
- (f) stressed the importance of agriculture and forestry linkages, and to strengthen the coordination between the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Forestry on related cross-sectoral matters, and we endeavour to continue collecting and analysing science and evidence-based data on agriculture and forestry interdependencies;
- (g) welcomed progress in the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across agricultural sectors in its 2021-2023 Action Plan;
- (h) noted the importance of Report of the State of the *Worlds' Land and Water Resources for Food and Agriculture* and recommended FAO to consider reporting these issues through a regular flagship publication and to undertake an assessment of existing water tenure arrangements and to initiate a global dialogue of water tenure matters;
- (i) underscored the need for improved inter-sectoral collaboration and governance to address plastic use throughout agrifood systems, and recommended to continue to address knowledge gaps, including through consultations with Members and relevant stakeholders and to develop, within FAOs mandate, a voluntary code of conduct on the sustainable use of plastics in agriculture;
- (j) welcomed the progress of the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030 and asked FAO to address the restoration of agricultural production ecosystems within its policies and programmes;
- (k) noted the progress of work in the agrifood sectors and the Strategic Framework 2022 to 2031, and encouraged FAO to continue to strengthen its normative and standard setting work;
- (l) endorsed the new Global Soil Partnership Action Framework 2022-2030 and supported to the preparation of an in-depth analysis on the proposed institutionalization of the GSP, for further review by the 11th GSP Plenary Assembly and the 29th Session of the COAG; and
- (m) endorsed the draft Conference resolution on the observance by the UN system of an International Day of Potato on 30 May every year, as set out in Appendix C to this Report for adoption by the 43rd Session of the Conference.

2. With the above observations, the Council endorsed aspects and recommendations of the Report relating to programme and budgetary matters.

With that we now start adopting the conclusions and we go to the *chapeau* and, we go to the footnote which was requested by the Russian Federation.

The Russian Federation dissociates itself from subparagraphs 50(g), 27(c), 27(d), and 29(b) of the Report. And then, we also insert the reference to the statement which can be found in the Verbatim.

We now go to the *chapeau* of the conclusions. Can we agree to the *chapeau*? I do not see any objections. Can we agree to subparagraph (a)? I do not see any objections. Then we go to subparagraph (b).

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

On subparagraph (a) I think there is something that I do not know whether you should call it “Committee on Agriculture’s Sub-Committee on Livestock”. I think we need to put the right appellation which is the “Sub-Committee on Livestock of the Committee of Agriculture”. I think that is the right appellation.

CHAIRPERSON

So, we say the Report of the 1st Session of the Sub-Committee on Livestock of the Committee on Agriculture is already there.

Can we now agree to subparagraph (a)? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (b). Can we agree to subparagraph (b)? Czechia on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am still on subparagraph (a). I may have additional language at the end of the subparagraph, which would read, "*Highlighted the importance of the transition of the livestock sector to overcome long-term challenges and look forward to the global assessment on the contribution of the livestock sector to the SDGs to be prepared for the next Session of the Sub-Committee on Livestock*".

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

First concerning the official name of the Sub-Committee. According to the Report of the first Plenary Session, we should call it "*Committee on Agriculture's Sub-Committee on Livestock*". It was already endorsed.

For the second proposal, we do see value. However, the word "*transition*" or the concept "*transition*" of livestock was not used, nor endorsed during the first Plenary. So, we could keep on looking forward for the presentation of the assessment but I would prefer not to enter in discussing the concept around livestock sustainability here.

CHAIRPERSON

So, what would be your proposal for the third line?

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

We could go along with "*and look forward to the global assessment on the contribution of the livestock sector to the SDGs to be prepared*". And we strike out the first "*and*".

CHAIRPERSON

I think we should stick to the agreed title, which was agreed by the Sub-Committee.

Mr Sean COX (United States of America)

We agree with the deletion of that first part because we do not find the meaning particularly clear, so we would support Argentina's suggestion to delete that first part.

CHAIRPERSON

It is a flexibility, I see nodding that there is an agreement to delete this part. With that we have an agreement on subparagraph (a).

We go to subparagraph (b). Can we agree to subparagraph (b)? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (c).

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

I would prefer something like "*welcome the development of the One Health Joint Plan of Action and strengthen cooperation*". "*Progress made in the adoption*", seems a bit vague to me. But that may be my Portuguese speaking mind at the back of my head.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

Still on subparagraph (a), let us remove the "*agriculture's*", because the right name is the Committee on Agriculture Sub-Committee on Livestock. That is what I wanted to avoid. So that is why I put it the other way but the right name is Committee on Agriculture Sub-Committee on Livestock. There is no added 'S'.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Cameroon, to make it formally correct. I go back to subparagraph (b). Can we agree to what was proposed by Brazil? Sorry I think Brazil comes back because I think not everything was captured.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

“*To assist Members upon request*”, if it makes sense.

CHAIRPERSON

Consistent with earlier paragraphs.

Sra. María Carolina CARRANZA NUÑEZ (Perú)

Sí, es para agregar un subpárrafo luego del subpárrafo (b). Es para recoger las intervenciones de varios países. “*Recomendó a la FAO en el marco del enfoque Una Salud intensificar la cooperación entre la asociación cuatripartita FAO-OMS-PNUMA-OIE y la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria para tener en cuenta la sanidad vegetal*”.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this proposal? I do not see any objections.

We go to subparagraph (d). And there was a request made by the United States of America.

Mr Sean COX (United States of America)

Just with reference to the added subparagraph. We are happy with suggestions for the Quadripartite, but although we are very big supporters of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), I think adding the IPPC is adding something outside of the Quadripartite. So we would support this, but without IPPC. So deleting after OIE or WAOH whichever it is now called.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

I support the deletion because it is no longer Quadripartite, when you add IPPC. And then the official name of OIE is now WAOH.

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

In principle, we can go along with the proposal made by Peru, although we do understand the point raised by the United States of America. Perhaps we can just use the very same paragraph we have already approved during the plenary of COAG in subparagraph 13(d). And it goes like this, “*recommend FAO to strengthen cooperation between the Quadripartite and the International Plant Protection Convention to consider plant health*”. And that is it. So instead of negotiating again, we perhaps just repeat.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

We can support the latest proposal of Argentina.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

We may have been missing one key component, either on subparagraph (c) or on “*alt*”, which is the Codex Alimentarius. So if we can add “*and the Codex Alimentarius and International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) to consider plant health*”. No, ‘alt’.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us work on “*alt*” because I think that gains the most support.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

All right.

CHAIRPERSON

You want to have Codex.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

Codex is subparagraph (c) and IPPC is subparagraph (i).

CHAIRPERSON

Okay we say between the Quadripartite, Codex Alimentarius and...

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

...IPPC.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we now agree to the paragraph "*alt*"?

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

I apologize for requesting the floor again. But here although we are huge fans of Codex Alimentarius our interpretation is that Codex Alimentarius has to do with food safety not plant health. So here we do not see fixing in the paragraph, but perhaps I do not know if someone from the management can provide us with further input. But our initial position would be to keep the subparagraph as agreed during the Plenary.

CHAIRPERSON

I perhaps give the floor later on to Deputy Director-Generals Ms Maria Helena Semedo or Ms Beth Bechdol.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

The intervention is in the same line as Argentina. At this point we do not see the Codex Alimentarius in here unless there is some other information that we do not have.

M. Bienvenu NTSOUANVA (Congo)

La santé des plantes et des aliments, si cela est possible pour compléter l'idée du Cameroun.

La santé des plantes et la sécurité sanitaire des aliments.

CHAIRPERSON

Now we are confused, is it correct now? Congo is this what you want to propose? While we are waiting for Congo, I give the floor to Peru.

Sra. María Carolina CARRANZA NUÑEZ (Perú)

No queríamos complicar con la propuesta de este párrafo, más bien queríamos recoger el aporte de Argentina dado que este subpárrafo, el 13 (d), del informe del Comité de Agricultura ya es un texto acordado que facilitaría trabajar en base a él.

Solo quisiéramos referirnos a la sanidad vegetal que ha sido el tema abordado en este debate y adicionalmente mencionar que, para tener contexto en este subpárrafo, tendría que mencionarse el enfoque de Una Salud, "*within the One Health approach*", porque si no, el párrafo carece de un contexto dado que en el informe original estaba bajo del capítulo del enfoque de Una Salud. Creo que sería conveniente agregarlo para que quede claro que nos referimos a ese tema.

CHAIRPERSON

It is becoming more and more complex. Let us keep this subparagraph pending and see whether or not we can later on find a solution.

We go to subparagraph (d).

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

Speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. We had actually additional wording to put at the end of this subparagraph.

It will read, “*Noted with appreciation the support for the need to implementation of the Codex Alimentarius guidelines / standards on antimicrobial resistance and the development of guidelines on monitoring the use of antimicrobials at farm level*”

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this insertion? We keep it pending.

We go to subparagraph (e) because I would like to ask your cooperation to could finalize these conclusions, but we have to do it before 20:00 hours this evening. So please help us to get it done. Now we go to subparagraph (e).

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

Can we do away with the word “*systems*” in the first sentence? First line. So that we leave only “*agricultural innovation*”, because it could be confusing if we had “*systems*” there.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree with the deletion of ‘*systems*’? I do not see any objection. Then we have adopted subparagraph (e).

We go to subparagraph (f). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (g).

Mr Shingo FUTAMI (Japan)

On this third line, strike “*the forest and*”, before ‘*recommended*’. And then I would like to propose new language at the end, starting with ‘*and encouraged FAO to continue playing an active role in relevant international fora by promoting an open dialogue on enhancing and promoting sustainable agrifood systems and further working with other international partners*’. Yes. And, including all relevant stakeholders and particularly Members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), *to upscale synergies between agriculture and the forestry*”

CHAIRPERSON

It is going to be very lengthy, Japan, and probably unreadable.

Mr Shingo FUTAMI (Japan)

That is the end. This is the same language stated in subparagraph 18(e) of the Report. I hope it works and it is agreeable to all the Members.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this addition? It is agreed language in the Report.

Mr Andrian MCADAMS (United States of America)

We have no problem with the substance of this. And obviously it is from agreed language in the Report. As you mentioned, it is a bit long, so perhaps we could just separate this into a separate point. So it starts with “*encouraged FAO to*”. That way we separate the two. But we have no problems with the substance.

CHAIRPERSON

To make the subparagraph readable, to split it in two subparagraphs. Is it okay Japan? Could we have done an agreement of both subparagraphs? I do not see any objections.

Let me go to subparagraph (i). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to paragraph (j).

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

Can we go back to subparagraph (i) please? Because I have the feeling that there is a bit hanging there and I think after “*action plan*” we could add “*looked forward to regular Reporting on the further implementation*”. I think that may be helpful.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this? I do not see any objections.

Then we go scroll down to subparagraph (j). Can we agree to subparagraph (j)?

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

We do not have an objection, we just would like to flag one issue. In the final line we are saying “*initiated a global dialogue on water tenure matters*”. We already included in the previous Item on water the very same issue but adding “*within FAO’s mandate*”. So can remove this and just keep what we have already decided or should we add here “*within FAO’s mandate*”?

CHAIRPERSON

It is down to the Membership. Either we act within the mandate of FAO, or we delete the subparagraph, but I think that is probably too much. Shall we just add “*within FAO’s mandate*”? Because that makes it consistent with earlier subparagraphs. I do not see any objection.

We go to subparagraph (k). I do not see any objections.

Then I go to subparagraph (l). I do not see any objections.

Then I go to subparagraph (m).

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

We wanted to get back to subparagraph (k) on plastics. I can read the whole text but perhaps the faster way will be to make the reference to the Report of the Committee on Agriculture paragraph 22(e). If we can just copy paste it at the end of the subparagraph so it is just starting with “*encouraged FAO to play an active role in the deliberations of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollutions...*” *etcetera*. It is quite long actually. I remember that we had a quite long discussion on the exact wording of all the elements so that is why I do not want to have it shortened but rather have it as it is.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

Is this a new subparagraph or this is to replace subparagraphs?

CHAIRPERSON

A new subparagraph.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

We would like in subparagraph (k) to go beyond consultation of Members and put something on the participation of Members, not only on consultation. Inclusive of participation of Members.

CHAIRPERSON

So it is “*participation of*” and “*consultations with*”.

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

Firstly, we can support the proposal of the European Union indeed it is agreed text, we can support the Brazilian proposal as well. But I am a little bit confused because reading subparagraph (k) now we are given the mandate to develop a code. And I remember, if my memory does not fail me, the debate on this. And first we agree on “*encourage FAO to undertake further scientific and evidence-based assessments*” in order to see whether or not there are enough inputs to promote and develop a code of conduct. So perhaps for the sake of clarity, we should include the subparagraph that we agreed upon during Committee on Agriculture (COAG). I can provide a reference, or I can read it out. Okay, both. So, it is subparagraph 22(c).

CHAIRPERSON

I do not want to insert a whole Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Report in this Report but go ahead.

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

We can be flexible but really I see this could be misunderstood, so with your indulgence Chairperson, it would be “*encourage FAO to undertake further scientific and evidence based assessment related to the distribution benefits, trade, off and risk of plastic for agriculture use on the alternative to address knowledge gaps on plastics in agriculture and request further development of policy instruments taking into account Members’ past and ongoing efforts as well as developing countries’ needs and challenges*”.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

We understand this is a Member-led organization. So, I would like to put “*inclusive participation of Members and consultation with relevant stakeholders*” in subparagraph (d). So that we leave it very clear that it is participation of the Members, to even force the idea, the characteristic of this Organization, of being a Members-led one.

CHAIRPERSON

Is this correct now Brazil as it is now on the screen? I do not see any objections. So, can we agree to subparagraphs (k), (l) and (m) now? I do not see any objections.

Then we continue to subparagraph (o).

Mr Purna Cita NUGRAHA (Indonesia)

On subparagraph (l), I think it should go before subparagraph (k) because the sequence is we need assessments and then we develop the voluntary guidelines. We propose to switch the placement. And a small addition after “*and*”, in line four in of subparagraph (l): “*and subject to assessment in subparagraph (k), to develop*”, so there will be the proposed changes.

Mr Moungui MÉDI (Cameroon)

I am a bit confused here. First, subject to assessment in subparagraph (k). Meanwhile, we have already said in subparagraph (k) that we should develop requests for the development of policy instruments. And those policies may also involve a Voluntary Code of Conduct.

So I do not know why here we put it as a precondition to develop the voluntary guidelines. My suggestion is to not to add “*subject to assessment*” in subparagraph (a) because it is becoming obvious.

CHAIRPERSON

Is there flexibility in the room not to insist on “*subject to assessment*” because if the assessment is left negative, there will probably not be a Voluntary Code. So, could we leave the text as it was?

Mr Purna Cita NUGRAHA (Indonesia)

Probably we can modify it to “*subject to the evidence-based assessment*” without referring to subparagraph (k).

CHAIRPERSON

I think that I leave the subparagraph pending because that is not how we can get to the conclusion.

I go next to the next subparagraph, we keep this one pending because we are now getting bogged down on things which were already agreed within the Committee on Agriculture.

Let us go to subparagraph (o). Can we agree to subparagraph (o)?

Mr Shingo FUTAMI (Japan)

This is a minor submission to make, but “*we ask FAO*” is a little bit weak expression. In line with the paragraph 23(b) of the document, instead of “*asked*” we should put “*recommended*” but we are very flexible.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to replace “*asked*” by “*recommended*”? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (p). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (q). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (r).

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

Can I go back to paragraph 3 endorsed here? My issue here is... Could the Legal Counsel give us some guidance? The endorsement of the Global Soil Partnership is who should do that endorsement of plan of action? If the Council, then we are fine. Regarding the endorsement of the draft Conference resolution on the observance of the United Nations (UN) system, who should do that? I think we need to take the second endorsement, we propose that to the Conference, but maybe the Legal Counsel can help us here.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

As you can imagine, the elements are very different between what is currently subparagraph (q) and current subparagraph (r). Insofar as the Global Soil Partnership Action Framework addresses matters of programmatic nature or of budgetary nature, I believe the Council would be in a position to endorse. If they go beyond this, of course, it would be a recommendation say to the Conference to endorse that, for example.

With respect to the endorsement of the draft Conference resolution, I would note that yes, earlier Council documents have endorsed the draft Conference resolution for adoption by the Conference. This has been the practice. Of course, it is not the Council which is adopting the resolution.

I think that the terminology here would work in this context, because it is purely the draft resolution and it is very clearly stated that it is a draft. It is not an adoption. And that is where I believe this differs somewhat from the other situations, where we have actually got the specific actions being endorsed by the Council or specific recommendations and that was where there was maybe some concern as to whether there was a possible departure from the Basic Texts. But of course it is in your hands.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

We are putting the Global Soil Partnership on *par* with the Committee on Agriculture. That is what I tend to see here from what the Legal Counsel told us, that it is programmatic or budgetary matters, but I do not think this is the case. The Global Soil Partnership has a different organization which is totally different from FAO's Committees. I was wondering if there could not be another way of looking at it because the Council is not entitled to endorse something. The Council is not a Committee of FAO *per se*.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

I will try to respond quickly. I am afraid I do not have the materials here available right now. However, I recall that the Global Soil Partnership had a reporting line to the Committee on Agriculture (COAG). I remember that the Members considered this very carefully when they looked at the matters of the products and which bodies and which entities had the authority to develop guidance, guidelines, strategies, etcetera. The Global Soil Partnership had in previous occasions, in fact, developed some strategies and guidance documents.

And within that context, it became evident that the Global Soil Partnership at this moment in time reports to COAG; it is not on a par with COAG. I mean, this is entirely in agreement with the distinguished representative of Cameroon.

However, at this moment in time, it does not have, I believe, a direct reporting line either to the Conference or the Council. Of course, I can look into this further overnight and provide some further guidance as to how things have gone before *vis-à-vis* the Global Soil Partnership. But yes, it has no independent standing, it has no legal status in the Constitution of the Organization. It is a creature created by the Technical Committees and endorsed by one or other of the Governing Bodies.

CHAIRPERSON

Because only ask for the endorsement of the Actual Framework.

It is 20:00 hours. Let us finalize our work today because, I do not see a fast conclusion with the other subparagraphs. Let us think it over and not make our life too difficult tomorrow morning so that we have a fast-track approach and adoption of the remaining subparagraphs because they are already adopted at the Committee of Agriculture (COAG).

With that, I would like to thank you so much for your hard and intensive work today in a very positive atmosphere of compromise. I think we also almost solved the Report of the Committee on Agriculture. The other two Reports are easier in the sense that the conclusions are much shorter than these ones so we can speed up our work. But we are really good on time for finalizing our work Friday at the end of the day.

Have a very good rest. Energize for tomorrow. Meeting adjourned.

The meeting rose at 20:00 hours

La séance est levée à 20 h 00

Se levanta la sesión a las 20.00

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Seventy-first Session Cent soixante et onzième session 171.º período de sesiones
Rome, 5-9 December 2022 Rome, 5-9 décembre 2022 Roma, 5-9 de diciembre de 2022
FIFTH PLENARY SESSION CINQUIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE QUINTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
7 December 2022

The Fifth Plenary Meeting was opened at 09:35 hours
Mr Hans Hoogeveen,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La cinquième séance plénière est ouverte à 09 h 35
sous la présidence de M. Hans Hoogeveen,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la quinta sesión plenaria a las 09.35
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Hans Hoogeveen,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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Item 6. Technical Committees**Point 6. Comités techniques****Tema 6. Comités técnicos**

Item 6.2 Report of the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (18-22 July 2022) (continued)

Point 6.2 Rapport de la vingt-huitième session du Comité de l'agriculture (18-22 juillet 2022) (suite)

Tema 6.2 Informe del 28.º período de sesiones del Comité de Agricultura (18-22 de julio de 2022) (continuación)

(C 2023/22)

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, dear friends, it is great to see you back, most of you smiling, which means that you have had a good rest and you are energized for today. Let us start with some good news.

First of all, yesterday, 95 percent of all the interventions were within the time limit, and that is the highest score ever in the Council. I was not always good in graphs when I was young, but I was helped by the Secretariat to get the facts and figures.

Secondly, we have a Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, and that is Ms Marie-Lise Stoll from Luxembourg.

She will do it only on one condition, that you are not making her life that difficult, and, of course, so we will do.

With that, we continue our deliberations where we ended yesterday, on Sub-Item 6.2, *Report of the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture*. We have only a few outstanding subparagraphs and hopefully, we can solve them quickly today.

Ms Donata Rugarabamu and I looked also to the question of Cameroon, related to the Global Soil Partnership, and we have a suggestion to get out of that issue, at least in a positive way. I asked the Secretariat to put on the screen the text of the draft conclusions, where we left off yesterday.

We only do the yellow subparagraphs which we could not conclude, while all the others were concluded by consensus. When it comes to the quadripartite work of FAO related to One Health, I would like to focus on subparagraph (c) *alt* because I think that is where we came nearer to a consensus. We were discussing yesterday whether or not to include also the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and there were proposals not to include the IPPC but stick to the text which was agreed in the Committee on Agriculture (COAG). Can I have any views to find a way out? The best way is always to stick to already agreed language. Any views on that?

Sra. María Carolina CARRANZA NUÑEZ (Perú)

Quisiera solamente, respecto a la propuesta, mencionar que el texto acordado en el informe del Comité de Agricultura (COAG) incluye a la *Convención Internacional sobre Protección de las Plantas*, lo que no se incluyó es el texto referente al *Codex Alimentarius*. Eso no fue acordado en el informe del Comité de Agricultura (COAG). Por lo tanto, como fue nuestra propuesta inicial a este párrafo, quisiéramos que se lea literalmente como fue acordado en el informe del Comité de Agricultura (COAG) sin la mención del *Codex Alimentarius* en el subpárrafo alternativo que fue propuesto también por Argentina.

CHAIRPERSON

We will put the text of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) on the screen so that we have in front of us what was agreed by it.

Mr Asmerom KIDANE TECLEGHIORGHIS (Eritrea)

I think the Quadripartite is well known for everybody. It includes the four – FAO, World Health Organization (WHO), UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH). I do not think it is necessary to mention them again once. Because once if you say the Quadripartite, then it is enough. I feel the second one is the most appropriate..

Mr Sean COX (United States of America)

Given that we were the ones that moved to strike International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) in the beginning, I wanted to just thank Peru and Argentina for their suggestions and as we did agree to it in the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), we would be happy to remove the brackets from the original Peru recommendation – IPPC or go with the exact COAG language.

We would not support adding Codex Alimentarius and food safety. I think we would prefer to stick with the Quadripartite plus IPPC.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

Just to remind that in the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) we have adopted two paragraphs, for two different subjects or topics. It is paragraph 14 (b) that regards the action plan for One Health, and then we adopted another one, which is paragraph 14 (f). I would like to see, because the proposition made by Peru, I believe, referred to subparagraph (f), if I am not wrong. Just to make clear about that, I do not know if Peru would like to maintain their previous proposition on that or you are just rephrasing the whole paragraph to include other ideas. It is just to be very clear about what you are deciding and what subparagraph we make reference here. I would like to have a very clear precision and reference on that.

Sra. María Carolina CARRANZA NUÑEZ (Perú)

Para aclarar, no, la propuesta es sobre el párrafo 13(d) del informe del Comité de Agricultura (COAG) para incluir específicamente a la asociación cuatripartita, a la Convención Internacional y la Sanidad Vegetal.

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

Just adding our voice to the United States of America, Peru and Brazil, we would prefer to go just with language from the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) in order to save time and move forward.

Mr Purna Cita NUGRAHA (Indonesia)

I think we also can go along with just the Report from the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) but I think we can somehow find a way out here on the ‘*alt*’ language by putting after “IPPC”, ‘*as appropriate*’ or ‘*where relevant*’. Because, when we are talking about plant health, it is the cooperations between the Quadripartite and IPPC. But when we are talking about food safety or the Action Plan on antimicrobial resistance (AMR), cooperation between the Quadripartite and Codex Alimentarius is also relevant here. So, we can address that by putting ‘*as appropriate*’ or ‘*where relevant*’.

M. Bienvenu NTSOUANVA (Congo)

Je pense que le Cameroun n'est pas là. La proposition faite par le Cameroun hier, d'ajouter la Commission et le CODEX Alimentarius, le rapport du fait qu'il s'agit ici d'Une Seule Santé et la question d'Une Seule Santé concerne aussi la santé humaine. Dans le CODEX Alimentarius, la FAO et l'OMS travaillent déjà sur ces questions. Je crois que l'idée, c'était celle-là. Mais nous n'avons pas de position vraiment tranchée. C'était pour mettre en lumière la santé humaine, la nécessité de préserver la santé humaine. Maintenant, si le consensus se dégage pour les textes du COAG, nous ne pourrions que nous aligner.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we then agree to the subparagraph *alt* as it is now on the screen? I do not see any objections. So, paragraph 13 (d) of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) report, can we agree to the paragraph 13 (d) of the COAG Report? I do not see any objections.

We go to subparagraph (d) where some Members asked some time to consider the text proposed by the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States. Can we agree to this text?

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

Regarding that, I believe that the language proposed yesterday to be added at the end does not reflect what we decided and approved in the Committee on Agriculture (COAG). So, we suggest to remove this language in order to reflect exactly what we had adopted in COAG. I mean specifically the end of the sentence, when it says, “*the use of antimicrobials at farm level.*”. That language was rejected in COAG, so I believe that we are not entitled here, in the Council, to rephrase the whole thing. It was presented, it was rejected and I do not believe that we should adopt this language as proposed yesterday.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

Always speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, I think the colleague from Brazil is right. So, just to avoid any long discussion on that, we may basically copy paste the paragraphs 14 (f) from the the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Report just to avoid any misunderstanding and I think that it can make the trick. So, at the end, instead of the yellow text, just to copy paste the paragraph 14 (f). This is the exact wording.

CHAIRPERSON

For the sake of interpretation, the idea would be now “*and called for the implementation of the Codex guidelines/standards on AMR and supported the development of guidelines in line with the action plan on monitoring the use of antimicrobials with WOA.*” Would that be agreeable?

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

Yes, just would like to support what Brazil mentioned about the discussion concerning the farm level. There was no concerns at the time. So, we do agree and we thank you for this new proposal and, indeed, this was agreed during the plenary of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) and we can go along with it.

CHAIRPERSON

I think there was an agreement on this subparagraph and we put a comma after ‘*chain*’. Then we go with ‘*called for*’ and then we have ‘*and supported*’. So, then we have also the commas probably and the text right. Thank you so much, also for agreeing to this subparagraph.

Then we have subparagraph (l) where we still were discussing the phrase “*subject to the evidence-based assessment*” in subparagraph (k). Can we agree to maintain the text ‘*subject to*’?

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

We support to maintain this text.

CHAIRPERSON

I do not see any objections, so agreed.

Then we go to the last yellow and that is “*endorsed the new Global Soil Partnership Action Framework*” and here the Legal Counsel and I did our homework. We went, I would not say into the archives of FAO, but we went to how the partnership was established, the relationship with the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) and the relationship with Council, and for that I give the floor to the Legal Counsel.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

The history of the Global Soil Partnership is somewhat complex and consequently its reporting lines are very unusual. As you are more than aware, it is not a Governing or Statutory Body, it is a partnership. Its terms of reference were actually developed and endorsed by the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) and were then submitted to the Council at its 145th Session and it was the Council that approved its Terms of Reference.

In those Terms of Reference, it is indicated that -and here I will read from the Terms of Reference,

paragraph 20, “FAO will lead the GSP implementation process and will provide funds from its regular programme to support the Secretariat by providing fulltime professional staff member and general service support, subject to the approval by its Governing Bodies.”

In that context, the Rules of Procedure of the Global Soil Partnership then go on to address the reporting line and it says, and again I quote, “the plenary assembly shall report through the Secretariat to FAO’s Committee on Agriculture, which may bring to the attention of the FAO Council any recommendation adopted by the GSP that may have policy implications or could affect strategic programmes of FAO”. Thus, you have before you a proposal from the Committee on Agriculture, this is not a proposal coming directly from the GSP, it is the Committee on Agriculture which is submitting this to you. My reading of this is that this Action Framework are elements which have programmatic and budgetary implications, and it would be for this reason that you could consider introducing maybe some language clarifying that that is the reason why the Global Soil Partnership Action Framework is presented to you and could, indeed then, provide a basis for the Council providing its endorsement of this framework.

CHAIRPERSON

The idea would be that we introduce before “endorsed” the following words: “noting the programmatic and budgetary nature of its content, endorsed,” and then we continue with the rest of the text. Would that be agreeable? Because then we have a clear understanding of how it relates, based on the past and based on the structure, how it relates to the Council. Can we agree to this text? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to the second paragraph. As we have done also yesterday, can we agree to the second paragraph with the above observation, that Council “endorsed aspects and Committee of Agriculture (COAG) recommendations on the report relating to programme and budgetary matters”? I do not see any objections.

We have finalized Sub-Item 6.2 and that is a good start to this morning.

I forgot to mention in my introductory remarks that I really would like to thank the interpreters for their hard work, not only of yesterday but also for giving us half an hour of overtime for their excellent work.

Item 6. Technical Committees

Point 6. Comités techniques

Tema 6. Comités técnicos

Item 6.3 Report of the 35th Session of the Committee on Fisheries (5-9 September 2022)

Point 6.3 Rapport de la trente-cinquième session du Comité des pêches (5-9 septembre 2022)

Tema 6.3 Informe del 35.º período de sesiones del Comité de Pesca (5-9 de septiembre de 2022)

(C 2023/24)

CHAIRPERSON

With that, I would like to continue with Sub-Item 6.3, *Report of the 35th Session of the Committee on Fisheries*, which was held from 5 to 9 September in 2022. The document before the Council is C 2023/24.

The introduction by Mr Shingo Ota, Chairperson of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), has been circulated to you.

Introduction to Item 6.3: Report of the 35th Session of the Committee on Fisheries (5-9 September 2022)

Mr Shingo Ota, Chairperson of the 35th Session of the Committee on Fisheries

The Committee on Fisheries (COFI) held its 35th Session from 5 to 9 September 2022. The session was convened in a hybrid modality, on an exceptional basis, and without setting a precedent in light of the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic and associated public health concerns, following consultation with the COFI Bureau. The session was attended by 99 Members of the Committee, observers from 21 other FAO Member Nations, the Holy See and Palestine, representatives from eight specialized agencies of the United Nations, 44 intergovernmental organizations and 51 international non-governmental organizations. The report of the 35th Session of COFI is submitted to the Council in document C 2023/24.

Significant outcomes of the Committee included:

- a) endorsement of a new COFI Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management;
- b) endorsement of the new FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Transshipment;
- c) support for Blue Transformation and for making it the focus of a very well received State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) 2022 report;
- d) appreciation for FAO's work and strong support for FAO's Biodiversity, Climate Change and Science and Innovation Strategies and associated action plans;
- e) recognition of the importance of fisheries and aquaculture to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and numerous requests to boost FAO's role in international fora;
- f) continued emphasis on Small-scale Fisheries (SSF) throughout the meeting and report, including the activities related to the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA), and recommendation for a SSF summit to be conducted biennially before COFI;
- g) strong support for global aquaculture development alongside the Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture, recommended to be finalized before the 12th Session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture;
- h) noted the importance of the new World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies and FAO's key role in providing technical assistance to the WTO Secretariat and to Members for its implementation; and
- i) strong commitment to Regional Fisheries Advisory Bodies (RFABs)/Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), particularly on their critical role of achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14, and on their importance to the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreement on fisheries subsidies.

The Council is invited to endorse the findings and recommendations of the Committee, and attention is drawn to sectoral strategies, priorities, programmes and budget matters, in particular to:

- a) State of the world fisheries and aquaculture: paragraphs 11 (a)-(i) and 11 (n)-(p);
- b) Progress in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related instruments: paragraphs 11 (j)-(m);
- c) The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: paragraphs 12 (a)-(j);
- d) Supporting small-scale and artisanal fisheries, including in the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA): paragraphs 13 (a)-(h);
- e) Combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing: paragraphs 14 (a)-(r);
- f) Enhancing COFI discussion, including recommendations of the Working Group on the Proposal of the Establishment of the Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management: paragraphs 15 (a)-(g);
- g) Addressing climate change in fisheries and aquaculture: reporting on progress and Action Plan for the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031: paragraphs 16 (a)-(h);
- h) Mainstreaming biodiversity in fisheries and aquaculture: paragraphs 17 (a)-(j);
- i) Decisions and recommendations of the 11th Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, Rome, Italy, 24-27 May 2022: paragraphs 19 (a)-(j);

- j) Decisions and recommendations of the 18th Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, 8 April - 8 May, 7-9 and 20 June 2022: paragraphs 20 (a)-(j);
- k) FAO's Programme of Work in fisheries and aquaculture under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31: paragraphs 21 (a)-(h);
- l) Development of regional action plans for the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (2022-25): paragraphs 22 (a)-(c); and
- m) Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) of the Committee: paragraphs 23 (a)-(d).

CHAIRPERSON

Now I would like to open the floor to the Members for remarks, observations and suggestions.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation)

I would like to inform you that yesterday evening my colleague who is participating in person in the Conference room informed me about some problems with the interpretation from Russian language to English and other languages. In this case, I fully appreciate the work of the interpreters but I continue my intervention in English to make their work easier.

I asked for the floor on the previous Agenda Item, especially my intervention related to the paragraph 2 that your Chairperson closed one minute ago. May I ask you and the Secretariat to come back to the text?

CHAIRPERSON

We put the text on the screen. I gave time to intervene but we will bring the text back. Of course, there is a footnote in the text related to your disassociation to the paragraphs in this Report.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation)

For the record, I would like to inform you that yesterday evening I reported to the Head of our delegation, Ambassador Victor L. Vasilev, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, about the situation, your proposal and the process as a whole, and we asked additional instructions from our Capital. For this moment, we can go along with your proposal but it is not our final decision because for this moment we do not have the final instruction from our capital.

Another very important issue, we continue to consult with our Capital and, as you told for us, we have some homework with the previous documents from the previous Session of the FAO Council. We preserve our right to come back to the text at the final stage, at the stage of adoption of the Report. So, our agreement to the text that I see is preliminary and I would like to ask you and all the delegations understand our position. It is our preliminary decision to go along with the text that I see on the screen.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Russian Federation, also for your willingness to continue work under the current situation and, as I said already at the beginning of the meeting, nothing is agreed until everything is agreed, and that counts not only for the Russian Federation but for all delegations here in the room. However, I do hope that we can continue in a spirit of compromise, flexibility and unanimity to work with consensus.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

Can you just allow me to pass the floor to Japan who will deliver on behalf of Asia Group?

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to Japan for making a presentation on behalf of the Asia Group.

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

Japan is honored to deliver this joint statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. The Asia Regional Group would like to commend the excellent work carried out by the Committee on Fisheries (COFI). In this statement, we would like to highlight two important points. The first point is the

contribution of fisheries and aquatic foods to food security. The Asia Regional Group emphasizes the vital role of FAO in sustainable fisheries and aquaculture. In this regard, we highly appreciate FAO's efforts in addressing various challenges relating to fisheries and aquaculture under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031.

This year, 2022, is the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYafa). We commend FAO for achievements related to IYafa, drawing global attention to positive contribution to food security, nutrition and livelihoods by fisheries and aquaculture, in particular small-scale ones.

With these in mind, the Asia Regional Group suggests that the 171st Council report highlight the importance of aquatic foods from sustainable fisheries and aquaculture to global food security, nutrition and livelihoods, and their contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as underlined in para 12a of the 35th COFI report.

The second point is the support for establishment of Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management. The establishment of the Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management (SCFM) is the other key highlight of the 35th session of COFI. As recommended by the Joint Meeting of the 134th session of the Programme Committee and 194th session of the Finance Committee, the Asia Regional Group strongly underpins the establishment of SCFM.

The Asia Regional Group expresses our expectation that SCFM will be an important and unique platform for substantive and in-depth discussion to address global fisheries management issues, including development and management of small-scale fisheries, effects of climate change on fishery management and eradication of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. This will enable the FAO to further strengthen its role in global fisheries management.

The Asia Regional Group looks forward to further updates on the participation support mechanism for developing countries, as well as the development of the SCFM Bureau and Secretariat, so that SCFM process will be more inclusive and fruitful in coming years.

In closing, the Asia Regional Group would like to urge FAO to continue its efforts in achieving sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, including a variety of capacity building programs. We also look forward to further joint efforts with FAO and the other Members in this field.

Sra. María Carolina CARRANZA NUÑEZ (Perú)

En primer lugar, deseo expresar el agradecimiento de la delegación del Perú a la FAO por el informe presentado y por la importante labor desarrollada por el Presidente y el Secretariado del Comité de Pesca (COFI).

Como se ha señalado, el impacto de la pandemia del COVID-19 y la crisis internacional han tenido una repercusión profunda en la pesca y la acuicultura, en particular en la pequeña escala.

En ese sentido, deseamos resaltar el apoyo de la FAO a los esfuerzos realizados a los Estados Miembros, especialmente aquellos en vías de desarrollo, para garantizar el mantenimiento de los niveles de producción, empleo y rentabilidad de la pesca y la acuicultura y su sostenibilidad.

En este contexto, el Perú reconoce en el informe la importante labor del Comité para evaluar el estado mundial de la pesca y la acuicultura y constatar su especial contribución a la seguridad alimentaria y la nutrición. Asimismo, saludamos los esfuerzos de la FAO para avanzar hacia la transformación azul como mecanismo para abordar la seguridad alimentaria conservando al mismo tiempo los recursos naturales. En el marco de la aplicación del Código de Conducta para la Pesca Responsable, el Perú sigue comprometido en el progreso de su aplicación y apoya las recomendaciones efectuadas.

Queremos destacar el apoyo brindado por el COFI al Año Internacional de la Pesca y Acuicultura Artesanales (AIPAA), cuya celebración el presente año busca poner en valor el potencial y la diversidad de la pesca y la acuicultura de pequeña escala y su contribución a la consecución de la Agenda 2030. Resulta fundamental generar políticas públicas diferenciadas y programas que promuevan la pesca y acuicultura artesanales de manera sostenible. Por eso expresamos también nuestro respaldo.

Finalmente, el Perú acoge con satisfacción las recomendaciones sobre la recuperación para hacer frente a la pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada (INDNR) y agradece a la FAO por su acompañamiento, a la vez que considera necesario continuar con su apoyo en el fortalecimiento de capacidades para la implementación del Acuerdo sobre Medidas del Estado Rector del Puerto (AMERP).

Con estas palabras apoyamos que el Consejo haga suyas las conclusiones y recomendaciones del COFI.

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States.

Iceland, Montenegro, San Marino, Türkiye and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

The EU and its Member States are very satisfied with the outcomes of the 35th Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI), which confirmed FAO's essential role in relation to fisheries and aquaculture, including in reporting on the state of world fisheries and aquaculture. Fisheries and aquaculture have a critical contribution to make with regard to food security and nutrition. They also remain extremely important for FAO's mandate.

We regret however that the working methods of this COFI Session did not allow for adequate preparation and fruitful exchanges. We trust that this will be remedied in the next Session, in particular to ensure adequate speaking time for both Members and Observers.

We commend FAO for the timely launch of the 2022 State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) publication at the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon last June. This report provided an important basis to support our discussion on COFI. The SOFIA will also be an important framework for present and future policy decisions on fisheries and aquaculture. We work on the endorsement of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on Transshipment.

These guidelines will constitute an ambitious and practical reference document for the international community to regulate, monitor and control transshipment operations, and will contribute to the fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. The EU stands ready to cooperate with FAO and other members to promote their implementation, including through capacity building for developing countries.

Ms Laura HOLDSTOCK (Australia)

Australia expresses its appreciation to the Chair of the 35th Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and endorses the findings and recommendations of the report of the 35th Session in full.

Australia takes this opportunity to reaffirm our support of the establishment of a new Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management and we stand ready to work with the FAO and Members to develop a meaningful work program. We also reaffirm the importance of the review process to be conducted at COFI 38 to determine the effectiveness of the new Sub-Committee.

Finally, Australia also commends the new initiatives to strengthen action to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, including FAO's role in implementing the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies and two new Voluntary Guidelines for Transshipment and Catch Documentation Schemes (CDS).

Ms Ellen LUGER (United States of America)

We fully endorse the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) Report and welcome its focus and the vital importance of both fisheries and aquaculture and particularly the small-scale sector for global food and nutrition security. The United States welcomes the establishment of a COFI Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management, which will help ensure that COFI remains the leading global forum for advancing sustainable fisheries and aquaculture.

We appreciate COFI's creative solution to ensure the new sub-committee is voluntarily and sustainably funded by establishing a multi-donor fund. We encourage Members and Observers to contribute to the process to allow meaningful discussions on important fisheries management issues,

including small-scale fisheries, combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and climate change that needs space on the COFI Agenda.

We also welcome the voluntary guidelines on transshipment as an essential new tool in the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. As a broadly applicable and ambitious set of minimum standards, the guidelines can now form the basis of strong binding rules that can be developed by individual states and regional fisheries management organizations.

Ms Deandra CARTWRIGHT (Bahamas)

I wish to express my delegation's gratitude for the dedicated efforts of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) as detailed in the Report of its 35th Session. Our delegation notes its contents and those matters requiring the attention of the Council.

With respect to climate change, we take note of the Committee's acknowledgement of the support provided by FAO in addressing climate change impacts on aquatic food systems and the communities they sustain, highlighting the vulnerability of and the need for increased support to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs).

We appreciate the Committee's request to FAO to increase its efforts, including by leveraging additional funding through the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to support developing country Members to build readiness capacity to address climate change and to implement climate change initiatives particularly for those most vulnerable to climate change such as SIDS and LDCs.

With respect to fisheries, as you are well aware, devastation by climate change events, such as hurricanes like Dorian in 2019, negatively impact industries including the fisheries sector, which is a vital industry in The Bahamas and countries throughout the Caribbean – our populations depend on the income and food from fisheries. Regrettably, over the past two decades, production in the Caribbean has declined by 40 percent. It is difficult to guarantee sufficient fish for the population while reducing the food import bill.

Indeed, our region could benefit more from the Committee's suggested strengthened collaboration with and within regional fisheries management organizations, such as the Caribbean Community's, Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM).

We agree with the Committee's highlight of the importance of supporting sustainable aquaculture development to meet future food demands, in particular developing countries and SIDS, such as The Bahamas and our sister Caribbean countries.

Such development could serve as additional capacity building through more regional training projects, leading to the education of key stakeholders on systems and practices by experts knowledgeable of the unique makeup of our region.

We support the efforts of the COFI as reflected in this present report.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

The Philippines aligns with the Asia Regional Group Statement delivered by Japan, which commends the excellent work of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) in its 35th session.

Furthermore, in line with the COFI recommendations, the Philippines would like to underscore and request FAO to undertake the following:

Sustain its efforts in championing the cause of fisheries among global partners and within the United Nations to mobilize support and shore-up partnerships needed by the fisheries sector as it faces unprecedented challenges locally and globally;

Assist Member States by having their respective FAO country and regional offices translate the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031, FAO Science and Innovation Strategy 2022-2025, and the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031, including findings and insights derived from Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries surveys and related instruments, into viable projects and interventions for the fisheries sector;

Continue supporting Members given the market-driven transformation of the global fishery sector as exemplified in the commercial fishery sub-sector, which warrants compliance and adherence to measures combating Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. The role of FAO is critical, likewise, in providing support for the sustainability of the export-oriented aquaculture sector.

Continue supporting the artisanal fisheries and aquaculture sector as active participants in global fishery value chains and active partners in shaping national and global fishery development agenda.

Sustain engaging governments and partners in the ongoing discussion to fully implement the recently adopted World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement of Fisheries Subsidies as one of the recent achievements in the push towards global fisheries sustainability.

On the issue of climate change resiliency, support market-creating innovations derived or inspired from the so-called nature-based solutions, which are abundant in aquatic ecosystems and lifeforms. As such, Members can make progress in the relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with innovations that create markets and support resilient livelihood and enterprises of fishers.

Support the ongoing review of the mandates, performance and relevance, and future existence of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC), an Article XIV Body under the FAO Constitution.

Develop the operational modalities and generate funding for the establishment of an inclusive Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management.

Mr Purna Cita NUGRAHA (Indonesia)

Indonesia aligns itself with the statement made by Japan on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We support the findings and recommendations of the report for the 35th Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI).

Indonesia is of the view that the ocean plays a critical role in the global climate system. This has been evident as we adhere to battle marine plastic debris and improve understanding of the ocean and climate.

In this regard, Indonesia designed a Blue Economy roadmap with its 5 strategic programs to protect oceans, maintaining a sustainable marine ecosystem, and significantly contribute to limiting climate change.

Going into detail of the report, Indonesia would like to convey our position as follow:

First, we support the establishment of the Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management (SCFM), and also support the development of Voluntary Guidelines for Transshipment and highlights that this guideline is voluntary, non-binding and taking into account different national realities and capacities.

Second, a regional strategy that pushes for the implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on Small-scale Fisheries is needed, and we encourage FAO along with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to create joint agreements or initiatives and events on small-scale aquaculture in the ASEAN region.

Third, we appreciate FAO's efforts in implementing the strategy on biodiversity mainstreaming across fisheries and aquaculture and encourage Member States to contribute to the awareness of the strategy.

Fourth, Indonesia supports the progress made towards the development of the Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture (GSA) and Action Oriented Guidance (AOG) and is also open to possible cooperation with other developing countries and strategic partners in the aquaculture sector including through South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC).

Lastly, we support the holding of the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) not a one-time event. This is why we encourage others to continuously strengthening the dialogue, collaboration, and partnership to support the role of small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture workers in facing daily challenges, such as capacity gap, environmental degradation, Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, and unnecessary trade barriers.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

La France s'aligne sur la déclaration de l'Union Européenne et de ses 27 États Membres et souhaite ajouter les observations complémentaires qui suivent. Nous nous félicitons des orientations définies lors de la 35e Session du Comité des pêches. Les océans, les mers et les ressources maritimes occupent, vous le savez, une place centrale dans l'Agenda 2030.

Comme l'a souligné le Président de la République Française, lors de son discours du 7 novembre dernier à la COP27 à Sharm El Sheikh, les océans sont, je cite : "*Une nouvelle frontière pour la coopération et le multilatéralisme.*" Ma délégation et celle du Costa Rica ont indiqué dans notre discours conjoint au Comité des pêches, ont rappelé que le Président de la République Française, Emmanuel Macron, et le Président de la République du Costa Rica, Rodrigo Chaves Robles, ont annoncé leur intention de co-organiser la 3e Conférence des Nations Unies sur les Océans, pour soutenir la réalisation de l'objectif de développement durable 14.

Un évènement de haut niveau thématique, impliquant la société civile, rassemblera la communauté des océans au Costa Rica en 2024, avant l'accueil conjoint de la Conférence des Nations Unies sur les Océans, par la France en 2025. La réalisation de l'objectif 14 doit passer par la promotion d'une pêche durable. Cette voie bleue sur laquelle la France et l'Union Européenne se sont mobilisées et engagées passe tout d'abord par une lutte renforcée contre la pêche illégale, non déclarée et non réglementée. Dans ce cadre, la France se félicite tout particulièrement de plusieurs avancées mises en avant dans le COFI35.

Premièrement, l'augmentation constante du nombre de parties à l'accord relatif aux mesures du ressort de l'état du port, PSMA. La France salut les adhésions récentes de l'Angola, du Maroc, du Nigeria, et de l'Érythrée. Il importe de poursuivre le mouvement d'adhésion dans la perspective de la 4e Réunion des Parties à l'Accord, qui se tiendra à Bali en mai 2023, et au-delà. Je salue à cet égard la mobilisation de l'Indonésie.

Nous appelons les états qui ne l'ont pas encore fait, à rejoindre le PSMA, et à la FAO à poursuivre sa mobilisation politique à cet égard. Deuxièmement, l'approbation des directives d'applications volontaires relatives aux transbordements, nouvel instrument qui s'inscrit dans le cadre du code de conduite de la FAO, pour une pêche responsable. Troisièmement, et enfin, la proposition de création d'un Sous-Comité de la Gestion des pêches que la France soutient, et qui permettra d'avancer sur certains travaux techniques.

En conclusion, la protection des océans appelle une action coordonnée de l'ensemble des Nations Unies. La contribution de la pêche à la réalisation de l'Agenda 2030, s'étend en effet bien au-delà de l'objectif 14. La contribution d'une gestion durable des espaces marins et de leurs ressources à l'amélioration de la nutrition, à la lutte contre le changement climatique, ou encore à l'accès à des emplois décents, n'est plus à prouver.

C'est pourquoi la collaboration entre la FAO et les autres agences des Nations Unies et organisations compétentes, sur ces questions, je pense notamment à l'Organisation maritime internationale, ou l'Organisation internationale du Travail, est indispensable et doit être l'un des axes centraux de son action. Nous endossons le rapport du COFI.

CHAIRPERSON

We would like to thank France and Costa Rica for organizing the Third Ocean Conference. We are looking forward to it.

Mr LI Hanghao (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China supports the statement made by Japan on behalf of the Asia Group. China supports FAO's efforts in promoting the sustainable development of global fisheries and aquaculture and looks forward to the continued activities of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) in accordance with FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, Strategy on Science and Innovation as well as their associated action plans.

China appreciates the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) Report for providing accurate and complete information as a high quality benchmark publication. Furthermore, China welcomes the new WTO agreement on fisheries subsidies and will earnestly perform its own duties

under the agreement. We commend FAO's work and achievements for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture and we encourage FAO to provide policy guidance and capacity building for countries in need.

In addition, China supports the international community and regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) in combating Illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and will continuously cooperate with relevant parties. Regarding the creation of the Sub-Committee for Fisheries Management, we support its creation and we wish to highlight the following points:

We need to avoid duplication of mandates with the other two existing Sub-Committees and should coordinate the meeting calendars and working modalities of the three Sub-Committees. Furthermore, we should fully take into account the financial and administrative impact of the newly established sub-committee, extensively consult developing Members' opinions and recommendations and provide practical support for their participation in the meetings.

With these comments, we endorse the adoption of the 35th COFI Report.

Mr Neil FOURIE (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

The United Kingdom (UK) would like to thank Director Mr Manuel Barange and the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) Secretariat for the Report being put to Council for consideration. The UK welcomes the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) Report.

We believe that FAO can amplify the key messages from the SOFIA Report to ensure they reach a wider audience, including parties to key conventions, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity. We also strongly encourage Members to cooperate effectively with regional fisheries bodies. We want to see all parties coming to the table with ideas and solutions, engaging effectively in these vital forums. Furthermore, we need to consider how to ensure more sustainable approaches in those areas of the ocean where the absence of any meaningful management and conservation measures means unregulated activity can continue unchecked.

The UK agrees that the new World Trade Organization (WTO) agreement on fisheries subsidies is a critical step towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets 14 and 6. By the next ministerial Conference, we hope more Member States can ratify the agreement so that the agreed disciplines can be entered into force. We look forward to working with other countries to deliver further disciplines on those subsidies that are contributing to overfishing and overcapacity.

We fully endorse the transshipment guidelines on combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fisheries. The guidelines also need to be reflected within the international and domestic frameworks and we urge Members to work together to deliver on stronger measures. The UK welcomes the WTO agreement on fishery subsidies.

We encourage COFI Members to prioritize fulfilling this mandate of SDGs 14 and 6 and ratify as well as implement this agreement. The UK was pleased to endorse the proposal for the new Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management of COFI and we agree the draft advice in the paper. The new Sub-Committee will be an important forum to discuss and identify solutions to fisheries management challenges of relevance to both small and large-scale fisheries. It will be an opportunity to share best practice and learn from experiences at national, regional and global level to address current and future challenges.

I am glad to announce today that the UK is currently considering funding to support the Sub-Committee's work. On mainstreaming biodiversity in fisheries and aquaculture, we look forward on receiving FAO's policy guidance on mainstreaming climate change and developing climate-smart management plans which we will consider in both national and regional contexts and encourage others to do the same.

Finally, the UK supports the FAO's Blue Transformation Initiative as the necessary steps to ensuring the ecological, social and economic sustainability of the fisheries and aquaculture sector and their contributions to fighting hunger and poverty.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Antes que nada, quisiera reconocer el excelente trabajo realizado por el Comité de Pesca (COFI) y también la Secretaría, que en manera muy balanceada y profesional ha apoyado a la elaboración del presente informe.

En primer lugar, queremos resaltar el papel de la FAO en relación con la pesca y la acuicultura sostenibles, ya que consideramos – y las tendencias mundiales así lo indican – que es un sector que contribuye enormemente a la seguridad alimentaria mundial y a la nutrición, que además tiene un enorme potencial, por lo que es importante otorgarle mayor notoriedad dentro de los sistemas agroalimentarios.

En esta línea, quisiera destacar el activo rol que ha tenido la Argentina en las discusiones del Comité, ya que para nuestro país es un sector prioritario, para el cual consideramos que es clave la gestión responsable de los recursos, incluyendo la defensa de nuestra jurisdicción en el marco de la lucha contra la Pesca Ilegal, No Declarada y No Reglamentada (INDNR).

Asimismo, acogemos el establecimiento del Subcomité de Ordenación Pesquera, y como lo hemos hecho en varias oportunidades, alentamos a que sea lo más inclusivo posible, de forma tal de garantizar la participación de los países en desarrollo. Eso es clave.

Queremos reconocer el trabajo de AIPAA en el Año Internacional de la Pesca y la Acuicultura Artesanal, que han realizado múltiples eventos para apoyar a los pescadores y acuicultores, visibilizando su actividad y promoviendo una integración más dinámica a las cadenas globales de valor.

Por último, aguardamos con ansias la actualización de los indicadores del Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) 14 que custodia la FAO y sus metodologías, en tanto permitan capturar y evaluar de forma más fehaciente la realidad de los países respecto a la pesca y la acuicultura sostenible.

Con estos comentarios, solicitamos que el Consejo haga suyas las conclusiones y recomendaciones del informe del Comité.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

Malaysia aligns itself to the joint statement of the Asia Regional Group delivered by Japan.

Malaysia would like to congratulate the outgoing Committee on Fisheries (COFI) Chairperson, Mr. Shingo Ota for his leadership in steering the committee work prior to the 35th session of COFI. Malaysia also welcomes the new COFI Chairperson, Mr Mohamed Ahmed Alghamdi from Saudi Arabia and we are looking forward to working with him and the new Bureau Committee.

The fisheries and aquaculture subsector in Malaysia is forecasted to contribute to the GDP from approximately USD 3 billion in 2021 to USD 4 billion in 2030. The subsector is also expected to contribute approximately 21 percent to 24 percent to the total agri-food sector GDP from 2021 to 2030. Fisheries is one of the subsectors with a consistent Self Sufficiency Level (SSL) of above 90 percent for the past 10 years in Malaysia context. However, factors such as climate change and depletion of natural resources can affect the sector if no further mitigation measure is to be taken.

In this regard, Malaysia welcomes the Blue Transformation Roadmap to align, coordinate and guide FAO's work on fisheries and aquaculture and calls FAO to continue putting emphasis of the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA's) contribution in light of the framework of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14. Malaysia commends FAO's work in achieving sustainable fisheries and aquaculture by improving fisheries management based on the precautionary and an ecosystem approach, including through strengthened collaboration with and within Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), and other relevant Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs) and civil society.

We applaud the excellent work of both, the Working Group and the Joint Task Force on the proposal of the establishment of the Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management. Whilst looking forward to the convening of the first meeting of the sub-committee in the near future, we are aspired to see a more focused, dedicated and rich discourse on multitude of challenges circling fisheries management around the globe, from temperate to tropical fisheries to coastal and deep sea fisheries and from single-species single-gear fisheries to multi-species multi gear fisheries.

Further, FAO must continue assessing the global impacts on the fisheries and aquaculture sectors in the context of global food security of the ongoing conflicts, climate change and continued impact of the COVID-19.

Malaysia also acknowledges the work by FAO to support small-scale fisheries within the framework of the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication at global and regional levels. At national level, Malaysia has initiated various programmes to alleviate the livelihood of small-scale fishers and had taken steps to acknowledge the significance of their role and to increase awareness on the importance of sustainable fisheries. Malaysia reiterates the importance of sound policies and legislation that are inclusive and enable to elevate and support small-scale fisheries livelihood and income involving small-scale fisheries organizations, women, youth and local communities. Under Malaysia's National Agrofood Policy 2.0, one of the strategies to improve the income of the food producer and overall economic contribution of the fisheries and aquaculture subsector is by assisting the food producers in diversifying income sources and increasing the market accessibility.

Malaysia takes note that fisheries and aquaculture play an important role in achieving numerous SDGs and appreciates FAO's initiatives in providing technical assistance and capacity building support in a number of areas, including in fisheries and aquaculture. Malaysia hopes that FAO would facilitate further discussions to effectively operate the Multi-Donor Umbrella Programme to ensure member countries benefited from this program and better implement activities towards improvement of SDG reporting. Malaysia encourages all Members to further promote sustainable aquaculture and manage all fisheries sustainably as a positive contribution to sustainable and inclusive economies by building inclusive and equitable value chains.

With this words, Malaysia support and endorses the report of the Committee.

Ms Kwena KOMAPE (South Africa)

I would like to give the floor to Senegal to present a position on behalf of the African Group.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to Senegal on behalf of the Africa Regional Group.

Mme Marie Gnana BASSENE (Sénégal)

Le Sénégal et l'Afrique du Sud font cette déclaration, au nom du Groupe Régional Afrique, sur le point de l'ordre du jour concernant le document *C 2023/24* - Rapport de la 35ème session du Comité des pêches.

Cette session du Comité des Pêches a été l'occasion de passer en revue plusieurs questions touchant au secteur de la pêche et qui sont d'une importance majeure pour les pays africains.

C'est ainsi que, concernant la situation mondiale des pêches et de l'aquaculture et les progrès accomplis dans l'application du Code de conduite pour une pêche responsable et autres instruments connexes, le Groupe fait sienne la recommandation du Comité pour une amélioration du travail de la FAO dans les méthodes de collecte et de traitement des statistiques, un renforcement des capacités et une mobilisation de ressources financières.

En outre, le Groupe reconnaît et salue le rôle de la FAO dans le suivi et la communication d'informations sur les indicateurs relatifs à l'ODD 14 du programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030 ainsi que l'aide qu'elle apporte aux Membres pour un meilleur suivi des progrès au regard de ces indicateurs.

S'agissant de la lutte contre la pêche illicite, non déclarée et non réglementée (pêche INN ou INDNR), qui porte un immense préjudice aux pays africains, le Groupe invite la FAO à poursuivre la dynamique de mise en synergie des moyens, à travers la stratégie de la FAO et le Plan de travail pluriannuel en matière de lutte contre ce type de pêche, pour permettre à l'Afrique de se nourrir durablement et mieux du poisson et autres produits de la pêche.

Par ailleurs, le Groupe se félicite de l'Accord de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC) sur les subventions à la pêche, qui a été récemment adopté et qui constitue un jalon décisif vers la durabilité

des océans, notamment en ce qu'il vise à éliminer toute forme de subvention à la pêche INN ou INDNR et aux activités la favorisant.

Une mise en œuvre efficace de cet accord pour notre continent reste toutefois largement dépendante de la capacité des Etats africains à contrôler et à surveiller les activités de pêche dans leurs eaux. Ainsi, cette capacité, tout comme la coopération entre les entités responsables de la gestion des pêches, devra être considérablement renforcée.

Conscient de l'importance de la petite pêche et de la pêche artisanale en Afrique, pour le développement durable, la sécurité alimentaire et la nutrition, ainsi que sa contribution à l'emploi, aux moyens d'existence et à une gestion responsable des ressources, et du rôle des femmes et des jeunes dans ce secteur, notre Groupe encourage l'intensification des activités relatives à l'utilisation et à la gestion durables des ressources de la pêche artisanale, en particulier la cogestion.

Tout en nous réjouissant de la création d'un sous-comité de gestion des pêches et de l'approbation de son mandat, nous réaffirmons le rôle fondamental que ce dernier pourrait jouer en matière de pêche artisanale durable.

Le Groupe soutient et salue l'idée émise sur la possibilité de tenir un sommet sur la pêche artisanale, tous les deux ans, avant la session du Comité des pêches.

En matière de gestion du changement climatique, notre Groupe exprime son soutien à la FAO dans ses efforts pour faire face aux effets du changement climatique sur les systèmes alimentaires aquatiques et dans les communautés, tout en soulignant la vulnérabilité des petits Etats insulaires en développement (PEID) et des pays les moins avancés (PMA) et la nécessité de les aider davantage.

Il invite la FAO à tout mettre en œuvre pour une meilleure résilience de la pêche et de l'aquaculture face au changement climatique, notamment dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre de sa Stratégie sur le Changement Climatique 2022-2031.

Par ailleurs, les défis à relever concernant la réduction au minimum des dommages et de la perte de diversité biologique et autres services écosystémiques exigent une action urgente pour une durabilité des ressources naturelles en Afrique et une mise en œuvre efficace des instruments au niveau continental, régional et international.

C'est pourquoi le Groupe appelle la FAO à renforcer son soutien aux pays africains pour l'élaboration d'une approche coordonnée pour lutter contre les pertes de biodiversité et les impacts négatifs des changements climatiques, par une mise en œuvre cohérente des conventions internationales appropriées.

Pour finir, le Groupe voudrait indiquer que plusieurs objectifs politiques, jugés cruciaux, et nombre de domaines d'interventions prioritaires ont été définis par l'Union Africaine (UA), pour le développement de la pêche et l'aquaculture, dans ses documents de stratégies concernant ce secteur ainsi que celui, plus large, de l'économie bleue, et qui sont en parfaite cohérence avec les questions examinées par le Comité.

C'est pourquoi, le Groupe prend bonne note du Rapport de la 35ème session du COFI et souhaite voir son approbation.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Brazil supports the endorsement, by the FAO Council, of the findings and recommendations of the 35th session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), held last September.

In particular, we welcome the results in favor of continued emphasis on Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF) in the work of COFI and its subsidiary bodies.

We also welcome the proposal for establishing the Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management. COFI's agenda has grown in intensity and complexity over the years, depriving us of the time and opportunity to properly deal with the subject of fisheries management, and the new sub-committee will be essential for holding detailed and technical discussions on this issue.

It is particularly commendable that the additional financial and administrative burden for developing Members has been taken into account in the proposal submitted by the working group that examined this matter. We recall, therefore, that a minimum level of funding support for developing Members will be required for in-person meetings, besides the extra-budgetary funding already required for holding any meeting of the new sub-committee.

We hope that this session of the Council will be able to endorse the proposal, and we look forward to a fruitful first session of the new sub-committee, with wide participation.

Sra. Carla SIERRA ZÚÑIGA (Costa Rica)

Nuestra delegación quisiera hacer algunos breves comentarios.

Reconocemos la importancia de la perspectiva que se ha venido abordando desde la FAO en relación con la biodiversidad y su integración con la pesca y la acuicultura guiados por la responsabilidad global que tenemos con los océanos y el sentido de urgencia que demandan los desafíos actuales que afrontamos.

En lo que respecta a la integración de la biodiversidad en la pesca y la acuicultura, apoyamos la labor de FAO sobre la aplicación de las directrices voluntarias sobre el mercado de artes de pesca y, en este sentido, solicitamos que FAO continúe de manera conjunta con la Organización marítima internacional, OMI, especialmente en lo que atañe al proyecto GloLitter, el cual es tan importante para Costa Rica y otros países que forman parte del mismo pues venimos trabajando fuertemente en mejorar, perfeccionar e intercambiar acciones en lo que respecta a la basura plástica marina. Este es un gran desafío que constituye una gran amenaza para la biodiversidad marina.

En lo que respecta a la pesca en pequeña escala y artesanal, así como las actividades que se han venido realizando en 2022 como Año internacional de la pesca y Acuicultura artesanales, solicitamos que FAO siga brindando apoyo siendo un sector vital para la seguridad alimentaria y la nutrición a nivel mundial, así como una fuente de empleo, medios de vida y administración de recursos.

Aprovechamos, Señor Presidente, para apoyar, tal como lo manifestó la Delegación de Francia, sobre la intención de los señores presidentes de la República francesa, Manuel Macron y de la República de Costa Rica, Rodrigo Chávez Robles, para coorganizar la 3.ª Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Océanos para apoyar el Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible 14. Evento de alto nivel que se llevará a cabo en Costa Rica en 2024 antes de la Conferencia de Naciones Unidas que se desarrollará en Francia en 2025. Esto como un compromiso con nuestro océano para promover la gobernanza marina sostenible.

Con estos comentarios, Señor Presidente, refrendamos el informe de la 35 sesión del Comité de Pesca que se llevó a cabo del 5 al 9 de septiembre.

Mr Anatoliy SHATKOVSKYY (Canada)

FAO's work on Fisheries is particularly important. While many international bodies are interactive on food security and agriculture, there is no alternative to much of the FAO's work concerning international fisheries. Canada welcomes the Report and the creation of a new Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management.

Many commercial fish stocks around the world are being over-fished. Bringing Members to share data, scientific advice, and working to manage fisheries, can make a difference. Canada also notes the Committee on Fisheries (COFI)'s guidance per paragraph 11 (m), that the FAO support Members' implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

Canada would also like to highlight the need for timely distribution of documents and translation, to enable the COFI to hold effective meetings as noted in paragraph 20 (b).

In conclusion, Canada recommends this Council endorse the programmatic and budgetary matters contained in its findings and recommendations, including in particular, paragraph 21 (h).

Ms Consolata Nkatha MAINA (Kenya)

Kenya commends the work of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and notes the findings and recommendations of COFI as detailed in its 35th Session Report.

Kenya endorses the findings and recommendations of the Committee on Fisheries with regards to sectoral strategies, priorities, programmes and budget matters as well as the global policy and regulatory matters.

In this regard Kenya will support implementation of these recommendations and other related interventions in its fisheries and aquaculture sector.

Further, with regards to part 15 of the report of the 35th Session of the COFI and part VIII of the Report of the Joint Meeting of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and 194th Session of the Finance, Kenya: endorses the recommendations on the establishment of the Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management (SCFM); emphasizes the importance of addressing the potential financial and administrative burden, especially for developing Member States, reiterates the call for voluntary contributions from Members towards the organization of sessions of the Sub-Committee, and encourages Members, observers, and other stakeholders to contribute to the multi-donor fund and finally; commits to availing its technical personnel and time for preparation and attendance of the meetings of the Sub-Committee.

Sra. Natalia ESCOBAR (Chile)

Chile apoya las conclusiones y recomendaciones del informe del 35 período de sesiones del Comité de pesca. Chile quiere agradecer a FAO por la nueva adición del Informe SOFIA 2022. Destaca la importancia de este documento, particularmente en las materias de ordenamiento pesquero. Asimismo, mi país reitera la necesidad de incorporar las directrices voluntarias y prácticas relevantes del monitoreo, control, vigilancias generadas en instancias multilaterales, lo cual constituye una tarea que debería estar incorporada en la evaluación de las medidas de conservación y manejo de las OROP adquiriendo de ese modo un carácter vinculante.

Chile reconoce la importancia de la pesca y la acuicultura como fuente de alimento y nutrición y manifestamos nuestra preocupación por el estado actual de los recursos pesqueros ya que, tal como lo consigna el Informe SOFIA 2022, estos siguen disminuyendo debido a factores como la pesca excesiva, la contaminación y los efectos del cambio climático. Debemos hacer más y mejores esfuerzos por la sustentabilidad de nuestros mares.

En relación al Código de Conducta para la Pesca responsable, mi Delegación desea enfatizar que este es un elemento de referencia clave para la mejora de las estructuras institucionales y la armonización de los marcos normativos y jurídicos. En consecuencia, instamos a todos los Miembros a trabajar en conjunto para generar un ordenamiento pesquero eficaz que permita recuperar las poblaciones de los peces, restaurar los ecosistemas y velar para que estos sigan contribuyendo a la seguridad alimentaria, la nutrición, el crecimiento económico y el bienestar de las comunidades costeras.

Finalmente, Chile agradece el trabajo realizado por la FAO y sus Miembros para visibilizar y apoyar a la pesca y acuicultura artesanal, principalmente en este año internacional. La pesca y acuicultura artesanal es de la más alta importancia social, económica y cultural para nuestro país, razón por la cual hemos impulsado un conjunto de adecuaciones y cambios normativos que rigen el sector en Chile. Dentro de estos, hoy queremos compartir tres iniciativas como buenas prácticas en este ámbito.

La primera, la Ley de Caletas que promueve la regularización y el desarrollo integral de los espacios de desembarque pesqueros existentes en el país, caletas, entregándoles un rol protagónico a las mismas organizaciones de pescadores en su administración. Segundo, el Reglamento de la acuicultura de pequeña escala que reconoce, visibiliza y apoya la acuicultura de pequeña escala y las personas que desarrollan esta actividad. Y, tercero, la Ley de equidad de género que reconoce de manera explícita la contribución de la mujer al sector de la pesca y la acuicultura artesanal.

CHAIRPERSON

I turn the floor to the Observers.

Mr Matthías Geir PÁLSSON (Iceland) (Observer)

Iceland fully aligns with the European Union's (EU) statement on this Item given earlier today.

We attach great importance to the work of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and would in particular like to echo the points the EU made on the importance of good and efficient working methods of COFI, on the positive early publication of the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) report, and welcome both the conclusion of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on Transshipment as well as the decision to establish a new COFI Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management (SCGM).

In addition to these issues, Iceland would like to underline the importance of FAO continuing to be a leader in fisheries and fisheries management. In that regard, we would like to see a strong fisheries department with sufficient resources here at FAO, as well as a robust Small Island Developing States (SIDS) office.

At a time when food insecurity is at a record high, the importance of blue and aquatic food has never been greater, and firm fisheries management is imperative.

The COFI report reflects this in Art. 11 (h), where it states that the Committee "*underscored the importance of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in meeting future food needs, and in achieving sustainable and resilient food systems and welcomed global initiatives to strengthen partnerships and the promotion of food from the ocean and inland waters.*"

The work, guidance, and leadership of FAO as the core international body in this field is certainly in high demand. The international fisheries policymaking must be made by a UN body with global participation like FAO and not in other fora with lack of transparency and equal representation of states.

We look forward to continuing good cooperation with FAO in this field.

CHAIRPERSON

I now pass the floor to the Member the Russian Federation.

Ms Ekaterina VYBORNOVA (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

I will be as brief as possible. The Russian Federation is pleased by the Report on the 35th Session of the the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), we welcome its endorsement and our delegation counts on the implementation of 21 (h) on the influence of conflict on the fisheries and aquaculture Sector.

CHAIRPERSON

I now turn the floor to the Observer.

Sr. Gonzalo EIRIZ GERVÁS (Spain) (Observador)

España se alinea completamente a lo expresado por la Unión Europea en nombre de sus 27 Estados Miembros y, en este sentido, agradece y valora positivamente el trabajo de FAO en materia de pesca y acuicultura, así como en la realización del Informe SOFIA 2022.

España apoya las conclusiones y recomendaciones del COFI que ya ha detallado la Unión Europea, pero especialmente la creación del nuevo Subcomité de Gestión pesquera, el trabajo del IYAFa en favor de la pesca y acuicultura artesanales, así como los esfuerzos en materia de lucha contra la pesca ilegal no declarada y no reglamentada y el Código de conducta depara la pesca responsable.

Además, quisiéramos subrayar dos puntos. Primero, el programa de FAO para la transformación azul y los esfuerzos de FAO para mejorar la sostenibilidad ecológica, social y económica de este sector, claves para la lucha contra el hambre y la malnutrición. Y también los trabajos encaminados a la implementación de la iniciativa de puertos azules al tiempo que animamos a FAO a profundizar en ella contando, para ello, con nuestra colaboración.

Finalmente, no quisiéramos dejar de desear los mayores éxitos para la nueva etapa que inicia la Comisión general de pesca del mediterráneo con la reciente elección de su nuevo secretario ejecutivo, Miguel Bernal.

CHAIRPERSON

We have concluded our evaluations on this Item. I pass the floor now to the Chairperson of the Commission of Fisheries, Mr Shingo Ota.

Mr Shingo Ota (Chairperson of Committee on Fisheries)

Thank you Mr Chairman, I have no comments and I would like to see the recommendations coming from the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) 35 to be adopted.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much Mr Shingo Ota for your concise remarks and I thank you for chairing the 35th Session of the Committee on Fisheries.

We now turn to the adoption of the draft conclusions on the *Report of 35th Session of the Committee on Fisheries* and we put them on the screen.

22. The Council reviewed the Report of the 35th Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), and in particular:

- a) acknowledged the importance of inland and marine small-scale fisheries for global sustainable development, food security and nutrition and a contribution to employment, livelihoods and resource stewardship, appreciated the continued progress of FAO and its partners with regard to the implementation of the Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF) Guidelines and their increased policy uptake as a contribution to the achievement of the SDGs and healthy food systems, and called for continued support by FAO in this regard;
- b) recommended FAO to continue providing technical assistance, capacity building and information dissemination on market information, especially for developing countries;
- c) stressed the need to strengthen efforts to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, welcomed the recently-adopted World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Fishery Subsidies as a major step forward for ocean sustainability, and commended FAO for its continued support in achieving this outcome;
- d) commended the work achieved by the Working Group on the Proposal for the establishment of the Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management (SCFM), and welcomed the Terms of Reference of the SCFM; and
- e) endorsed the proposal for establishing a COFI Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management (SCFM), including the proposal to hold the first SCFM meeting before the 36th Session of COFI in virtual modality, provided extra-budgetary funding is secured and taking into consideration administrative implications.

23. With the above observations, the Council endorsed aspects and recommendations of the Report relating to the programme and budgetary matters.

We have a footnote as well, stated by the Russian Federation: “*The Russian Federation disassociates itself from paragraph 21 (h),*” and a statement by the Russian Federation may be found in the Verbatim Report of this Session.

Ms Ekaterina VYBORNOVA (Russian Federation)

My remark that we did not disassociate from this Item.

CHAIRPERSON

That is even better. We delete the footnote. Sorry for the misunderstanding. Then we continue with the *chapeau*. Can we agree to the *chapeau*? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (a). Can we agree to subparagraph (a)?

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

Before subparagraph (a), I would like to add one subparagraph. It is exactly the same as paragraph 12 (a) of the COFI 35th Report. It is necessary to read out?

CHAIRPERSON

So it reads: “*Highlighted the importance of aquatic food from sustainable fishes in aquaculture to global food security, nutrition and livelihoods, and their contribution to the achievement of the SDGs, and the need for resources and partnerships to support this contribution.*”

Can we agree to this subparagraph? It is the exact language of the Report. I do not see any objections.

Can we agree to subparagraph (b) now?

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

I would just propose that we add one word, or two, at the end. We have the reference to: “... *the achievement of the SDGs and healthy food systems*” – that we put in addition “*healthy and sustainable food systems*”.

CHAIRPERSON

That is indeed a wording that we always use, sustainable food systems. Can we agree to this?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Yo iba a plantear exactamente casi lo mismo que simplemente creo que no es ‘*healthy*’ sino ‘*sustainable food systems*’, ese es el concepto. Por lo cual es ‘*sustainable agrifood systems*’. Ese sería el concepto que me parece que sería apropiado y excluiría ‘*healthy*’.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this subparagraph? I see nodding.

Then we go to subparagraph (c). Can we agree to v subparagraph (c). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (d). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (e).

Mr Benjamin ROSS (Australia)

Thank you Chair, perhaps at the end of this subparagraph we could add: “*And highlighted the importance of the review process to be conducted at the 38th Session.*”

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

I am wondering whether we could add one short subparagraph somewhere.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first deal with this one and then I am going to come back to you for your short subparagraph.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this subparagraph? I do not see any objections.

Then I go back to the European Union (EU) for an additional subparagraph.

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

I am not stressed about where it goes, but I think we could add a short subparagraph to “*welcome the endorsement of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on transshipment.*”

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this subparagraph? I do not see any objections, but I think we should place it before subparagraph (e) on the Sub-Committee, because the other two subparagraphs are the Sub-Committee subparagraphs.

Then we go to subparagraph (g). Can we agree to subparagraph (g)?

M. Moungui MÉDI (Cameroon)

We are fine with this but we were just thinking if we could not add something, a small portion of the sentence, like after “*administrative implication*” – “*and agreed to request the Conference to approve the creation of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management.*” Because I believe that is the prerogative of the Conference to do so because here in principle the Council cannot endorse policy matters. This is I think an element of policy matters, so if we want to refer that officially to the Conference, we do so by adding such a sentence.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

No tenemos objeciones de la propuesta planteada por Camerún. Tengo simplemente, cuando usted lo considere, una propuesta de adición de párrafo que refuerza el párrafo anterior que viene de la Joint Session, pero cuando usted me diga.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

We support the proposal coming from Cameroon and we also consider it to be important to add something relating to the participation of developed State Members in the Sub-Committee. So we would be inspired by the Item 15 (c) of the Report of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), that says: “*underscore the importance of addressing the potential financial and administrative burden especially for developing State Members.*” So maybe after “*administrative implications*” we could include: ‘comma’ “*underscored the importance of addressing the potential financial and administrative burden especially for developing State Members.*”

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

I am happy that this part fell out and I wanted to ask that in the penultimate line it should not read “*approve the creation...*” but “*the establishment of the COFI Sub-Committee*” I also have another subparagraph to propose to add, I know you will come to that later but just to indicate like Argentina I would like to add something, coming from the the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) Report.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us also think about the time we have for this Council.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Dos comentarios. La primera es si en lugar de request —preguntaba por lo expresado por mi estimadísimo colega de Camerún—, ¿no sería razonable decir recommend? No sé si Counsel request the Conference o recommend the Conference. Esa es una consulta técnica que me gustaría si la pueden resolver ustedes.

Y la segunda es si me permite hacer mi propuesta de nuevo párrafo.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first deal with this, otherwise we are going back and forth.

My proposal would be to indeed use the word “*recommend*” because that is what we normally do. Then we go to new subparagraph of Argentina.

Could a technician bring the screen on again for the text? I ask your indulgence because we have a technical problem with the computer. It is back again.

Mr Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

“*Welcomed the voluntary contributions from Members towards the organization of sessions of the Sub-Committee, and encouraged Members, Observers and other stakeholders to contribute to the multi-donor fund.*” That comes from the last Session of the Joint Meeting of the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this subparagraph? It is an agreed paragraph in the Joint Meeting. I see nodding.

Ms Renate HAHLEN (European Union)

What I would like to add should probably come above the Sub-Committee, it would basically be a copy and paste from the the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) Report para 14 (d). I can read it out, but it is related to the Port State Measures Agreement, so it should go definitely above the establishment of the Sub-Committee.

CHAIRPERSON

It would read “*appreciated the continued increase in number of Parties to the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) and noted the conclusion of the Third Meeting of the parties to the PSMA, including the decision to develop strategies to improve the effectiveness of the PSMA; encouraged further adherence to the Agreement and welcomed the convening of the fourth meeting of the Parties to be hosted by Indonesia in May 2023.*”

Can we agree to this subparagraph? It is an agreed subparagraph in the Report. I see nodding in the room.

Then we go to the last paragraph, that is now paragraph 23 of the Report, and can we agree to this paragraph as well?

I do not see any objections. With that, we have concluded our work on the Item on the *Report of the 35th Session of the Committee on Fisheries*.

Item 6. Technical Committees

Point 6. Comités techniques

Tema 6. Comités técnicos

Item 6.4 Report of the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (3-7 October 2022)

Point 6.4 Rapport de la vingt-sixième session du Comité des forêts (3-7 octobre 2022)

Tema 6.4 Informe del 26.º período de sesiones del Comité Forestal (3-7 de octubre de 2022)

(C 2023/25)

CHAIRPERSON

We now continue our work with Sub-Item 6.4, *Report of the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry* (COFO), which was held from the 3 to 7 October 2022. The document before the Council is C 2023/25 and the introduction by Mr Gunter Walkner, Chairperson of the COFO, has been circulated to you.

Introduction to Item 6.4: Report of the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (3-7 October 2022)

Mr Günter Walkner, Chairperson of the Committee on Forestry

The Committee on Forestry (COFO) held its 26th Session from 3 to 7 October 2022. The Session was conducted as a hybrid event for the first time. Of the 120 Members of the Committee, 109 participated in the Session, including five Ministers, and a total of 758 participants.

The Report of the 26th Session of COFO is submitted to the Council in document C 2023/25. The Committee reviewed the 24 items on its agenda, as highlighted below.

The Committee welcomed the adjustment of the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2020-2023, the progress in its implementation and recommended to align the planning cycle of the COFO MYPOW with that of the other Technical Committees, starting in 2024, in order to facilitate cross-sectoral work among the Committees.

The Committee endorsed the proposed priority areas of work in forestry in 2022-2023 and beyond, and welcomed their strong alignment with the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31.

The Committee discussed the key findings of the 2022 edition of The State of the World's Forests (SOFO) and its three interrelated pathways, and recognized the potential of forests to help mitigate the

impacts of global challenges, including climate change, biodiversity loss and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Committee provided guidance to FAO to:

- continue supporting the provision of sufficient, reliable information and knowledge, the development of innovative tools, as well as mobilization of finance on the topics covered in SOFO 2022, for science- and evidence-based policy decisions and effective programmes for forestry and agrifood systems transformation;
- consider collecting, assessing, and disseminating good practices of sustainable production and trade of charcoal and other forms of wood energy, with a view to supporting Members' efforts and dialogue towards the transition to sustainable uses of wood fuels and meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets;
- support Members to accelerate South-South and Triangular Cooperation, including through voluntary sharing of knowledge and practices, research, and technology transfer on mutually agreed terms with a view to promoting the development and use of sustainable wood and non-wood forest products, addressing the challenges faced by developing countries, including Small Island Developing States (SIDS);
- continue FAO's support for strengthening the role of forest ecosystems in global climate policy;
- support Members in halting forest loss and degradation, restoring degraded lands and drylands, implementing sustainable forest management, and strengthening work on forest fire management;
- reflect the importance of addressing deforestation, forest biodiversity loss and of scaling up the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity in the implementation of the 2024-27 Action Plan of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors;
- continue to review the Regional Forestry Commissions, including through consideration of the ongoing governance reviews;
- conduct, subject to available extra-budgetary resources, a global assessment of the status and scaling-up potential of agroforestry, including agroecological principles and practices and other innovative approaches, to update the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) categories covering production systems integrating trees and forests, and to report on progress to COFO 27.

The Committee took note of the outcomes of the XV World Forestry Congress, appreciated the Youth Call for Action made at the event, and invited Members to consider appropriate actions for supporting youth engagement in forestry at all levels.

The Committee discussed forests and sustainable production of wood and non-wood forest products and took note of the Ministerial Call on Sustainable Wood (as part of the outcomes of the XV World Forestry Congress). Further, COFO 26 recommended FAO to support Members to promote the development and sustainable consumption and production of wood and non-wood forest products, contributing to improved livelihoods, including through building capacities of women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

The Committee welcomed FAO and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) co-leadership to promote the implementation of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030 and recommended FAO to support Members with tools, methodologies and capacity development initiatives to strengthen their capacity to scale-up forest ecosystem restoration efforts.

The Committee discussed the item on agriculture and forestry linkages, presented to both the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG 28) and COFO 26, in line with the Council's request to strengthen coordination on cross-sectoral matters and to present papers dealing with interrelated issues between agriculture and forests to both Committees.

The Committee requested FAO to continue actively identifying the important and mutually beneficial linkages between agriculture and forestry and scaling up its related activities in the relevant Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) of its Strategic Framework. Moreover, COFO 26 recommended FAO to continue collecting and analysing necessary science- and evidence-based data on agriculture and forestry interdependencies, including on the direct and underlying drivers of deforestation and land degradation, by further enhancing consistency between agricultural and forest data sets, and compiling case studies and good practices which should be reported at COFO 27.

The Committee recommended that the Action Plan for the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031, clearly sets out FAO's priorities for climate action in agrifood systems at a sectoral level, including for the crop, forest, fisheries and aquaculture, and livestock sectors, at local, national, regional and global levels, and recognized the importance of mobilizing additional resources to support the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031 through its Action Plan, including for forest-related climate action.

The Committee called on FAO to include relevant forms of science and innovation in forestry in the preparation of the regional action plans for the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (2022-25).

The Committee also encouraged the COFO Working Group on Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems to support the preparations for the UN International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists in 2026.

The Committee welcomed the ongoing improvements of the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) process, the recent FAO FRA Remote Sensing Survey, and recommended FAO to continue the development and harmonization of methods and definitions for forest data collection, including for primary forests, and recommended further efforts towards a definition of "forest degradation" during the FRA 2025 cycle.

The Committee recommended FAO to strengthen its leadership role in the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), and to facilitate active participation of CPF Members in the mid-term review of the International Arrangement on Forests.

CHAIRPERSON

I now open the floor to the Members for comments, suggestions and remarks.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States. Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, Republic of Macedonia, San Marino and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

First of all, its Member States would like to thank the Committee on Forestry (COFO) Secretariat and the Chairperson, Mr Glen Hargrove, for an excellent meeting and the satisfactory outcomes of the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry. We also want to congratulate Mr Gunter Walkner as the new COFO Chair and all Members of the Bureau.

We have a couple of remarks to make. First, we wish to highlight the COFO Session recommended making efforts towards finding a common definition of forest declaration during the 2025 Global Forest Research Assessment Cycle. We fully support this recommendation.

Second remark. We express our full support for the COFO recommendation to continue collecting and analyzing necessary science and evidence based data on agriculture and forestry including on the direct and underlying drivers of afforestation and land degradation.

We regret that our suggestion to include agricultural expansion as the main driver of afforestation, could not be agreed on in the final Report.

Further remark, the EU and its Member States would like to highlight the importance of field inventory data in quality control and the validation of results derived from remote sensing. Field measurements are needed to produce reliable and unbiased forest information. This is well reflected in the final Report.

Finally, we must express our concern about the very full Agenda of the 26th COFO Session. This resulted in some serious time constraints. For lack of time the Observers were not able to deliver their statements on any of the Agenda Items. For example under Agenda Item 8.6, dialogue with statutory bodies in forestry, and we regret that we were not able to hear the statements by the Chairs of the relevant bodies.

With these observations, the EU and its Member States endorses the Report of the the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry.

Ms Nosipho Nausca-Jean JEZILE (South Africa)

I am making the statement on behalf of the Africa Regional Group by South Africa, the Republic of the Congo and Angola.

At the outset the Group wishes to pay tribute to and recognise the excellent way Mr Glen Hargrove from Canada chaired the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO), which resulted in the successful conclusion of the Committee's work and the adoption of important findings and recommendations that will advance the work of the Committee.

The Group also extends our appreciation to the COFO Secretariat for their dedication and professionalism in supporting the Chair and the preparations undertaken for this Session.

Furthermore, the Group congratulates Mr Günter Walkner on his election as the incoming Chair of the 27th COFO Session and pledges its full cooperation to ensure a successful outcome of that Session.

The Group reiterates that Africa's forests are considered economic, social, and environmental, as indispensable for Africa's development and the general well-being of its people by providing valuable ecosystem services and contributes significantly to climate change mitigation.

Furthermore, we reiterate that forests play an essential role in enhancing and preserving biodiversity, food security, preventing soil erosion and contributing to water balance, and building resilience and improving the livelihoods of rural communities.

In Africa, wood and non-wood forest products are integral to the livelihoods and economies of local populations and it is of concern that unsustainable exploitation and trade of rosewood in Africa continues due to growing international demand.

However, it is also recognised that Africa faces challenges related to the annual loss of forests ecosystems resulting from unsustainable agriculture, fuelwood harvesting, mining, and logging, but is also commitment that Member States uphold to address these challenges, including through sustainable forest management programmes.

The transformation blueprint of Africa, as embodied in its Agenda 2063, therefore, places an emphasis on measures to sustainably manage and conserve the continent's rich biodiversity and its forests.

In this regard, the valuable technical role of the African Forestry and Wildlife Commission is recognised with appreciation as a contribution to the sustainable management of forests in Africa.

The Group further encourages FAO to continue identifying opportunities to improve complementarities and synergies between the agriculture and forestry sectors and to strengthen coordinated policy responses in addressing common challenges.

FAO is also encouraged to continue supporting the implementation of key initiatives in Africa such as the Sustainable Forest Management Framework for Africa 2020-30, the Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC), the Great Green Wall initiative, the AFR100 initiative, and community forest initiative supported by the Wangari Maathai champions award.

Further, we are in support of FAO's three interrelated pathways as a contribution to green recovery, FAO should also consider supporting African Members, upon their request, in their efforts to scale up investments and actions to implement the three forest pathways, with a focus on embracing good practices and innovations, including capacity building and strategic partnerships. That would improve access to financing.

The Group calls on FAO to support African Members, through its technical and finance mobilization assistance as well as through coordinated efforts with relevant partners, that will improve the sustainability, legality, and productivity of wood and non-wood forest products' value chains.

In conclusion, with these observations, the Africa Regional Group takes note of the Report of the 26th Session of COFO.

Ms Laura HOLDSTOCK (Australia)

Australia expresses its appreciation to the Chair of the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry and endorses the findings and recommendations of the report of the 26th Session in full.

We highlight the importance of scaling-up the use of sustainable wood-based products for their renewable and carbon storage potential, and reaffirm our support for FAO's ongoing efforts, including through the Collaborative Partnership on Forest's "Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World" initiative.

We also take this opportunity to again highlight that sustainable intensification plays an important role in biodiversity outcomes, by reducing land needed to meet timber demand and leaving more land available for conservation. We emphasise the importance of considering this in a balanced approach to the Action Plan for 2024-27 and implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

La France s'aligne sur la déclaration de l'Union Européenne et de ses états membres, prononcée par la République tchèque et souhaite ajouter les observations qui suivent à titre national. La France est mobilisée avec ses partenaires en faveur de la protection de la biodiversité, notamment la protection des écosystèmes terrestres, de la lutte contre la déforestation et de la gestion durable des forêts dans le monde.

Lors du Comité des Forêts, la France et le Gabon ont souligné combien les forêts, notamment tropicales sont au cœur de l'atteinte des objectifs de développement durable, et ont mis en valeur leurs partenariats pour partenariat pour préserver la forêt tropicale. À la COP27, un événement One Planet a réuni des chefs d'états et de gouvernements et des ministres d'Afrique, d'Asie et d'Amérique Latine ainsi que des dirigeants d'organisations internationales et de la société civile. Les participants ont affirmé la nécessité de protéger en priorité les réserves vitales de carbones et de biodiversités. Ces espaces sont à la fois des stocks naturels de carbone et des espaces riches en biodiversités.

Comme les forêts anciennes, les tourbières ou les mangroves. Ils couvrent moins de 14 % de la surface de la Terre et concentrent pourtant plus de 75 % de ce que les scientifiques appellent "le carbone irrécupérable", et 91 % des habitats des espèces vertébrées. Si ces paysages ont détruit, de grandes quantités de carbone seront libérées dans l'atmosphère, et de nombreuses espèces de faunes et de flores risquent de disparaître accélérant dangereusement le changement climatique et la perte de biodiversité.

En clôture de l'évènement, Monsieur Ali Bongo, Président de la République du Gabon et Monsieur Emmanuel Macron, Président de la République Française ont annoncé qu'un sommet One Planète, consacré aux enjeux forestiers se tiendrait à Libreville en mars 2023. Ce sommet sera notamment l'occasion d'avancer de manière ambitieuse sur la préservation des forêts tropicales qui sont au cœur des enjeux climats et biodiversité.

Je voudrais par ailleurs rappeler l'importance que la France attache à la grande muraille verte évoquée par ma collègue de l'Afrique du Sud au nom du Groupe Régional Afrique, programme phare pour combattre les changements climatiques et la désertification et lutter contre l'insécurité alimentaire et la pauvreté, en Afrique, en particulier au Sahel. Enfin, je souhaite de nouveau féliciter notre collègue l'Ambassadeur Gunter Walkner pour sa désignation comme Président de la 27e Session du Comité des Forêts.

Avec ces observations, nous invitons le Conseil à approuver le rapport de la 26e Session du COFO.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much to your President to organise a Summit related to the important issue of sustainable forest management, very much appreciated.

Ms Ellen LUGER (United States of America)

The United States thanks FAO for its work preparing for the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO26) and the final Report that is under discussion for this Council. The State of the World's Forests 2022 set the stage for meaningful discussions throughout COFO26, with the focus on the three interrelated pathways needed to achieve green recovery, combat climate change, and address biodiversity loss.

The United States highlights the statistics within the State of the World's Forests (SOFO) Report relating to forest ecosystem services, forest employment and livelihoods, forest foods and medicines, and land use change and zoonotic diseases which all paint a clear picture of the importance of forests to global, economic, social and environmental health.

The United States agrees with the SOFO Report conclusions on the need for decoupling agricultural growth from deforestation, increasing forest restoration and agroforestry to diversity livelihoods, and increased land productivity, increasing integrated landscape approaches, and strengthening governance and legality. We also support increased public and private sector financing that will result in more sustainable forest practices and land management based on new economic models that reflect the value of ecosystem services around the world.

Forests need to be protected from all threats, including wildfires. To that end, the United States supports FAO and the United Nations Environment Programme UNEP efforts. Our experience has shown that we need to protect people and communities and improve forest health and resilience. A paradigm shift in land management across jurisdictional boundaries has been necessary to reduce risk and restore fire adapted landscapes in the United States.

We recognize the importance of the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment and encourage FAO to continue to work with Members on ways to reconcile regional results of forest resources assessments, country Reporting, and remote sensing survey outputs, in an effort to avoid discrepancies among data sets published.

Mr Purna Cita NUGRAHA (Indonesia)

Indonesia aligns itself with the joint statements which will be delivered by Malaysia on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We support the findings and recommendations in the Report of the Committee on Forestry (COFO). In particular, we take note the publishing of the State of World Forests, SOFO 2022, which focused on forest pathways for green recovery and building inclusive resilience and sustainable economies.

In that regard, Indonesia has launched the State of Indonesia's Forests, SOIFO 2022, at the high level panel on agriculture and forestry linkages on the sidelines of COFO26. Indonesia has taken corrective measures to manage natural resources and the environment formulated using scientific evidence and implemented them within the national perspective.

The results of the measures are now summarized and integrated into a national programme for greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions reductions in forests and other land use. This programme encouraged the achievement of GHG emission level of minus 140 million tons of CO₂ by 2030, and is implemented through a structured and systematic approach.

Lastly, Indonesia sincerely hopes that our national programmes, policy and efforts to preserve forests and benefit the community have positively contributed to the sustainable management of the world's forests and global ecosystem. In this regard, Indonesia stands ready to render our full support in advancing discourse, including by supporting the future work of COFO.

In closing, Indonesia endorses the Report of 26th Session of the COFO.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Brazil deems the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO26) a successful meeting where the role of forests in the fight against climate change was appropriately addressed with due

consideration to the importance and urgency of scaling up the access by developing countries to financial resources, technology and capacity building that will allow the development and implementation of forest-related policies. We were particularly pleased by the recognition in the Report of the potential of by economy in general and forest products in particular in the achievements of multiple socioeconomic and environmental objectives.

At the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP27), Parties emphasized the importance of protecting, conserving and restoring nature and ecosystems to achieve the Paris Agreement temperature goal, including to forests while ensuring social and environmental safeguards. They were also encouraged to consider ecosystem based approaches in mitigation and adaptation action, while ensuring relevant social and environmental safeguards.

Brazil is convinced that the sustainable management of forests is central for the achievement of all of those endeavors. Bearing this in mind, we stand ready to contribute with FAO in the promotion of context specific forest-related policies that advance the three dimensions of sustainable development in an integrated and ambitious manner.

In conclusion, Brazil supports the endorsement of the Report of COFO26 by the Session of the Council.

I would like also to take this opportunity to come back to a reflection that we needed to do about the practice of appointing the Chairperson of the Regional Forest Conference to Chair the COFO. I understand this in the past was not a very successful idea. We hope, with the action of the new Chair of COFO, we somehow break this practice and align COFO to the other committees of FAO.

Mr Abdul Rahman ABDUL WAHAB (Malaysia)

Malaysia delivers this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We highly appreciate the Report of the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO26) contained in document *C 2023/25* on the Agenda Item. We recognize that in many regions of the world, including Asia region, both wood products and non-wood forest products contribute to wellbeing and livelihoods in many aspects. It is very important to generate income contribute to food security and nutrition, and have a role in medicinal remedies.

Having said that, however, sustainable forests should be the cornerstone of the policy for production of wood and non-wood forest products. Therefore, we echo a recommendation for FAO to continue supporting Members with technical expertise to strengthen policies including financial mechanism, transparency, legal and institutional arrangements where possible to enhance sustainability, especially pertaining to wood and non-wood forest products.

As we have heard in the earlier discussions, agriculture and forestry are intertwined and synergies and intersectoral approach is imperative for more sustainable agri-food systems. Further, we echo the call for FAO with international partners, including all relevant stakeholders and particular Members of the collaborative partners on forests, to support Members to further identify opportunities and implement actions to improve complementarity between agriculture and forestry sectors.

We welcome the FAO's work on forests and climate change in the context of FAO's Strategic Framework 2022-31, and FAO's Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031.

We agree that FAO continues to assist Members in implementing sustainable forest management, integrated risk management approaches in forest adaptation measures. We echo the recommendation that the action plan for FAO's Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031 should clearly set out FAO's priorities for climate action in agri-food system at sectorial level. The action plan should comprehensively consider the role and climate benefit of forests in mitigating and adapting to climate change. We invite FAO to continue to Report progress on implementation of the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy 2022-25, in particular in relation to forest and agriculture.

We commend the joint FAO and UNEP initiative to develop and implement the global fire management platform to reduce the negative impacts of wildfires and livelihoods, landscapes and global climate, response and recovery among the important areas in the forest fire management

Strategy, which requires support for coordinated efforts among Members by FAO. In this connection, we call on FAO to continue to support Members for the implementation of Strategy.

We welcome the development of the draft 2024-2027 action plan for the implementation of FAO's Strategy on mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors, and look forward for its finalization, taking into account other FAO strategies, guidance and further development on the various relevant international treaties and bodies. We welcome the overall ongoing improvement of the forest resource assessment process, including progress made in the preparation of Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) 2025. We also concur with COFO's recommendation on where forest Reporting matters in the FRA 2025 cycle on ecosystem restoration.

Whilst acknowledging the collaborative efforts between FAO and UNEP, we call on FAO to continue to support Members with tools, methodologies and capacity development initiatives and to facilitate access to finance in order to scale up forest ecosystem restoration.

In closing, Asia Regional Group commits to continue working constructively with Members and all stakeholders across sectors to ensure the successful achievement of COFO's future works.

Mr Anatoliy SHATKOVSKYY (Canada)

Canada welcomes the the Committee on Forestry (COFO)'s work and Report. We appreciate the work of Mr Hargrove for chairing a successful meeting. We welcome the incoming Chairperson and thank the Secretariat for its ongoing support.

The Canadian delegation notes and supports the COFO's guidance in paragraph 15(b) and elsewhere, that the Secretariat promote the sustainable production, use and consumption of forestry resources and wood products.

We also want to particularly recognize the guidance that the FAO foster closer collaboration and information sharing between the COFO and the other technical bodies. Intercrop and agricultural and forestry products is one example of how the two areas come together and how they can contribute to improving productivity, while reducing environmental impacts.

Canada also recognizes the COFO's calls for working with diverse communities, including women and indigenous peoples. Noting the start of COP15 on biodiversity this week in Montreal, for which Canada stepped up to be the host location, we also underscore the important interlinkages between the FAO's work in forestry and biodiversity.

In conclusion, Canada recommends this Council endorse the programmatic and budgetary matters contained in its findings and recommendations.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

La Argentina ha tenido una participación muy activa en el 26° periodo de sesiones del Comité Forestal (COFO) en octubre pasado y estamos muy satisfechos tanto con el debate como las conclusiones alcanzadas y que se reflejan en el documento puesto a consideración de este Consejo.

Asimismo, cabe destacar la excelente labor de la Secretaria del COFO antes y durante la reunión bajo el excelente liderazgo de su Secretaria, Sra. Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs. Habiendo realizado mi país muchas críticas, siempre constructivas, de pasadas sesiones de COFO, también es justo reconocer los tremendos avances realizados para una mayor visibilidad de la temática forestal en la FAO, en sintonía con el nuevo Marco Estratégico, y una mejor relación con las Representaciones Permanentes de los Miembros en Roma.

En esa línea, mi país y mi Representación se gratifican que en el COFO26 haya elegido al estimado amigo Sr. Günter Walkner, Representante Permanente de la República de Austria ante la FAO para el cargo de Presidente del 27.º período de sesiones del COFO.

A nuestro entender COFO26 posee mensajes muy claros para la FAO y sus Miembros:

Primero, los bosques tienen un rol transversal y crucial, ya que no solo desempeñan funciones ambientales y ecosistémicas, sino también contribuyen a la seguridad alimentaria, la nutrición, y para

el logro de sistemas agroalimentarios sostenibles, en sus tres dimensiones: ambiental, social y económica.

Segundo, la silvicultura debe ser un elemento integral en los sistemas agrícolas y alimentarios sostenibles. De allí la importancia de que cuestiones interrelacionadas entre la agricultura y los bosques sean presentados en COAG y COFO y que el nuevo Marco Estratégico de la FAO refleje la importancia de las cuestiones forestales y la necesidad de trabajar de manera intersectorial y con diferentes asociados.

Tercero, aumentar la producción de alimentos y la seguridad alimentaria sin reducir la superficie forestal sigue siendo un desafío en el mundo como lo refleja la Evaluación de los recursos forestales mundiales 2022. Existen muchas soluciones equilibradas posibles para tal desafío desde diferentes enfoques de sistemas alimentarios, y teniendo en cuenta las diferentes capacidades, prioridades y realidades de cada sector y país. Por lo tanto, insistimos en la premisa que la agricultura y la ganadería no necesariamente tiene que contraponerse a los bosques.

La deforestación es el resultado de un modelo de desarrollo que puede ser evitado a través de prácticas que complementan las actividades agrícolas con el cuidado de los bosques. Existen sobrada evidencia sobre el aporte positivo que la innovación tecnológica puede ofrecer a la producción agrícola y ganadera y así favorecer la complementación entre este sector y los bosques. Ejemplo de ello es el Manejo de Bosques con Ganadería Integrada (MBGI) y los distintos sistemas agroforestales y silvopastoriles que se realizan en nuestro país.

Con estos comentarios, alentamos que el Consejo haga suyo el Informe del 26º período de sesiones del COFO y las recomendaciones allí formuladas.

Sra. Natalia ESCOBAR (Chile)

Chile apoya las conclusiones y recomendaciones del informe del 26 período de sesiones del Comité Forestal. Concuera con la necesidad de mejorar las sinergias entre los sectores agrícolas y forestales para que los sistemas agroalimentarios sean más sostenibles, en particular mediante la planificación del uso de la tierra. Debemos evaluar la manera de desvincular el crecimiento de la producción agrícola, de la pérdida de bosques y de otro tipo de diversidad.

Desde la Corporación Nacional Forestal se han tomado medidas que quisiéramos compartir como buenas prácticas, tales como: emisión de resoluciones que incluyen el término del procedimiento de ingreso de planes de manejo de corta de bosque nativo para la recuperación de terrenos con fines agrícolas y otra resolución que instruye evaluar los planes de trabajo de formaciones xerofíticas procurando su protección, recuperación y mejoramiento con el fin de asegurar su sustentabilidad.

Complementariamente, estamos implementando acuerdos de producción limpia que buscan una mejor integración de la actividad agrícola y forestal mediante la zonificación de sectores de recuperación de bosques aislados del pastoreo. Asimismo, a través del programa de reforestación campesina y de arborización, se entregan plantas en predios rurales que, entre otros usos, son utilizadas para la apicultura y forraje.

Finalmente, a través del plan Siembra por Chile se está ejecutando el programa de restauración de bosque nativo a gran escala priorizando zonas de conservación y protección de suelos, humedales, cabeceras de cuencas y cuerpos de agua y el Plan Nacional de Restauración a escala de paisaje con la meta de un millón de hectáreas restauradas al año 2030 con el propósito de recuperar los bienes y servicios ecosistémicos y la biodiversidad, reducir las amenazas y presiones sobre los distintos ecosistemas y aumentar los beneficios ambientales, económicos y sociales favoreciendo una economía de la restauración basada en alianzas público-privadas sustentables.

Mr LI Hanghao (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China associates itself with the statement made by Malaysia on behalf of the Asia Group. China thanks FAO for its strong support to the development of forestry and the grassland in China, especially for assisting China in the global forestry resources assessment and the remote sensing monitoring. We hope that FAO will continue to provide the valuable support to China's forest conservation and the forestry and the grassland development in its future work.

China encourages FAO to support Members in promoting the development of sustainable production and consumption of wood and waste wood forest products and in helping family farmers, women and the youth to improve their livelihoods; global, regional and country policy dialogues and the technical exchanges, especially through South-South and the Triangular Cooperation to disseminate and share knowledge and practices. We encourage FAO to assist Members at their request in curbing forest loss and the degradation, restoring degraded lands and drylands and enhancing the sustainable development capacities of forests.

China attaches great importance since we are the Chairperson of the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15), we have a high strong political will, we have made concrete actions to promote the COP15 process, to make our contribution to biodiversity protection. In the next phase of COP, we will be holding meetings in Montreal, China will play its role as Chair and we will cooperate with the relevant stakeholders and the Member to promote global biodiversity protection.

Based on the above comments, China suggests the Council to endorse the Report of the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO), and we hope that under the leadership of its Chair, to continue to carry out the work in this regard.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, China, and a lot of success for chairing UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) in Montreal.

Mr Keiji MATSUBA (Japan)

Japan associates itself with the statement made by Malaysia on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

First, the importance of sustainable forest management is growing and has a context of sustainable development goals, the Paris Agreement and other international development agendas. We would like to highlight the important role of FAO as a UN specialist agency.

Second, we acknowledge the multiple linkage between the agriculture and forestry sectors and highly appreciate that FAO added Item on agriculture and forestry linkage at their 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO) and the 28th Session of Committee on Agriculture (COAG)(for the discussion by Members.

We encourage FAO to continue playing an active role in international and regional work by promoting open dialogue on enhancing and promoting sustainable agrifood systems, and further working with other international partners including all relevant stakeholders, and particularly Members of the collaborative agency on forests including International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), to promote activities for sustainable development in the agriculture and forestry sectors.

Last not least, Japan would like to emphasise the importance of sustainable forest management and sustainable good use, advising knowledge and experience acquired through our effort on the use of forest and forest products, investing, utilizing, promoting and growing. We would like to continue to support international cooperation and coordination via relevant initiatives such as sustainable work.

To conclude, with these comments, Japan endorses the Report of the 26th Session of COFO.

M. Bienvenu NTSOUANVA (Congo)

Comme c'est la première fois que nous prenons officiellement la parole. Nous saluons votre conduite des travaux. Pour ce point de l'ordre du jour, nous nous alignons donc à la déclaration faite par l'Afrique du Sud, au nom du Groupe Régional Afrique. Mais nous voudrions bien mettre l'accent sur un aspect important, qui concerne le lien entre l'agriculture et la forêt qui souvent est abordé dans un seul sens.

En effet, une approche holistique est nécessaire pour aborder cette question. Parce que la forêt est un écosystème. Les liens agriculture - forêt devraient également être regardés sous l'angle du conflit homme faune, pas seulement de la déforestation. La dévastation des cultures et des populations vivant dans les zones de développement communautaire, déserts protégés sous-financés, et devenu légion dans notre région de l'Afrique Centrale, et constitue une menace sérieuse pour la réalisation de la sécurité alimentaire et la résilience.

Par ailleurs la perte des forêts à cause de l'agriculture pourrait être compensée si les efforts des pays en termes de programme déforestation et de restauration des forêts et d'implémentations de l'agriculture climatique intelligente étaient suffisamment appuyés par des financements innovants, telle que la finance climatique. À défaut de ces appuis, les forêts vont continuer à être en danger.

Nous tenons à relever que les mesures unilatérales de dispersions des marchés des produits agricoles au motif de déforestation en lieu et place de l'accroissement des investissements, dans le cadre des mécanismes de compensations, et d'un dialogue fécond avec les pays fournisseurs de commodités, ne serviront nullement la cause de la forêt.

Car la préservation de la forêt ne sera jamais réussie par la coercition. La République du Congo est résolument engagée à préserver ses forêts parce que le bien-être de l'humanité en dépend. Cet engagement a été renouvelé le 8 novembre 2022, lors de la COP27, à travers la signature du protocole d'accord pour un partenariat des forêts.

Avec ces quelques commentaires, nous approuvons le rapport de COFO26.

Ms Siti Normaznie ABDUL MUTTALIB (Malaysia)

Malaysia appreciates the FAO Management, Committee on Forestry (COFO) Secretariat and all the Members for successfully organizing the 26th Session of COFO in a hybrid format from 3-7 October 2022.

Malaysia welcomes the key findings and recommendations of the State of the World's Forests (SOFO 2022) and supports the Committee's discussion on the impacts of global challenges, including climate change, biodiversity loss and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on farmers, forest ecosystem and communities. Malaysia appreciates FAO's long-term commitment to Members in developing good practices and innovative solutions, leaving no one behind in more sustainable forest management, global biodiversity and mitigating climate change to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Malaysia recognizes the importance of mobilizing multiple sources of funding to support the efforts in ecosystem restoration and agroforestry. Simultaneously, Malaysia strongly upholds its commitment to involving forest-dependent communities in government development programmes and initiatives for job creation and livelihood resilience through social forestry programmes.

Malaysia recognizes the interlinkages between the agriculture and forest sectors and an improved cross-sectoral work within FAO, Committee on Agriculture (COAG) and COFO. In the local context, Malaysia National Agrofood Policy 2.0 places emphasis on the need for the conservation of ecological landscape including forest resources and wildlife for more sustainable and integrated land use planning and management. These cross-sectional approaches will open meaningful opportunities to enhance synergies for closer integration between the agriculture and forestry sectors to address issues such as ongoing deforestation, forest degradation, combating climate change and biodiversity loss. In light of this, we call on COFO and COAG to make reciprocal reporting as a matter of regular affairs on the interconnectedness in the agriculture-forestry relationship.

CHAIRPERSON

With that, we have finalized our deliberations on the Report of the Committee of Forestry (COFO). Besides that we have a new Chairperson of the Committee on Forestry, and a new Director of the Forestry Department, Mr Zhimin Wu. He is here. During lunchtime, you can take the opportunity to meet and greet him.

With that, I would like to give the floor to the new Chair of the COFO, whether or not he wants to make some brief remarks.

Mr Günter WALKNER (Chairperson of Committee on Forestry)

Since this is the first time I am taking the floor, please allow me Mr Chairperson to express my gratitude and appreciation for your wise leadership and the Council Members for giving forests high priority within the Organization and strengthening FAO's leadership on the global Forest agenda.

The 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO) was a historic event – COFO’s fiftieth anniversary and the first hybrid session since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A total of 758 representatives from 109 FAO Member Nations took part in person and online.

COFO provided important guidance on several policy areas.

I would like to refer to just some highlights of many more relevant findings and recommendations.

The State of the World’s Forests 2022 and its three interrelated pathways stressed the potential of forests to help mitigate the impacts of global challenges, including climate change, biodiversity loss and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In line with the Council’s request made at its 164th and 165th Sessions, to strengthen coordination on cross-sectoral matters between COFO and the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), the Committee considered the Item on agriculture and forestry linkages, presented to both COAG and COFO.

Based on this mandate we will continue our efforts to actively identify the important and mutually beneficial linkages between agriculture and forestry and scale up its related activities in the relevant Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) of its Strategic Framework.

Although COFO26 is over, there is hard work ahead of us before the next session in 2024. And it is urgent work.

During the intersessional period, in the framework of the Committee’s Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW), we have the opportunity to enhance knowledge sharing, increase visibility at global and regional levels of FAO and its Members’ work on forestry, and provide advice on global policy matters, within our mandates.

We must walk these miles together. We have taken considerable steps along the track, enriching our knowledge and dialogue.

But we need you, our esteemed Members to take concrete actions and ensure that the next two years are a success. So, when we meet at the next COFO in 2024 – in this room, we can say with pride we are playing an important part in the global effort to stop forest loss and restore 350 million hectares of forest landscapes by 2030.

To conclude, I wish to underline, that in my capacity as Chairperson of the COFO, I am at your disposal and I look forward to collaborating with you all and with the FAO Secretariat, to contribute to FAO and its Members’ efforts to protect, restore and sustainably manage the world’s forests.

CHAIRPERSON

I have to refrain myself from making comments on sustainable forest management, although the issue is very near to my heart, when you look to my past.

Now, I will read out the draft conclusions which we can then adopt after the lunch break.

24. The Council reviewed the Report of the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO), and in particular:

- a) requested FAO to continue actively identifying the important and mutual beneficial linkages between agriculture and forestry and scaling up its related activities in the relevant Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) of its Strategic Framework 2022-31;
- b) recommended FAO to continue collecting and analysing the necessary science- and evidence-based data on agriculture and forestry interdependencies, including on the direct and underlying drivers of deforestation and land degradation, by further enhancing consistency between agricultural and forest data sets, and compiling case studies and good practices, which should be reported at COFO27;
- c) recommended FAO strengthen its leadership role in the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF);

- d) urged FAO to support Members with tools, methodologies and capacity development initiatives to strengthen their capacity to scale-up forest ecosystem restoration efforts;
- e) encouraged FAO to promote awareness raising, capacity building, research and innovation for an effective contribution of sustainable wood products and their value chains to mitigate climate change and support climate adaptation, substituting carbon-intensive products; and increasing resilience to climate change, including through the inclusion of sustainable wood in FAO's Action Plan for the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031; and
- f) endorsed the proposed priority areas of work in forestry in 2022-23 and beyond and welcomed their strong alignment with the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31.

25. With the above observations, the Council endorsed aspects and recommendations of the Report relating to programme and budgetary matters.

We start adopting these conclusions after the lunch break. I would thank you so much for a very productive, inclusive and, I think, consensus-based Session this morning. I will let you now go for lunch. Energize yourself, come back in a very positive atmosphere and we commence and begin our meeting again with the adoption of the draft conclusions at 14:00 hours. Meeting adjourned.

The meeting rose at 12:13 hours

La séance est levée à 12 h 13

Se levanta la sesión a las 12.13

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Seventy-first Session Cent soixante et onzième session 171.º período de sesiones
Rome, 5-9 December 2022 Rome, 5-9 décembre 2022 Roma, 5-9 de diciembre de 2022
SIXTH PLENARY SESSION SIXIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEXTA SESIÓN PLENARIA
7 December 2022

The Sixth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14:04 hours
Mr Hans Hoogeveen,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La sixième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 04
sous la présidence de M. Hans Hoogeveen,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la sexta sesión plenaria a las 14.04
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Hans Hoogeveen,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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Item 6. Technical Committees**Point 6. Comités techniques****Tema 6. Comités técnicos**

*Item 6.4 Report of the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (3-7 October 2022)
(continued)*

*Point 6.4 Rapport de la vingt-sixième session du Comité des forêts (3-7 octobre 2022)
(suite)*

*Tema 6.4 Informe del 26.º período de sesiones del Comité Forestal (3-7 de octubre de
2022) (continuación)*

(C 2023/25)

CHAIRPERSON

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, I hope that you are refreshed for an intense session this afternoon again. We will have, after the snack at 16:30 hours, the late afternoon session as well.

Let us not waste our time with that, let us start adopting the draft conclusions on the Report of the 26th session of the Committee on Forestry.

I start with the chapeau. Can we agree to the chapeau? I do not see any objections.

Then I go to subparagraph (a). Can we agree to subparagraph (a)? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (b). Can we agree to subparagraph (b)? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (c). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (d). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (e). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (f).

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Go to subparagraph (e), if you do not mind. I would like to mention "*bioeconomy*". In fact, the contribution of bioeconomy and sustainable wood products.

CHAIRPERSON

Is it on this subparagraph or a different one?

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am still speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States. We just checked the Report. There is a contribution of bioeconomy with the adjective "*sustainable bioeconomy*." We may add this word to that.

Then we have two additional subparagraphs to propose after (e). We can deal with that afterwards.

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, let us first deal with this subparagraph.

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

We do support the introduction just proposed by Brazil and since many delegations address wood and non-wood products, we would like to add "*unsustainable wood and non-wood products*." The Committee on Forestry (COFO) Report also captured it.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Maybe we do not need to repeat "*sustainable*," it could be "*sustainable bioeconomy and wood and non-wood products*."

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this subparagraph now? I do not see any objections.

Then I give the floor to the Ambassador of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States for two new subparagraphs.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I would put it before (f), in other words after (e).

First subparagraph would, if Secretariat can just copy and paste paragraph 23 (c) from the COFO Report, so I can read it out.

"It is recommended FAO to continue the development and harmonization of matters and definitions for forest data collection, including for primary forests, and recommended further efforts for definition of forest degradation during the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) 2025 cycle. This includes using remote sensing and conducting related capacity development to help reduce the Reporting burden, enhancing information sharing and increased transparency of forest-related data and Reporting."

The second paragraph we can put after the new (f), which will be basically copy and paste of the 23 (h), *"highlighted the importance of field inventory data and quality control and validation of remote sensing derived results."* It will not raise any objections because it is copy and pasted directly, and those two paragraphs are quite of importance for the European Union and its Member States.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first go to the first paragraph, can we agree to this already agreed language? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to the second paragraph, which is also an agreed language. I do not see any objections.

Then I go to paragraph (h).

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

This is not regarding (h), but it is inspired by the European Union. We would like to also include paragraph 17 (d).

CHAIRPERSON

Include after subparagraph (g), before the end, a new subparagraph and that is paragraph 17 (d). *"We invite FAO to support Members upon request to further identify opportunities and implement action to improve complementarity between the agriculture and forestry sectors and strengthen coordinated response towards realization of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, recommending that these initiatives do not create the necessary barriers to trade, and benefits the situation for small-scale producers who are key for global food production."*

Can we agree to this already agreed language? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to paragraph (i). Can we agree to paragraph (i)?

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

As principle and in conformity with our own decision here, we support the election of the new Chairperson, but Brazil mentioned something this morning which we think could be presented also here, that is to bring the system of election of the Chairperson of the Committee on Forestry (COFO), and align it with the other Committees. He mentioned that this morning that I wanted to see it, I do not know if we take it as with the delegation of our Austrian colleague, we take it for granted already, or if we need to mention it officially in the Report of the Council.

CHAIRPERSON

If we want a moment to consult, because as far as I know the reports of several Technical Committees, we do not approve appointments of the Chairperson, but let me consult with Legal Counsel.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

No, you did not get me correctly. If I may be clearer probably, I am not mentioning that we endorsed the election of the Chairperson. I say the process of electing the Chairperson of the Committee on Forestry (COFO), we should align it with the process for electing the Chairpersons of the other Technical Committees.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

If you recall, we had this discussion not in the previous Session, but in the one before that. We had many problems because the then Chairperson was not aware of the procedures, the Basic Texts of FAO, so I am not going to be very diplomatic, we wasted a lot of time discussing procedures and matters advanced due to that.

Somehow, we started repeating this problem in the previous Session, but this was remedied. Then at that moment two Sessions before, I consulted the Legal Counsel, and she probably will confirm that. Remember that we need some work maybe at Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) and then going to the Council and the Conference in order to adopt the procedures from the Committee on Forestry (COFO) to be equal to the other Committees.

CHAIRPERSON

My proposal would be that the Council request the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) to review the procedure of the election of the Chairperson of the Committee on Forestry. That means that it will be dealt with in the CCLM, and the CCLM will come with recommendations to our next Council and the Conference.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Just to be clear, we somehow solved this problem, but in practice not legally, electing our Austrian colleague which of course we all supported.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much. Of course, as I clearly saw in the room, we all support the current Chairperson of the Committee on Forestry, but as the Board experienced with our Bible, the basic text, there are many other issues as well, but it is good that we have, I think for the future, a clear recommendation and decision of the Council and the Conference on this issue. So, the Council recommended the CCLM, and of course we will say "*the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters to review the process of election for the Chairperson of COFO in order to align it with the processes of other technical committees.*" Would that be agreeable, France?

M. Louis DE BRONDEAU (France)

J'ai une question par rapport à ce paragraphe. Je sais que mon collègue brésilien a mentionné la pratique d'élection du Président du Comité des forêts (COFO). Mais s'agit-il d'une pratique qui a été respectée par les membres ou s'agit-il d'une règle dans les textes fondamentaux de la FAO ? Auquel cas, il y a effectivement matière à saisir le Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques (CCLM). S'il s'agit seulement d'une pratique, je ne pense pas qu'il y est matière à saisir le CCLM.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

The Council has much more authority than I to answer this demand from France, but just to remind that contrary to other committees, the Committee on Forestry (COFO) elects the Chairperson of the Regional Forest Conference on a rotation basis. We somehow solved the problem, in practice, electing our Austrian colleague, but not legally. That is why it has to go to the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM).

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Legal Counsel.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

As quite correctly indicated by the Ambassador of Brazil, the Committee on Forestry (COFO) is somewhat unique in that the members of its Bureau, its Steering Committee, are the elected

Chairpersons of the Regional Forestry Commissions. Therefore, it is fundamentally very different from the other Committees. Nevertheless, it is meant to in fact elect a Chairperson as reflected in its Rules of Procedure. There has been some uncertainty due to various reasons as to how that rotation should work, so the proposal here is to, as far as possible, have some form of alignment or consistency of processes across the Technical Committees, while recognizing certain particularities that may exist for COFO.

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

In principle, of course, we do see merit in this proposal, but we have a technical question. Could it be better to introduce this when we address the the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) Report, since we are addressing CCLM? It is just a question, we are completely flexible.

CHAIRPERSON

The Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) did not discuss it yet, I think. So, it has to be to the next Session of the CCLM, and then we can get of course a recommendation of CCLM coming to the next Council for approval or rejection, but for approval probably. That is the procedure to be followed.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

After hearing the comments from the Legal Counsel, I understand we need to also include the Steering Committee or the Bureau, not only the Chairperson, because if we go to elect only the Chairperson and keep the rotation for the Steering Committee coming from the regional commissions, we might have some problems. I understand it would be better that the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) examines the whole procedure.

CHAIRPERSON

I think how it is formulated now, because when you look to the Basic Texts, of course the Chairperson of the Committees being elected, but of course the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) can take it broader, but I think we do not have to specify here Bureau or whatever.

Mr Andrian MCADAMS (United States of America)

I think, in general, we do not have a lot of issue with this. I think our only question is, and maybe this is an issue for Legal Counsel, but that question of *"in order to align,"* if that is the appropriate language that we would use there. If not, we could suggest perhaps going with *"for consistency of processes across technical committees, recognizing their distinct nature."* Perhaps that would be more accurate, but again question really to Legal Counsel here.

CHAIRPERSON

I was just following the words of the Legal Counsel when I proposed this text.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

It is up to all Members here in the Council to decide on whatever language they would like to see and what task they want to give to the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM), but I think that we should not already see the outcomes of the review. I would put a full-stop after *"COFO,"* because the rest of the sentence is suggesting the outcomes and the recommendations of CCLM, and the discussion and the review will take place during CCLM, the outcomes may go in whatever direction. I think it is fair enough to put a full-stop after *"COFO"*.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

I have two issues here, which I want to bring up for the kind attention of the Council. Let me start with the last one, because it is following what the European Union (EU) just said. I think if we put a period after *"COFO"*, then we are not giving clear guidance on how the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) should tackle this issue. The wording that the United States of America proposed, we really appreciate that wording because it gives us the best way to direct, or it gives the CCLM legal basis on where to go. We would prefer the wording of the United States of America.

The second thing that I was also thinking of bringing to your attention is the fact that I do not know how we can deal with that, but the regional commission seems to be operating quasi independently sometimes, and I do not know if we here, or the CCLM can decide on how they appoint their Chairperson. We need to have clear guidance from the CCLM whether they should go beyond the election of the Chairperson and consider the Bureau as a whole.

CHAIRPERSON

I think when we come back to Brazil, then I ask the United States of America to repeat its proposal, but when we go to the regional committees, we go into the Article VI, because they are Article VI Bodies, and of course we can ask also the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) to look into the Article VI Bodies. The question is whether or not we want to do this as well, because I know the Article XIV bodies have a longstanding Item on the Agenda and it is of course a little bit different than only the election of the Chairperson.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Basically, I agree with Cameroon, which is we should keep *"in order to align with the process of the other Technical Committees,"* otherwise there is no need for the review of this, because if we are asking the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) to review, it is in order to align. Not ask them to review and come back to the current text. In addition, I would like to remind that the geographical distribution of the Committees is not exactly the same one as for the Regional Groups in FAO, which is also another problem that we need to face.

Mr Andrian MCADAMS (United States of America)

I think we do not want to necessarily prejudice the outcome of it. I think we would, after *"COFO,"* so obviously removing the part and bracket there, the text was, *"for consistency of processes across technical committees, recognizing their distinct nature."* I think that is a little bit more clear about what we are asking here, and obviously solves our issue on that question of alignment.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I think that with the latest proposal from the United States of America, we are getting there, to what we actually want from the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM), to provide review, to review the process of the election of Chairperson of the Committee on Forestry (COFO). We can put at the end processes across the committees and provide guidance and recommendations, and now I just question the Legal Counsel to whom actually we should provide those guidance and recommendations, to the Council, to the Conference, and last point, I think it is not fair to discuss the issue without COFO itself. I also think that that COFO Chairperson and Bureau should be consulted on that. I do not know how to put it into the text actually, but I think that the COFO Chairperson and Bureau should be consulted on this matter too.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Maybe I am wrong, but the Legal Counsel will correct me, the Council is instructing the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) to take some measures. It is not to the CCLM to consult the Committee on Forestry (COFO) if they want to change or not or to adapt themselves. It is the CCLM, it is under the Council and the Conference. So, very frankly, of course informally they can consult COFO, but formally I do not see the need for that.

Mr Moungui MÉDI (Cameroon)

On this, the first thing is we should probably consider that the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) is a Technical Committee of the Council. The first reporting line is the Council. We said to provide guidance and recommendation to the Council, I think it is superficial, that is what I think, because they are obliged, once there is a matter which is referred to the CCLM by the Council, obviously it is reported to the Council. If colleagues want, we can add volumes into this paragraph by adding that, but, for me, it was obvious.

The other thing is, that is why I brought up the issue of regional commissions, because they are behaving like Article 6 bodies, and it is a little bit difficult, the way we are treating those, including

Article 14 bodies here. I think we should leave it for the time being to the Chairperson of the Committee on Forestry (COFO) and leave the Bureau because the commissions continue to operate on their own, they have their own meetings biannually, and they elect who they want to elect there to guide their meetings.

I would prefer that we leave it to the Chairperson of COFO. The other idea of bringing COFO in front, if my recollection serves me, this point was brought before COFO during its last Session, people mentioned that in their statement, including Africa. I do not know whether there is another way to bring it up again, which is different from the discussion that we had in COFO itself.

CHAIRPERSON

First, I give the floor to Ms Donata Rugarabamu, perhaps you could say and provide guidance and recommendations to the next Session of the Council, so that we directly have a timetable also for when we do want to see recommendations that are not for a couple of years standing issue. Then we have combined both issues.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

Indeed, this relates to the query as to whether or not the Steering Committee and indeed the Regional Commission should be addressed. As correctly noted previously, these are Statutory Bodies which have been established either under the authority of the Conference or the Council. We would need to do some research to confirm exactly the situation in this context.

Nevertheless, I do wonder whether the current wording, and this also goes to say the proposal in consideration of the European Union, the fact that if a request reflects recognizing their distinct nature, this covers in fact many of these particularities. The Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) would normally undertake also a very thorough review. Therefore, indeed, some of your concerns may be addressed in what comes out from the CCLM, without having to specifically identify every single thing that you wish to have addressed in this context. Just a suggestion on my part.

CHAIRPERSON

With this thorough explanation of the Legal Counsel, can we agree to the text as it is now on the screen? I see no objections.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

The word, "*guidance*," I am a little bit puzzled by that word here, because the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) cannot give guidance, it is an advisory body to the Council. Stick to "*recommendations*" because they cannot give guidance to the Council.

CHAIRPERSON

As the text is now on the screen, would that be agreeable to all of us? I really would like to wrap up this issue, because otherwise I am afraid that we are going to Saturday and nobody wants that.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

No fui parte personalmente de la discusión que han tenido, estaba tratando de seguir la dinámica. Solamente es una pregunta técnica, no quisiera dejarlo pasar sin estar seguro, ¿es "*for consistency of processes or practices*"? ¿Cuál sería el concepto, es "*processes*" o "*practices*"? Solo quiero tratar de estar tranquilo de que estamos por la línea correcta.

CHAIRPERSON

I always follow the advice with the Legal Counsel, she advises my processes, but I give her the floor.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

I would not want to put words in the mouth of Brazil who made the initial proposal. My understanding is that, as the Members are discussing the Rules of Procedure of the Committee, we are talking here about processes rather than practices. That is my understanding.

M. Louis DE BRONDEAU (France)

J'ai également une question pour la Conseillère juridique concernant la procédure. L'élection du Président du Comité des forêts (COFO) est régie par le règlement intérieur du COFO, et seul le COFO lui-même peut modifier son règlement intérieur. Donc, j'aimerais juste que la Conseillère juridique me confirme que tout amendement à la procédure pour l'élection du Président du COFO devra passer par le COFO lui-même et non pas seulement par le Conseil.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Legal Counsel and then we will close this discussion.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

Indeed, the Rules of Procedure of the Committee on Forestry (COFO) provide at Rule IX that the Committee may amend its Rules of Procedure. Therefore, they would go through COFO. Nevertheless, of course, the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) is the authority within the governance framework on constitutional and legal matters. Therefore, such changes would not normally take place without the review and advice of the CCLM.

CHAIRPERSON

With this explanation, can we now agree to the text as it is in front of us? I see now nodding and thumbs up.

We have agreed with this, the conclusions on the *Report of the Committee on Forestry*. Thank you so much, and we have done it again with consensus.

Item 7. Report of the Joint Meeting of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and 194th Session of the Finance Committee (November 2022)

Point 7. Rapport de la Réunion conjointe du Comité du Programme (cent trente-quatrième session) et du Comité financier (cent quatre-vingt-quatorzième session) (novembre 2022)

Tema 7. Informe de la reunión conjunta del Comité del Programa en su 134.º período de sesiones y el Comité de Finanzas en su 194.º período de sesiones (noviembre de 2022) (CL 171/7; CL 171/INF/7)

CHAIRPERSON

Now, we turn to Item 7, *Report of the Joint Meeting of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and 194th Session of the Finance Committee*, which was held in November 2022.

The documents before you are CL 171/7 and CL 171/INF/7, and I do remind you that several Items which were dealt with in this Joint Meeting are separate Items on the Agenda, for example, the integrated water resource management which we have dealt already with. Later on, we come back to the Progress Report on the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), and the Strategic Policy Framework for Multilingualism. Those will be dealt with separately, so we do not have to deal with them here under this Agenda Item.

You have seen that introduction by the Chairperson of the Joint Meeting, Ms Yael Rubenstein, which worked closely together with the Co-Chair, Ms Imelda Smolcic, are circulated.

Introduction to Item 7: Report of the Joint Meeting of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and 194th Session of the Finance Committee (November 2022)

H.E. Yael Rubenstein, Chairperson of the Joint Meeting of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and 194th Session of the Finance Committee

Chairperson, Members of the Council, I am pleased to present the Report of the Joint Meeting of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and 194th Session of the Finance Committee. This Report is submitted to the Council in document CL 171/7.

The Joint Meeting examined, among others, the *Update on the Strategic Exercise of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP)*, *Integrated water resources management for food security and*

climate resilience, Strategic policy framework for multilingualism and the Establishment of the Committee on Fisheries Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management. I would like to highlight the following matters for the attention of the Council.

Regarding the Technical Cooperation Programme, the Joint Meeting appreciated the open, transparent and inclusive consultation process. In particular, the Joint Meeting recommended that the Council endorses, for approval by the 43rd Session of the FAO Conference, a new set of TCP resource shares to be applied starting with the 2024-25 biennium.

Members also welcomed the development of initiatives for sustainable agricultural water management, addressing the impacts of water scarcity, drought and floods on agrifood systems.

In relation to the *Strategic policy framework for multilingualism and the Establishment of the Committee on Fisheries Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management*, the Joint Meeting recommended the Council to endorse the policy framework and the establishment of the Sub-Committee.

Finally, I would like to underline that in other items, the Joint Meeting recognized the strengthened Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) collaboration, in particular at country level, welcomed the active participation of FAO Country Offices in the formulation, negotiation and adoption of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and FAO Country Programming Frameworks by the governments, and noted that the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub has started to provide technical support to countries.

Dear Members of the Council, I would like to invite you to review the full Report of the Joint Meeting of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and 194th Session of the Finance Committee. For your convenience, this Report includes an excellent executive summary prepared by the Secretariat. I am pleased to provide any further explanations you may have regarding this Report.

CHAIRPERSON

With that I would like to open the Report of the Joint Meeting for reviews, reflections and suggestions by the Members.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

In line with the request made by the Joint Meeting to the Council, Australia is pleased to endorse, in full, the recommendations and conclusions outlined in document CL 171/7, *Report of the Joint Meeting of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and 194th Session of the Finance Committee (Rome, 7, 8, 9 and 11 November 2022)*.

Australia takes this opportunity to thank the FAO Management team for their ongoing commitment to working constructively and collaboratively with Members. We underscore the importance of continuing the trend of open and transparent communication from the top down and the bottom up to maximise programmatic and financial cooperation and cohesion, and ensure that, collectively, we are all enabled to address the impact of the multifaceted food crisis the world is currently facing.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia, San Marino, Türkiye and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

First of all, we would like to start by thanking the Chairperson of the Joint Meeting, Her Excellency Ambassador Yael Rubinstein, for her excellent leadership.

The EU and its Member States welcome the open and comprehensive review of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP). We consider positively the evolution of the principles of distribution of the regional TCP resource shares, according to criteria shared by all: universality, Least Developed Countries (LDCs), undernutrition, poverty, inequality, vulnerability. We recommend Council to approve the resource shares agreed by the Joint Meeting, while recalling that we need to maintain the focus of the TCPs on the LDCs as reflected in the weighing of the criteria.

On Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs), the EU and its Member States support the request of

the Joint Meeting to FAO. The publication of these crucial documents is a standard practice in almost all UN agencies and, in fact, used to be the practice in FAO. The publication of all CPFs will greatly improve transparency, accountability and oversight of FAO's work on the ground and allow for a better coordination between donors in this regard.

We welcome the progress report on the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs). The EU and its Member States encourage efforts for stronger collaboration, especially at country level, and on current issues related to the war in Ukraine and food security.

We welcome the progress made and the annual report on Corporate Policy, Processes and Measures on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse. These are matters of high priority to us and we encourage management to continue strengthening its work to ensure results at all levels in the Organization as well as with FAO's partners.

We take note of the Strategic policy framework for multilingualism. We welcome the progress made by the formalisation of this strategy and the appointment of a Corporate Coordinator for Multilingualism.

We support the establishment of the Sub-Committees on Fisheries Management (SCFM), as proposed by the 35th Committee on Fisheries. We stress the importance of allowing the most fragile countries to fully participate in this Sub-Committee. We also support the creation of a multi-donor fund to enable the full operation of the Sub-Committee. We thank the countries, notably Norway, that have also pledged contributions.

Finally, we reaffirm our full support for enhancing and improving collaboration between the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

With these comments, the EU and its Member States endorse the report.

Mr Addisu Melkamu KEBEDE (Ethiopia)

Mali is not a Member of this Council Members, so I would like to ask you to give the floor to Mali to speak on the behalf of African Regional Group on this Item.

CHAIRPERSON

I pass the floor to Mali to speak on behalf of the African Regional Group.

Mme Traore Halimatou KONE (Malí) (Observateur)

Le Mali, en concertation avec la Zambie, l'Éthiopie et le Niger a l'honneur de prendre la parole au nom du Groupe régional Afrique. Tous nos remerciements vont à la Présidente de la Réunion Conjointe pour la conduite impeccable de la réunion.

Nous saluons le fait que l'exercice stratégique relatif au programme de coopération technique a fait l'objet d'un processus de consultation ouvert, transparent et inclusif. C'est le lieu de reconnaître les efforts de la FAO pour accorder les différents points de vue. Nous approuvons les informations actualisées sur l'exercice stratégique du Programme de Coopération Technique (PCT) ayant abouti à la recommandation de la répartition des ressources entre les régions qui s'appliqueraient à partir de l'exercice biennal 2024-2025, avec l'option de revoir la clé de répartition avec plus de scénarii et de critères tous les trois ans, en tenant compte des priorités du moment.

Le Groupe Régional Afrique prend note des informations actualisées et des mesures prises par l'Organisation dans le cadre de l'action qu'elle mène pour prévenir le harcèlement, le harcèlement sexuel et l'exploitation et les atteintes sexuelles. Nous saluons les programmes de formations ciblés, conçus pour prévenir ce comportement et demandons qu'il continue aussi longtemps que le phénomène ne s'estompe pas. Il est indispensable de faire preuve de grande fermeté pour appliquer la politique de tolérance zéro, et la Direction doit absolument donner le temps pour promouvoir un lieu de travail plus éthique.

Le Groupe Régional Afrique soutient l'approche «*Une seule santé*» et son impact quant à la transparence des marchés et les échanges commerciaux. L'Afrique est et demeure partie prenante du Codex Alimentarius et accorde un intérêt particulier au Programme conjoint FAO/Organisation

mondiale de la Santé (OMS), relatif aux avis scientifiques et au Secrétariat du Codex. Aussi, nous aimerions saisir cette opportunité pour recommander à la FAO de soutenir les Etats Membres africains, y compris les institutions régionales africaines dans la mise en œuvre d'un processus d'intégration afin de prendre pleinement en considération les résultats clés du Sommet des Nations Unies sur les systèmes alimentaires de septembre 2021.

En particulier ce que l'Afrique a soumis à cette occasion à travers la position commune africaine. Il est important de souligner ici, le rôle attendu du Pôle de coordination des Nations Unies sur les systèmes alimentaires et bien entendu l'opérationnalisation des coalitions thématiques au niveau national, et ce dans le cadre de l'exercice d'intervention. L'examen des plans nationaux et du processus de leur mise en œuvre en tenant compte du Programme détaillé de développement de l'agriculture africaine (PDDAA) et le deuxième plan décennal de mise en œuvre de l'Agenda 2063.

L'impact désastreux de la pandémie de la COVID-19 sur tous les segments sociaux économiques sur tous les continents reste d'actualité. Cette situation a généré un renouveau et un sursaut de partenariat au niveau de la communauté internationale. Nous voudrions à cet effet saluer et encourager l'initiative conjointe de la FAO, et de la Commission de l'Union africaine, à savoir la mise en place du Groupe de travail multipartenaires sur l'impact du COVID-19 sur la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle en Afrique, coprésidé par les deux institutions, ce cadre de concertation qui a su mobiliser et fédérer le soutien politique requis mérite d'être maintenu et soutenu.

Nous approuvons les conclusions du Comité concernant l'évaluation des activités de la FAO en matière de coopération sud-sud et de la coopération triangulaire et la réponse de la Direction et soutenons que cette opération puisse servir de tremplin pour les initiatives *Main dans la Main* et *Un pays*, un produit prioritaire. Nous soutenons un plan d'action pour la stratégie de la FAO, relative au changement climatique 2022-2031.

Tout en recommandant fortement que la FAO puisse prendre en considération les conclusions issues de la Convention-cadre des Nations unies sur les changements climatiques (CCNUCC) Conférence des Parties (COP) 27 mais aussi et surtout le Plan d'action africain sur la résilience des systèmes alimentaires en conformité avec les axes stratégiques de l'Agenda 2063. Enfin, nous voudrions lancer un appel afin que la Conférence des Nations Unies sur la biodiversité (COP 15), qui se tient au Canada, serve de repère et d'opportunités pour une stratégie collective de défense et de sauvegarde de la biodiversité pour la survie des générations futures et la promotion de l'agroécologie.

Sur ce, nous approuvons le rapport de la Réunion Conjointe.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

If I can seek your indulgence to pass the floor to Thailand who will be speaking on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

CHAIRPERSON

I pass the floor to Thailand to speak on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

Ms Supajit SRIARIYAWAT (Thailand)

Thailand has the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

The Asia Regional Group endorses the report of the Joint meeting of the 134th session of the Programme Committee and the 194th Session of Finance Committee, and seizes the opportunity to commend the work carried out under the able leadership of the Chairperson.

Our statement will highlight five important points.

First, the Asia Regional Group reemphasizes the value of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) as a key instrument for capacity building, knowledge sharing and technology transfer to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We endorse the outcome of the inclusive and transparent consultation process on the allocation of TCP resources among regions, and we appreciate the harmonization of the principles for within-region allocation of TCP resources.

We endorse for approval by the 43rd session of the FAO Conference the regional TCP resource shares to be applied starting with the 2024-2025 biennium as indicated as the “Example 1” presented at the Joint Meeting of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and 194th session of the Finance Committee: Africa 40.3 percent; Asia and the Pacific 24.5 percent; Europe 8.3 percent; Latin America and the Caribbean 18.3 percent; Near East and North Africa 8.6 percent.

Second, with regard to FAO Country Programming Framework process, we appreciate the efforts to refine its alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and link it with the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031 and we support improved accessibility on endorsed the Country Programming Frameworks (CPF), as appropriate.

Third, the Asia Regional Group supports FAO’s water-related initiatives, guided by FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031, in consideration of the urgent need to promote more effective, holistic and integrated water management in view of the increasing scarcity of freshwater resources hitting our region.

We also support that the topic of water resources management be considered as topic for the general debate at the next Conference session and as biennial theme for the Governing Body session in 2024-2025.

Fourth, we support the establishment of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fisheries management (SCFM) along the functions and funding modalities proposed by the working group and look forward to engaging in the preparation process and substantive discussions of the first meeting of said Sub-Committee.

Lastly, we take note the current status and operations of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, and recognized the progress achieved. We look forward to receiving regular updates, including a progress report on the status and operations of the Hub.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Canada appreciates the constructive spirit of the Joint Meeting, which led to important conclusions and recommendations, and we thank the Chair for her effective leadership and the Secretariat for its ongoing support.

We particularly note the importance of the recommendations on the strategic policy framework on multilingualism and the establishment of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management (SCFM), as noted as well during the earlier Item on the COFI.

We appreciate the progress on the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) and recognize that the confirmation of the new regional percentage allocations is an essential step for moving ahead with the next cycle. We also support the conclusions on the country programming frameworks, which will add value to the Organization, continuing to enhance transparency and efficiency.

Finally, we welcome the new approach to presenting the recommendations and conclusions of the joint meeting, which helps facilitate the work of this Council. We fully endorse the recommendations and conclusions of the Joint Meeting.

M. Louis DE BRONDEAU (France)

La France souscrit à la déclaration prononcée au nom de l’Union Européenne (UE) et de ses 27 États Membres et souhaite ajouter ce qui suit concernant la dernière réunion conjointe du Comité du programme et du Comité des finances.

En premier lieu, l’exercice stratégique sur le Programme de Coopération technique (PCT) a permis une certaine avancée en permettant de sortir d’une simple répartition régionale pour aller vers une répartition en fonction de critères. La répartition endossée par la réunion conjointe donne un poids légèrement plus élevé au critère essentiel qu’est, à nos yeux, la part de Pays les Moins Avancés (PMA) au sein d’une région. Elle permettra ainsi une légère augmentation de la part régionale Afrique pour le biennal 2024-25. De notre point de vue, il s’agit d’une évolution positive, mais surtout d’un point de départ pour les évolutions futures, qui devront mieux prendre en compte certains critères comme la sous-alimentation et la pauvreté, afin de concentrer les ressources du PCT au bénéfice des pays les

plus fragiles. Nous demandons qu'un point d'étape sur la mise en œuvre soit fait dans quelques mois pour soutenir cet objectif.

En second lieu, concernant les Cadres de Programmation Pays (CPF), nous insistons sur la nécessité que la FAO les publie systématiquement, comme c'est la pratique normale dans le système des Nations unies – à commencer par le PAM et le FIDA. Je rappelle d'ailleurs que la FAO, comme a dit mon collègue du Tchèque, avait l'habitude dans le passé de publier ces CPF. Cette publication peut par exemple prendre la forme d'un onglet dédié sur le site internet de la FAO.

Il s'agit, tout d'abord, d'une question de transparence concernant le travail de la FAO dans les pays – d'autant plus évidente dans une FAO digitale que le Directeur Général a montré dans ce propos introductif. Il s'agit, ensuite, d'une question de redevabilité envers les Membres de la FAO, qui financent le travail de l'organisation via des contributions obligatoires et volontaires. Il s'agit aussi d'une question d'efficacité, car ces informations sont la base pour pouvoir collaborer et financer des activités dans les pays.

Enfin, il s'agit d'une condition de la participation effective de la FAO, organisation spécialisée des Nations Unies, à la réforme du système de développement des Nations unies et à l'approche *One UN* mise en œuvre par le Secrétaire général des Nations unies avec le soutien des Etats membres. Les priorités définies par la FAO et les pays concernés en matière de développement agricole, d'alimentation et de nutrition doivent en effet s'inscrire en cohérence avec les priorités plus larges définies pour chaque pays dans les Plan-cadres des Nations unies pour le développement durable (UNSDCF). Il est essentiel qu'elles puissent être connues de l'ensemble des bailleurs, des agences des Nations unies, notamment celles ayant leurs sièges à Rome, et d'autres acteurs pertinents, y compris les intervenants techniques. Seuls une publication systématique et un accès aisé à ces CPFs permettront de s'assurer que ces documents de référence soient connus et utilisés par tous.

Ayant formulé ces observations, nous sommes disposée à adopter le rapport de la Réunion Conjointe du Comité du Programme avec le Comité des Finances. Et je ne peux conclure sans remercier la Présidente de la réunion, Ms Yael Rubinstein, pour son excellent complément de débat.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

We welcome the outcomes of the Joint Meeting and Members' agreement on several key areas of work for the Organization. It was my first meeting as DPR for the US, and I was really impressed that we were able to reach consensus so quickly and efficiently on a lot of really important issues. I really hope that we can follow that example today as well

On the Country Programming Frameworks (CPF), we commend FAO for its continued efforts to build a culture of transparency, enabling broad and swift access to the Organization's activities and, like France and others, we strongly encourage their swift publication as requested by the Joint Meeting Report, consistent with country level programming transparency from other United Nations (UN) specialised agencies.

We would like to stress again our role as Members is to provide oversight of the full range of FAO financial management and activities, ensuring alignment and effectiveness with its strategic framework. We would also like to reiterate our support for FAO's plan on water resources management for food security and climate resilience within the Organization's mandate.

We encourage FAO to continue to seize the growing momentum ahead of the UN 2023 Water Conference and we strongly endorse water resources management as the priority topic for the general debate of the 43rd Session of the Conference in June 2023, and as the biennial theme for the governing body Sessions in 2024 and 2025.

We concur with the Joint Meeting's recommendation on the establishment of the Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management (SCFM) to allow meaningful discussions on important fisheries management issues, including small-scale fisheries, combatting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and climate change. We would also like to reiterate our call to Members and observers to contribute to the multi-donor fund and we would be looking for opportunities to do so ourselves.

The United States of America welcomes ongoing efforts by the UN Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) to strengthen collaboration at the global, regional and country levels. While we recognize that each agency has a specific mandate and role in addressing hunger and food security, in a world of increasing crises and finite resources, the RBAs must work together more closely to play a more pivotal role in the UN system wide response to the global food and nutrition challenges.

We commend FAO for the notable efforts to advance the Organization's policy of zero tolerance towards sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse, and we especially appreciate the Organization's continued focus on implementing a survivor centred approach.

Finally, on the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, we would welcome further information on all country level actions to date, including any private sector connections and engagements that have been made and any partnerships that have been formed. With these comments, we endorse the Report in its entirety.

Mr HUANG Fei (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China aligns itself with the statement by Thailand on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. China welcomes the Report of the Joint Meeting and recommends its Members for their efficient and constructive work under the leadership of its Chairperson.

China appreciates that the Joint Meeting has reached the consensus on the regional Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) resource shares to be applied starting with the 2024-25 Biennium.

China supports the Council to endorse the recommendation on this matter contained in the Report and submitted to the 43rd Session of the Conference for approval.

China encourages FAO to fully consult with Members within region allocation of resources to ensure the sustainability and the stability of existing projects.

China welcomes the comprehensive and transparent information by FAO on Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs). Appreciates that the formulation of FAO CPFs aligns with United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework (UNSDCF).

China requests that FAO fully respects host countries wish when it comes to publishing the CPF.

Finally, China commends the important role FAO plays in hosting the UN Food System Coordination Hub and welcomes FAO to continue to provide timely update to Members on the functioning of the hub.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

La Argentina quisiera destacar la excelente conducción de la reunión por parte de la distinguida representante permanente de Israel, la Sra. Yael Rubinstein, en un contexto desafiante que nos toca vivir.

Fue gracias a su liderazgo que hemos logrado un informe que refleja los consensos de los Miembros de ambos comités.

Me voy a referir solamente a dos cuestiones, del Programa de Cooperación Técnica (PCT) de la FAO y sobre el Comité de Pesca (COFI).

Con el respecto del PCT, la actual coyuntura, marcada por la pandemia del COVID-19, se torna aún más evidente la necesidad de un cambio en el paradigma en materia de cooperación internacional, particularmente para los países denominados de "*renta media*". El presente contexto internacional deja en evidencia la insuficiencia del criterio del producto bruto interno (PBI) per cápita para evaluar las necesidades de cooperación, mostrando las brechas de desarrollo en distintos sectores de la salud, sociales y macroeconómicos para hacer frente a este tipo de crisis.

En ese sentido, la Argentina se congratula para el acuerdo alcanzado en cuanto a los criterios utilizados para la asignación de recursos y reinventar el PCT a partir de ellos, teniendo en cuenta el carácter universal de esta Organización y que no existen pobres de primera y pobres de segunda categoría.

Estamos convencidos que el PCT, aun en su pequeña escala, sirve para compensar la escasa inversión en el desarrollo de los sistemas agrícolas en el sistema de Naciones Unidas, y ese esfuerzo no debe focalizarse en una región sino en todos aquellos lugares en el que existan poblaciones en situación de vulnerabilidad, no siempre reflejados en criterios de renta per cápita, como algunos todavía creen.

Agradecemos al equipo de Sra. Beth Bechdol por el proceso y esperamos que la decisión sea refrendada por la Conferencia de la FAO.

El ultimo tema que quisiéramos resaltar es la creación del Subcomité de Manejo Pesquero en el marco del COFI y que recibió un amplio apoyo en la reunión conjunta por parte de los Miembros, demostrando el gran compromiso en la lucha contra la pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada (INDNR). Asimismo, creemos los términos de referencia del nuevo subcomité son un gran ejemplo de la vocación inclusiva y de búsqueda de consensos en la membresía de esta FAO, y auguramos que los mecanismos de apoyo a los países en desarrollo sean tenidos de modelo para órganos similares en esta Organización.

Con estos comentarios, la Argentina endosa las conclusiones de la Reunión Conjunta.

Mr Thomas John KELLY (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

The UK joins other delegations in thanking the Committees for the Report and we endorse its recommendations and conclusions.

We wanted to focus on two areas. First, Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs). We see the CPF as part and parcel of FAO's results framework. However, we find that not all CPFs are available in an open and transparent way. Some CPFs are available if you know where to look, but it should not be hard to find them.

We support points that France and United States have already made on improving the transparency of CPF Reporting and we think this is a missed opportunity across several fronts. Without the CPF, we do not really know how FAO is demonstrating its comparative advantage and results at country level. It is difficult to develop and create new Programme and funding partnerships if we do not know what is being done. And it is also difficult to show how FAO is working and contributing beyond FAO's results framework to creating a stronger United Nations (UN) effort at country level through the UN Sustainable Cooperation Development Framework (UNSDCF).

So we are not just calling for the Reports to be published for the sake of it, it is really important to track results. And we look forward to all endorsed CPFs being made available on FAO's website together ahead of the next cycle of the governing body meetings in spring 2023.

We wanted to mention the Indonesia CPF, Mr Chair as published this year, a few days ago actually. It includes specific indicators, baselines and targets. It also refers to contributing to a broader Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) contribution to the UNSDCF in support of the government and it also runs for the same time frame as WFP country strategic plan.

So it is a useful Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for us to learn from. I am mentioning all of this, because we recall that the Rome Agencies have committed to develop joint country strategies and the pilot was to include Indonesia. We repeat our interest in seeing this joint approach to country planning among the agencies in Rome and we are saying that because one of the consistent findings of evaluation Reports that we review every year on Rome-based Agencies collaboration in the field, is that there are still misunderstandings about respective Rome-based Agencies' mandates in the field.

We need to do better in this area and of course it is an issue for all the Rome agencies to address, but I would like to ask in FAO Council if FAO can provide us with an update of how FAO is engaging with the other Rome Agencies in developing joint country strategies and how we, the governing bodies, can better support these efforts.

The other issue we wanted to highlight is our agreement with the Joint Meetings considerations on the annual Report on corporate policy and processes on prevention of sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse.

We commend FAO for its engagement with the UN Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) survey and would like to ask whether FAO could share more analysis or insights from the Organization's responses to the survey.

We also note that FAO is in the process of updating policies on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. Can FAO say when they plan to share the new policies and whether Members will be able to provide comments prior to finalisation?

On Reporting, it is good to know that FAO is doing a lot of outreach, and has multiple channels in place, but we need to be alive to the risk that staff are choosing not to Report sexual harassment. This underlines the importance of FAO and other agencies seeking to improve understanding of the barriers to Reporting as part of its outreach, and to address them in the new policies.

Once again, we thank the committees for their work and endorse the recommendations and conclusions of the Joint Meeting Report.

M. Bienvenu NTSOUANVA (Congo)

Le Congo s'aligne sur la déclaration au nom du Groupe Régional Afrique (GRA) par le Mali. Nous remercions le Comité du Programme et le Comité financier pour la qualité de leurs délibérations et nous remercions aussi la Présidente de cette Réunion conjointe.

Nous aurions pu faire l'économie du temps, ne pas prendre la parole si notre attention n'avait pas été attirée par les paragraphes 26 et 34 du document de travail de la Réunion conjointe en mai 2022 intitulé Informations actualisées sur l'exercice stratégique du Programme de Coopération Technique (PCT), document JM 2022 1/2, qui dispose ce qui suit, je cite: "*Aucune modification n'est prévue en ce qui concerne la durée maximale de 36 mois.*" Ça, c'est le paragraphe 26. Le paragraphe 34 dit ceci: "*En raison du grand nombre des projets approuvés au cours d'un exercice biennal, 700 à 800, il est complexe et difficile de saisir ces résultats catalytiques qui se caractérisent souvent bien après la clôture des projets.*"

Alors, sur la base de ces paragraphes, nous avons quand même un commentaire concernant la flexibilité du cycle des PCT en fonction des spéculations en cause ou du programme à mettre en œuvre afin de mieux cerner l'efficacité des interventions et garantir la pérennisation des acquis. En effet, notre petite expérience de mise en œuvre des programmes PCT sur le terrain, nous permet de vous assurer ce qui suit.

Un, les procédures administratives cumulées et relatives au démarrage et au recrutement des consultants prennent souvent un sixième à un quart de la durée totale du projet.

Malgré les cas de réussite incontestables, c'est généralement lorsque les résultats sont encore en phase d'initiation que les financements s'amenuisent et les interventions s'arrêtent. Car les ressources complémentaires pour soutenir les financements catalytiques ne sont souvent pas disponibles alors que c'est le moment critique pour accroître les effets des programmes et garantir leurs appropriations par les bénéficiaires. Par exemple, pour les interventions sur les cultures à cycle long, comme le manioc, les interventions méritent de couvrir deux cycles de culture pour plus d'efficacité.

Trois, le manque d'anticipation dans la mobilisation des ressources ou de mise en place des dispositifs de financements complémentaire pendant ou avant la mise en œuvre des programmes PCT conduit au lessivage des acquis.

En conclusion, même si nous ne disposons pas de solutions à proposer actuellement, il est toutefois important de mener une réflexion pour améliorer le mécanisme de mise en œuvre du programme PCT. Car tenant compte des avantages comparatifs techniques de la FAO, et si les interventions des programmes PCT étaient faites dans une durée raisonnable, comme pour les projets de développement des autres institutions, la FAO gagnerait plus en visibilité et exercerait efficacement son mandat auprès de ses Membres.

Sur ces quelques commentaires, nous approuvons donc ce Rapport et je vous remercie.

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

Japan fully associates itself with the Asia Regional Group joint statement delivered by the distinguished delegate of China and just quickly to touch upon two important points.

First Japan supports the Joint Meeting request in paragraph 7, subparagraph (i) in this Report. For FAO to make available to Members, as appropriate, all endorsed the Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) in one single place. In this regard, Japan expects following information will be included on the one single place. That information when each CPF is published first and when it is updated after first posted.

Second point, with regard to the United Nations Food System Summit (UNFSS) follow up meeting to be held next year, Japan simply expects the regular update about this issue through FAO governing bodies as is described in paragraph (13), subparagraph (f) of the Joint Meeting Report.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

The Philippines associates with the Asia Regional Group statement delivered earlier by Thailand endorsing the Report of the Joint Meeting of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and the 194th Session of the Finance Committee. We just have a very short request.

We note that the Joint Meeting and other, many Members look forward to the updates of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub and our simple request is to invite the Council to request the Hub to publish its as much as possible, the progress of the work of the coordination hub in its website.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

First of all, we would like to thank Ms Yael Rubenstein for the Organization of the Joint Meeting.

The Russian Federation endorses the conclusions of the Joint Meeting of the Committees, and we have a few comments to make on the content of the recommendations which will not be discussed separately.

We commend the results of the strategic review of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) for setting out the methodology and principles for the Cooperation framework.

We commend, we suggest closer work with the Secretariat, closer ties on the implementation regarding the work of the technical cooperation regarding the Strategic Framework for 2022-24 for the thrust and also regarding the work for the Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs).

This was pointed out by the participants of the meeting. And regarding the importance of the strategic review, the periodic review, and the assessment of work of the assistance coming through the Programme framework, also for preserving the key principles for technical cooperation.

Regarding the criteria for the technical assistance, we would like to point out the conditions whereby sustainable impact is ensured regarding the implementation of additional funding, including by investment funds.

This is the precondition for the effectiveness of the work on technical cooperation. We endorse the work of FAO on the transparency of the work, including for the implementation of bilateral cooperation. We endorse the legal aspects regarding all the countries. As we understand, there are some problems in this area regarding the implementation in the near term.

Sra. María De Lourdes CRUZ TRINIDAD (México)

Tomamos nota de la información actualizada del proceso estratégico relativo al Programa de cooperación técnica, el cual es de gran relevancia y base en la construcción de capacidades y transferencia de tecnología a nivel nacional y regional. Consideramos que este es parte medular de la Organización de acuerdo a su mandato, por lo cual nos parece importante el cambio de distribución de recursos.

Apreciamos los esfuerzos de actualización de los marcos de programación por países, que son parte esencial del trabajo de la Organización. De igual manera, apoyamos los trabajos en la gestión integrada de los recursos hídricos en favor de la seguridad alimentaria y la resiliencia al cambio climático. Las conclusiones de la reunión conjunta facilitan los trabajos de este Consejo, por lo cual acogemos y apoyamos su informe.

Mr Mina Rizk ATTIA RIZK (Egypt) (Original Language Arabic)

I wish to endorse the conclusions of the Joint Meeting between the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee. In this respect, I would point out the following.

First of all, regarding the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP). Egypt endorses the proposal for a revision of the allocation of the TCP every four years. Regarding integrated water resource management for food security and resilience in combating climate change.

Egypt places particular importance on the link between water resources, climate change and food security, and this was very clearly set out during the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP) 27 under the chairpersonship of Egypt.

We highlighted this particular point at the COP 27, and FAO was a stakeholder in the consultations regarding water resources.

CHAIRPERSON

I now turn to the Chairperson of Joint Committee, whether they want to make some additional remarks or responses.

Ms Yael RUBINSTEIN (Chairperson of the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees)

I would like to thank the Member of the Joint Meeting for the amazing, efficient and effective work done.

Please allow me also to thank management, the Secretariat, all technicians, translation and interpretation teams and other logistic teams for amazing, successful Joint Meeting.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my Co-Chair, my dearest friend Ms Imelda Smolcic for her endless support.

CHAIRPERSON

I now turn to two questions. One is the question related to the joint programming work on country basis and Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs). The other question is related to the survey on the sexual harassment. I ask Management as Members are very concise and brief, to do the same. I give the floor first to the Deputy Director-General Mr Laurent Thomas for the survey.

M. Laurent THOMAS (Directeur général adjoint)

Je remercie les Membres du Conseil pour leurs interventions nous encourageant à poursuivre et intensifier nos efforts en ce qui concerne les comportements au travail. En particulier en ce qui concerne les inconduites, les abus de pouvoir, le harcèlement, y compris sexuel, ainsi que la protection contre l'exploitation et les atteintes sexuelles.

Point extrêmement important en réponse au commentaire du Groupe régional Afrique sur ce sujet, je voudrais réaffirmer ici solennellement que le Directeur général et la Direction de la FAO poursuivront sans relâche les efforts nécessaires pour la mise en œuvre de la politique de tolérance zéro dans ces domaines.

Le Directeur général a eu l'occasion de réaffirmer cette politique au cours de réunions publiques et en interne. Bien que nous ayons fait des progrès, nous ne sous-estimons pas qu'il nous faudra mener une action soutenue qui s'inscrit dans la durée, pour résoudre des problèmes généralement systémiques et qui touchent à la culture d'entreprise. J'espère qu'avec cette déclaration, les Membres du Conseil sont rassurés du ton donné par la Direction sur ces questions graves.

Le Royaume-Uni de Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord a demandé spécifiquement des précisions en ce qui concerne la mise à jour de la politique sur l'exploitation sexuelle, et les abus dans ce domaine. Le Réunion conjointe nous a demandé de rester saisi sur cette question importante et nous poursuivrons donc les rapports, en particulier dans le cadre du rapport annuel que nous soumettrons à la Réunion conjointe, à cette occasion, nous pourrons donner des informations supplémentaires sur le développement des politiques en cours et les mises à jour.

Le Royaume-Uni de Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord a aussi demandé des éléments sur le suivi de l'enquête des Nations Unies sur l'exploitation et les atteintes sexuelles. Tout d'abord, il est important de noter, comme il l'a été dit dans le Rapport à la Réunion conjointe que la participation à cette enquête de la part du personnel de la FAO a été multipliée par deux en 2021 par rapport à 2020, et par 10 en l'espace de quatre ans. Les recommandations, les résultats de cette enquête confirment ce que nous avons trouvé au sein de l'Organisation: la nécessité de travailler sur plusieurs fronts à la fois, que ce soit le ton au plus haut niveau de l'Organisation, la culture, les systèmes, et travailler sur la question fondamentale, qui est une autre question du Royaume-Uni de Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord, la confiance, sur comment faire en sorte que le personnel et les partenaires de la FAO puissent se sentir en confiance pour faire rapport sur des abus qui pourraient être menés.

À cet effet, je suis heureux d'informer les Membres du Conseil que le Bureau de l'Inspecteur général, avec l'appui de la Direction de la FAO, a lancé ce mois-ci une nouvelle « hotline », je ne sais comment on dit en français, une ligne spéciale, où tout partenaire et le personnel de la FAO peuvent communiquer en confiance, y compris dans des langues locales, toutes les langues, sur des abus qui aurait pu être perpétrés.

Encore un élément qui va nous permettre de progresser et d'améliorer un environnement où l'ensemble du personnel de la FAO doit se sentir en confiance pour faire un rapport sur ces questions.

CHAIRPERSON

I now give the floor to Ms Beth Crawford for the questions related to the Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) and joint programming.

Ms Beth CRAWFORD (Director, Office of Strategy, Programme and Budget)

We welcome the interest in the Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) because we believe that it really shows how in our Strategic Framework 2022-31, we bring the country level planning together with FAO corporate framework and how we link to the other United Nation (UN) agencies, funds and programmes through the way that we work at the country level.

We have heard the interests of many Members to have the CPFs more easily available. I would stress again that as the distinguished delegate of the United Kingdom also said, many of them are available, but not in one place at this point in time. And we also of course continue to work in joint programming as and when appropriate at the country level, and this is the type of thing that will also be clear in the CPFs and the related UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF), which of course are published by New York when they are available.

We would be happy to continue to update on those topics as we move along.

CHAIRPERSON

With that, I would like now to turn to the draft conclusions and I would like already to compliment the three Chairpersons as well as the three Secretaries, because when you look to their reports, they specifically formulate what they ask, what the asks are for the Council, and I think that is the first time in our proceedings that we see how clear the questions remarks are from the three Committees to the Council, what should be noted, what should be agreed to and what should be endorsed. I think that is an excellent way for our proceedings.

We followed that in our draft conclusions, which are now put forward to you on the screen, and then, because of that excellent work, we can be very brief in our conclusions.

26. The Council reviewed the Report of the Joint Meeting of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and 194th Session of the Finance Committee, noting that *Integrated water resource management for food security and climate resilience, the Progress Report on Rome-based Agencies collaboration and Strategic policy framework for multilingualism* are taken up in the specifics under separate Items, and:

- a) noted its considerations on the Annual Report on Corporate Policy, Processes and Measures on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.
- b) agreed with its observations on the updates on:

- i. *FAO Country Programming Framework (CPFs); and*
- ii. *UN Food System Coordination Hub; and*
- c) endorsed its recommendations on the *Update on the Strategic Exercise of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP)*.

27. With the above observations, the Council endorsed the recommendations of the Report.

We now scroll up and go to the chapeau. Can we agree to the chapeau? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (a). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (b).

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

Just a quick question. So when we say “*agreed with its observations*”, so where do we see the observations? Will it be at the Verbatim Report?

CHAIRPERSON

Those are in the Report of the Joint Meeting.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

I mean the observations done here in the Council.

CHAIRPERSON

The observations and updates can be found on those Items in the Report of the Joint Meeting, so that we do not have to specify all the elements in the Report.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

Yes, I understand. If there are additional observations made in the Council, where will it be reflected?

CHAIRPERSON

Then you have to propose an additional subparagraph.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

It is just about posting the updates of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, to post your updates on their website. It is a simple request. I do not know where to put it in.

CHAIRPERSON

I do not know, it is up to you to specify whether you want to have a specific conclusion on that. Of course, it can be found anyhow in the verbatim and I already conveyed this message to the Director of the Coordination Hub to do it.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

Okay.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to subparagraph (b)? I do not see any objections.

Can we agree to subparagraph (c)? I do not see any objections. That is a milestone that we have achieved now, to adopt the update of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) and its criteria. I think this is an excellent decision, although I have to be independent, but still, it is an excellent decision.

Can we then agree with the last subparagraph? I do not see any objections.

We have concluded our work on Item 7.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

This paragraph 27 it is true encompassing because we have exceptions on the Reports which are outlined in paragraph 1. We cannot endorse the recommendation in the Report including those exceptions that we have, because those exceptions will be looked at in different Agenda Items. There should be a caveat here probably, that we endorsed these recommendations except what is listed above.

CHAIRPERSON

What we could do to not have a lengthy discussion, is we say? Because I see many speakers asking for the floor, we could say if you scroll down. Endorse recommendations of the Items which are reflected in paragraph 1 of the Report.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

I wonder if you could explain what that means. I feel like a colleague from Cameroon it says at the beginning with the above observations, the Council "*endorsed the recommendations of the Report*". I do not see how we need to now also explain this other thing that is above, and other things that are above.

I am also just not sure what that means. I do not think this is necessary, and I think it is entirely unnecessary to have the continued discussion on it. I mean, we can it is just, it does not make sense to me why we need to repeat what we say at the beginning of the sentence.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

I just wanted to concur with United States of America because with the word, the above observations, it covers the entire, observations that have been listed. I do not think we have to repeat Items that we do not agree or not being reflected in the Report. It is quite clear with the above observations. I think we can carry on with your original proposal.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I had the same observation as my colleague from United States of America, throughout the superfluous, and we might have still one little paragraph to add just before paragraph 27.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first deal with the remarks made. Can we all agree with the original text?

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

I am sorry but what is not said is taken for granted. That is the law, and the Legal Counsel can say if I am wrong or not. And then if you omit the fact that we endorsed the Report. It is the full Report, it is not part of the Report. I think that I am not very comfortable adopting here a Report which contains some elements that are discussed somewhere else.

Unless we say with the above observation, the Council endorsed the recommendations of the elements of the Report addressed above. Because it is not the entire Report that we are adopting or endorsing.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

I just want to say that I disagree, and I would encourage perhaps our colleague to disassociate from the paragraph if he thinks that with the above observations does not cover the above observations.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

I have been already called to new modalities of working here. If you want me to be blunt, Chairperson, probably we will put that to a vote.

It is my prerogative as a Member of the Council to request something. Nobody can ask me to dissociate myself, it is my decision.

CHAIRPERSON

Let me make a compromise proposal before we lose it, because this is not spirited where we were working on. If we say “*with the above observation, the Council endorsed the recommendations of the Items mentioned in paragraph 1 of the Report*”.

Dear friends, we are getting really behind schedule, and you all have said you want to finalize not later than Friday. Let us be flexible to get out of this and not have the lengthy discussion on this.

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

First, Japan supports the original sentence because it is self-explanatory. Second, and as you said Chairperson, every important thing we can check by the Verbatim. Third, Japan has originally a very strong position not to reopen the discussion of the Sub-Committee.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

We agree with you in that we can exercise some flexibility, but the flexibility should not go against logic. We endorse the position of Cameroon in the sense that we cannot agree to recommendations regarding Items on the Agenda which will be discussed under discussions on other Items. If we could defer the adoption of this point until we move to the next point regarding cooperation between the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs).

CHAIRPERSON

I am now going to intervene because before we have an hour discussion on this Item. I made a compromise proposal which is now on the screen. Would that be agreeable to the room? Because it clearly refers to what we have in paragraph 1 and I hope with that some see it in already in the first part of the second paragraph out of context more specific. Could we agree to the compromise? United States.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

Could you just explain to me what paragraph (1) is?

CHAIRPERSON

It should read para 26 if we put the right number, but we show you, if we can scroll up.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

The whole point here is that we are endorsing the Report. Not endorsing what we just wrote. Like all that is saying then, is that we are endorsing paragraph 26 of this Report. And we are not. Give me a moment.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

In the spirit of compromise, you can go down to the last paragraph you mentioned. Perhaps you can say, “*with the above observations, as stated in paragraph 26*” and that should cover both sides without prolonging the discussion.

CHAIRPERSON

Would that do the tweak as long as we have to tweak? And then we delete, of course, and then we can say recommendations of the Report. I see nodding in the room.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

As I understand from the European Union (EU) representative from Czechia, we have proposals on, you have seen the proposal on the paragraph, but you are proposing that we endorse the conclusions that were made at the review of the Report. If we could listen first to the proposal made by Czechia and then we could go back to paragraph 27.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am on paragraph 27.

CHAIRPERSON

I will give you the floor now for your additional paragraph.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am still considering paragraph 27. I also consulted the language we actually used in the last Council.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us go to your paragraph.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

The paragraph is quite simple. It is “*requested FAO to publish all country programming frameworks at its website in one place.*”

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this subparagraph? I do not see any objections.

Can we then now agree with paragraph 27, based on the proposal which was made by Malaysia? I do not see any objections.

I think we have now concluded on the Report of the Joint Meeting.

Item 8. Report of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee (7-11 November 2022)

Point 8. Rapport de la cent trente-quatrième session du Comité du Programme (7-11 novembre 2022)

Tema 8. Informe del 134.º período de sesiones del Comité del Programa (7-11 de noviembre de 2022)

(CL 171/8; CL 171/INF/6)

CHAIRPERSON

Let us move to Agenda Item 8, *Report of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee*, which was held from 7 -11 of November 2022. The documents before the Council are CL 171/8 and CL 171/6.

The introduction by the Chairperson of the Programme Committee, Ms Yael Rubinstein, has been circulated to you.

Introduction to Item 8: Report of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee (7-11 November 2022)

H.E. Yael Rubinstein, Chairperson of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee

Chairperson, Members of the Council, I am pleased to present the Report of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee. The 134th Session of the Programme Committee was held from 7 to 11 November and its Report is submitted to the Council in document CL 171/8.

The Programme Committee had 18 items on its agenda, including nine items for information. I would like to highlight the following matters for the attention of the Council.

The Committee appreciated the high quality of the document FAO strategic priorities for food safety within the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and the Office of Evaluation’s renewed focus to enhance the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of evaluation work as indicated in the document Work Plan of Evaluations 2022-2025 – Update, and recommended the Council to endorse them.

It welcomed the Preparation for the Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 – Regional and Technical Priorities and appreciated efforts to operationalize the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 with regard to the specific conditions, needs and priorities of Members in each region and technical area, and recalled the importance of incorporating the conclusions of the Regional Conferences and Technical Committees in the review of the Medium Term Plan 2022-25.

In relation to the evaluations and their Management response, the Committee appreciated their useful and comprehensive approaches, and Management’s acceptance of their findings. In particular, the Committee recognized that FAO’s COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme was found to be

relevant, mostly timely, and adaptive in addressing national priorities emerging from the pandemic, and highlighted FAO's long-term engagement and comparative advantage in facilitating and ensuring South-South and Triangular Cooperation and its technical quality. Moreover, it welcomed the information received and the progress achieved on the follow-up reports of the evaluations of FAO's support to Zero Hunger, FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme and the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations. Furthermore, the Committee appreciated the progress made by FAO on the "One Country One Priority Product Initiative" (OCOP).

Dear Members of the Council, I would like to invite you to review the Report of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee. For your convenience, this Report includes an excellent executive summary prepared by the Secretariat. I am pleased to provide any further explanations you may have regarding this Report.

CHAIRPERSON

I now open the floor for question remarks by Members.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

We take this opportunity to specifically praise some of the conclusions of the PC report.

Firstly, Brazil appreciates the references to the importance of South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) in the implementation of FAO's Strategic Framework and related initiatives.

Apart from the Item dealing directly with the evaluation of FAO's work on the subject, SSTC deserved a clear mention under the "*Update on the development of regional action plans for the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy*", reflecting concerns raised by Members about risks arising from a strictly regional approach.

Brazil supports the view according to which SSTC are a fundamental aspect of the inter-regional and global perspectives that must necessarily inform FAO's documents and initiatives.

We expect the development of the action plans to take into account the establishment, by COP 27, of the "*Joint work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security*". When referring to the potential of developing tools for assessing and monitoring adaptation and its co-benefits, the decision in question recognized the importance of sharing best practices among countries and the important role of science, technology, and capacity-building in the process.

Since we mentioned COP 27, Brazil would also like to show particular appreciation for the discussions and conclusions regarding the update on the development of the action plan for the implementation of FAO's Strategy on Climate Change.

As we are all aware at this point of implementation, COP 27 has adopted clear and direct language urging developed country parties to urgently and significantly scale up their provision of climate finance, technology transfer and capacity-building for adaptation so as to respond to the needs of developing country parties.

The Conference has expressed serious concern about the unmet goal of developed countries to jointly mobilize USD 100 billion per year by 2020, noting the growing gap between the needs of developing country Parties and the support provided for their efforts to implement nationally determined contributions.

Additionally, the decision establishing the "*Joint work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security*" highlighted the role of farmers as stewards of the land, acknowledged their acute vulnerability to climate change and pointed to the need of adopting context-specific solutions, according to national circumstances. The text also recognizes the high adaptive capacity of sustainably managed livestock and its contribution to safeguarding food and nutrition security, livelihoods, sustainability, nutrient cycling, and carbon management.

Finally, bearing all this in mind, Brazil expects the Action Plan on the Climate Change Strategy to align with decisions arising from COP 27, clearly addressing the engagement of FAO in the four-year Sharm el-Sheikh joint work on the implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security.

With this, Brazil supports the endorsement of recommendations and conclusions coming out of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States. Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Republic of North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino and Ukraine aligned themselves with this statement. We would like to start by thanking Her Excellency Ambassador Rubinstein for her excellent leadership of the Programme Committee and also to the FAO Secretariat and management for the support to the Committee.

A couple of remarks to make. First, the EU and its Member States appreciate the efforts for implementing FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 taking into account the specific conditions, needs and priorities of Members across the various technical areas. However, we would like to see further refinements of the priorities for the technical committees and for the regional conference for Europe in the revision of the Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2022-25, especially concerning the consequences of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine,

The graphic presentation of the priorities is also lacking clarity and details. Therefore, we would like to invite FAO to adjust the document.

Second, we appreciate the strategic priorities for food safety, as they are underlined in FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31. In particular, the critical importance of One Health and the work of the Codex Alimentarius.

We also welcome the particular attention paid to mainstreaming food safety management and controls throughout agriculture and food systems.

Third, the One Country One Priority Product (OCOP) initiative still raises many questions. We call on FAO to provide regular updates on the list of countries which are part of the initiative, as well as the products which were selected.

FAO key strategies, especially on climate change and biodiversity and FAO voluntary guidelines for sustainable soil management should be duly taken into account, recalling also the information given by FAO management at the informal briefing on the 30 September, that OCOP is intended to lead to more diversification in agriculture practices and has a focus on biodiversity and sustainable criteria.

Fourth, the EU and its Member States welcome all efforts made by FAO to implement a more precise regulatory framework for data governance, protection of data and intellectual property rights, aligned with the rules and principles in other United Nations bodies.

We invite FAO to continue to work in this domain. The proper implementation of the policy and the alignment of FAO statistical data and other data activities with the policy on intellectual property rights, once promulgated, now the key elements.

Fifth, we welcome the Office of Evaluations renewed focus on enhancing the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of evaluation. We look forward to regular updates of their work plan of evaluations 2022-25 being presented to the governing bodies.

We underline that all sustainable agriculture approaches, such as agricultural practices, organic agriculture and agroforestry, are key issues to be considered in the Strategy of evaluation.

Finally, we express our appreciation for the evaluation of FAO's South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) and in management's response as indicated in recommendation 4. FAO's strategic orientation on these type of projects is essential to ensure its relevance. With these comments, we endorse the Report.

Mr Benjamin ROSS (Australia)

Australia thanks the Chairperson of Programme Committee, as well as its Members, for their strong contributions during the 134th Session of the Programme Committee. We welcome the Committee's report, and we are pleased to endorse its recommendations and conclusions in full.

In particular, Australia reiterates its support for the FAO Strategic Priorities for Food Safety within the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31. We recognise the importance of food safety to global food security, and we appreciate the important role of the FAO, in particular the Codex Alimentarius Commission, in underpinning the development of international science-based food safety standards, guidelines and recommendations.

Australia also offers full support of the recommendations of the Committee to ensure that the conclusions of the regional conferences and technical committees, including those related to crises response, are incorporated in review processes of the medium-term plan, particularly in light of the current global food security situation.

Finally, we take note of the Committee's considerations under points 3 a) to 3 f). In this regard, we welcome the progress made by FAO Management in the implementation of the cross-cutting Data Protection Policy, and the updates provided on FAO's Statistics work and tools under the agenda items 5, 6 and 7. Australia highlights the value and utility of these updates and encourages FAO to continue their regular reporting to Members on these matters, as appropriate.

Ms Ellen LUGER (United States of America)

Thank you very much to FAO and the Members of the Programme Committee for all of the work that went into this Report. The United States welcomes and is prepared to endorse the Programme Committee Report.

We would like to take this opportunity to highlight a few Items. We are happy to see the Science and Innovation Strategy regional action plans progressing, but we want to stress the need to ensure that these regional plans also incorporate global and interregional perspectives, as the Programme Committee Report notes. And that they do not limit the range of opportunities in science, innovation, in agriculture in any regions.

We would also request that, similar to the Climate Change Strategy Action plans that FAO commits to providing regular updates to Members on the action plans across all regions.

We also wanted to raise our concerns about the temporary proxy indicators that FAO has proposed for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicator 2.4.1. We do not think the proposed proxy measures are appropriate to be used even as stopgap measures, given that they fail to capture a wide diversity of sustainable agricultural practices and would create a misleading picture of the status quo, hindering the adoption of smart policies and practices.

For example, the proposed proxy measure of proportion of organic agriculture area would fail to capture critical sustainable agricultural approaches, including no till farming, agroecological practices and regenerative approaches.

Given these issues, we do not think the proposed proxies reflect the original intentions of SDG indicator 2.4.1 to measure the proportion of agricultural area that is under productive and sustainable agriculture.

Therefore, we strongly support the further refinement and development before implementation and would like to see this reflected in the Report.

Finally, we endorse the Programme Committee's suggestion you for assessing the Medium Term Plan (MTP).

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Nos felicitamos la Presidenta del Comité de Programa, la Sra. Yael Rubinstein, por su liderazgo y la Secretaría por su eficiencia.

La Argentina quisiera destacar la excelente conducción de la reunión por parte de la distinguida representante permanente de Israel, la Sra. Yael Rubinstein, y el gran trabajo de Secretaría, que con su paciencia y gran profesionalismo nos han ayudado a tener un comité más eficiente y eficaz.

El Comité del Programa nos brinda mensajes muy claros para la FAO y sus Miembros:

Los alimentos inocuos son claves para alcanzar los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible de la Agenda 2030. Por ello es fundamental que las actividades de FAO en materia de inocuidad alimentaria sigan los acuerdos internacionales y, en este sentido, se utilice la ciencia, los hechos comprobados, la evidencia empírica y los niveles de riesgo aceptables para la elaboración de documentos y el diseño de planes para apoyar a los países en sus programas nacionales.

En esa línea, el comité del Programa una vez más dio cuentas de la contribución del comercio internacional para el cumplimiento de la Agenda 2030 en tanto un motor para el crecimiento económico inclusivo y la reducción de la pobreza, y un medio clave para lograr los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS). Esto se vio reflejado al discutir, entre otros, las prioridades estratégicas de la Organización con respecto a la inocuidad alimentaria en el contexto del Marco estratégico de la FAO para 2022-2031, por ejemplo.

En este sentido, creemos que se debe hacer un reconocimiento particular a la trazabilidad y seguridad que aportan las cadenas de suministro globales vis a vis las dificultades y desafíos que enfrentan los productores locales para garantizar la inocuidad de los alimentos.

Hemos tenido la posibilidad – a partir de la discusión del Plan de trabajo de evaluaciones para 2022-25 – de iniciar la conversación sobre las discusiones más estratégicas que se deberían dar en el comité en cuanto a qué “*business as usual*” está resultando en un cúmulo de trabajo, pero sin un propósito estratégico claro y sustancial que tenga repercusiones en acciones y soluciones concretas a los tantos desafíos que enfrenta el mundo. Agradecemos a la nueva Directora de Evaluación a empujarnos a pensar más estratégicamente en el comité del programa.

Sur la cooperación Sur Sur y Triangular (CSST). Se reconoció que la FAO se encuentra bien posicionada para determinar y promover diferentes “*soluciones del Sur*” pertinentes para los planes nacionales, las prioridades y las necesidades de los asociados, y generar entornos propicios. La FAO puede y debe hacer más en este campo.

Reiteramos nuestra sugerencia de que la CSST sea considerada de manera transversal a todas las iniciativas de la FAO en el terreno y no solamente a la emergencia, conforme las orientaciones emanadas de la Segunda Conferencia de Alto Nivel de las Naciones Unidas sobre la Cooperación Sur-Sur (BAPA+40) y la oficina de CSST de las Naciones Unidas.

Existe un gran interés de los miembros en seguir recibiendo actualizaciones y participar de la labor estadística de la FAO, en particular la relativa a los indicadores de los ODS. Reafirmamos nuestra convicción que las mejoras de metodologías a los indicadores de los que la FAO en la agencia custodia deberían no solo priorizar su viabilidad para la recolección de datos, sino también ser sustantivamente neutrales, imparciales y científicamente rigurosos, a efectos de dar cuenta de las ventajas comparativas de la FAO.

El Comité del Programa acogió con enorme satisfacción la organización del primer Foro de la ciencia y la innovación de la FAO y alentó a la Administración a programar este tipo de foros de manera anual.

Con estos comentarios, la Argentina endosa las conclusiones de la reunión del Comité.

Mr HUANG Fei (China) (Original Language Chinese)

Could we please go back to the draft conclusion of Item 7 regarding the proposal by the European Union (EU) because we were too late for that?

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first deal with this and we will come back to that later otherwise we go back and forth. So let us first finalize this before we go back to another conclusion.

Mr HUANG Fei (China)

China has the honour to deliver this joint statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We appreciate the Report of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee, as well as the efficient and constructive work of the Chairperson and Members of the Committee.

The Asia Regional Group would like to take this opportunity to highlight the important points as follows:

First, we appreciate the efforts with regard to the specific conditions, needs and the priorities of Members in each region and technical area in preparation for the Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2022-25.

With regards to FAO's strategic priorities for food safety leading the Strategic Framework 2022-31, we concur that food safety plays a vital role in the area of the development of sustainable agrifood systems, food security and nutrition, etc.

We encourage FAO to continue the ongoing-driven policy and technical support to Members in their efforts to improve food safety. In this context, we endorse FAO strategic priorities for food safety within the FAO Strategic Framework to 2022-31.

Second, we welcome the update on the development of the regional action plans for FAO Science and Innovation Strategy and for FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-31. We appreciate the development of the said regional action plans based on the request by the regional conference to consider local, national and regional circumstances and differences. We recognize that both of the plans are in the format of deemed documents and look forward to receiving further updates.

Additionally, we congratulate FAO for successfully hosting the first Science and Innovation Forum and encourage you to consider scheduling this event on an annual basis.

Third, we support the Council to approve the updated Workplan of Evaluation 2022-25 and highly appreciate the fruitful outcomes of the evaluation work on FAO's COVID-19 response and recovery programme, South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC), etc. The Asia Regional Group would like to commend FAO's contributions in mitigating the effects of the pandemic and strengthening the long-term resilience of agrifood systems and livelihoods.

We appreciate the important role of FAO's SSTC and encourage FAO to continue to expand its resource partners and further strengthen its work in this area, including in Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) joint collaboration.

Last but not least, we welcome the updated information provided regarding the One Country One Priority Product (OCOP) initiative, FAO's relevant statistics and data works, etc. The Asia Regional Group highly appreciates and welcomes FAO's continued efforts to be more transparent and inclusive.

In conclusion, the Asia Regional Group reviewed the Report of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and recommend Council to make the decision based on the country's recommendations.

I will continue to deliver China's national statement. I will read it in Chinese language.

Continues in Chinese

China welcomes the Report of the Programme Committee as a result of efficient reviews. China appreciates the spirit of cooperation demonstrated by all the committee Members and a constructive review process led by the Chairperson, and also thank the support given by the Secretariat.

China welcomes the final Report on the real-time evaluation of FAO's COVID-19 response and recovery programme. China highly appreciates the full implementation by FAO of this programme which has contributed significantly to lessen the impact and the recovery from the pandemic.

China appreciates the progress FAO has made in promoting South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC). China encourages FAO to further widen its resource space to increase the diversity of its resource and project partners.

China welcomes the latest progress on One Country One Priority Product (OCOP) initiative as well as the various ways taken by FAO to ensure the transparency of information.

Finally, China supports the council to endorse FAO strategic priorities for food safety within its Strategic Framework 2022-31 and work plan of evaluation.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Canada appreciated the positive and constructive atmosphere of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee, which demonstrates a clear cross-regional collaboration in support of continuing to strengthen the Organization.

We thank the Chairperson for her guidance and leadership and the Secretariat for its ongoing work to support the committee.

In particular, we underscore the value of the rich discussion regarding the evolving strategic approach to evaluation, the important considerations raised regarding updating the Medium Term Plan (MTP), as well as the additional clarity on the application of indicators under FAO custodianship specifically 2.4.1, we consider the promulgation of FAO strategic priorities for food safety, an important and welcome step for the Organization.

We appreciate the updates that were provided on the two action plans and One Country One Priority Product (OCOP), as well as the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and we very much welcomed the Organization's commitment to provide further updates on these and related issues at the next Session of the committee, amongst other opportunities.

We appreciate the efforts of the Secretariat to present the findings of the Programme Committee in a more accessible format to facilitate the decision making by this council. And we have already seen some of the benefits of that in broad strokes in the last Item.

Therefore, we are pleased to endorse the Committee's conclusions and recommendations. And we take note of the Committee's considerations.

Mr Shingo FUTAMI (Japan)

Japan aligns itself with a statement made by the distinguished delegates of China on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. And then there are three points that we make, as our initial statement.

First, Japan takes note with appreciation of FAO strategic priorities for food safety within the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31. Then, we echo with the Programme Committee that highlight the importance of no multiple work, including the Codex Alimentarius standard setting processes.

Second, we take note of the update on FAO's statistics work for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators, we call on everyone to keep us informed regularly on progress of development of the proxy indicators. In particular, the proxy indicators, are for the countries that face difficulty in producing the official indicators. It is important to develop the proxy indicators in a way that they are actually applicable and viable for those countries.

To this end, Japan proposes that FAO convene informal consultation with the Members in order to avoid creating something that cannot be accepted or used by Members.

M. Michel LEVEQUE (France)

La France souscrit à la déclaration prononcée au nom de l'Union Européenne et de ses Etats Membres, et souhaite ajouter ce qui suit. Nous voulons d'abord remercier la Présidente du Comité du Programme et l'équipe du Secrétariat pour leur conduite des travaux. Nous nous félicitons des avancées permises par la dernière réunion du Comité du Programme.

Tout d'abord, l'orientation favorable donnée aux projets de stratégie pour la sécurité alimentaire des aliments doit être soulignée. La France se félicite de plusieurs éléments mis en valeur dans le projet de stratégie présenté par la FAO, le rôle central du CODEX Alimentarius, l'importance des liens entre santé humaine et santé animale, au sien de l'approche «Une seule santé», et la collaboration avec les autres agences de la quadripartite, l'intégration de la sécurité sanitaire des aliments tout au long de la chaîne de production alimentaire.

Concernant la révision du Plan à moyen terme 2022-2025, il importe de prendre en compte les conséquences de la guerre en Ukraine, comme le besoin en a été souligné lors de la 169^e session du Conseil de la FAO, de la 33^e session de la Conférence Régionale Europe, et des sessions des comités techniques qui se sont tenues depuis juin 2022.

Dans cette stratégie à moyen terme, il est aussi nécessaire d'accélérer notre mobilisation collective face aux défis climatiques et la réponse de la FAO dans ce domaine. Il convient notamment de prendre en compte les résultats de la Conférence des Nations Unies sur les changements climatiques (COP27) qui s'est tenue Sharm El Sheikh en novembre. Nous saluons à cet égard la présidence de l'Égypte et nous nous réjouissons de travailler avec les Émirats arabes unis en vue de la prochaine COP. Comme l'a souligné le Président de la République française dans son intervention, nous n'avons qu'une obligation, celle de continuer d'agir, d'agir sur l'atténuation, sur l'adaptation, sur la préparation aux crises et l'adaptation face aux crises.

La France attache une importance particulière à la question des données. Elle rappelle la nécessité du respect onusien en matière de protection de données et d'une gouvernance qui repose sur des mécanismes de recours et de contrôles véritablement indépendants. Nous resterons vigilants sur ce sujet et appelons la FAO à faire régulièrement rapport sur ce sujet aux organes directeurs.

Enfin, la France partage l'objectif d'une politique d'évaluation recentrée sur des objectifs stratégiques pour la FAO, en particulier des enjeux relatifs à l'agriculture durable et les différentes approches possibles y compris l'agroécologie. Nous souhaitons que la mise en œuvre de la politique de la FAO sur ce sujet fasse prochainement l'objet d'une évaluation, comme l'avait demandé le Comité des Programmes à sa 132e session. L'évaluation indépendante des projets et programmes de la FAO, notamment les cadres de programmations pays est indispensable à la bonne gouvernance et au bon fonctionnement de l'Organisation. À cet égard, la France se félicite de l'ambition affichée dans ce domaine par la nouvelle Directrice de l'Évaluation, Madame Cosentino.

En conclusion, la France invite le Conseil à approuver le Rapport de la 134e session du Comité du Programme.

Ms Pernilla IVARSSON (Sweden)

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and my own country, Sweden. We align ourselves with the European Union (EU) statement.

We would like to start by thanking H.E. Ambassador Yael Rubinstein for her steady facilitation in the Programme Committee as well as in the Joint Meeting. We feel that the committee managed to play a constructive role in providing guidance in at a time when global food security is facing serious threats.

I would like to highlight a few issues coming out of the Programme Committee that are of particular importance to the Nordic countries. The preparation of the reviewed Medium Term Plan (MTP) is central opportunity to operationalize the FAO Strategic Framework in accordance with Members particular needs and priorities. The world is currently facing crises and conflicts with huge impact on food security.

For the Nordic countries, it is important that the consequences of the Russian Federation's unprovoked and unjustified war in Ukraine is followed up closely by FAO, and that the MTP is adjusted accordingly.

The impact of the war on food security have arisen in all the technical committees and in the regional conferences. We are glad that the Programme Committee highlighted this fact as well.

Conflict and climate change are also core drivers of food insecurity and must be reflected in the MTP and consequently monitored and reported upon.

The adoption of FAO strategic priorities on food safety is very welcome. Food safety is an important work stream that cuts across United Nation Organizations and themes. The long-standing cooperation with World Health Organization (WHO) is key and must be further strengthened in light of continuous threats to food safety worldwide.

In this context, we want to highlight the importance of FAO sustained support to the Joint FAO/WHO scientific advice for Food Safety, providing the basis for the Codex standards. This cooperation is important to uphold the One Health approach in FAO's work.

The Nordic countries have climate change high on our Agendas. At 27th United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties (COP) 27, the Nordic Council of

Ministers organized a side event on climate solutions and energy access in rural areas in collaboration with FAO, this dialogue between Nordic and African countries was an opportunity to collaborate and learn from each other because climate issues cannot be solved by any one country or organization.

Last, we also welcome the adoption of the outcomes of the corona via joint work on agriculture at COP 27.

We appreciate the work already undertaken to develop an action plan to implement the strategy on climate change. We need climate action from FAO more than ever. The plan needs to uphold the high ambitions agreed in the strategy, while at the same time remain flexible enough to be fit for purpose.

We support a clear linkage to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the programme priority areas in the strategic framework. This will hopefully secure ownership across FAO departments and at all levels in the Organization. The role of science and innovation is also fundamental not only for climate action but to transform our food systems.

We therefore welcome the ongoing work with regional action plans on this topic. We are pleased to see that climate change, biodiversity and one health appeared as key terms in these plans.

Last, we underline the need to continue to inform the Programme Committee on the governance of FAO statistical data and other data activities. It is important that the work is aligned with the data protection policy, and that all activities are in line with UN standards.

We look forward to updates on the implementation of the frameworks, including from the newly established Data Coordination Group led by the Chief Economist. With this, the five Nordic countries endorse the Report of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

Malaysia aligns itself with the joint statement of the Asia Regional Group delivered by China.

Malaysia takes note of the alignment of Regional and Technical Priorities based on the outcomes of Regional Conferences and Technical Committees to the FAO Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) for the preparation for the Medium-Term Plan (MTP) 2022-2025.

Malaysia also endorses FAO strategic priorities for food safety within the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031 and acknowledges that the Strategic priorities need a scientific evidence-based approach in the implementation of food safety policies.

In particular, Malaysia encourages FAO to continue assisting Members to improve their food safety policies that will help them in aligning their policies with the relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We request FAO to continue mobilizing resources in order to ensure the ongoing provision of demand-driven policy and technical support to countries in their efforts to improve various aspects of food safety. Further FAO's role in providing the scientific basis for deliberations of Codex for food safety guidance is instrumental.

Food safety is key contributor to One Health approach and therefore in ensuring food safety at domestic level, Malaysia has established high level multi-stakeholders National Food Safety and Nutrition Council (NFSNC) led by the Ministry of Health. The Council objectives are to become the focal point for the cooperation and coordination in facing new challenges in food safety and nutrition at local, regional and international level, and also to form a stable food safety and nutrition control system based on scientific facts using integrated surveillance, enforcement, inspection, research and development methods. Further, the Council also will become the advisory body to the government on all matters related to food safety and nutrition in terms of formulating strategic action plans for long term activities.

Malaysia welcomes the update on FAO policies on Protection of Data and Intellectual Property Rights, recalling the need to ensure data governance, data integrity and intellectual property rights. Malaysia also recognizes the establishment of the Technical Data Coordination Group on Data for Statistics and Statistics to further improve the internal coordination and management of statistic data.

With regard to One Country One Product Initiative, Malaysia acknowledges FAO's efforts in facilitating Member States to promote their most distinctive agricultural products, locally known,

available and underutilized agri-food products that have the potential to be marketed regionally and internationally. This will help Member States in ensuring food security and supporting farmers' livelihood and eventually significantly contribute to achieving the SDGs particularly SDG 1 (End Poverty), SDG2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 10 (Reduce Inequalities). To this end, we call on FAO regional offices in particular to intensify more awareness raising efforts and outreach programme to Members in the region and facilitate their interest in participating in the initiative.

CHAIRPERSON

It is time to energize ourselves and to maintain the positive spirit in the room with the international snack.

We adjourn the meeting now until 17:00 sharp and then we continue with the last speakers and hopefully speedy adoption of the draft conclusions.

The meeting was suspended from 16:29 to 17:05 hours

La séance est suspendue de 16 h 29 à 17 h 05

Se suspende la sesión de las 16.29 a las 17.05

CHAIRPERSON

I see in your lively discussions that you are energized for the third Session of today. And we have to make good progress in order to finish Friday on time.

I would like to reconvene our meeting of the Council and give the floor to the Russian Federation for its statement.

Ms Ekaterina VYBORNOVA (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

The Russian Federation takes note of the Report of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee. We would like to highlight that we think it is important that in the review of the Medium Term Plan (MTP) for 2022-2025 we see the reflection of the impact of all conflicts on food security. We ask to reflect in a footnote to the Report on this, that the Russian Federation disassociates itself from paragraph 6 (d). The explanation of our position will be presented in the adoption of the Report of the Session.

CHAIRPERSON

Your position will be reflected in a footnote to this Report.

Mr Addisu Melkamu KEBEDE (Ethiopia)

Once again, I would like to invite Mali, Member of Programme Committee to speak on behalf of African Regional Group.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to Mali. Mali, you have the floor.

Mme Traore Halimatou KONE (Malí) (Observateur)

Le Mali, en concertation avec la Zambie et l'Érythrée prend la parole au nom du Groupe régional Afrique sur ce point de l'ordre du jour. Le Groupe Régional Afrique remercie le Comité du programme pour les conclusions issues de ces travaux.

Nous félicitons la Présidente Rubinstein, et le Secrétariat du Comité du programme pour le travail abattu lors de la Session. Nous prenons note des réflexions du Comité sur l'initiative Un pays, un produit prioritaire et voudrions souligner qu'il est important que cette initiative ne favorise pas la suprématie d'une seule culture par rapport à d'autres, compte tenu de l'engouement que cela pourrait engendrer à la vue des avantages qui seront accordées aux produits choisis.

Nous exprimons ce point de vue car nous savons qu'en Afrique, nous prônons la diversification des cultures pour éviter la monoculture. Concernant l'élaboration du plan à moyen terme révisé, 2022-2025, Priorité Régionale et Priorité Technique, nous voudrions rappeler la situation alimentaire au Sahel qui a été exacerbée par les conflits et le changement climatique auxquels cette région fait face

depuis bientôt une décennie. Plusieurs millions de personnes souffrent de la faim. Le Sahel est loin d'être la seule région en Afrique en proie à la famine.

Le Soudan du Sud, l'Éthiopie, la Somalie, la RD Congo et encore d'autres. Ces zones de conflits ne doivent pas être oubliées. Nous avons une pensée profonde envers tous ceux qui souffrent de la faim, dans le monde. Nous sommes reconnaissants pour les actions des agences romaines, soutenues par les généreux donateurs auxquels nous demandons de trouver ici notre reconnaissance et remerciement pour l'accompagnement fait à notre région.

Nous voudrions réitérer l'importance que l'Afrique accorde à la sécurité sanitaire des aliments, et tous produits végétaux et animaux dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre effective de l'initiative phare de la ZLECA, Zone de Libre-Échange Continentale Africaine, lancée dans le cadre de l'Agenda 2063, et qui, nous l'espérons vivement, va booster le flux de commerce inter et intrarégional. Le soutien de FAO est plus que souhaitable dans l'opérationnalisation de l'Agence africaine de contrôle sanitaire.

Notre groupe sollicite plus d'accompagnement dans nos laboratoires nationaux pour le contrôle de l'aflatoxine dans les céréales, et autres cultures, mais aussi le contrôle de qualité pour nos produits prétendant à l'initiative Un Pays, un produit prioritaire, permettant d'engager l'élaboration de normes pour ces produits pilotes et les résidus des produits phytosanitaires utilisés dans leurs productions. Nous félicitons la nomination d'un coordinateur chargé du multilinguisme à FAO, et du rôle joué par celui-ci dans la coordination des efforts déployés dans l'ensemble de l'organisation pour la mise en œuvre du cadre stratégique.

Le Groupe régional Afrique recommande au Conseil d'examiner et d'approuver la proposition présentée dans le document COFI 2022/6 relative à la proposition de création d'un Sous-Comité de gestion des pêches, qui comprend un plan visant à tenir en ligne la première réunion du Sous-Comité de gestion des pêches avant la 36^e Session du Comité des Pêches, compte tenu des incidences financières et administratives.

Sur ce, nous approuvons le rapport de la 134^e Session du Comité du produit.

Sr. Miguel Jorge GARCÍA WINDER (México)

Es mi primera participación personal, así que comienzo expresando mi reconocimiento y agradecimiento a todos los presidentes de los comités. Realmente, su trabajo es ejemplar y los admiro por la paciencia que tienen en su dedicación, así que muchas gracias a todos ustedes.

Yo sigo un poco confundido, quizá me puedan ayudar en todo este proceso que estamos llevando a cabo. Primero, si lo que estamos haciendo es revisando y aprobando los reportes, ¿por qué? Porque me parece que discutimos en esta sesión lo que ya discutimos *at large* y *ad cansansium* en otras discusiones.

Entonces incluso, me atrevería a proponer que para el futuro aprobemos en bloque todos estos reportes y nos ahorremos alrededor de dos días de trabajo, porque lo que estamos aprobando son los reportes, entonces me parece que estamos volviendo a discutir. Sin embargo, y a reserva de que esta sea una conversación respetando el derecho que todos tenemos de opinar, me parece que si revisamos el Reporte del Comité de Programa, hay tres temas que salen y que me gustaría proponer a este honorable Consejo para que de alguna manera se pudieran discutir extensivamente por el Consejo.

El primero, me parece que es de fundamental importancia, es todo lo que tiene que ver con el nuevo Programa Estratégico de Evaluación de FAO. La evaluación es de gran relevancia para asegurar la transparencia y para asegurar la pertinencia de los trabajos de FAO y deberíamos encontrar una oportunidad para conocer, como Consejo, precisamente cuál es la propuesta de la nueva estrategia.

Tener evaluaciones independientes en esta institución es vital y realmente importante, he conversado de manera informal —y he pedido autorización para decir sobre esta conversación—, con la nueva Directora de Evaluación y me parece que existen ideas extraordinarias y propuestas conceptuales y metodológicas que tienen que ser conocidas por el Consejo y aprobadas por el Consejo para implementar y transformar FAO hacia una institución más pertinente, más transparente, más eficiente. Entonces, la primera propuesta es que las encontráramos, no sé si en esta o en otra sesión.

Otro tema de particular importancia, que me permito proponer, es que en la próxima reunión de este Consejo diseñemos tres sesiones especiales, una dedicada exclusivamente a dar seguimiento a cada una de las estrategias: la estrategia de ciencia e innovación, la estrategia de cambio climático y la propuesta de agua. Y que en esta sesión se presente no solamente los avances teóricos, sino que se nos presenten presupuestos, estructuras y necesidades.

Nuestra gran responsabilidad es mover a FAO hacia el siglo XXI y no atarla en el siglo pasado, necesitamos entender cómo van a ser con los recursos y con el personal. Esto no es pequeño. Me dicen que esto lo podemos estudiar y ver en el *budget* y en el *working plan*. Sí, pero necesitamos conocer más precisamente. Nuestra función aquí es apoyar a esta institución para que sea pertinente y solo si el Consejo lo toma en sus manos, lo puede hacer.

Otro tema que necesitamos de mayor información tiene que ver con el Plan a plazo medio. El Plan a plazo medio es la ruta fundamental del corto y mediano plazo de esta institución y el año que entra tenemos una elección. Tenemos que saber qué va a pasar con el Plan a plazo medio ante una eventual reelección o un eventual cambio de director, ¿cómo lo vamos a implementar? Entonces, me parece que estos tres temas que surgen del Reporte del Comité de Programa son realmente esenciales y es en los que deberíamos de pasar el tiempo discutiendo.

Mr Mina Rizk ATTIA RIZK (Egypt) (Original Language Arabic)

Given our limited time, I will simply talk about the Strategy on Climate Change through to 2031. I would like to express my gratitude to all those delegations who have expressed their satisfaction about the Organization of the major conference held in Egypt, the Conference of the Parties (COP27). And I would like to stress the positive role played by the Organization through its participation in COP27 and its support for several initiatives, including the one launched here in FAO on 12 November 2022.

The FAO delegation took part in most of the meetings and provided input into most of the COP initiatives. This participation goes hand in hand with the Organization's Strategy on Climate Change. It allowed us also to have a very positive view of the workplan reviewed by the Organization and its Strategy.

We would like the workplan also to go hand in hand with the results of the COP, which were adopted there in Egypt. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

I now turn the floor to the Observers.

Sra. Haifa Aissami MADAH (Venezuela, República Bolivariana de) (Observador)

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela agradece la presentación del informe a cargo de la Presidenta del Comité de Programa, así como a los demás Miembros por las recomendaciones en él contenidas para la consideración del Consejo.

Apreciamos que se destaquen las necesidades y prioridades específicas de los Miembros en cada región y esfera técnica en el Plan a medio plazo para 2022-2025 bajo la premisa de que podemos tener los mismos problemas, pero no necesariamente las mismas políticas para solucionarlos, requiriendo que las mismas se vean a través del prisma de los contextos nacionales y con abordajes diferenciados.

También reconocemos la contribución positiva del comercio alimentario y agrícola de la iniciativa "Un país, un producto prioritario". Venezuela, en el marco de programación de país con FAO, ha colocado entre sus estrategias esta iniciativa que sabemos ayudará y contribuirá al bienestar social, y económico de nuestro país.

Agradecemos las notas referentes a la información actualizada sobre la labor estadística de FAO, relativa a los indicadores de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) y la Comisión de Estadísticas de las Naciones Unidas; sin embargo, nos gustaría que en un espacio con todos los Miembros de la FAO se pueda compartir sobre todo esto y otros temas relativos a dicha labor para transmitir nuestras preocupaciones y propias experiencias.

Por último, nos sumamos a lo reflejado en el informe sobre la cooperación Sur-Sur y Triangular e invitamos a FAO a seguir fortaleciéndola. Asimismo, ratificamos la importancia de desarrollar

agendas de complementariedad entre países hermanos como la ruta preferente que nos conducirá de manera segura hacia el desarrollo de los pueblos del sur.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Chairperson of the Programme Committee to see whether or not she has any comments or suggestions.

Ms Yael RUBINSTEIN (Chairperson of the Programme Committee)

Excellencies, thank you all for your comments and appreciation for the work of the Programme Committee. I would like to thank the Members of the Programme Committee for amazing, efficient and effective work done. I would also like to thank the Management, Secretariat, technician, translation, interpretation as well as logistic team and to mention the fact that we had healthy working hours together with a healthy diet and good music definitely contributes to our amazing success. Last but not least, I would like to thank my co-Chairperson, Ambassador of Argentina, for his very wise and good advices and for his friendship.

Ms Maria Helena Semedo (Deputy Director-General)

No particular question or comment, but just to thank all the Members for their contribution to the Climate Change Action Plan. I think we have now all the inputs we need, coming from the Technical Committees and the discussion in the Programme Committee. We expect to finalize the action plan by December, which will be shared just for final comments by the Members.

I would like also to express what has been said in Egypt. We had a very active participation in Conference of the Parties (COP27) where we had opportunity to express the messages coming from the Strategy on Climate Change, which is the transformation of agrifood systems, a solution to climate change. Not only a contributor, but a solution to climate change. For the first time in Egypt, we have six pavilions on food systems, which is very much advanced, if you compare to the previous one. The decision taking and loss and damage, the decision on Koronivia action agenda, among others, will help us implement our Climate Change Strategy.

Thank you for the support and we will be reporting, as requested, on the implementation of the Strategy on Climate Change.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Chief Scientist.

Ms Ismahane ELOUAFI (Chief Scientist)

Thank you very much for all the support we heard from Members of the Council to the Science and Innovation Strategy. I shared with you the action plans, which are at their final stage. We are going to have a final document, although it is going to be an evergreen document, by the end of December 2022.

We are taking a really regional perspective to it. The leadership on the regional action plan is given to the Assistant Director-Generals (ADGs) in the region. However, we also have a global perspective/plan, and we have a team here in the headquarters that are putting it together. There will be some global initiatives like the ATIO, the new Flagship Report on Agrifood system Technology and Innovation Outlook that has been already launched in the Science and Innovation Forum, and there will be more.

The idea is that as we are providing the region with freedom to pick and choose their priorities, we are making sure that there are synergies, there is no duplication, and there are also learnings from region to region. We have new global initiatives that are mostly built on new data around how technology and innovation could be scaled up and how we could use big data in analyzing how policies and finance could help us do so.

As we said earlier, in many attempts or in many interventions, the Science and Innovation Strategy is very much building on the Strategic Framework and supporting it. Therefore, you could think of it as

“what is the best science to have a better production?” “What is the best science to have better nutrition?” The same for environment and for the livelihood.

We are looking forward to bringing science to the forefront and building partnerships to have access to that know-how and the technologies and innovation.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Deputy Director-General, Mr Laurent Thomas, for a brief remark.

M. Laurent THOMAS (Directeur général adjoint)

Très brièvement, nous partageons les préoccupations du Groupe Afrique quant à la détérioration de la sécurité alimentaire dans ses formes les plus aiguës, en particulier en Afrique.

Nous voudrions informer les membres du Conseil que la FAO, dans le cadre des appels humanitaires interagences lancés il y a quelques semaines, appelle pour une somme de 1.9 milliards de dollars des États-Unis, pour appuyer la relance de la production et des activités agricoles, de 50 millions de personnes dans les pays les plus affectés.

On ne doit pas oublier que les personnes les plus affectées aujourd’hui par la faim et l’insécurité alimentaire aiguë sont principalement des personnes vivant dans les zones rurales, dérivant leurs biens de subsistances de l’agriculture, de l’élevage et des pêches.

CHAIRPERSON

With that I think we have finalized our deliberations on the Report of the Programme Committee. I now will present to you the Draft Conclusions, which we will put on the screen.

The Council reviewed the Report of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and:

- a) noted its considerations on the One Country One Priority Product Initiative and the updates on:
 - (i) statistical tools and data for statistics;
 - (ii) FAO statistics for SDG indicators and the UN Statistics Commission;
 - (iii) governance of FAO's statistical data and other data activities and their alignment with cross-cutting FAO policies on protection of data, intellectual property rights;
 - (iv) the development of regional action plans for the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy; and
 - (v) action plan for the implementation of the Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031.
- b) requested to share the final draft action plans of the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy and the FAO Strategy on Climate Change for a written input by Members and to be briefed on the outcome;
- c) agreed with its conclusions on the preparations for the Medium-Term Plan 2022-2025 regional and technical priorities, the real-time evaluation of FAO's COVID-19 response and the COFI programme final Report, the management response to the evaluation of FAO's South-South and Triangular Cooperation; the management response and follow-up Reports on:
 - (i) evaluation of FAO's support to zero hunger, SDG2;
 - (ii) evaluation of FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme; and
 - (iii) evaluation of FAO's Strategy for partnerships with civil society organizations.
- d) supported the further refinement and development of the temporary proxy indicators proposed by FAO for SDG indicator 2.4.1; and

- e) endorsed its recommendations of the Workplan of Evaluation 2022-2025 update and endorsed the FAO strategic priorities for food safety within the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031.

With the above observations, the Council endorsed the recommendation of the Report.

We have the footnote, as was requested by the Russia Federation. *“The Russian Federation disassociates itself from paragraph 6 (d) and a statement by the Russian Federation may be found in the verbatim Report of the Session”*.

Of course, with that we have followed the recommendations given by the Programme Committee to the Council.

With that, I would like to start with the *chapeau*. Can we agree to the *chapeau*? I do not see any objections.

Then I go to subparagraph (a). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (b). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (c). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (d).

Mr Shingo FUTAMI (Japan)

I have a new subparagraph to propose under (d).

“Encouraged FAO to continue the regular reporting to Members through relevant Governing Bodies and to convene an informal consultation with Members on FAO’s statistics work for developing the SDG proxy indicators”.

This reflects my national statement but it is quite important to take into account the Members’ views in the process of the development of the proxy indicators as it is official indicators.

The proxy indicators are for those who are now able to use the official indicators. In order to make the proxy indicators applicable for as many countries as possible, contacting the informal consultation with Members is highly recommended.

In recent interventions of the other colleagues, some dissatisfaction has been expressed. That will help justify my proposal. If it is agreeable to all Members, I want to keep it. Let us see how it works.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Me parece bien la propuesta de Japón. Me parece que es parte de lo que han dicho varios Miembros, pero iba a referirme al punto anterior, al subpárrafo nuevo sugerido por Japón.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first deal with this subparagraph.

Mr Miguel Jorge GARCÍA WINDER (Mexico)

It is related to the Science and Innovation Strategy and the Strategy on Climate Change but I can wait until later on.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to the proposal made by Japan? I see nodding. So, agreed.

Argentina on subparagraph (d).

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Sí, un tema técnico aquí. Entiendo que la tarea que estamos incluyendo en este subpárrafo es una tarea que no depende de FAO, depende de la Comisión de Estadísticas, creo, de las Naciones Unidas.

Entonces más que *“supported”*, quizás es *“took note”* lo que me parece más apropiado, o *“Highlighted the needs”*

Pero no es un tema que dependa de FAO, me parece a mí técnicamente hablando. Y al final después de *indicator 2.4.1* agregaría: "*and to keep Members informed to the extent possible*"

Mr Andrian MCADAMS (United States of America)

I think we can go along with most of the proposals here including the one from Japan, and thanks to Argentina for your proposal. From our perspective, we wanted to strengthen some of that language on instead of "*supported*" going to "*requested*". But understanding Argentina's concern relating to FAO proposing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) indicators, if we added the word "*requested*" but then also mentioned that the SDGs must be approved by the United Nations (UN) Statistics Commission, that would perhaps address Argentina's concern. Then we could also get in the word "*requested*" that we had wanted to put forward. I do not know if that would be amenable to Argentina and then obviously, we can go along with "*keep Members informed*".

CHAIRPERSON

Can you make a concrete text proposal?

Mr Andrian MCADAMS (United States of America)

Instead of "*supported*" we would go with the word "*requested*". And then it would say, "*continuing the further refinement and development of the temporary proxy measures proposed by FAO, recognizing or understanding that they must be approved by the UN Statistics Commission*".

CHAIRPERSON

No. It is FAO for Sustainable Development Goal indicator 2.4 and then we have your part, "*request on the approval by the...*"

Mr Andrian MCADAMS (United States of America)

Exactly. "*Recognizing or understanding they must be approved by the United Nations (UN) Statistics Commission*", or something to that effect. If that works for Argentina, I think we could accompany that text.

CHAIRPERSON

Would this be agreeable? So, we delete the "*highlighted need for*" and "*supported*", replaced by "*requested*". I do not see any objections.

Mr Miguel Jorge GARCÍA WINDER (Mexico)

Could you be so kind to go back to where you have "*the strategies on Climate Change on Innovation and Science and Technology*"?

In subparagraph (b) I do not have a request, I just have a petition to the Council. I wonder until when we are going to be asking for more reviews on these Strategies. My suggestion will be that we should let these Strategies be implemented, and then after a period of time we probably can review the progress or the lack of progress.

My suggestion is, "*requested FAO to proceed with implementation of the Action Plans of FAO Science and Innovation and Climate Change Strategy*". Otherwise we are going to be in a circle of eternal revisions, and perfection kills practice. That is my concern. I understand the meaning of the sentence but my plea to the Council is to put FAO to work, and then results must be presented. Not more documents, but results. My suggestion will be "*request FAO to promptly implement the working plans for the strategies in Science and Innovation and Climate Change*".

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Yo creo haber entendido lo que México expresó. Yo participé en las discusiones en el Comité del Programa y fuimos muy claros los Miembros del Comité del Programa en cuanto a lo que queríamos, son las dos cosas: por un lado, tener cuanto antes el *draft* para poder ver lo de las diferentes estrategias, los planes de acción para que los podamos ver y, en todo caso, darle el último *feedback* para la acción concreta. Y la otra, que simplemente lo antes posible.

Quiero decir que no necesariamente el texto que estaba en pantalla es contradictorio con lo que dice México, pero no deberían ser incluidos en el mismo párrafo. Entonces, yo lo que sugiero es que, si México plantea la necesidad de algo que tenga que ver con tratar de apurar la implementación, yo estoy de acuerdo, pero debe ser por separado porque todavía no tenemos ese plan y lo que los Miembros en el Comité del Programa plantearon fue "queremos ver el plan antes de su implementación, por si hay alguna cosa que podamos enriquecer".

No para renegociar lo que el plan en definitiva es elaborado por FAO y tiene la potestad de hacerlo, pero creo que también los Miembros tienen el derecho de poder acceder a esa información, previa a la implementación porque a veces comentarios de los Miembros pueden ayudar a la implementación más correcta.

Entonces, insisto, me parece que es importante —repito—, diferenciar lo que es la necesidad de ver el plan con la necesidad de apurar la implementación. Las dos cosas me parece que son perfectamente compatibles, pero no deberían ser confusas en el mismo párrafo.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

I am in the same line with Argentina.

Mr Thomas John KELLY (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I sympathize with my Mexican colleague's wish for this Council to discuss these issues because they are the key issues facing FAO in terms of its mandate in many ways. But like the Argentinian Ambassador said, we actually have not seen the final action plan and we encourage FAO to produce one so that we can move directly to implementation. I think we would want to make sure that we saw the action plan first and agreed on it while bearing in mind the Mexican Ambassador's focus on strategic discussions in this Council.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we not change the order so that we take the first part in blue now to the end and then promptly implement?

Ms Nosipho Nausca-Jean JEZILE (South Africa)

I am [XX] with that rearrangement because the Council has approved the Strategies and from what I hear, Argentina, the United Kingdom (UK), and Brazil are outlining the need to have sight of the action plans and then definitely move as promptly as possible to implementation. I wanted to reflect on the question raised by Mexico. Do we have to approve the action plans? No. Thus our understanding is that we do not have to approve the action plans, and therefore it is sufficient then if you rearrange as such.

CHAIRPERSON

Indeed, your assumption is correct. We agreed in the last Council that the Council agrees and adopts the Strategies and that we then develop the action plans, but that the Management will finalize the action plans and decide on it so that it will not have to go to the Council for approval.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

We agree with the rearrangement of the text. Perhaps we can be informed by the text of the Programme Committee document which reads "*so that Members are informed and involved, noting the action plan is a living document*". This modifies it a little bit. Perhaps it could be "*Strategy on climate change, so that Members are informed and involved, noting the action plan is a living document and encourage their prompt implementation*".

CHAIRPERSON

Now we have two proposals on the table. Any reflections on those?

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

It is a good proposal coming from Canada, but maybe we should keep: "*for a written input by Members*" after "*share the final draft action plans*".

Then we need something for the strategies. The idea is “*sharing the draft action for written inputs by Members*”.

CHAIRPERSON

Perhaps we could replace “of” with “on”.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON

Would putting “*for written inputs by Members*” after “*climate change*” do the trick?

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

No, I do not think so.

CHAIRPERSON

To put *with input by Members* after *climate change*.

Mr Fernando José MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Where do “*the strategies*” go? I understand that “*shared the final draft action plans for written inputs*” have to be together, either at the beginning or after “*the strategies*”.

CHAIRPERSON

I suggest that we put it after the name of the Strategies, so that is clear that the action plan are of the Members.

In the second line, keep that. Remove the brackets, put the comma after “*Members*”, and then delete the last part “*for written input*”. Would this be agreeable for the Council?

Mr Andrian MCADAMS (United States of America)

We are flexible. I just wonder to what end we put “*for the written inputs by Members*”. Quite frankly Canada's proposal, which notes that the action plan is a living document, perhaps took care of that. But if this is the way out, perhaps this is the right language. I am just confused why we need both of those.

CHAIRPERSON

Also looking to the clock with a lot of work to do, perhaps we can maintain this text and continue.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

No hay objeciones. Para clarificar las dudas que tenía Estados Unidos. Yo creo que está claro cuál es la competencia que FAO tiene para poder elaborar los planes de acción, pero está bueno que los Miembros a partir de recibir el *draft* puedan expresar sus comentarios al *Management* para que el *Management* pueda en ese documento vivo tomar en consideración esos últimos comentarios.

En definitiva, nadie está poniendo en discusión las competencias exclusivas que tiene FAO para llevar adelante y elaborar los planes de acción. Esa me parece que es la lógica, la racionalidad detrás de la sugerencia y no pone en discusión las competencias exclusivas que FAO tiene en términos de la elaboración del plan de acción.

M. Bienvenu NTSOUANVA (Congo)

Je me suis plongé dans le rapport du Comité de l'agriculture, notamment le paragraphe 25-II, pour éviter notre potentiel désaccord avec ce qui a été demandé. Il est demandé à FAO de continuer à organiser en temps voulu le processus de consultation ouvert, inclusif et transparent, et de prendre en compte les orientations fournies par les membres, pour affiner et enrichir les plans d'actions. C'est ce qui a été dit, donc c'est dans le rapport. Est-ce que ce que nous sommes en train de décider maintenant, n'est pas contraire à ce que nous avons déjà arrêté ?

Sr. Miguel Jorge GARCÍA WINDER (México)

No es que quiera entrar en discusión, pero yo tengo un poco más de conocimiento en términos de ciencia que, en otros términos. Si esto, la ciencia, es cambiante, progresiva, si me piden que haga un documento por escrito, prácticamente estoy parándolo en el tiempo.

Quizá lo más conveniente sería decir que se pide a FAO que mantenga una constante comunicación con los Miembros para adecuar a las circunstancias y a las condiciones las estrategias. Porque si escribimos hoy, lo que escribamos hoy, el año que entra posiblemente nos sirva. Piensen que si hubiéramos escrito esta ciencia cuando se creó el arado, estaríamos negando la posibilidad de tener un tractor o un dron.

Entonces, yo creo que lo que tenemos que hacer es que FAO mantenga una comunicación abierta y constante con sus Miembros para adecuar y ajustar. De otra manera, nos estamos nosotros poniendo una misma camisa de fuerza y aquí si queremos hacer eso, tenemos que ponerle tiempos, ¿sí? Entonces mi opinión es que dejamos

Continues in English

“Final action plan on Science and Innovation Strategy and Climate Change, and to keep an open communication line with Members to adjust them according to the conditions”. Otherwise, we put a strap in our hands, but if all the countries agree with this, then that is fine.

CHAIRPERSON

I thought we had a compromise, and of course it is a living document. We know it since it is stated with so many words that it is a living document which will evolve in time. Can we maintain the compromised text? I do not see any objections.

With this, we have finalized our conclusions on the Report of the Programme Committee and we come back to China. Thank you so much. This is adopted.

I come back to the Joint Meeting, the subparagraph on the issue which was tabled by the European Union and its 27 Member States.

Mr HUANG Fei (China) (Original Language Chinese)

We do not want to reopen the debate. We went too fast with revising the conclusion. Regarding the proposal made by the distinguished delegate of European Union (EU), we propose to directly use the Report of the Joint Meeting in subparagraph 7(i). I hope the distinguished delegates of the EU can agree with us. .

CHAIRPERSON

We will put the text, at least of subparagraph 7(i), on the screen.

Mr Mina Rizk ATTIA RIZK (Egypt)

I would like to thank our dear colleague from China because we went a little bit too fast when discussing this point. We also wanted to raise our concerns regarding the language used. During the Joint C Meeting we had the same discussion, and we made it very clear regarding two points.

First, we had our concern regarding sharing these Country Programmatic Frameworks (CPF) in retrospect. The second point was, we need to make sure that the Members that have the CPFs with FAO are also agreeing to this practice. There is a bit of a difference between sharing them on the website versus having them available to Members.

CHAIRPERSON

Is there the flexibility in the room to stick to the language which was agreed during the Joint Meeting, as is now shown in subparagraph (e)? I also look to the European Union whether or not I can agree to the subparagraph as now on the screen.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I wanted to have it as clear as possible without any caveats or additional language. Of course, we also agree and understand that there was quite substantial discussion in the Committee itself. Hopefully the

outcomes of the discussion, as reflected in the agreed language, will be well implemented by FAO in spring 2023. We are really looking forward to having all the programming documents in one single place. We can agree with the suggested agreed language for the Joint Meeting.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much European Union for your flexibility. So, we have replaced this subparagraph with the agreed language, and I think we again have an agreement in the Council on the Report of Joint Meeting. We continue our work.

- Item 9. Reports of the 192nd (1-3 June 2022), 193rd (27-28 October 2022) and 194th (7-11 November 2022) Sessions of the Finance Committee**
- Point 9. Rapports des cent quatre-vingt-douzième (1-3 juin 2022), cent quatre-vingt-treizième (27- 28 octobre 2022) et cent quatre-vingt-quatorzième sessions (7-11 novembre 2022) du Comité financier**
- Tema 9. Informes de los períodos de sesiones 192.º (1-3 de junio de 2022), 193.º (27 y 28 de octubre de 2022) y 194.º (7-11 de noviembre de 2022) del Comité de Finanzas**
(CL 171/9; CL 171/16; CL 171/18)

Item 9.1 Audited Accounts – FAO 2021

Point 9.1 Comptes vérifiés – FAO 2021

Tema 9.1 Cuentas comprobadas de la FAO correspondientes a 2021

(C 2023/6A; C 2023/6B)

Item 9.2 Status of current assessments and arrears

Point 9.2 État des contributions courantes et des arriérés

Tema 9.2 Estado de las cuotas corrientes y los atrasos

(CL 171/LIM/2)

CHAIRPERSON

Let me go now to Item 9, Reports of the 192nd Session of the Finance Committee, which was held from 1 to 3 June 2022, and the 193rd Session, which was held from 27 to 28 October 2022 and the 194th Session of the Finance Committee, which was held from 7 to 11 November 2022.

The relevant documents are CL171/9, CL171/16, CL171/18, C 2023/6A, and C 2023/6B you can see that the Finance Committee is already working on 2023), and CL 171/LIM/2.

There were many Sessions of the Finance Committee; Ms Imelda Smolčić, you did a lot of work with your team.

The Items have two sub-Items which will be dealt as one in under this Item. That is Sub-Item 9.1, *Audited Accounts – FAO 2021* and Sub-Item 9.2, *Status of current assessments and arrears*.

I would also like to remind Members that we will deal with either voting or registration via the Conference of the voting rights of the Members in arrears in the payment of their financial contribution to the Organization in a separate Agenda Item.

I would like to draw the attention of the Members to the document CL 171/LIM/2 that sets out *Status of current assessments and arrears* as of 28 November 2022. The introduction by the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, Ms Smolčić, has been circulated to you.

Introduction to Item 9: Reports of the 192nd (1-3 June 2022), 193rd (27-28 October 2022) and 194th (7- 11 November 2022) Sessions of the Finance Committee

Ms Imelda Smolčić Nijers, Chairperson of the Finance Committee

Chairperson, Members of Council, I am pleased to present the Reports of the 192nd, 193rd and 194th Sessions of the Finance Committee. These Reports are submitted to the Council in documents CL 171/16, CL 171/18 and CL 171/9 respectively.

While the 194th Session dealt with FAO matters, the 192nd and 193rd Sessions were convened to deal with World Food Programme (WFP) matters. The Council is requested to note the Finance Committee's consideration of matters relating to the World Food Programme presented in the Reports of its 192nd and 193rd Sessions prior to their consideration by the WFP Executive Board.

I would now like to highlight the following matters presented in the Report of the 194th Session of the Finance Committee.

On the review of the *Audited Accounts - FAO 2021 and Management Response to the Recommendations presented in the Report of the External Auditor for 2021*, the Council is requested to submit the Draft Resolution, for adoption by the Conference, of the FAO Audited Accounts for 2021 as presented in paragraph 12 of document CL 171/9.

On the review of *FAO Oversight Advisory Committee Membership*, the Council is requested to endorse the appointment of Mr Honoré Ndoko as a member of the FAO Oversight Advisory Committee for an initial period of three years.

Furthermore, the Council is requested to endorse the conclusions of the Finance Committee on its consideration of the *Financial Position of the Organization, on the Restoration by the Conference of the voting rights of Member Nations in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the Organization, and on the Update on the status of recommendations presented in the JIU Report, Review of Whistleblower Policies and Practices in United Nations System Organizations (JIU/REP/2018/4) and JIU Report, Review of the State of the Investigation Function: Progress made in the United Nations System Organizations in Strengthening the Investigation Function (JIU/REP/2020/1)*.

Finally, the Council is requested to note the Finance Committee's considerations related to the updates it received on the implementation of recommendations of the External Auditor and the FAO Oversight Advisory Committee, and on scheduling of the FAO Management and Administration Review by the JIU.

I would be pleased to provide any further explanations you may have regarding our Reports.

CHAIRPERSON

I would now like to open the floor for Members to make their suggestions, comments and remarks.

Ms Nosipho Nausca-Jean JEZILE (South Africa)

Ethiopia and Niger speak on behalf of the Africa Regional Group.

At the outset, the African Regional Group welcomes the Finance committee reports of 192nd and 193rd on the matters of the World Food programme and 194th on FAO matters

The Group appreciates the audited annual accounts and unqualified audit opinion, as well as WFP's robust financial performance.

We welcome the information provided by WFP on management's plans to implement audit recommendations and want to underline the importance of implementing prioritized recommendations in contributions management and also appreciate the efforts they are making to address managements of contribution management.

Africa regional group supports WFP's use of advance financing mechanisms as an important means to increase flexibility, responsiveness, and efficiency of its operations.

We highly appreciate the WFP's growing use of the Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF) to support local and regional purchases as well as purchases from small scale holder farmers as it further contributes to improving production and productivity by creating market opportunities and minimising the cost of transportation.

The Africa Regional Group appreciate the proposed allocation of USD 55 million to establish a changing lives transformation fund and request its expansion of funding.

We welcome the report and the progress made to implement the external auditors recommendations, noting that management would respond to any remaining questions bilaterally with Members of the Finance Committee.

Africa Regional Group noted the projected operational requirements for 2023 of USD 19.7 billion and the provisional implementation plan of USD 12 billion to align WFP's activities with the anticipated funding.

The Group also appreciates the implementation of life saving activities utilizing local and regional markets as this incentivize local producers to produce more.

We express our concern with the growing funding gap between operational requirements and expected contributions, which are exacerbated by the current global economic situation with raising fuel and food prices and high inflation.

With regard to the 194th Finance Committee, the Africa Regional Group welcomes the detailed report of the financial position of FAO as at 30 June 2022 and appreciates the updated status of current assessments and arrears of the organization.

The Group commended the external auditor for the quality of the report and support on the strengthening the internal control framework, on the formulation of country programming framework, and their integration with program priority areas (PPAs) and others.

The Group also encourages the management to implement recommendations of the remaining outstanding recommendations of the external audit in timely manner, giving particular attention to those which are long outstanding issues or time sensitive.

We support the Director-General's proposal of appointment to the member of the FAO Oversight Advisory Committee for an initial period of three years.

Finally, we acknowledge continued collaboration between FAO and JIU on scheduling of the FAO management and administration review.

With these comments, the Africa Regional Group endorses the Finance Committee reports.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, The Republic of North Macedonia, San Marino, Türkiye and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

We will focus our comments, in particular, on the report of the 194th Session of the Finance Committee. We would like to start by thanking the Chairperson of the Finance Committee Ms Imelda Smolčić Nijers for her engaging and efficient leadership of the Committee.

There are couple of remarks to make. Overall, we welcome the report. It addresses several important issues that need to be strengthened to further improve governance, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of the FAO.

We fully share the Committee's appreciation for the Report of the External Auditor for 2021, both regarding the unqualified audit opinion and for the valuable long form report. Based on this, we agree that the Council should forward to the Conference the draft resolution by which the Conference will adopt the Audited Accounts.

We encourage the FAO management to address and implement the outstanding recommendations by the external auditors and the Oversight Advisory committee. In particular, to strengthen the internal control framework to address systemic weaknesses and ensure clarity in formulation and integration between the Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) and the Strategic Framework and the Programme Priority Areas (PPAs), in order to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) targets and achieve Agenda 2030.

We encourage the FAO management to prioritize the development of procedures for handling allegations of misconduct against executive heads and to identify the appropriate legal instruments to implement the Joint Inspection Unit's recommendation.

With these remarks we endorse the reports of the Finance Committee.

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

First of all, the Asia Regional Group would like to extend its sincere appreciation for the excellent work made by the Finance Committee under the outstanding leadership of the distinguished Chairperson, Ms Imelda Smolic.

We would also appreciate FAO management's efforts to address various challenges relating to FAO's Financial Position and Oversight.

Among the three reports prepared by the Finance Committee, we would take up the 194th Session's report since it was held for intensive discussion and thorough examination on FAO matters.

We wish to highlight some pertinent points from the report, which are not covered by the other Agenda Items of this Session of the Council:

With regard to the Financial Position of FAO, the Asia Group notes with appreciation that FAO's liquidity is expected to be sufficient to cover operational needs through the end of this year.

In this regard, we recognize that FAO's cash flow health is depending on the timely payment of assessed contributions and wish to draw Members' attention to the recommendation by the Finance Committee, which urges Members to make payments of assessed contributions in time and in full.

With regard to the FAO Audited Accounts for 2021, the Asia Regional Group notes with appreciation that the financial statements are prepared in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS).

The Asia Regional Group also supports the external auditor's recommendations and encourages management to ensure their implementation within the time frames suggested by the external auditor.

Bearing in mind the quality of the audited accounts, unqualified opinions and recommendations made by the external auditor, and the thorough examination made by the Finance Committee, the Asia Group is pleased to endorse the Draft Conference Resolution on FAO Audited Accounts 2021, as is described in paragraph 12 of the Finance Committee report.

With regard to the oversight issues, the Asia Group would like to quickly touch upon each of 4 items.

First, regarding FAO Oversight Advisory Committee Membership. The Asia Regional Group welcomes the nomination of Mr Honore Ndoko as a new member of the Advisory Committee and endorses the recommendation made by the Finance committee on this matter.

Second, regarding Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) recommendations on Whistleblower Policies and Investigation Function. The Asia Group endorses the Finance Committee's conclusions on this matter and expects a further update on progress to be presented to the Spring 2023 session of the Committee, and preliminary procedures to be considered at its autumn 2023 Session of the Committee.

Third, regarding JIU review on FAO Management and Administration. The Asia Group commends continued collaboration between FAO and JIU on this matter, and notes with appreciation that JIU indicates that the resumption of the FAO Management and Administration Review is placed on its preliminary list of topics for 2023. We are looking forward to receiving the updates on this matter, in particular the finalization of JIU's Programme of Work for 2023.

Fourth, regarding the implementation of recommendations made by the external auditor, the Oversight Advisory Committee, and the Finance Committee. The Asia Regional Group highly evaluates the progress on the implementation of recommendations so far and encourages Management to implement the remaining outstanding recommendations in a timely manner, with appreciating OIG's effort to identify and prioritize outstanding high-priority and high-risk OIG recommendations.

Following the Asia Regional Group joint statement, I would like to make Japan's national statement. Four points, which, basically, I mentioned at the Finance Committee.

First, the financial position of FAO. While appreciating the ensured short-term liquidity, Japan is concerned about the mid- to long-term deficit of FAO due to the unfunded staff-related liabilities, in particular, after looking at the decreased value of long-term investment portfolio which was set aside to fund staff-related liabilities, decreasing by USD 130 million in just half a year.

Japan would like to encourage the management to seriously continue its efforts to review the options on how to address the underfunding of staff-related liabilities.

Second, Audited Accounts of FAO. Japan would like to highlight one figure, the net asset of FAO in 2020. It was reported as USD 700 million last year. However, it was restated as USD 2 200 million this year. This is due to the change of accounting method, it is appropriate, but a billion level of difference has taken place in the accounting report.

However, this was not explained by the management in an explicit way, although the net asset is one of the most fundamental financial data. It was just written down in the accounting report in a technical manner, as business as usual.

We sometimes talk about transparency. Japan considers that just putting information on the website or in the voluminous documents is not real transparency. Real transparency is sincere communication, on how to explain important issues in an understandable manner. Of course, this is not an easy task, but it is worthwhile pursuing this challenge through mutual efforts and cooperation between FAO management and Member Countries.

Third, JIU recommendation on Whistleblower and investigation function. Japan expresses its disappointment about FAO's delay of the examination on this matter, lagging behind other UN agencies. Japan sincerely requests the acceleration of the examination on this matter, hoping that a good function will be established in the future in order to demonstrate FAO's good governance.

Fourth and final, JIU Review on FAO Management and Administration. Japan appreciates the progress, which has been made on this matter. However, the reality is still remaining. The reality is that FAO has not undertaken JIU review for 20 years. Japan sincerely hopes that the schedule of this review will be set in 2023 and that the result of the review will be utilized for further improvement of the FAO governance.

Mr Benjamin ROSS (Australia)

Australia congratulates the Chairperson and the Committee Members for the successful convening of the 192nd, 193rd and 194th Finance Committees and we are pleased to endorse, in full, the recommendations and conclusions presented to the Council.

In addition, as we did under the agenda item 7, as a Member of the Finance Committee, Australia takes this opportunity to highlight the current constructive and collaborative relationship between Members and the management, and we underscore the need for this to be nurtured and maintained. We consider this will be crucial over the coming biennium as we inch closer to 2030 and the pressure on delivering the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development mounts; undoubtedly bringing with it tough conversations on organisational governance and financial matters.

In this regard, we highlight the following three points from the 194th session:

We welcome FAO's confirmation that the FAO has confirmed in writing its willingness to reschedule the Management and Administrative Review at the earliest convenience of the Joint Inspection Unit.

We look forward to reviewing options identified by management to address the underfunding of After Service Medical Coverage liabilities; and finally

In general terms, we thank the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and the External Auditor and their teams for the commitment to improve the functioning of the Organization and we highlight the importance of addressing outstanding recommendations in a timely manner.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

The United States joins consensus in endorsing these three Finance Committee Reports. We appreciate that the Council Committees reoriented their Reports to clearly state the Items for Council decision and endorsement. It is useful and it helps us as a Council.

During the Finance Committee Sessions, we called on Management to focus our efforts to address unfunded liabilities. We congratulate FAO on its financial position, specifically the increase in net assets. Surplus for this period increased as a result of revenues from voluntary contributions.

On the recommendations of the External Auditor, we commend the progress made on closing recommendations and urge FAO management to continue efforts to close the outstanding recommendations.

We were very happy to hear the update from the Legal Counsel and the Inspector General on the progress made in the establishment of appropriate formal procedures for the investigation of complaints of misconduct by FAO's Director-General should any such complaints be made, in line with clear and longstanding recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit.

We look forward to reviewing the draft of procedures reflecting FAO's governance structure and existing legal framework in the fall of 2023.

We were also pleased to hear of FAO's continued willingness to cooperate and collaborate fully with a management administrative review, once it is scheduled by the Joint Inspection Unit next year.

In turning to World Food Programme; recognising that the matters relating to the Finance Committee's Sessions 192 and 193 have been previously addressed by the WFP executive board at its annual and second regular Sessions, we support endorsement of these Reports by the Council.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Valoramos el cuantioso trabajo realizado por el Comité de Finanzas y los informes producidos, así como también el liderazgo de mi colega y hermana rioplatense, Ms Imelda Smolcic.

Quisiera destacar las recomendaciones del auditor externo, en particular, la sugerencia de continuar fortaleciendo el marco de control interno tanto en la Sede como en las oficinas descentralizadas, la formulación de los marcos de programación país y su integración con las esferas programáticas prioritarias y las metas de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS).

También quisiera agradecer la información actualizada que ha sido provista sobre el estado de las recomendaciones presentadas en los informes de la Dependencia Común de Inspección (DCI), y alentar a la FAO a proseguir reforzando el trabajo con otros organismos especializados del sistema de Naciones Unidas, a fin de contar un enfoque de aplicación armonizado para los procedimientos formales de investigación, que tenga en cuenta el Marco Jurídico de la Organización, en el entendido de que contar con procedimientos e instrumentos apropiados legitima y fortalece la gobernanza de la FAO.

En la misma línea, consideramos relevante que la FAO continúe colaborando con la DCI, a fin de programar adecuadamente el examen de la gestión y administración de la FAO, que redundará en un beneficio para la Organización y todos los miembros.

Por otra parte, tomamos nota con satisfacción las consideraciones del Comité de Finanzas sobre el Fondo de transformación para Cambiar Vidas, que sin interés de reanudar debates que ya hemos sostenido en la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA, creemos es esencial para que el PMA pueda desplegar todo su potencial de acuerdo a la total dimensión del mandato del PMA, acordado por todos; mandato que contiene la dimensión primordial y prioritaria de salvar vidas, pero al mismo tiempo de cambiar vidas siempre que ello sea posible.

Damos la bienvenida este tipo de iniciativas para profundizar su trabajo en el nexo humanitario-desarrollo-paz. En ese aspecto, debo decir que ello permitirá quebrar los compartimentos estancos entre emergencia humanitaria y asistencia al desarrollo.

Con lo expresado, esperamos que el Consejo haga suyas las recomendaciones del Comité.

M. Michel LEVEQUE (France)

La France souscrit à la déclaration prononcée au nom de l'Union Européenne et de ses États Membres.

En complément des commentaires formulés par Tchèque, nous souhaitons rappeler l'importance de la transparence financière dans la gestion de l'Organisation. Ce principe s'applique aussi bien aux initiatives lancées par l'Organisation comme *Main dans la Main* ou *Un pays, un produit prioritaire* (OCOP), qu'aux grands événements organisés par celle-ci comme le Forum Mondial de l'Alimentation (FMA). Si nous saluons le succès de cette semaine et sa contribution à la visibilité de l'action de la FAO, nous souhaitons que le Secrétariat indique à ce Conseil quel est le coût et le financement du FMA et ses répercussions budgétaires ; nous souhaitons également recevoir des informations sous la forme d'un état financier détaillé. Cela est d'autant plus nécessaire que nous comprenons que l'intention du secrétariat est que le forum soit pérennisé et organisé chaque année désormais. Nous soulignons à cet égard, comme l'UE et ses États Membres l'ont indiqué dans la procédure écrite à propos du calendrier de 2023, que la tenue du forum ne doit pas se faire au détriment du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale (CSA), qui doit se tenir à l'occasion de la Journée mondiale de l'alimentation, conformément à la demande des Membres du CSA en 2007, et comme c'est la pratique constante depuis.

De manière générale, nous encourageons vivement la FAO à mettre en place un portail public d'information financière, sur le modèle d'autres organisations des Nations Unies, par exemple à l'ONUDI ou l'UNESCO, parmi bien d'autres, qui fournirait de manière moderne, claire et accessible l'ensemble des informations concernant le financement volontaire des projets de la FAO et leurs bénéficiaires. Cette transparence accrue est d'autant plus nécessaire que le modèle de financement des activités de la FAO a largement évolué ces dernières années, avec des contributions volontaires constituant plus de deux tiers des ressources de l'Organisation. De même, une information financière améliorée est nécessaire concernant les contributions obligatoires, sous la forme d'un « *honour roll* » public actualisé en temps réel, comme en dispose la qualité-totalité des agences des Nations unies, à commencer par l'ONU elle-même.

Enfin, nous remercions la FAO pour ses informations concernant la reprise de l'examen de la gestion et de l'administration de la FAO par le Corps Commun d'Inspection (CCI). Comme nous l'avons souligné lors du dernier Conseil, cet examen indépendant permettra d'améliorer l'efficacité du travail de la FAO, ce qui bénéficiera à toutes les populations que l'organisation soutient. Sa tenue au plus tôt en 2023 est donc un objectif prioritaire.

Mr Thomas John KELLY (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

The United Kingdom thanks the Finance Committee and its Chairperson for its critical oversight function regarding FAO and also in World Food Programme (WFP) matters.

We note the views and recommendations of the Committee on matters considered by the June and November WFP Executive Board sessions, including WFP's Management Plan for 2023-25.

We very much appreciate the clear Report provided by the Finance Committee in its 194th Session dedicated to FAO. We endorse the Committee's recommendations including on the audited accounts.

We note the unqualified audit opinion and welcome progress made on the Statement of Internal Control and commitments to continue to improve its structure and content. We look forward to updates on this as well as the strengthening of the Internal Control Framework at FAO Headquarters and in its Decentralised Offices.

We would like to emphasise the Committee's point on the importance of the External Auditors' recommendations on the formulation of Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) and their integration with programme priority areas and Sustainable Development Goal targets. As we have said before, this is important to demonstrate results and to strengthen and develop partnerships.

FAO's result framework for this biennium rightly integrates country level work, so we would like to hear more from FAO on plans and timing for addressing these recommendations.

Since I have mentioned CPFs I am not going back to the previous language we have just discussed on the conclusions, those have been agreed, but I do think it is a pity that FAO does not have a more straightforward approach to publishing CPFs. Other UN agencies do it.

Going back to the Mexican Ambassador's point, we need to start to implement these strategies; the Strategy on Climate Change, the Science and Innovation Strategy and we know that we need to develop partnerships to do that. We will need to work and deepen our engagements with the private sector to do that, to attract that funding. How are we going to attract these people to work with FAO and to work with us on implementing the Strategies if they do not know what FAO plans to do in country A, B or C? I do not understand that.

Going back to my comments, we also endorse the Committee's conclusions on the restoration of voting rights for Members in arrears. We thank the Independent Chairperson of Council for his work in leading extensive consultations and look forward to these being concluded ahead of the next Council.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK) delegation wanted to take this issue later but I am mentioning it now when I have the floor to save time. We want to thank you, Chairperson, for the work that you have done in leading these extensive consultations and look forward to these being included ahead of the next Council in terms of the restoration of voting rights.

Finally, in line with the suggested action by Council set out in the Report, the (UK) notes the Committee's considerations, including on the welcome update of the management and administrative review, and we look forward to the rescheduling of this with the Joint Inspection Unit's work as soon as possible.

Mr Abdul Rahman ABDUL WAHAB (Malaysia)

Malaysia aligns itself with the Joint Statement of the Asia Regional Group delivered by Japan.

Malaysia commends the excellent work carried out by the Chairperson of the Finance Committee and the Committee Members. Malaysia welcomes the report which addresses several important issues which needs to be strengthened to improve governance's transparency, effectiveness and accountability despite the challenges posed by conflicts, climate change, and COVID-19 pandemic.

Malaysia recognizes that FAO's cash flow health depends on the timely payment of assessed contributions and appreciates the report of the External Auditor for 2021, both regarding the unqualified audit opinion and for the valuable long-form report. Malaysia appreciates external auditor's professional assessment and valuable recommendations for improvements in administrative budgetary procedures and encourages measures taken to implement the recommendations by the external auditor. Malaysia welcomes FAO's fruitful efforts in internal controls and encourages Management to continue to strengthen related efforts. Malaysia also encourages FAO to continue exploring alternative funding modalities to support Country Programming Framework (CPF).

Malaysia applauds the work on strengthening the ethical outlook of FAO, including those of the report of the update on the status of recommendations presented in the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) report, *Review of Whistleblower Policies and Practices in United Nations System Organizations*, and JIU Report, *Review of the State of the Investigation Function*.

Finally, we highly appreciate the update on the scheduling of the FAO Management and Administration Review by the JIU and place great hope that the review can be implemented within the stipulated timeframe and look forward to receiving regular updates on its progress.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

We appreciate the hard work of the Finance Committee, its Chairperson, and its Secretariat, noting the complexity and importance of their task. We take particular note of the important progress achieved on the restoration of voting rights and on Joint Inspection Unit related issues, including the scheduling of FAO's management and administrative review.

Canada is pleased to endorse the 194th Finance Committee Report in full.

Ms LI Xi (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China aligns itself with the statement made by Japan on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We agree with the statement by the Asia Regional Group.

We are satisfied with FAO's financial situation, especially its liquidity position. We acknowledge FAO's efforts in ensuring the approval of Technical Cooperation Programme projects and the expenditure level despite the pressure of the pandemic and encourage the management to continuously explore solutions for the underfunded staff related liabilities for review by Members.

In addition, we also acknowledge the achievements of FAO in increasing voluntary contributions and encourage the Management to further enhance partnerships.

In the meantime, we encourage FAO to submit the 2021 Audited Accounts to the Conference.

Mr KIM Hyungsik (Republic of Korea)

The Republic of Korea (Korea) is aligning itself with the joint statement of the Asia Group which was delivered by Japan.

We want to make some comments regarding the financial position of the Organization stated in the Report of the 194th Session of the Finance Committee. The Republic of Korea welcomes the Committee's review mentioned, in that operational costs can be covered until the end of 2022, considering the payment trend of contribution. Korea supports the Committee's call for timely and full payment of the contributions by all Member countries.

However, Korea would like to stress that many countries have difficulties in securing budget for their contributions due to global inflation and economic slowdown. Taking this into account, we would like to encourage FAO to use the regular budget in more efficient ways.

In particular, we would like to encourage FAO for consideration on choice and concentration by setting priority among projects, improvement of efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation, prevention of overlapping investments through cooperation among Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) and enhancing synergy effects among the projects.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

Pakistan aligns itself with the statement delivered by Japan on behalf of the Asia Group. In addition we have some brief comments on one aspect of the Audited Accounts and that is the Statement on Internal Control submitted by the Director-General.

Chairperson, we note with appreciation the Director-General's comprehensive Statement on Internal Control included with the financial statements. And this statement is important as he is responsible and accountable for the article C of the Internal Control system. We commend Management for having put in place an effective mechanism and process outlined in paragraphs 4 to 10 of the Internal Control Statement to enable the preparation of the Director-General's Statement.

As a result, the Statement on Internal Control has been prepared based on a thorough and organization wide review of internal controls by managers as well as recommendations of FAO's internal and external oversight mechanisms. We compliment Management for putting in place this important process because a sound and effective system of internal control ensures the integrity of financial and accounting information and promotes accountability and prevents fraud and errors. It can help improve operational efficiency by improving the timeliness of financial reporting and by assisting managers achieve desired results through effective stewardship of the Organization's public resources.

Mr Mina Rizk ATTIA RIZK (Egypt) (Original Language Arabic)

I would like to align myself with the statement made by South Africa on behalf of the Africa Regional Group. I would also like to express our consideration for the efforts of the Finance Committee, particularly the efforts made by Her Excellency the Ambassador who chaired the Committee and whose work led to these conclusions.

We support all of the recommendations and decisions without a single exception.

We have two observations; we have looked at the state of liquidity of the Organization in the Regular Programme as well as for contributions by Member Nations through 31 December 2022 and we urge

countries to pay their arrears so that the Organization can implement its work programme, particularly when it comes to addressing the impacts of COVID-19 and climate change.

We would also like to praise the quality of the Report of the External Auditor as well as the quality of the Financial Statements based on International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

The Russian Federation would also like to thank Ms Imelda Smolcic for the effective organization of the work of the Committee. We note the high effectiveness of the functioning of FAO in the area of financial management, budget management, and taking into account the recommendations of Bodies of internal and external control in order to optimise the Organization's work.

The Russian Federation supports the recommendations of the Report of the Finance Committee, and we would like to raise a couple of points.

In terms of administrative and budgetary activity of FAO we feel it is very important to follow a single, agreed United Nations (UN) system-wide approach to achieve unity in the Organization. It is dangerous to have decisions taken by different elements of the system of the UN.

Given this, we are in favour of the need for an integrated universal approach for problems of the accumulated after-service staff related liabilities. That point is discussed at the General Assembly of the UN and we feel that that is the platform for a shared consensus-based approach to resolve the situation, including at FAO.

I would also like to share the recommendations of the Finance Committee when it comes to developing a coordinated and single UN wide approach to FAO when it comes to the Director-General of the Organization. It is important to take into account the intergovernmental nature of FAO's existing mechanisms for investigation, in particular ensuring that they are objective and unbiased.

We welcome the efforts of the Secretariat to agree upon new timelines for reviews of the system of the Joint Inspection Unit's Management and administration. We have a positive view of the open and constructive cooperation on this area between the Management of the Organization.

Sr. Miguel Jorge GARCÍA WINDER (México)

Primero, quisiera expresar mi agradecimiento al Presidente de este Comité. Sra. Imelda Smolcic es un placer siempre trabajar contigo y es un honor. Segundo, quisiera expresar mi agradecimiento a la administración por su apoyo y a todos los Miembros del Comité de Finanzas. Siempre las discusiones que tenemos son enriquecedoras y aprendo mucho de esto.

Me resulta un poco extraño hacer mi intervención porque México es Miembro del Comité de Finanzas y comentar sobre lo que ya comentamos en el comité pareciera que no está en la línea de lo que he venido pidiendo. Quisiera compartir con el honorable Consejo dos ideas fundamentales o dos reflexiones que México hizo en las sesiones del Consejo.

La primera tiene que ver con el tema de pagos atrasados. Aquí, consideramos que este tema requiere un análisis profundo para saber con certeza las causas de estos retrasos y desarrollar estrategias especiales para cada caso, pues asumimos que existen diferentes razones por las cuales los países no pagan. Algunas tal vez no tengan los recursos, otras tal vez no tengan los mecanismos y otras, simplemente, quizá no pagamos porque sentimos que FAO no es importante. No lo sé, pero necesitamos una estrategia y una conversación seria y abierta sobre este tema que, me parece, está faltando.

Es importantísimo tener una conversación transparente con los países de ingresos medios, pues estos países están invisibilizados en casi todas las discusiones. Finalmente, yo creo que el futuro de esta organización está en las manos de los países de ingresos medios. Si los países de ingresos medios no consideran esta organización importante, el futuro de la organización estará en serios problemas. Entonces, quisiera invitar al Consejo que tengamos una discusión profunda y seria de este tema.

El otro tema de relevancia que tratamos en el Consejo tiene que ver con el tema de las contribuciones voluntarias. Nuevamente aquí es importante. Seguimos con que es importante hacer una revisión

detallada y desapasionada sobre este tema. ¿Cuál es el impacto en la operación de FAO? ¿Cuál es el impacto en la transparencia en el uso de estos recursos? ¿Cómo podemos aprovecharlos mejor?

Estos dos temas los pusimos en la reflexión del Comité. Los quiero poner en la mesa de este Consejo porque son temas que, en mi opinión, impactan el quehacer y el futuro de la Organización.

CHAIRPERSON

I do not have any other speakers on my list of the Council so I give the floor to Chairperson of the Finance Committee for some remarks, also on all the compliments you got for the several Committee meetings you organized, held, and chaired.

Sra. Imelda SMOLCIC (Presidente del Comité de Finanzas)

He seguido con atención el debate de los Miembros y he tomado nota de las palabras. Agradezco de corazón las amables palabras que han dirigido hacia mi persona y la conducción de mis trabajos, así como a los Miembros del Comité. Simplemente puedo agregar que los períodos de sesiones del Comité de Finanzas han sido realmente fructíferos y, ya que consideraron cuestiones cruciales a las que se enfrenta la Organización, quiero expresar mi aprecio a la Secretaría del Comité, por un lado, por su asistencia en nuestras deliberaciones. A los Miembros del Comité y a la Administración por contribuir desde el principio a un diálogo genuino con los Miembros para un fortalecimiento de los trabajos del Comité.

CHAIRPERSON

I now turn the floor to Mr Laurent Thomas, Deputy Director-General, to reflect on some of the remarks and, certainly, questions.

Mr Laurent THOMAS (Deputy Director-General)

I would like to thank all of the Members of the Council for the guidance received, which strengthens the guidance we have received from the Members of the Finance Committee.

We share the views of the Members of the Council with a very strong position for the External Audit of the Organization, including with regards to what could be expected from a well-managed organization, the unqualified auditor opinion on our account.

We also fully agree with the recommendation made by our oversight, the External Auditor, the Inspector General of FAO, the Oversight Advisory Committee of the Organization and the need for FAO's management to continue to strengthen its risk management and its internal control addressing systemic weaknesses in this regard.

This also includes the need to prioritize action, addressing long outstanding and priority auditor recommendations and agreed actions, but also recommendations with regards to allegation of misconduct.

We share the views that much is still needed to be done. We are in a stage of maturity of ongoing progress; we are not where we would like to be.

FAO has been developing and strengthening its corporate environment for managing risk and internal control: we have established the appropriate policy frameworks and the appropriate governance mechanism. This has been recognised by our oversight Bodies; in a public statement now attached to the External Auditor's Report Statement of Internal Control, the Director-General acknowledged that he considers that the risks had been managed properly, based on the Report received from the senior executives of the Organization. This is another progress in this regard.

We believe that FAO will be in a position to continue to progress on these matters following the result of the ongoing review by the Office of the Inspector-General of our enterprise resilience management capacity.

With regards to the liquidity situation of the Organization, I reiterate the statement made that we have sufficient resources to cover the need of delivery of the Organization and until year end and beyond, but we will continue to intensify efforts to call on Members having outstanding contribution to provide.

With regards to the unfunded staff-related liabilities, we will continue to dialogue with the Finance Committee; a number of options have been explored and this is done in close consultation and dialogue with those United Nations entities, as many of the solution have to be system wide.

With regards to some specific comments that were debated at the Finance Committee on the asset situation of the Organization, I can confirm that this was due to a change of accounting method to ensure that we would be compliant with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), but not a real financial problem or budgetary problem, otherwise we would have had an unqualified opinion.

But we have taken the guidance received from Finance Committee Members very seriously. We will make sure that we can progress on this question of perception of the need for improvement in terms of transparency of communication of information including in financial matters, something that was raised by several delegations.

That is the main comment I will make, otherwise the other points were reinforcing recommendations that were included in the Report of the Finance Committee at its 194th Session.

CHAIRPERSON

I noticed at least two or three delegations asked for a more detailed Report on the cost and results of the World Food Forum; perhaps I can give the floor to Mr Máximo Torero on that.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

We are currently working on assessing all the costs that were incurred. They were very small because most of the work of the World Food Forum is based on volunteer work, but we will have a briefing on those details that were requested so that people and Members can know exactly how it was spent.

CHAIRPERSON

With that we have concluded our deliberations on Item 9. I now continue with the draft conclusions which will be put forward to you on the screen:

30. The Council reviewed the Reports of the 192nd (1-3 June 2022), the 193rd (27-28 October 2022) and 194th (7-11 November) Sessions of the Finance Committee, except for *Restoration by the Conference of voting rights of Member Nations in arrears in the payment of their financial contribution to the Organization*, which was taken up under a separate Agenda Item, and:

- (a) endorsed the recommendations of the Finance Committee to:
 - i. recommend the Draft Resolution for adoption by the Conference of the FAO Audited Accounts for 2021, as included in *Appendix D* to this Report, and as reproduced in paragraph 12 of the document *CL 171/9*; and
 - ii. endorsed the appointment of Mr Honoré Ndoko as a member of the FAO Oversight Oversight Advisory Committee for an initial period of three years.

31. In addition, the Council endorsed the conclusion of Finance Committee on:

- (a) the Financial Positions of the Organization; and
- (b) the Update on the status of recommendations presented in the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) Report, *Review of the Whistleblower Policies and Practices in United Nation System Organizations* (JIU/REP/2018/4) and JIU Report, *Review of the State of the Investigation Function: Progress made in the United Nations System Organizations in Strengthening the Investigation Function* (JIU/REP/2020/1).

32. The Council also noted the Finance Committee's considerations on:

- (a) Progress Reports on the Implementation of Recommendations of the External Auditor and the FAO Oversight Advisory Committee; and
- (b) the Update on scanning of FAO Management and Administrative Review by the JIU.

33. With the above observations, as stated in paragraph 30, the Council endorses the recommendations of the Report.

Now we go to the first paragraph, the *chapeau*. Can we agree to the *chapeau*? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (a). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to paragraph 31. Can we agree to this paragraph? I do not see any objections.

Then I go to paragraph 32. Can we agree to paragraph 32?

I do not see any objections. Then we go to paragraph 33.

I do not see any objections.

With this we have concluded Agenda Item 9.

Item 10. Report of the 117th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (24-26 October 2022)

Point 10. Rapport de la cent dix-septième session du Comité des questions constitutionnelles et juridiques (24-26 octobre 2022)

Tema 10. Informe del 117.º período de sesiones del Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos (24-26 de octubre de 2022)

(CL 171/10)

CHAIRPERSON

We go to Agenda Item 10, *Report of the 117th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters*, which was held from 24 to 26 October 2022. You can find the document in CL 171/10.

An introduction by Ms Alison Storsve, Chairperson of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters, has been circulated to you.

Introduction to Item 10: Report of the 117th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (24-26 October 2022)

Ms Alison Storsve, Chairperson of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters

During the 117th Session held from 24 to 26 October 2022 in a hybrid modality, the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM), after having considered the relevant documents prepared by the CCLM Secretariat, makes specific recommendations for decision by the Council on:

- the promulgation of the FAO Policy on Intellectual Property Rights;
- the proposal to amend the Constitution of the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and Mouth Disease (EuFMD); and
- the implementation of Recommendation 7 of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) Report, Review of the state of the investigation function: progress made in the United Nations system organizations in strengthening the investigation function (JIU/REP/2020/1).

The CCLM considered the activities of the Development Law Branch; and the role of the Governing Bodies of the Organization, in particular the Council Committees, in the Organization's formal decisionmaking process and the role of informal consultations, having regard to the FAO Basic Texts. It brings to the attention of the Council for its endorsement, its conclusions regarding these items.

Finally, the CCLM considered the update on:

- the implementation of the FAO Data Protection Policy;
- the restoration by the Conference of the voting rights of Member Nations in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the Organization;
- the Code of Conduct for Voting; and

- the Review of the jurisdictional setup of the United Nations common system.

The Committee informs the Council of the CCLM's considerations with respect to these items.

CHAIRPERSON

With that, I would like to open the floor to remarks, requests, and suggestions of Members of the Council.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

The Philippines delivers this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

We welcome the Report of the 117th session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM). We endorse the CCLM's recommendations for decision by the Council, notably on the promulgation of the FAO Policy on Intellectual Property Rights; the proposal to amend the Constitution of the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EuFMD); and the implementation of recommendation 7 of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) Report, Review of the State of the Investigation Function: Progress made in the United Nations System Organizations in Strengthening the Investigation Function (JIU/REP/2020/1). We look forward to the Council's endorsement of these recommendations.

We concur with the CCLM's conclusions, for the Council's endorsement, of the Activities of the Development Law Branch; and the role of the Governing Bodies of the Organization, in particular the Council Committees, in the Organization's formal decision-making process, while emphasizing that the Council is the decision-making body and the importance to guarantee the independence, inclusiveness and transparency of the decision-making process of the Council. We underscore the importance of the complementary role of informal consultations to ensure Members' engagement, and encourage the informal consultation's frequency and formality taking consideration of the affordability and feasibility for Members' full engagement, especially for the developing countries, in order to uphold the FAO Basic Texts.

We appreciate the CCLM's consideration of the updates on: the implementation of the FAO Data Protection Policy; the Restoration by the Conference of the voting rights of Member Nations in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the Organization; the Code of Conduct for Voting; and the Review of the jurisdictional setup of the United Nations common system. We hope for the Council's favorable consideration of the actions CCLM plans to take further on these matters.

Lastly, we also welcome the initiative of a new public FAO Law Lecture commemorating the World Food Day annually and FAO's contribution to public international law related to its mandate.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia) (Observer)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States.

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, The Republic of North Macedonia, San Marino, Türkiye and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

We would like to thank the Chair and the Members of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) for their leadership and commitment and we appreciate the CCLM's findings. We wish to reiterate several points.

We welcome the CCLM discussions on the FAO Data Protection Policy and are pleased that the implementation of the Data Protection Policy will stay on the CCLM's agenda. In particular, we take note that the Data Protection Unit (DPU) is being established as an independent office in the Office of the Director-General. We would stress that the DPU should be granted full operational independence in all its activities and call on FAO management to keep members informed on progress made, including on the appointment of the head of the DPU.

With regard to the draft Policy on Intellectual Property Rights, we commend the CCLM's considerations on further aspects to be incorporated into the Policy and we agree with the recommendations made.

We support the conclusion of the CCLM that the proposal to amend the Constitution of the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EuFMD) has respected the procedural requirements set out in the EuFMD Constitution and the Basic Text. Having said that, we endorse the draft Resolution in the Annex to this report.

Fourth, we express our full agreement with the conclusions and recommendation of the CCLM on the implementation of the recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) Report on the Review of the State of the Investigation Function: *Progress made in the United Nations System Organizations in Strengthening the Investigation Function*. We urge management to take immediate steps to implement the recommendation, in particular to submit a draft procedure for further consideration of the Governing Bodies.

Finally, we would like to encourage the work of FAO's Development Law Branch on relevant legislation to ensure effective implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 2030 Agenda to promote agriculture and food systems sustainability, including the system's transformation.

With these comments, we endorse the conclusions and recommendations of the 117th Session of the CCLM.

Ms Kristen PISANI (United States of America)

The United States of America appreciates that the Council Committees, including the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM), formatted their Reports for this Session with clear actions identified for the Council. We recommend endorsing the Items the CCLM recommended for Council endorsement and decision. The United States of America appreciates that the CCLM considered the roles, mandate, expertise, and function of the Council Committees and Governing Bodies -as compared to the status of informal negotiations - and endorses these conclusions.

We look forward to the informal consensus tasked on the restoration of voting rights by the Conference for Members in arrears being considered during the next series of regularly scheduled meetings and for the Council's consideration in spring. We appreciate the progress made in CCLM and Finance Committee discussions on taking forward FAO's development of procedures for the investigation ahead of the agency, as recommended by the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations system (JIU) and undertaken by other similar Specialized Agencies.

Finally, we join consensus in improving the resolution on the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EuFMD) constitutional change.

Ms LI Xi (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China would like to support the intervention made by the Philippines on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We are very happy with the work done by the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) and appreciate, in particular, the activities of the subdivisions of the Development Law Service, which contributed greatly to the development of agrifood systems. We also would like to encourage FAO to continue organizing various events. We also would like to thank the Council for having very clearly looked at the point upon which it is to make decisions. We also appreciate the complementary role of informal consultations.

Also, China would like to underscore that since the Council is a decision-making Body of the Organization right below the Conference, we need to guarantee the decision-making process of Council Members in decision-making, as well as the right to information, and decisions needing to be taken in this manner by the Council.

Secondly, informal consultations should not take the place of formal consultations. Indeed, it is important to guarantee the transparency of consultation documents and the frequency and modalities of consultations, also needing to take into due account the capacities of Members, especially developing countries.

M. Michel LEVEQUE (France)

La France souscrit à la déclaration prononcée au nom de l'Union Européenne (UE) et de ses États Membres et souhaite ajouter ce qui suit.

Nous souhaitons insister sur trois points qui figurent dans le rapport du Comité des Questions Constitutionnelles et Juridiques (CQCJ).

Premièrement, la protection de données et la protection des droits de propriété intellectuelle. Nous saluons l'élaboration par la FAO, en consultation avec les membres, d'une politique relative à ces deux questions. Leur mise en œuvre doit désormais s'appuyer sur des garanties solides d'indépendance et des possibilités de recours effectives. Nous invitons la FAO à rendre régulièrement compte aux organes directeurs de la mise en œuvre de ces politiques.

Deuxièmement, nous souhaiterions de nouveau insister sur l'importance de la mise en œuvre des recommandations du corps commun d'inspection des Nations Unies sur la dénonciation des abus (JIU/REP/2018/4) et le renforcement de la fonction d'enquête (JIU/REP/2020/1). La mise en œuvre de la recommandation 7 du rapport sur la fonction d'enquête est un point essentiel. Nous appuyons donc la demande du CQCJ et du Comité Financier de présenter aux Membres des propositions concrètes lors de la prochaine session des organes directeurs.

Troisièmement, la France appuie tout particulièrement les conclusions du CQCJ au paragraphe 43. Le respect de la prérogative des organes directeurs dans le processus de décision formel est un élément essentiel de la bonne gestion d'une organisation et ce, à travers tout le système des Nations unies.

Par ailleurs, la France appelle la FAO à communiquer aux Membres l'ensemble des accords – cadres conclus par la FAO avec des tiers, organisations internationales, Etats, organismes de recherche, universités, fondations, entités ou groupements du secteur privé, etc., comme par exemple, le Memorandum d'accord que la FAO a récemment conclu avec l'Agence internationale de l'énergie atomique (AIEA). A cette fin, nous proposons que la FAO mette en place un répertoire accessible aux États Membres, recensant ces accords, en particulier ceux qui relèvent du champ d'application des Articles XIII à XV de la Constitution de la FAO.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

We would like to thank the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) for its work and the Chairperson of the CCLM for her leadership on these critical issues, and we appreciate the work of the Secretariat.

Canada is in full agreement with the recommendations made to Council for its Report. Specifically, we support the endorsement of *FAO's Policy on Intellectual Property Rights* as an important piece to guide the Secretariat and its staff for the future. We are also supportive of the Secretariat proceeding with the implementation of Recommendation 7 of the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations system (JIU) Report 2020/01, *Review of the state of investigation function: progress made in the United Nations system organizations in strengthening the investigation function*.

We further appreciate that the CCLM discussed and recalled the role of the Governing Bodies, in particular the Council Committees in the Organization's formal decision-making process, and appreciate the complementary role of informal consultations in building consensus and signalling Members' engagement in the work of the Organization.

While acknowledging that this will be further discussed, we equally note the consideration by the CCLM and the *Restoration by the Conference of the voting rights of Member nations in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the Organization* and the draft *Code of Conduct for Voting* and appreciate the CCLM's readiness to review these documents once reviewed or further advanced.

Finally, Chairperson, we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Secretariat for a successful first edition of the public FAO Law Lecture commemorating World Food Day, which was a genuine success. With this, Canada endorses the CCLM Report.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

The Russian Federation has no objection to approving the Report of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM). We would like to refer to some aspects of the recommendations, in particular the question of approving the investigative function for Directors. We think that it is necessary to work here considering the recommendations from the 194th Session of the Finance

Committee, which is mentioned in paragraph 35 of the Report of the CCLM. The recommendations on this Report were coordinated or agreed.

When discussing the review of the legal foundation of the United Nations system, we note the importance of following a coordinated approach. In this context, we emphasize that the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) is the Body that regulates and coordinates the United Nations' services and has the exclusive authority to consider correcting and to making the corresponding recommendations, including for FAO as part of the United Nations system.

Considering these comments, the Russian Federation is ready to not object to the adoption of the Report.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

The Philippines aligns itself with the statement of the Asia Regional Group on Agenda Item 10, *Report of the 117th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (24-26 October 2022)*. The Philippines appreciates the presentation of the Chairperson of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM), Ms Alison Storsve and the efficient work of the CCLM. On the draft *FAO's Policy on Intellectual Property Rights*, the Philippines supports the CCLM's consideration that the draft of *FAO's Policy on Intellectual Property Rights* be promulgated and implemented early and that this be reviewed and adjusted as needed to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.

On the *Restoration by the Conference of the voting rights of Member nations in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the Organization*, the Philippines appreciates the update by the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) on his inclusive consultations of the topic following the 170th Session of the Council in June 2022. On the *Code of Conduct for Voting*, the Philippines supports the conclusion of the informal consultations to reach a consensus for such *Code*, for adoption by the 43rd Session of the Conference in July 2023.

With the comments above, the Philippines endorses the CCLM's recommendations and conclusions, as well as its considerations in the Report of its 117th Session for the Council's approval endorsement.

CHAIRPERSON

With that, we have concluded our list of speakers on behalf of the Council. I would now pass the floor to Ms Alison Storsve, the Chairperson of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM). She unfortunately could not be present here but thank God we have technology. She asked me to convey the following message to you.

"The Chairperson acknowledged the compliments made by all of you, at least by the Members who took the floor, for the work being done by her and the Committee. I am most pleased to take the advice of the Council in its last Session to provide the Council Committees with clear proposals for recommendations to be endorsed and the approved decision-making in the Council.

The Committee hoped that the Report as now proposed could indeed improve the work of the Council. The Chairperson appreciates the Council Members' thoughtful consideration of these Items."

With that, since there are no questions to the Management, I would like now to continue with the draft conclusions of CCLM. I will put them on the screen:

34. The Council reviewed the Report of the 117th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM), except for the *Restoration by the Conference on the voting rights of Member Nations in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the Organization and the Code of Conduct for Voting*, which had taken up on a separate Agenda Items, and endorsed the recommendations of the CCLM on:

- (a) the draft FAO Policy on Intellectual Property Rights;
- (b) the proposal to amend the Constitution of the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EuFMD) and adopted Council Resolution 1/171 set out in *Appendix E* to this Report, and reproduced in the Annex to the CCLM Report (CL171/10) containing the amended EuFMD Constitution; and

- (c) the implementation of the recommendation 7 of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) Report, *Review of the State of the Investigation Function: Progress made in the United Nations System Organizations in Strengthening the Investigation Function* (JIU/REP/2020/1).
35. Furthermore, the Council endorsed the conclusions of the CCLM on:
- (a) the activities of the Development Law Branch; and
 - (b) the role of the Governing Bodies of the Organization, in particular the Council Committees, in the Organization's formal decision-making process.
36. Finally, the Council noted the CCLM's considerations on:
- (a) the update on FAO Data Protection Policy; and
 - (b) the Update on the Review of the jurisdictional setup of the United Nations common system.
37. With the above observations, as stated in paragraph 34, the Council endorsed the recommendations of the Report.

We now scroll up and we go to hopefully the adoption of the draft conclusions, and we go to the *chapeau*. Can we agree to the *chapeau*? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (a). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (b). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (c).

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

Unfortunately, not all of us are very familiar with the content of the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations system (JIU) Report 2020/01, *Review of the state of the investigation function: progress made in the United Nations system organizations in strengthening the investigation function*. Could the Chairperson explain what Recommendation 7 of the JIU Report is? Perhaps I did not listen to what was being said in detail but I would be grateful for some clarification of what the content of Recommendation 7 actually is.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

The Members will recall this is a matter of some long standing. I am just trying to actually find the exact recommendation for you, but it was a request for the development of procedures to govern the investigation of allegations of misconduct.

Let me not mistake this. If you would not mind, Chair, I would just like to give me a couple of minutes. Recommendation 7 of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) Report requested legislative bodies of the United Nations systems organizations that have not yet done so to develop and adopt appropriate formal procedures for the investigation of complaints of misconduct by executive heads.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we now adopt subparagraph (c)?

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

We have some difficulties with understanding the essence of Recommendation 7 of the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations system (JIU) Report 2020/01, *Review of the state of the investigation function: progress made in the United Nations system organizations in strengthening the investigation function*, and I will explain why.

The 117th Session of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) took place at the end of October 2022 and one of the recommendations in its Report, paragraph 35, read as follows: "*The Committee invited the Council to request FAO Management to prioritize the development of procedures, taking into account the views of the Finance Committee, and encouraged continued consultations with other Specialized Agencies.*"

In considering the previous Agenda Item, we already agreed a recommendation, part of which refers to the development of functions for investigating Directors. The 194th Session of the Finance Committee took place after the 117th Session of the CCLM and the recommendation of the Finance Committee took into account the recommendations of the CCLM at its 117th Session. When we are looking at the Reports of different Subsidiary Bodies of the Organization, we are giving different recommendations in part when it comes to investigative functions.

I will explain what I mean. The Finance Committee encourages a coordinated approach to developing these functions, not rejecting the recommendation of the CCLM, whereas in this wording given here, what we have is that the CCLM – without considering the position of the Finance Committee – talked about developing these investigative functions the Organization.

But, this recommendation was given, in chronological terms, before the recommendation that was then put forward by the Finance Committee. So, from a timing point of view, it would make more sense to support the recommendation of the Finance Committee that was made after the recommendation of the CCLM.

Therefore, our proposal would be to remove the parts of the subparagraph that refer to the development of investigative functions because this recommendation is covered in the Report of the 194th Session of the Finance Committee. I hope that I was clear in stating my position.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Legal Counsel.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

The distinguished representative of the Russian Federation is correct about the chronology. I would take the opportunity to note that the Finance Committee did have and did consider the recommendations of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) as they were addressing exactly the same recommendation.

The Finance Committee's Report indeed reflects that the Finance Committee and here I quote paragraph 20 subparagraph (c), "*support of the recommendation of the CCLM, inviting the Council to request FAO Management to prioritise the development of procedures and to identify the appropriate legal instruments, as well as any amendments required to existing instruments to implement the JIU Recommendation*".

It is my understanding that the new element that is over and above the recommendation of the CCLM that was added by the Finance Committee was in the context of timing. The CCLM requested FAO Management to prioritize and the Finance Committee, while also reiterating the need and importance of consultation without the specialized agencies, which are also in the process of developing procedures of this nature, did request an update at the spring 2023 session and then preliminary procedures for the autumn session. My understanding of these two is that that was the only distinction; the process proposed by the CCLM and supported by the Finance Committee essentially are the same. The Finance Committee took one step further and indicated some timing. That would be my reading of the two Reports.

CHAIRPERSON

Could the Russian Federation agree to the subparagraph as it is on the screen?

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

From the Russian Federation's point of view, it would be correct to make a footnote referring to the fact that the implementation of Recommendation 7 of the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations system (JIU) *Report 2020/1, Review of the state of the investigation function: progress made in the United Nations system organizations in strengthening the investigation function*, should take place considering the recommendation of the Finance Committee at its 194th Session in November 2022.

Without this, there is a situation where we have the same issue being considered through two different Reports and the recommendations of these two different Reports do not agree with each other. Therefore, with your agreement, I will need to look at the heading of this subparagraph.

If you could roll the page and scroll down to the point that we are actually discussing at the moment, please. There is a problem with the sound. After the JIU *Report 2020/1*.

Continues in English

“Taking into account the relevant recommendation of the 194th Session of the Finance Committee as stipulated by paragraph 35 of the CCLM Report”.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to the insertion of this subparagraph so that it links both Reports together? I think that would be, I would say, a wise recommendation. I do not see any objections.

Then we continue with paragraph 35. Can we agree to paragraph 35?

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

En este párrafo ~~punto~~ 35(b) tengo alguna duda técnica que me gustaría compartir con usted, para ver si me la puede clarificar.

En principio, este tema estaba en el Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos (CCLM) como otros asuntos. O sea que, en teoría, no había un documento --fue solo un párrafo--, creo que es el párrafo 43, bajo otros asuntos. Entonces, me parece raro que endosemos una conclusión con esas características y con ese marco de procedimiento. Quizás “examinó y recordó” y lo que sugiero es cambiar el verbo y no decir *endorsed* en el caso puntual de ese punto. Pero me someto a que usted con su experiencia me indique. Porque entiendo que los roles de los órganos, de los Comités, del Consejo, de los Órganos de Gobierno están en los Textos Básicos. Entonces, por ahí se podría tomar nota o, no sé, cambiar el verbo pero no endosar. No me parece que esa sería... No sé cuál es la novedad que aporta el CCLM respecto de esto. Ya está en los Textos Básicos, pero no lo sé.

Le pido disculpas, pero me gustaría que me pueda desasnar.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Legal Counsel.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

I understand the Ambassador of Argentina is querying the use of the reference to *endorse* in light of the fact that this matter was not a standalone Agenda Item. Indeed, this matter, if I recall correctly, in fact, came to the attention of the CCLM because it was discussing a number of outputs or was ready to discuss a number of outputs from informal consultations.

Of course, in that context, it was important for them to be considering what to do with these outputs. So it was considered useful in the light of their role as the Committee responsible for looking at legal and constitutional matters to try and recollect what the respective functions were. They have considered that it would be helpful for there to be a recollection of what was stated in the Basic Texts. This is why they used the word “*recall*”. It is simply restating what in fact is reflected throughout the Basic Texts.

My recommendation would be for the Council to either re-endorse or to recall. It is not establishing a new rule, but “taking note of” would seem to be suggesting that the Council may not be concurring with the recommendation with an observation that simply confirms what the Basic Texts say.

Mr Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

“Recalled”

CHAIRPERSON

Suggestion of Argentina is to replace “*endorse*” by “*recalled*”. Perhaps, the best would be “*furthermore the Council endorsed the conclusions of the CCLM on the activities of the development law branch and recalled the role of*”... and the rest of the text. I think, now, we have to rearrange the subparagraph.

Mr Fernando Jose MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

I agree with the proposal, but I was going to suggest that, after hearing the Legal Counsel, we include “*and the recollection of the role*”. Maybe this could help.

CHAIRPERSON

So we move (a)? And we go to recollection of the role. We make it two paragraphs, so 35 and 36 and we delete end.

Ms Nosipho Nausca-Jean JEZILE (South Africa)

“*Recall*” is maybe better, legally, than “*recollection*”. If the Chairperson does not mind, in the way it is formulated now, maybe it is something to think about, just to rethink.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Right now we have “*recalling the recollection*”, so perhaps the “*the Council welcomed CCLM’s recalling of...*”. That sort of addresses the Ambassador of South Africa’s comment as well.

CHAIRPERSON

Brazil is agreeing, so with that, we have an agreement on paragraph 36. Then I go to paragraph 37. Can we agree to this paragraph? I do not see any objections. And then we go to paragraph 37. I do not see any objections. With that, we have concluded our deliberations and conclusions on Item 10.

Item 14. Restoration by the Conference of the voting rights of Member Nations in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the Organization

Point 14. Rétablissement par la Conférence du droit de vote des États Membres en retard dans le paiement de leurs contributions

Tema 14. Restablecimiento por la Conferencia de los derechos de voto de los Estados Miembros en mora del pago de sus contribuciones financieras a la Organización

(CL 171/19)

CHAIRPERSON

To make sure that we are on right timing with our provisional Agenda, I briefly would like to touch on Item 14, *Restoration by the Conference of the Voting Rights of Member Nations in Arrears in the Payment of their Financial Contributions to the Organization*, because it is an Item for information and that is. It is indeed that the informal consultations have to facilitate the formal process of Governing Bodies.

We arrived in the informal consultations on an informal consensus on the document, but it has now to follow the formal procedures of the Governing Bodies. That means it will go to the next meeting of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) and to the next meeting of the Finance Committee for formal approval and then the recommendation has to be approved by the Council, which we recommended to the Conference to adopt as solution. That as an introductory remark, several Members already referred to it.

I would like to thank all the Members who participated in the intense informal consultations, but we had a positive outcome, and we hope that it will be followed by positive outcome of the formal meetings.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. The intervention will be quite brief. You basically almost said that. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, The Republic of North Macedonia, San Marino, Türkiye, and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

First of all, we would like to thank you, the independent Chairperson of the Council, for holding informal consultations with Members on this important matter. We also thank all Members, not just the ones here but really all Members, for their constructive approach in these consultations which

resulted in reaching an informal consensus on the draft of the Conference Resolution as you just rightly said.

The EU and its Member states are convinced that the Conference's relation will provide valuable and practical guidance for Members in arrears to restore their voting rights at FAO's Conferences. In this regard, we strongly encourage all concerned Members to make full use of these Conference Resolutions.

Finally, we agree with your conclusions on the further steps, that were also mentioned in the recommendations of the 194th Finance Committee held in November. We agree that the procedures, criteria, and the draft Resolution be considered first by the Finance Committee, and of course, Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM), at the spring Sessions in 2023 prior to its consideration by the Council afterwards.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

La verdad es que le pedí la palabra porque este es un tema muy caro. Mis convicciones y, como parte del mundo en desarrollo, siempre hemos tratado de defender el concepto fundamental del universalismo y del derecho de todos los Miembros a poder ejercer el derecho más soberano, el derecho más importante que es el del voto. Y, como siempre lo he dicho en cada una de mis intervenciones, FAO es la organización más democrática que existe aquí en Roma porque, como todos sabemos, cada Miembro tiene la posibilidad de expresarse con un voto y esa igualdad no la tenemos en otras instituciones aquí en Roma.

Es esencial defender este concepto y este principio. Usted, como en otras oportunidades, fue el garante de poder generar un diálogo virtuoso en el cual, con la posición absolutamente constructiva, creo yo, de todos los Miembros hemos logrado un resultado finalmente positivo. Creo que, en definitiva, el punto central que siempre hemos defendido y que creo está capturado en el resultado final de este ejercicio fue que, de ninguna manera, ningún país que quiera ejercer su voto pueda ser restringido hacerlo por razones económicas que son ajenas, en general, a su propia voluntad.

Agradezco a los Miembros y a usted, Presidente, por haber sido el que lideró el proceso de consultas y, sobre todo, porque estamos convencidos de que los resultados de una votación inclusiva son aquellos que tienen mayor fuerza y mayor legitimidad. Y lo que queremos es liderazgos con mucha legitimidad aquí en el Sistema de Naciones Unidas.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

I particularly like to note your role in drafting this Resolution on voting rights and re-establishing those rights. It takes into account the best practices adopted in the United Nations and is a compromise between the participants to the process.

We would particularly like to note that attempts to introduce additional elements to the text that go beyond what was previously agreed can undermine the result that have been achieved. Considering this, we support the recommendation to submit this document for final approval at the 43rd Session.

Sra. Ivania Leon (Nicaragua)

Nicaragua agradece al Presidente independiente del Consejo, a la Secretaría y a todos los Miembros por haber desarrollado un proceso de consultas informales inclusivo, participativo y transparente que ha permitido avanzar en la búsqueda continua del consenso como forma privilegiada para fortalecer a nuestra Organización.

Consideramos que tomando en cuenta la complejidad del entorno internacional sumado a algunos casos a otras circunstancias ajenas a las voluntades de los países que les impiden honrar sus deberes, el proyecto de resolución presentado por una parte interpreta la necesidad de flexibilidad para que los Miembros puedan cumplir con sus obligaciones y, por otro lado, busca asegurar a FAO los recursos tan necesarios para garantizar la ejecución de actividades en su programa de trabajo ordinario.

Instamos a tomar ejemplo de este proceso en otras consultas informales en curso y en el futuro apostando siempre por la flexibilidad entre los Miembros y bajo su liderazgo como método para alcanzar el consenso y lograr nuestros objetivos comunes.

Nuestra delegación recomienda que este proyecto de resolución sea remitido a los órganos rectores pertinentes en sus respectivos períodos de sesiones para su aprobación durante la Conferencia en su 43.º período.

Ms Nadine Rosario M. MORALES (Philippines)

The Philippines delivers this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

We highly appreciate the draft Conference Resolution contained in Annex 1 of the document *CL 171/19, Restoration by the Conference of the voting rights of Member Nations in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the Organization*, on Procedures for the restoration by the Conference of the voting rights of Members in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the Organization.

We commend the leadership of the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council (ICC), and the participation of FAO Members, in the informal consultations in a spirit of full cooperation, to achieve consensus on this matter, as requested by the General Committee of the 42nd session of Conference and the 170th session of the Council, with a view for submission to the Conference at its 43rd session.

We value the untiring commitment of Members, relevant Governing Bodies and the ICC in conducting a thorough review, deliberation and consultation of the process for the restoration of voting rights, as it is important to have a clear and transparent procedure for the restoration of voting rights of Members in arrears under Article III Paragraph 4 of the FAO Constitution.

We underscore that while the Constitution stipulates, and the Member Nations have accepted, the legal obligation to contribute annually to the Organization its share of the budget in the form of assessed contributions, fully and unconditionally in a timely manner in order to secure the financial situation of FAO, the Constitution likewise recognizes that there are conditions beyond the control of Members that put them in a situation where they incur arrears and lose their voting rights.

The draft Conference Resolution presented to us in this 171st session of the Council provides clear guidance to Members in arrears to request restoration of their voting rights by the Conference. Implementation of the procedure will enable the Conference to duly assess and grant the request of Members in arrears, in accordance with the Basic Texts.

In this regard, the Asia Regional Group recommends the submission of this draft Conference Resolution to the 43rd session of the Conference for approval upon review of the CCLM for consistency with the FAO Basic Texts.

Ms Kristen PISANI (United States of America)

The United States of America (US) welcomes the ongoing work of the Independent Chairperson of the Council in assisting Members in reaching consensus on this issue in inclusive informal consultations. As we have stated previously, it is prudent for FAO to have a clear process in place for the constitutionally permitted means for Members in arrears to apply for their voting rights to be restored, provided the circumstances preventing them from payment were beyond their control. We fully support the draft criteria and the text of the draft Resolution which provide practical criteria that are consistent with the Constitution and Basic Texts.

The United States reiterates its support for finalizing and submitting the Draft Conference Resolution for adoption by the 43rd Session of the Conference following review by the spring Sessions of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal matters, Finance Committee and the Council.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

We applaud the conclusion of the informal negotiations on this resolution which adds clarity on this important issue. We support its consideration through formal means per the rules of the Organization and we urge Members to always endeavour to pay their financial contributions to the Organization in full and on time, when possible.

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

Cameroon, Algeria, Tunisia, Mali, and Uganda speak on this Agenda Item on behalf of the African Regional group. As you recalled the matter concerning the procedure for the resolution by the Conference of the voting rights of Members in arrears in payment of their financial contribution to the Organization by the 42nd Session of the Conference.

A mandate was given, and I quote, *“For the conduct of a comprehensive review of the process for reinstating voting right for Member Nations in arrear for consideration by the relevant Governing Bodies including the CCLM supported by a process of informal consultation led by the Independent Chairperson of the Council with the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson of the Regional Group.*

We were part of those Chairperson and vice-Chairperson. *“The Council noted that the parties developed by the Organization over past years of the restoration of voting rights consistent with the approach of most other UN systems Organizations and encourage the ICC to hold a transparent and inclusive informal consultation open to all Members on the subject matter, taking into account the existing rules and procedures, the CCLM’s findings and recommendations and relevant United Nations Bodies General Assembly resolutions as appropriate and invited the ICC to report the progress to the Council at its next Session”.*

This was good to remind us of what the task assigned to us was. We want to appreciate the work that you did yourself, Chairperson, because the African Regional Group participated in all informal consultations that you invited us to and we are happy today that we came to a positive consensus on a Draft Resolution that should go to the next process of the Governing Bodies, starting with the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM.) You knew the position of the African Regional Group at that time and how much we were eager to see that there is no process that may impose a deadline for submission of any plan that is proposed.

After long discussions, we came to a Draft Resolution which we are today happy to support even though it does not fulfil all our expectations. For the sake of consensus and also to be positive, we are happy as a Regional Group to support that it should go through the process you have just described.

Ms LI Xi (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China agrees the Statement made by the Philippines on behalf of the Asian Regional Group. We thank the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) for the multiple informal consultations and align with the comments thereof. Considering voting rights related to the fundamental rights of some directing countries in their participation in FAO matters, we emphasise that the general committee should fully consider the specific situation of the Nations in arrears when reviewing restoration of their voting rights to ensure inclusion.

Mr Abdul Rahman ABDUL WAHAB (Malaysia)

Malaysia aligns itself with the Joint Statement of the Asia Regional Group delivered by the Philippines.

Malaysia highly appreciates the review process with formal consideration by Sessions of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM), the Finance Committee and the Council, as well as informal consultations led by you, the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC).

More importantly, we have carefully reflected the legal aspect of the issue including the absence of explicit provisions in the Basic Texts concerning the implementation of Article III, paragraph 4, of the Constitution. We also noted that proposals have, from time to time, been developed without long term solution.

Following this conundrums, the draft conference resolutions as outlined in document *CL 171/19, Restoration by the Conference of the voting rights of Member Nations in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the Organization* which among others, provide an explanation of the nature of the conditions beyond the Member’s control can serve as a pragmatic long lasting solution in the restoration of voting rights of Members.

In essence, from our perspective the draft conference resolution will do justice to all parties concerned namely the General Committee, the Conference and the requesting Members. Therefore, we

recommend the submission of the draft Conference Resolution to the 43rd session of the Conference for approval.

CHAIRPERSON

We now can conclude this Agenda Item by the following draft conclusions as we always do. I will put them on the screen, and I will be very brief:

43. The Council reviewed document CL 171/19, *Restoration by the Conference of the voting rights of Member Nations in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the Organization*, and:

- (a) commended the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) for his leadership and the open transparent and inclusion consultation on the matter; and
- (b) looked forward to reviewing the draft Conference Resolution at its next Session in April 2023, following its review by the Finance Committee and the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters.

I turn now to the *chapeau*. Can we agree to the *chapeau*? I do not see any objections.

Can we agree to subparagraph (a)? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (b). Can we agree to subparagraph (b)?

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

Regarding timing, from our point of view, it would be correct to initially indicate the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) and then the Financial Committee, as we said earlier. That is because the Financial Committee will meet after the CCLM.

Mr MOUNGUI MEDI (Cameroon)

There is also an element of timing here that we should consider and we would like to suggest that in subparagraph (b), we said “*looked forward to reviewing the Conference resolution at its next Session in April 2023*”. I want to add the idea of the Conference in 2023, I think it is important that we add it here. So, “*looked forward to reviewing the draft conference resolution at its next Session in April 2023 for onwards transmission to the Conference*” or something like that, “*following its review by the...*” and so on.

CHAIRPERSON

I think it is good, because it is positive that we indeed get a glance so that Conference can take the decision. However the Legal Counsel has always as a perfect text.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

It is the Council’s perfect text that I recommend to you at the 170th Session. At the end of the relevant paragraph, you would add a comma, “*with a view for submission to the Conference at its 43rd Session for approval*”.

CHAIRPERSON

Are we missing a couple of words? Can we agree to this subparagraph now? I do not see any objections.

Dear friends, with that, we have concluded our work for today. We started with good news and we will end with good news, because we are right on track on the provisional timetable and we are on our pathway to adopt the Report on Friday which is the wish of all of us (but it depends on the next two days). I really would like to thank you for a hard day’s work. It was an intense day. We covered many elements. Thank you for your spirit in the room, virtually and in person.

Mr Fernando Jose MARRONI DE ABREU (Brazil)

Just to confirm, we are going to approve our Report before 16:00 hours on Friday. I understand we have an unavoidable engagement, everyone. I hope so.

CHAIRPERSON

I will do my utmost but it depends on all your colleagues here in the room, but thank you so much for the hard work, for the spirit.

Mr Mougui MEDI (Cameroon)

I would like to say that I was approached by our Members in the Drafting Committee. They need to get information about the appropriate time so that they can get organized.

CHAIRPERSON

Of course, we always look ahead. It depends on how we do our work tomorrow, but we are aiming to start the Drafting Committee at 9:30 hours on Friday morning. That means that we could finalize our Report before 16:00 hours, but everything depends not on us, but on you.

Thank you for your hard work. We see each other tomorrow, 9:30 hours sharp in this room again. Have a good rest. Meeting adjourned.

The meeting rose at 20:04 hours

La séance est levée à 20 h 04

Se levanta la sesión a las 20.04

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Seventy-first Session Cent soixante et onzième session 171.º período de sesiones
Rome, 5-9 December 2022 Rome, 5-9 décembre 2022 Roma, 5-9 de diciembre de 2022
SEVENTH PLENARY SESSION SEPTIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE SEPTIMA SESIÓN PLENARIA
8 December 2022

The Seventh Plenary Meeting was opened at 09:34 hours
Mr Hans Hoogeveen,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La septième séance plénière est ouverte à 09 h 34
sous la présidence de M. Hans Hoogeveen,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la septima sesión plenaria a las 09.34
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Hans Hoogeveen,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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Item 15. Code of Conduct for Voting**Point 15. Code de conduite relatif au vote****Tema 15. Código de conducta para las votaciones**

(CL 171/20)

CHAIRPERSON

Good morning, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, dear friends, I see many smiling faces. I hope it is not only because you had a very good rest last night and a good sleep. We continue to work in the very positive spirit which was in the room yesterday the whole day. We covered many issues. We are back on track and even yesterday we set a target for finalizing this Council before 16:00 hours tomorrow afternoon.

We are very much used within the UN of setting goals and targets, and we commit ourselves to goals and targets, but often we see we cannot achieve them. But for once, at least here in Rome, let us make sure that we achieve the target of finalizing the Council for no specific reason before 16:00 hours tomorrow afternoon. Let us work hard today again in a positive spirit. I know that I can count on you and let us cover the remaining Agenda Items today so that the Drafting Committee can start its work tomorrow morning, but we will come back to that later.

We start with Agenda Item 15, the *Code of Conduct for Voting*.

As you have seen, at this moment there is no document yet, so I give you information about where we are at this moment. My predecessor and I had many informal consultations on the Code of Conduct and, based on the last informal consultation, we almost have all paragraphs agreed, but there are two remaining Items to be informally discussed and to see whether or not we can informally reach a compromise. And, as I said yesterday, informal consultations are there to facilitate the work of the Governing Bodies.

During the course of January, we will have, hopefully, a last informal consultation to find a compromise on two remaining Items, to arrive at an informal consensus on the Code of Conduct. It can be brought forward to the Committee on Constitution and Legal Matters (CCLM) and then for review by the next Council. That is all at this moment, I have to say.

We worked hard, in a positive spirit of compromise. We have to find a way forward and they are not the easiest Items but I still think I am working on compromised language for the last remaining Items, so that we can conclude our work on the draft Code of Conduct to be reviewed by the CCLM as well as by the Council, and then brought forward to the Conference.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States.

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia, San Marino, Türkiye and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

Firstly, we would like to thank, you, the Independent Chairperson of the Council for holding informal consultations with Members on this very important topic, and all Members for their constructive engagement in these consultations.

The EU and its Members have consistently advocated for a meaningful Code of Conduct, which brings clarity and transparency to voting procedures.

The current draft already contains some essential elements, amongst them the absolute secrecy of the vote, transparent vote counting and a reference to the best practices in the UN. This is very good basis for the way forward.

We support the continuation of informal consultations in the coming months, focusing on the outstanding issues, so that this Code of Conduct for Voting can be submitted to the respective FAO Governing Bodies for consideration and recommendation, prior to its subsequent submission to the 43rd Session of the Conference for endorsement.

Ms Nosipho Nausca-Jean JEZILE (South Africa)

The statement is delivered on behalf of the Africa Regional Group by South Africa and Eritrea.

The Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) continued inclusive consultations on a voluntary Code of Conduct for Voting is appreciated in which the Group actively participated in the spirit of reaching a compromise.

Although the Group recalls that the existing voting procedures of the FAO Basic Texts have resulted in numerous past successful elections, the Group wishes to also recall that in the informal consultations on the voluntary Code, the Group submitted a detailed and constructive proposal outlining the Group's position on the voluntary Code.

The Africa Regional Group believes that the development of a voluntary Code should follow the decisions of the Conference and Council, with a focus on the election process for the position of Director-General of FAO, with no expansion of this mandate. The voluntary Code would also mainly apply to the voting procedures or proceedings during the election day for the FAO Director-General.

Furthermore, the FAO Basic Texts shall not be amended because of the approval of the voluntary Code and its implementation should also not jeopardize the sovereign rights of FAO Members.

The Group notes that since it is envisaged that the 43rd FAO Conference may consider the voluntary Code for adoption, its implementation will only be applicable to the election process for the position of FAO Director-General in 2027, and the voluntary Code should also be the subject of regular review.

In conclusion, with these observations, the Africa Regional Group stands ready to continue working towards a consensus on the voluntary Code of Conduct for Voting.

Ms Nadine Rosario M. MORALES (Philippines)

The Philippines delivers this statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

We took note of the update and appreciate the ongoing efforts of the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) to hold open, transparent and inclusive consultations with Members to reach consensus on a Code of Conduct for Voting for consideration by the 43rd session of the Conference in July 2023, as requested by the 170th session of the Council. We also highly value the active participation and inputs of Members during relevant sessions and informal consultations on the draft Code. We request the frequency and schedule of the future consultations should take full consideration of Members' affordability to guarantee the inclusiveness of the Member's engagement, especially for the developing nations.

We recognize the role of a Code of Conduct for Voting to protect the sanctity and the secrecy of the vote, while recalling the established practices well served the above duties as demonstrated in previous elections pursuant to Rule XII of the General Rules of the Organization. We underscore that any agreed Code should uphold the Basic Texts with no amendment to it.

We recall the agreement reached by the Members as the fundamental principles of the following negotiations, which are as follows: Exclusive and rigorous compliance with the decisions of the Conference and Council. The Basic Texts shall not be amended as a consequence of the Code. No expansion of the mandate agreed to by the Ministers at the Conference. The sovereign rights of Member Countries shall not be jeopardized. Only a text negotiated amongst Members could be put to the Governing Bodies. The Code should be limited to the Secret ballot only without any further expansion. To refer to the Code as a political understanding reached by the Members and not as a binding instrument.

We can support a voluntary Code of Conduct, which is based on consensus reached by the Members, on desirable behavior by Members and candidates nominated by the Members, with respect to the election of the Director-General of the Organization. The Code should be built on the fairness, credibility, openness, and transparency of the process, and the voluntary nature should be underlined.

The Asia Regional Group stands ready to cooperate with all Members, Governing Bodies and the ICC to conclude the informal consultations on the matter with full consideration of all Members' proposal, to reach a consensus on a Code of Conduct for Voting for adoption by the 43rd Session of the Conference of FAO in July 2023.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

We wish for continued success in today's Session. We hope that all participants in today's Session will be successful. We would like to thank the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) and Mr Khalid Mehboob, also, for the work on the Code of Conduct for Voting that went on to 2021. Unfortunately, since 2021, the process of preparation of the document was very lengthy, without yielding any concrete results.

Unfortunately, again, we note this delay was because of excessive ambition from a specific category of countries. As such, we were not able to come to agreement on a final version of the draft, although we were close to it several times. We believe that the draft code of conduct on voting must be voluntary, it must have to do with the process for voting and it must not address any other procedures related to voting.

Based on these principles, we have reached general consensus and we are prepared to participate in continued work on this draft, with mutual respect for countries' positions and based on the principle of consensus.

Ms Kristen PISANI (United States of America)

The United States of America appreciates your ongoing efforts to facilitate the development of a code of conduct for fair elections. The last informal consultation showed that we are close to achieving consensus on this Code. We have the mandate of three FAO Governing Bodies, namely the Committee on Constitutional Legal Matters, Council and Conference, including the highest Governing Body with Conference 42's instructions to undertake and finalize this work.

This voluntary and robust Code of Conduct is important. It looks to the future, improves and strengthens procedures and transparency and FAO elections and codifies some of those strong practices we saw FAO employ during Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) and Committee on World Food Security (CFS) secret ballot elections. FAO can be at the forefront of the UN system in electoral integrity. We look forward to working with our colleagues to finalize the Code of Conduct that will help ensure the integrity of FAO and bring it into conformity with existing practice and many other UN agencies on governance and accountability issues and which must include in-person secret ballot elections.

The United States of America continues to urge finalization of the current draft, reflecting inclusive consultations and discussions, to reach consensus on a code that can be considered at the spring 2023 Council for adoption at the 43rd Conference in June 2023.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

Malaysia associates itself with the joint statement of Asia Regional Group delivered by the Philippines. We highly appreciate the ongoing efforts of the Independent Chairperson of the Council, the open, transparent and inclusive consultation with Members to reach consensus on a Code of Conduct for Voting consideration by the 43rd Session of the Conference in July 2023 and as requested by the 170th Session of the Council. I am happy to see that the consultation has been constructive and close to consensus.

While recognizing the longstanding practice of voting pursuant to Rule XII of the General Rules of the Organization has been working well in protecting the sanctity and secrecy of the vote, we also subscribe to the notion that further pragmatic, but not prescriptive, guidance is required to aid implementation of Rule VII paragraph 10. That is to say that it should not lead to the amendment of the Basic Texts.

To this, as always, we all ardently, in the spirit of reaching consensus on a Code of Conduct for Voting, stand ready to engage in the ensuing consultations and cooperate with all Members and governing bodies leading up to the 43rd Session of the Conference in July 2023.

Ms LI Xi (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China agrees with the statement delivered by the Philippines on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. We stress that the consultation on the Code of Conduct should fully respect the views of all Members

and that, before submitting it to the Governing Bodies for review, consensus needs to be reached. We need to respect the basic text and should not amend the Basic Texts. Secondly, we should respect good practices and FAO's situation.

To avoid risks, we should not innovate for the sake of innovation and we should not blindly follow the practices of other individual organizations. Thirdly, the frequency and approach of informal consultations should fully consider the actual situation and capacity of developing countries and guarantee inclusiveness and transparency.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

We appreciate the efforts to inclusively develop a consensus-based Code of Conduct for Voting. Canada looks forward to concluding the development of that Code of Conduct, recognizing the added value of codifying good practices for the transparency and accountability of the Organization. Solid procedures, like those envisioned for the Code of Conduct, strengthen the Organization for the benefit of all Members.

We must recall not to let perfection be the enemy of good. As many Members will recall, recent elections have been successful and we should capitalize on that positive momentum to crystallize those good practices in a Code of Conduct that complements, rather than replaces in any way, the basic text. We look forward to continuing our engagement on this process, with a view to its conclusion ahead of the next Conference.

Mr Tsutomu KOYAMA (Japan)

Japan is aligned with the statement of the Philippines on behalf of Asia Regional Group. In addition to the key issues discussed in the previous informal consultation referred to during the statement, Japan would like to add that global food security is threatened, as never before, by the multi-layered risks of COVID-19, climate change and conflicts. We are struggling to emerge from the unprecedented perils of this year and those global food crises will continue into next year and beyond.

Given that FAO is the centre of gravity of our efforts to ensure global food security under the multilateral system, the international role of FAO and its Director-General will become increasingly important. Why? All colleagues here appreciate FAO's efforts to address the crisis in accordance with its mandate. It is also true that the international community has high expectations of FAO's leading role on that and therefore demands a high degree of integrity in its governance.

The Code of Conduct for Voting is one of the promising tools to respond to those expectations, as it will ensure transparency in the election of the Director-General next July and it will allow FAO to move forward with the admiration of the international community.

Japan fully trusts on your leadership in guiding the agreement of this Code, in line with previous discussions and hopes that all Members dedicate to the fruitful Code of Conduct.

CHAIRPERSON

We can now turn to the draft conclusions for this Item. You can be assured that what I always try to do is to make sure that we can be as inclusive as we can in informal consultations and taking also, surely, into account limitations which many delegations have when it comes to resources for informal consultations.

I will put on the screen now the draft conclusions:

46. The Council commended the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) on his continued efforts in leading open, inclusive and transparent consultations in order to achieve consensus on the draft text for submission to the 43rd Session of the Conference in July 2023.
47. The Council requested the ICC continue these consultations with a view to a consensus text being submitted to the next Session of the Council, following review by the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters.

With that, I turn to the first paragraph. Can we agree to the first paragraph? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to the second paragraph. Can we agree to the second paragraph? I do not see any objections.

With that, we have concluded this Agenda Item.

Item 16. Participation of private sector observers in sessions of the FAO Governing Bodies

Point 16. Participation d'observateurs du secteur privé aux sessions des organes directeurs de la FAO

Tema 16. Participación de observadores del sector privado en períodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores de la FAO

(CL 171/21)

CHAIRPERSON

We continue to the next Agenda Item 19, *Participation of private sector observers in sessions of the FAO Governing Bodies*. Probably you all know the history of this Agenda Item. In its 99th Session of the Council in 2014, the Council asked the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) to hold consultations with the Regional Groups, with the involvement of Members, with a view to reaching a policy agreement on proposed rules.

Then we had a long period where there were discussions but not a consensus reached. A new element which we had was the adoption of FAO's Private Sector Strategy in 2020 and, based on that, the issue got back on the Agenda. The 170th of the Council, in June 2022, requested the ICC to hold consultations, in particular to elicit from the Membership its interest in developing a permanent observer status for private sector entities and with a view to developing a proposal for approval to the Council through the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM).

We have had a first round of informal consultations done after the summer break and it became clear during the first round of consultations that there are still quite some questions and remarks and suggestions for this Item, and we still have to see the feasibility, possibility, as well as finding a way forward on this issue. That is why we have informal consultations.

Based on the many questions and remarks made, Management and I are working on a note for the Members to answer all those questions and remarks, which would form a basis for further informal consultations. Of course, we cannot predict the outcome of the informal consultations because the issues raised. That is why I said a feasibility, possibility, and a way forward on this Agenda Item. We hope to send this note before the end of the year, so that in the first half of 2023, probably the beginning of February, we can hold another round of informal consultations.

By sending it before the end of the year, there is enough time for all Members to not only study the answers given on all the issues raised during the informal consultation, but also get instructions from capital for finding an answer to the way forward. That means also taking due account of the affordability of all Members to be part of this inclusive consultation.

With that, I would like to open the floor for remarks or suggestions by Members of the Council.

Mr Jack BISASE (United States of America)

Very briefly, the United States of America supports the development of criteria for the participation of private sector entities. We believe the format of these criteria should be roughly consistent with the guidance and terms that govern the participation of civil society. The United States of America appreciates that FAO management and the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) are working to provide Members with additional information and facilitate informal consensus.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

Australia welcomes the development of the guidelines for the participation of private sector observers in sessions of FAO Governing Bodies. The participation of the private sector is an important enabler to help deliver FAO's mandate. As such, the development of appropriate criteria and procedures to guide engagement in Governing Body sessions, in a consistent and considered way, is welcomed.

While we acknowledge that deliberations are ongoing, Australia considers that the proposed guidelines should provide a transparent and logical procedure for assessing private sector participation in a way that upholds the intergovernmental nature of FAO decision-making, in consistency with the Organization's Basic Texts. We welcome the further clarification as to the status of the guidelines' development and we look forward to contributing in future processes to enable its finalization and adoption.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia, San Marino, Türkiye and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

First of all, we would like to thank you, the Independent Chair of the Council, for holding the first round of informal consultations with Members on this topic.

We concur with the continuation of informal consultations in upcoming months to focus on this matter. In this regard, in order to facilitate the discussion, we request that FAO presents a background document addressing questions, remarks and observations raised at the first round of informal consultations by Members, as you already mentioned, well in advance of the next round of informal consultations.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

En primer lugar, la Argentina desea agradecer el trabajo realizado por el Comité de Asuntos Constitucionales y Jurídicos (CCLM) con relación al documento sobre la participación de actores del sector privado en calidad de observadores en los períodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores de la FAO. Entendiendo la necesidad de contar con normas y procedimientos para su participación, ampliando el alcance de la *Resolución 44/57*, y reafirmando la potestad exclusiva de los Estados Miembros para la toma de decisiones.

Respecto a los criterios respectivos para otorgar la condición de observador a una entidad, consideramos oportuno señalar el concepto de instrumentos de colaboración. Debe entenderse en un sentido amplio, incluyendo movilización de recursos logísticos, humanos, de gestión, entre otros, y no solo de carácter financiero, ya que todos los recursos resultan valiosos y fundamentales para poner en práctica el programa de trabajo de la FAO.

Asimismo, y en caso de ser materialmente posible, nos gustaría sugerir la posibilidad de contar con el listado de entidades del sector privado a las cuales se les concede la condición de observador especial con antelación al inicio de las sesiones de los órganos rectores que tienen previsto participar, a fin de contribuir proactivamente con mayor transparencia a la gobernanza de la FAO. No es necesario que recuerde la importancia que requiere el tema del balance regional, y la necesidad de que este tipo de cuestiones sea absolutamente considerado cuando se produce una discusión o un debate sobre esta cuestión.

Estaremos atentos a este debate en el futuro.

Ms LI Xi (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China appreciates FAO's Strategy for Private Sector Engagement 2021-2025. We believe that this strategy effectively enhanced good interaction and effective collaboration between governmental bodies and the private sector and will help FAO mobilize resources as well as revitalizing our organization. However, regarding the participation of the private sector, observers in sessions of FAO governing bodies, we have the following points, the following concerns.

Firstly ECOSOC resolution 1996/31 has already clearly established rules for the attention of the UN advisory body status by NGOs for their participation in UN meetings and for the procedure of submitting written comments. FAO as a specialized agency should naturally abide by this resolution to address the issue of participation in FAO's meetings by the private sector, including NGOs.

Second, currently we believe that according to the basic texts, the governing bodies as an intergovernmental organization, their decisions and resolutions should be taken based on the national realities of all members and of the international agri-food governance needs.

Once we allow the private sector to attend the meetings of the governing bodies, especially meetings regarding the policies, budgets and resolutions, their compositions might conflict with the positions of the members or with the interests of the Organization or might deviate from FAO's purpose and that will challenge the predominant status of the Members and will ultimately undermine FAO's credibility and authority. In practical terms, it will lower the efficiency of the governing bodies on decision-making and will not help FAO timely and effectively respond to global challenges in agri-food sector.

Secondly, for developing countries, their private sectors are not well developed. Therefore, not being able to ensure inclusive participation of the private sectors of all countries will constitute challenges for geographical representation and equity and will take a toll on FAO's neutrality.

Finally, the current strategy and regarding the reviewing of the qualification of the private sector, only the results are made public whereas Members can now take part in the review process, this cannot ensure transparency and fairness in the process and will pose great risks to governing bodies' decision-making. We believe that the current strategy for the engagement of the private sector and relevant mechanisms have already provided values and channels for FAO's cooperation with the private sector and afforded the private sector a lot of possibility of participation. Therefore, their participation in the governing bodies' meetings lacks legitimacy and necessity.

Based on the abovementioned points, we encourage FAO to continue work with the private sector, guiding by the strategy. Well, we believe that the private sectors cannot be participating in governing bodies' meetings as observers. We believe it is not necessary to consult on this matter anymore.

Mr Anatoliy SHATKOVSKYY (Canada)

Canada supports transparency and accountability at FAO. Having external parties as observers is a step towards this. The UN and FAO have been clear – close cooperation and collaboration with the private sector is essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Canada supports, in principle, the involvement of private sector observers and we look forward to future informal consultations on this issue to bring further clarity on how best to put this into practice.

Ms Yael RUBINSTEIN (Israel)

Israel welcomes the participation of the private sector in FAO's Governing Bodies and we look forward to further guidance and updates.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

Malaysia welcomes the discussion on the participation of the private sector as observers in FAO Governing Bodies, in the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) and in Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) informal consultations. While recognizing relevance and important value in the contribution of the private sector to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and FAO's Strategic Framework, we would like to highlight the following: the rules and procedures that are to be considered should take into account the intergovernmental nature of FAO decision-making process and this should be maintained.

Global norms tended of policy should continue to be developed without influence from any vested interests. Balanced representation between regional groups and regions must be ensured to ensure inclusivity. Clear procedures must be laid down to differentiate the participation in the close and open sessions. The role of observers in Governing Bodies should not supersede the sovereign right of Members of FAO and, of course, the Members should consider the process of inclusion of the private sector, perhaps in stages, perhaps on an ad hoc basis in the initial implementation.

Malaysia continues to stand ready to engage in future consultations among Members through the facilitation of the ICC, prior to the Conference.

M. Moungui MÉDI (Cameroon)

The Africa Regional Group is trying to consult again to make sure that we have a common understanding of the process that you have outlined.

However, the first idea that we have is that we should agree, first of all, on the principle. We are in favour of democratization and democratization should not shadow the principle of balance of power which we think is essential if we were to accord participation of the private sector in FAO Governing Body Sessions.

Nevertheless, we are open to start thinking about the principle itself, because we do not know what the content of the paper that you are preparing will be, though it will be subject to the response of any survey that will be undertaken early next year. We should be mindful of the fact that we are not yet sure that we have agreed on a principle.

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

I just want to express Japan's position to welcome the informal consultation on this matter.

Mr Purna Cita NUGRAHA (Indonesia)

Indonesia also welcomes discussions on the participation of private sector in the sessions of FAO governing bodies. We would like to stress that the participation of the private sector is already guaranteed in the Basic Texts under the framework of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS). So, as we are going forward with the discussion, we would like to see how we could arrange the participation beyond this existing arrangement.

CHAIRPERSON

I now turn the floor to the Observers.

Ms Stefania COSTANZA (Italy) (Observer)

Italy is an Observer, however, I would like to state clearly that we are ready to give our contribution to the common effort. We think that equity and transparency are key in this matter. We really look forward to the upcoming discussions.

Mr Mina Rizk ATTIA RIZK (Egypt) (Original Language Arabic)

We welcome the discussions under this Agenda Item. We would like to highlight several points. It is obvious that there is no consensus, at least this is what we see now. There is no consensus regarding the future of this process and we do not know whether this will continue or not. So, basically the aim of this discussion is to contribute in a comprehensive fashion to this process. We need to take into account the various views and opinions of Members. That said, we have two points to highlight.

First, we fully support the efforts to bolster transparency within the Organization. This does not mean that all parties should participate in the Governing Bodies' meeting to ensure transparency. There are many concerns regarding transparency within FAO. Therefore, we need to take this into account while discussing this Item and we need to review the various criteria and norms, in addition to the various processes relating to this Item.

Once again, we would like to reiterate the positions of various delegations. FAO is for its Members and any participation from any other party or entity should come through the Members within this Organization.

Mr Arnaldo DE BAENA FERNANDES (Brazil)

It is not an intervention, it is just a question for you, because we already had an informal consultation. Members expressed their views on a proposal. Is your idea for February is to present a new draft of this proposal or is it a technical background information paper that we are going to produce?

CHAIRPERSON

I am not going to present a new draft, because I think what you also hear today, and also in the past, when you look to the long history of this Item, it is a very complex issue. It is a very fundamental issue that needs further discussion and based on the first round of informal consultations, it is clear that we have many questions related to legal aspects, to the aspects you have mentioned today, to

practices in other UN Organizations. A note that we are preparing would be giving that information in the note and based on the note to see what the next steps should be.

I am not predicting any outcome because, as you have seen by the interventions this morning, it is very complex. There is certainly not a consensus yet, so in either way there is a need for more information and based on the technical information, I would organize a new round of informal consultations to see what the next step would or should be. Then, I will report on that in our next Council. But certainly not a new draft for guidelines.

With that, I do not have any other requests for the floor. I would like then to present to you the draft conclusions on this Agenda Item, and I will put it on the screen.

48. The Council appreciated the oral update provided by the Independent Chairperson of the Council regarding his consultations with the Membership on the participation of private sector observers in the Sessions of FAO Governing Bodies.

49. The Council encourages the ICC to continue these consultations and look forward to further updates following review by the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters.

I turn now to the adoption of these conclusions and I go to the first paragraph.

Ms LI Xi (China)

We agree with paragraph 48 and we wonder if the concern we expressed today could also be added in this draft because, as you mentioned, we do not have clear consensus on the necessity and the feasibility of this issue. Also, many regions and countries expressed their grave concern about this issue itself.

CHAIRPERSON

We have at least an agreement on paragraph 48. Then I would suggest a new paragraph before paragraph 49. Give me one moment for making the text.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

Just a point of clarification. The note you mentioned earlier, during your first briefing, will be submitted by the end of this month and it will take into account the observations made by the Council in this Session. Will it also include any changes or updates to the proposed guidelines, taking into account what we discussed today? Or will it be the same proposed guidelines that are on the table for the consultations?

CHAIRPERSON

No, I think we have to go a step back. All the questions made during the informal consultations and the concerns raised, before going into the need for having guidelines. Because we first have to answer the question whether we want to. And that would be the aim of the note, to answer all the questions, to go into the concerns raised and then we will see what the next step will be.

We have now a text and we put it on the screen. My proposal would be,

49. Council Members expressed the need to discuss further the feasibility and desirability of participation of the private sector observers in Sessions of the FAO Governing Bodies, and to ascertain the interest of the Membership in this regard.

Mr Jack BISASE (United States of America)

We were going to propose what we thought was an elegant way to incorporate the divergent views in the room to your paragraph 49.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first deal with the new paragraph 49. Because that is reflecting what was asked by China Then we see what we do with paragraph 50.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

It is a very good attempt to address some of the divergent views that came here. I would also suggest something to start with: “*Noted first the complexity of the subject*”, because I think it is an idea that we should express. You said it yourself and then noted the complexity of the subject. I prefer that instead of “*Council Members*”, we leave the word “*Council*”. Council suggested that Members should agree first on the principle, including the feasibility and desirability of participation.

“*The Council noted the complexity of the subject and suggested that an agreement should be reached first on the general principle prior to embarking on designing a draft working paper*”. Under “*general principle*” we may put a comma and then we add “*including, its feasibility and desirability of participation*”.

CHAIRPERSON

To be correct, because there is already a document before, I think, “*prior to embarking on designing draft guidelines*” because that is what it formally is. Delete the word “a”. Would this be agreeable to the room?

Ms LI Xi (China)

We very much appreciate your work and Cameroon’s proposal. Can we make a slight amendment to the expression? We suggest to change “*agreement*” into “*affirmative consensus*”. We do not know whether it is an appropriate expression. We need help from the Legal Counsel.

First of all, we need consensus on this issue. According to our previous discussion, consensus means the absence of objection. We remember this very much.

However, what has happened in reality is that many informal consultations may go beyond the affordability of many Members, especially for the small missions. So, if they cannot follow this kind of consultation, sometimes their voice and even words can be taken as no objection to this sentence. But, this does not mean a “yes” from them.

What we are trying to address here is that it has to be an affirmative consensus. Unless everybody said “yes”, this is the kind of consensus we need to take into consideration. Considering that this governing body is of an inter-governmental nature, this is quite a critical and principal issue.

CHAIRPERSON

We replace the word “*agreement*” by “*consensus*” and I do hope that we then have a consensus on this paragraph.

Mr Jack BISASE (United States of America)

A couple of suggestions: we would propose including in the beginning, “*some Members of the Council*”.

CHAIRPERSON

We work by consensus so we try to avoid what we had in the past, “*some Members*”, “*many Members*”, “*different Members*”.

Mr Jack BISASE (United States of America)

Understood. Second suggestion: “*Affirmative consensus*” sounds redundant. I think you could strike ‘*affirmative*’ and just have ‘*consensus*’.

Also, the word “*reached first*”, I do not know that you need the word ‘*first*’. The consensus should be reached on the general principles, avoiding prescribing the sequencing.

CHAIRPERSON

Could we agree to delete the words ‘*affirmative*’ and ‘*first*’?

Ms LI Xi (China)

We agree to delete the *'first'* but we think that there is a big difference with *'affirmative'*. One request is nobody says *'no'*. *"Affirmative"* means that everybody needs to say *'yes'*. So, we think this is something we have to keep.

CHAIRPERSON

Is the reflection in the room to maintain? I think the United States of America is nodding. I think with that we have agreement on paragraph 49. Can we then also have agreement on paragraph 50?

Ms LI Xi (China)

Back to paragraph 49, we are wonder whether this kind of affirmative consensus should be reached in the informal consultation, or does it have to be reached in the Governing Body itself – for example in the Council? We would prefer for it to be reached in the Council, because this is deciding whether we should allow them to attend the Governing Body, and the Council is very critical.

CHAIRPERSON

The formal process is that an informal process cannot reach a decision because it has to always go to Council, that is why it is stated in paragraph 50, that it always goes via the Governing Bodies, the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM), and then to the Council. I do not think we have to say that consensus should be written in the Council, because it is in the Basic Texts, and you can have informal consensus but it does not mean anything until you have consensus in the Council. So I do not think we have to expressly mention this in the text, it was also confirmed by the Legal Counsel. Therefore, I do hope that we can maintain this text.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I have no additional comments on this paragraph. I would just have one little paragraph after paragraph 49, relating to the background document which should address all your remarks, comments, questions, etc. I leave it to you when I should read it out.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first see whether or not we have an agreement on paragraph 49.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

I actually pressed the button for paragraph 50.

CHAIRPERSON

Therefore, I think we have agreement on paragraph 49.

I give the floor to the Ambassador of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

The paragraph would be quite simple. We always have the Council I see, so: *'The Council requested that the ICC presents a background document addressing questions, remarks and observations of the Members raised at the First Round of the Informal Consultations, well in advance of the next Round of the Informal Consultations'*.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to paragraph 50?

Ms LI Xi (China)

We welcome the European Union's proposal very much and we agree with this idea. Just one thing, we would also like to include questions made in this Council and not only the questions and remarks made by the first round of the informal consultation. Also, on the last part of the sentence *"in the next round of the informal consultations"*, we have some reservation about whether we should have this informal consultation or not. So, we request to bracket first *'to request'*. We agree with this paragraph,

but we need to answer the questions including those raised in this Council, and secondly “*in advance of the next informal consultation*”).

CHAIRPERSON

Now we have to be absolutely clear, because you put in bracket what I thought was the wish of all Members, to continue the process of Informal Consultations. Otherwise, you ask now the Council to take a decision to come back to the mandate given in earlier Councils to have those informal consultations, and that would mean a decision of the Council – because we have to be absolutely clear, we cannot leave it in the air what the next step would be. So either what we have suggested and I think paragraph 49 was agreed upon, needs of course an informal consultation before going to the Council. So I would like to ask you what do you want to do with what was now suggested by the European Union?

Ms LI Xi (China)

We welcome the note suggested by the European Union, but it is related to the next proposal we are going to make. We request that the informal consultation is discontinued until the consensus was reached.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

The European Union, in principle, has a good idea there, which we can support. However, we are always sceptical about requesting the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) prepare papers because that is not its job. The job of the Chairperson is to Report to the Council. Therefore, I would instead request that the Secretariat to make a summary of the Verbatim Records of today’s discussion, as a reference that may be used by Members. That is what is available. I am not so sure whether the former discussion for the first round and so on are available. What we have today is the Verbatim Records of the discussion that we are having in this Council. So, we can give that job to the Secretariat, to present a summary of the Verbatim of the discussions that we are having, to guide any discussions in the next round of consultation. I think that may be helpful. So, if the European Union permits, we can re-draft their proposal, taking into consideration those two considerations.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

Écoutant mes collègues précédents, et sur la base de la proposition de la République tchèque, au nom de l'Union européenne et de ses États membres, je me demande si on ne pourrait pas simplifier. Ce papier qui répond aux questions et remarques, il doit faire le lien aussi je pense avec le paragraphe précédent. Le paragraphe 49. Donc, nous pourrions commencer par: "In this regard, the Council requested..." On peut aller directement à : "A background document." Si on ne sait pas qui doit le préparer. Ou bien sinon, on dit:

Continues in English

“Requested the Secretariat to present a background document addressing questions, remarks and observations raised by Members.”

Poursuit en français

Comme ça, on couvre à la fois les questions posées pendant les consultations informelles, il y en a eu beaucoup et elles ont été dûment notées, et les questions soulevées aujourd'hui par les Membres. Je pense que c'est plus simple: *"Raised by Members."* And we delete *"raised at the first round..."*.

CHAIRPERSON

This is a very concise text and thank you France for helping this. I see quite a few nodding in the room.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

I think we can go along with the idea proposed by France. That cleans it up. We look forward to receiving such a background document.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

We want to go back to paragraph 49. Is it better if we change the word *'including'* to *'or'*? Because when you say *'consensus on generation principles'* that means general principles for private sector to participate. If you put *'or'* there is also the chance that it is either we want to include private sector or not – the visibility or the desirability. But, we are flexible on which you think is clearer, if it is *'or'* or *'including'*. Just to impart that we are not pre-empting any decisions here.

CHAIRPERSON

I thought we had a consensus on this text and my concern is by reopening it that we depart further from the consensus. I would like to remind everybody about the target you have set for today and tomorrow. So I would like to see whether or not we could maintain the consensus of paragraph 49 because it is clear that by stating that *'including the feasibility'*, it could mean that you will say *'no'* to the participation. But that is up to what you decide. So I think if we say *'or'* it becomes more difficult. So I would ask you to be flexible and to go along with the consensus that we had, to maintain *'including'*.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

I can be flexible with that explanation.

Mr Jack BISASE (United States of America)

Since we are in paragraph 49, the word *'affirmative'*, we are interested in hearing an opinion of Legal Counsel on what *'affirmative consensus'* implies as a phrase, versus what *'consensus'* would imply if it were alone. We are not sure *'affirmative'* is necessary and we are afraid it changes the meaning.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

I would first observe that the term “affirmative consensus” has not been typically used in FAO. FAO normally reflects or proceeds on the basis of the traditional definition of consensus as being “the absence of objection.” “Affirmative consensus” is used in other organizations such as the World Trade Organization and certain bodies of the United Nations to refer to the need for not an absence of objection, but a positive agreement. There is therefore a distinction between the affirmative consensus and consensus in the methodology traditionally used in FAO.

Mr Jack BISASE (United States of America)

Given that explanation our position would be to maintain what is traditionally done in this Body and to stick with the word *'consensus'*. So, we would appreciate bracketing *'affirmative'*.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first go to paragraph 51 and then come back to paragraph 49.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

For paragraph 51, we were concerned that having the following review by the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) was perhaps prejudging what the next few steps would be. So, we would suggest to reformulate: *'the Council encourages the ICC to continue with these consultations and looks forward to further updates at future Sessions'*. If we wanted to, we could note the availability of CCLM to review updates at the appropriate time. But, I think we can also just stop it right there because we do not know yet when there will be something substantive for CCLM to consider.

CHAIRPERSON

The suggestion would be to look forward to further updates, so not *"a further update"* but *"further updates"*.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

I am happy with paragraphs 49 and 50, but on paragraph 51 I would propose to change the word *'encouraged'* to *'requested'* because *'encouraged'* does not seem to give you a clear mandate for continuous consultation.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

We support the suggestion by Canada.

Ms LI Xi (China)

It is a small but fundamental change. We agree with Canada's deletion and agree with Malaysia's change of 'encourage' into 'requests'. But, all requests would be discontinued – this consultation – until consensus was reached.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

Just a point of clarification. How would we reach consensus on this matter? It is stated in paragraph 49 that we need to reach affirmative consensus, but what would the process be for you to reach that consensus? Maybe you can share your thoughts with us.

CHAIRPERSON

If we do not have informal consultations, it means that the Council has to do the consultations, and thirdly, listening to what we are discussing, it means considerable time in the Council to discuss whatever the outcome should be, based on the document.

Normally, we try to facilitate the decision making in the Council, by having informal consultations, but if you ask for it or not, and it is always in the mandate of the Independent Chair to facilitate the decision making in the Council to consult informally with Members for a positive or a consensus decision in the Council.

Therefore, if we want to bring it directly to the Council it is always the prerogative of the Independent Chairperson to facilitate the process before it is discussed to see whether or not a compromise or agreement could be reached. Therefore, for that, you do not have to ask formally for an informal consultations, although it was mandated in three Sessions already of the Council, to have inclusive informal consultations. Because the word 'inclusive' has also a meaning, and that is more than only the Council Members. However, it is up to the Council to decide on that.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

For paragraph 51, we feel strongly that the verb should be 'continue' and not 'discontinue' because I think it has been clear from our discussion this morning that more exchange, more information and more answers to the questions are necessary. We see no other feasible means to get to that, other than having consultations.

I think the point on 'until consensus has been reached' we have noted your style and your approach which is always to seek consensus through informal consultations, relentlessly. Therefore, we strongly believe that the informal consultations are always driving towards consensus. Thus, that specificity is not necessary. I think paragraph 51, as it stood "...ICC to continue these consultations and look forward to further updates", accurately reflects what we believe would be a useful way forward. We will still come back to paragraph 49 at the time appropriate.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

I understand the idea put forward by China, but I hope what I am going to say will not be overlooked. I believe that what Canada just said makes sense, because this is an informal consultation that the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) will be conducting. The role of the Council at this time is to encourage those consultations or to request the ICC to continue those consultations. During those consultations no decision will be made.

Therefore, the idea of once consensus has been reached– I hope China will concur with me – is that the consensus is decided in the Governing Bodies, not during the informal consultations. We can do away with the decision to discontinue until consensus is reached. But, I leave it to China to look at it differently, without prejudging what they may think. So, 'the Council requested the ICC to continue these consultations and look forward to further updates' and we leave it at that.

If we have to discontinue it, we have to come back to the Council. Only the Council can decide to discontinue it.

Mr Mina Rizk ATTIA RIZK (Egypt)

I do not want to necessarily engage in this debate between ‘*continue*’ and ‘*discontinue*’. My concern regards the structure of the remarks we have. If we are discussing continuing or discontinuing consultations, we need to see on what we are consulting. We are having the consultation on the document that we are requesting in paragraph 50. The Council requested a background document, and that is why this consultation should be pending to the document.

That is why I recommend that we merge both paragraph 50 and 51 and we say that pending the background document that we have generously prepared by the ICC, then we can start the consultations. Until we see the document, we cannot engage in a consultation process, because what would we be consulting on? We want to see what other information we have, where are the questions, the remarks, the observations, as prepared by the ICC, and then we can engage in a consultation process. Otherwise, I do not think serves the purpose of this Agenda Item to jump into conclusions regarding continuing or discontinuing the process.

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

To put it simply, usually we have a background information paper, then we have an informal consultation, whether or not we can go to consensus, we can go to find another solution, we should discontinue the discussion.

Regardless of the position of every Member supporting, neutral or negative, we need informal consultation - what we can do, what we should not do – otherwise we lose our path. Especially about the affirmative consensus, I am not sure how to certify such a situation. For example, even in the case of the general agreement at the informal consultation with regard to the registration of voting right, I am not sure whether or not it was affirmative or something.

I would like to have a very much shortened sentence, just to get the information and have an informal consultation and then we should discuss about the next step. It was the notion the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) suggested at the beginning of our discussion for drafting this sentence. I think we should put things more simply, the text itself is complex. Sorry, I do not have a concrete proposal over the drafting but we are a little bit going too much into the detail for projecting the future discussions.

So background paper, informal consultation, and consider next step. That is a possible solution I think.

CHAIRPERSON

I see the list of speakers growing and that means the time is also passing, and that means our target is getting out of reach. Let me propose the following for paragraph 51. “*The Council requested the ICC to continue the informal consultations based on the background document as referred to in paragraph 50 and looked forward to further updates.*”

Sorry, Secretariat, I said, “*The Council requested FAO to continue the informal consultations based on the background document as referred to in paragraph 45*”. We have to maintain the bracket continue/discontinue, because that was the proposal of China, and then clean up the rest of the text which I have now scratched out, so that we have a clearer text on the screen.

Mr Winston PINNOCK (Bahamas)

I just wanted to make a quick observation and probably there is a question in this as well. I do not understand how there is any harm to the Council and its authority by seeking to disallow the Independent Chairperson to be able to have informal consultation on any issue. On this specifically I did not get what the purpose of China’s proposal; based on my understanding it is clear that any consultation will still come back to the Council. Is that correct? I did not see the point and I think it should be left as was.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I think that the latest proposal on paragraph 51 is good. It follows the sequence of the logic of paragraph 49 and 50. We need a space where to discuss general principles, the background requirement as well. Therefore, informal consultations are the right tool how to do that, so if anybody

can suggest whatever other tool to do that, I am really curious – but I think from the representations it is the right vehicle to provide Members with the opportunity to discuss it.

On the ‘*affirmative*’ I think it is a bit superfluous because again there is kind of logic, consensus is always unanimous agreement – that is first – and should be reached. It suggests that it is actually affirmative in its sense. Of course I concur with the explanation of Legal Office on this matter. So I would say we don’t need this particular adjective in this regard.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

I would like to support your suggested solution for paragraph 51, but maybe we could delete the word ‘*based*’ - so our understanding is we continue the consultation on the background document that you will be presenting; or when you say ‘*based*’ is there something else from the background document? I am in your hands, what do you plan to subject to consultations?

CHAIRPERSON

My meaning was based on the background document. We first have the background document and then we have the informal consultations; so to avoid the discussion on whether we have to have a background document. Because that is why everybody said let us first have the background document and then we have informal consultations. That is what I refer to in this paragraph, that is why I think it is necessary to have the word ‘*based*’ into this text.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

Is it the background document that will be subject to consultations?

CHAIRPERSON

We first have a background document that reflects everything that is asked for now for the Council, and then we have the consultations.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

So the document will be circulated – if that is the case, my suggestion was to remove ‘*based*’.
“*continue the informal consultations on the background document referred to in paragraph 50*” if that is acceptable.

CHAIRPERSON

I am flexible but it could give room at least for new interpretation. I suggest to put ‘*based*’ also in brackets. The Philippines, it could be that the informal consultations could go about whether or not you have a background document, so I would say to make clear that we first have the background document and then have the consultations. Because we can place background somewhere else but I think ‘*based on the background document*’ means that we have the background document and based on that we have the informal consultations. That is what I tried to capture by saying let us first have the background document and then have the consultations.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

I am flexible there too Chairperson.

Ms Nosipho Nausca-Jean JEZILE (South Africa)

I think the Members’ concerns are covered in paragraphs 49 and 50. Paragraph 51 becomes a repetition. If it was possible for Members to consider on 50 in this regard, ‘*the Council requested a background document and observations, or addressing observations raised by Members and requests the ICC to consult thereon.*’

Then, it simplifies it because on paragraph 51 we are saying the same thing we are saying on top, as well as adding the consultation. So if that was acceptable we just amend paragraph 50 a little bit and do away with paragraph 51. “*...And observations raised by Members and request the ICC to consult thereon.*”

Therefore, that is our request because that would simplify the complexities I hope.

CHAIRPERSON

I always admire to get text shorter. I still have seven speakers. It means if we do not get flexibility in the room, we spend the rest of our morning on this and it means that we will not arrive today at concluding our Session in order to give the Draft Committee the chance to look at the Report tomorrow morning. I would like to ask everybody to work again in the spirit of consensus and to find a way forward on this. Because it is clear, it is a very complex issue, it needs further discussion, and then we see where we can arrive at.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

Perhaps I can try to see how we can reach a consensus. I think the concern expressed is that they want to ensure that the consultation, the first consultations held, will be indicative of the positions of the Members. Therefore, I think based on that the original paragraphs 49 and 50, which you clearly articulated for me, is acceptable.

On paragraph 51 perhaps we can use to pinpoint is, “both 49 and 50 paragraphs will be an important factor in the next consultation”. So my suggestion would be ...“*request ICC to continue informal consultation based on observations expressed by consultation on paragraph 49 and the background document referred to in paragraph 50.*” Therefore, that would be able to alleviate the concerns of countries wanting to decide whether they want to continue or discontinue, and then of course the views expressed during this Council.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

Firstly, I would like to support the continuation of informal consultations. I think it is a requisite to be able to move forward.

Secondly, I would like to support connecting the informal consultations with the background document. I can support either of the text formulations that are presented at the moment. I had also developed a proposal to link paragraph 51 with paragraph 50 – very similar to what South Africa has put forward – I will not table that now.

Finally, I would also like to support the removal of the word “*affirmative*”.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us see whether or not we can conclude this Item.

Ms LI Xi (China)

We always want to be constructive and flexible, we can agree with the continue of this issue and we also always appreciate your leadership on all kinds of consultation. Moreover, our biggest kind of concern is still about we know you are trying your best to be more inclusive and transparent as possible.

We find the issue, the problem of this informal consultation is still that some countries – it is not whether they want to have these things or not, or that they want to attend this discussion or not – but simply because they cannot afford to attend all the informal consultations. So here, we say yes, we agree with this formal consultation, more inclusive, more transparent.

It will be a good way, but we will insist on the affirmative consensus, so that no country will lose the chance to say ‘no’ if they cannot afford. For example if they miss the one or two informal consultations. Therefore, this is what our idea is. So in conclusion, yes, we agree with the ‘continue’ of the consultation, but we would insist on ‘affirmative consensus.’”

CHAIRPERSON

At least we have solved one issue. As I said, but perhaps we can reflect where we do, although it is in the Basic Texts, because if you say ‘*consensus*’ should it read ‘*the consensus should not be in the informal consultations*’. Because the informal consultations is paving the way for consensus in the Governing Bodies.

Even if there is no consensus or not everybody could participate – although I see there is an instruction to make sure that everybody can participate – it is up to the Governing Bodies to decide to find consensus. Whatever we do in informal consultations, even if we have informal consensus, it does not say anything about consensus in the Governing Bodies because there either we have an agreement of all, or there is no agreement.

Because if a Member says ‘*I cannot agree*’ it means that there was no agreement, there was no consensus; it means that the Council has to take the next step, whether or not we continue consultations on a consensus, or - what we should avoid as much as possible – to have a vote. I think let us not go into that direction.

We could say ‘*suggest that consensus should be reached on the general principles*’ and then say ‘*consensus should be reached in the Governing Bodies*’ – because that means consensus both in the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) as well as in the Council. It is clear that the informal consultations can do a lot but not with consensus because consensus has to be reached in the Governing Bodies. And consensus in the Governing Bodies means that the practise in FAO is that everybody has to agree, nevertheless a disagreement means no consensus and then we have to take a decision on what should be next.

Would that not be a way out as a compromise, to avoid the word ‘*affirmative*’ because before you know we set a precedent for next elements when we say ‘consensus’ that every time we have to specify is the consensus or an affirmative consensus. However, clearly what stated by China is that we need consensus meaning everybody in the Governing Bodies has to agree.

Ms LI Xi (China)

You made your point very clear. The issue is that we agree that all the informal consultation, the consensus reached is informal and is impossible to get informal affirmative consensus there. However, in the Governing Bodies we would still request an affirmative consensus.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

I have to say it is remarkable, I thought this would be a quick Agenda Item. Therefore, the fact that we are still here discussing it, is surprising to me. A few observations: Inspired by the Ambassador of South Africa I think paragraphs 50 and 51 can usefully be combined, but we would suggest that the consultation that is proposed there be not just about the background document because the point was that we wanted to reach agreement on general principles and on feasibility and desirability. And that may not be contained in the background document.

Therefore, for paragraph 50 we would propose the text up until ‘*observations raised by Members, requested the ICC to pursue further consultations, and looked forward to further updates.*’

That suggests there that the consultations be inspired by or include the background document but can go beyond that.

With regard to the debate on paragraph 49, we believe ‘*affirmative consensus*’ is not something that is reachable, that has not been a precedent and we would strongly feel that consensus is the basis upon which we should work and Members can choose and speak for themselves in terms of their agreement or not, or their absence of objection.

A concern with the proposal to have it come back to ‘*in the Governing Bodies*’ at this point I think that would roll us back to having no informal consultations before we get to the next Council. So perhaps a next option here would be suggested that ‘*an informal consensus should be reached on the general principles, including the feasibility and desirability of participation.*’

Because as we have understood the conversation this morning, we want to come together as a group to understand what the problem is we are trying to solve and understand what the proposed path forward would be – and then that will come back to the Governing Bodies, having had that conversation. However, with the formulation that consensus should be reached in Governing Bodies, it means either we discuss this for the rest of the week or in April we have long discussions with nothing intercessional.

So we would suggest that ‘*informal consensus should be reached*’ – and then not include ‘*in Governing Bodies*.’”

CHAIRPERSON

I will withdraw my proposal “*in Governing Bodies*” because it did not meet consensus and it brings us further away.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

S'agissant du 50 et 51, nous serons flexibles, et nous pouvons travailler sur les différentes propositions. S'agissant de l'ajout du mot "affirmatif" devant "consensus", il s'agirait d'une nouvelle notion, que nous ne connaissons pas ici, dans cette Organisation. La Conseillère Juridique a mentionné l'Organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC), mais c'est très différent, je suppose que s'est prévu dans leurs textes. Ça n'est pas le cas ici. Ce n'est pas le cas aux Nations Unies. J'avoue que nous ne comprenons pas quelles seraient les implications. Donc, après avoir consulté nos juristes, nous ne sommes pas favorables à l'ajout du mot "affirmatif", et nous souhaitons en rester au mot habituel "consensus".

Mr Mina Rizk ATTIA RIZK (Egypt)

We would like to endorse the proposal that came from the Ambassador from South Africa, that is originally the suggestion from Egypt, to merge paragraphs 50 and 51, but I think she was much wiser than me, and could come up with a language that we think we can live with.

I did not want to open again paragraph 49, but because I see this is still pending approval from the Members, I think my concern is not regarding ‘affirmative consensus’ but rather regarding ‘suggested’, we prefer using the word ‘requested’, that ‘affirmative or consensus’ based on earlier on. We can live with *suggested*’ but we prefer *requested*’.

Mr Winston PINNOCK (Bahamas)

I was going to make the point, but I will still emphasize what France made, which is that we got legal definition as far as the use of the word ‘*affirmative*’ not being in the language of this Body. And with all of the wrangling over phrases and words, I am just wondering if China wants to move the process along, I do not know why we would want to insist to add another word to have a fight over. I think it is a matter that there should be some compromise on. Therefore, I am appealing to my Council Members to give on that, I think it would be reintroducing a new terminology for us to have a battle over.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

I will address two points. The first one is to applaud the Ambassador of South Africa for suggesting that we merge paragraphs 50 and 51. As you see in the new paragraph 50 now we are not making reference to any other paragraph, and that may help the Secretariat because in editing the Reports they do not need to name or give the paragraph. If the paragraph changes up, then you have to change everything. Therefore, we prefer to have it on paragraph 50 and we are okay with what France suggested.

Now, the second item I want to address is the word ‘*affirmative*’. I think we need to approach China but I would like to put on the table a quote from another field, I think it was a quote and I hope my memory is correct and I will quote it properly from one colleague of the United States. He said something like this: “*I am coming from a country where English is the first language. And to my recollection I am not so sure that consensus is an elastic word.*”

So usually, we avoid to put adjectives behind ‘consensus’. But we need to approach China and see if there could be any flexibility on that, since we are discussing here informal consultations. I believe that if well explained, China will join the consensus to leave affirmative.

CHAIRPERSON

Before I go to China let us first see whether or not we could have agreement on para 50 and 51. Because I see that several countries are supporting the proposal of the Ambassador of South Africa.

Can we agree to the proposal that paragraph 50 “...in this regard Council requested the background document addressing questions, remarks and observations raised by Members, and requested the ICC to consult on...” Could there be agreement in the room, so that we then delete paragraph 51 and we have a simple paragraph 50. Is there any objection to that? I see none. Then we have at least the text cleaned.

Ms LI Xi (China)

First of all extreme appreciation to the Ambassador from South Africa who saved us at the end of the day as always. We accept the merging of paragraphs 50 and 51.

For the ‘*affirmative*’ we accept the deletion. We always want to be constructive and flexible. I just want to explain a little bit that the reason why we proposed this is that we want to try our best to be as inclusive as possible, so that, for example, like one day Bahamas or Congo are not present for one Council or maybe not a Council but an informal consultation, you will always not be ignored. Therefore, this is what we initially proposed, that is why we wanted this word affirmative.

On the other hand, we noticed that many Members made a very good proposal, saying that because affirmative, this word is used in World Trade Organization (WTO) and in other organizations instead of a common language in the Governing Body here in FAO, so that we need to uphold our tradition here. We want to delete this affirmative.

I agree on this principle very much. We accept the deletion of ‘*affirmative*’ and we kindly request that this principle should be upheld in our following consultations for the legal structure adjustment or any negotiation, consultation or mechanism of FAO, we still stick to our established practise on the Governing Body and in our history, instead of following only one or two single organizations.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much China for your explanation and background of your position and for your flexibility. We are almost there now and I think I agree with the proposal, perhaps we should indeed say ‘*and requested*’ – that makes it stronger that we need a consensus by all, instead of ‘*suggested*’. I think with that we have an agreement now on this Agenda Item. I do not see any objections.

Item 17. Status of implementation of decisions taken at the 169th and 170th Sessions of the Council

Point 17. Suite donnée aux décisions adoptées par le Conseil à ses cent soixante-neuvième et cent soixante-dixième sessions

Tema 17. Estado de la aplicación de las decisiones adoptadas por el Consejo en sus períodos de sesiones 169.º y 170.º

(CL 171/LIM/3)

CHAIRPERSON

Let us now speed up again in a good mood and continue our work now with Item 17, *Status of implementation of decisions taken at the 169th and 170th Sessions of the Council*. The Council is invited to note the information which is given in document CL 171/LIM/3, which is front of you.

I open the floor for any remarks by Members on this Item.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States.

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, The Republic of North Macedonia, San Marino and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

First of all, we thank FAO for updating Members on the status of the implementation of the decisions taken at the 169th and 170th Sessions of the Council.

The EU and its Member States take note with appreciation of the various detailed briefing notes and publications provided by FAO on the impact of the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against

Ukraine on global food security, accessible to the public on the FAO website. We invite FAO to also update the July 2022 “*Note on the impact of the war on food security in Ukraine*,” in line with the commitment to give quarterly updates. Furthermore, we thank FAO for the brief evaluation of the impact at the regional level. For a better understanding of the differentiated impacts, we invite FAO to provide more detailed data specifically targeted to each region.

Secondly, we appreciate the information concerning FAO’s ongoing “*Response to COVID-19: Building to transform*.” We welcome the extension of the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme to July 2023 and ask for clarification on which actions are being taken within the seven key priority areas.

Thirdly, concerning the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) 2021-22, we note FAO’s advocacy for unearmarked or lightly earmarked voluntary contributions and highlight the importance of aligning the various new financial approaches with the Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Finally, the EU and its Member States see the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub’s Food Systems Solutions Dialogues as a useful platform to exchange views on the undertakings following from the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS). This format could also be helpful for preparing for the 2023 Stocktaking event.

Mr Asmerom KIDANE TECLEGHIORGHIS (Eritrea)

Eritrea, Angola, and Burkina Faso take the floor on behalf of the African Regional Group regarding the status of implementation of decisions taken at the 169th and 170thth session of the Council, and Eritrea is honoured to present the statement.

Primarily, the Africa Regional Group commends FAO, the Secretariat and the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) for organizing the 171st session. The 169th and 170th session, which were taken on 8 April 2022 and from 13 to 17 June 2022 respectively, the decisions prepared with paragraphs and status of implementation of each decision, where some of them not yet completed and need consultation in the future.

However, the pertinent issues considered on the 170th sessions of the Council are programme implementation report 2020-2021, FAO’s response to COVID-19, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, Governance of FAO’s statistical data activities and their alignment with the cross-cutting FAO policies on protection of data & intellectual property rights and restoration of voting rights of member nations in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the organization. The decision at the 169th session of the Council was mainly focussed on impact of the Ukraine-Russia conflict on global food security and related matters under the mandate of the Food and Agriculture Organization.

Therefore, on the programme implementation report 2020-2021 the Council highlighted the value to the organization of unearmarked and lightly earmarked voluntary funding and requested an analysis of the role and effects of earmarked contributions in delivering the strategic framework 2022-2031 and the FAO strongly supports for unearmarked or lightly earmarked voluntary contributions through several specifically tailored funding modalities, including the special fund for emergency and rehabilitation activities. To that extent the council requested FAO to continue to monitor the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic on global food security, including analysis of the impact on agrifood systems.

The council requested FAO to engage in inclusive consultations with members regarding its work, including actions on supporting members in implementing their national food system pathways. The Council decided, management to continue improving its activities on governance of FAO’s statistical and clarify the linkages between the internal structures addressing data protection and statistics governance. On issues related to restoration of the voting rights of member nations in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions the Council requested the ICC to continue consultations with members to achieve consensus before submitting an updated version of the Draft Code of Conduct for voting to the relevant Governing Bodies.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Canada welcomes the update on the implementation of previous decisions of the Council, and we appreciate the progress made to date on implementation. Taking note of the important debate, which took place on the first day of this Council, we underscore that the global food crisis, and more specifically the repercussions of the war on Ukraine, will have long-lasting implications for the work of the organization.

In this regard, the conclusions of the 169th Council remain particularly relevant. Recognizing that many of these are listed as ongoing, we look forward to their ongoing implementation and future updates in this regard, including through the regular programme policy cycle of the Organization to update key documents. Furthermore, we note that prompt sharing of information remains one of the most powerful tools of the organization to sustain its leadership on these key issues.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

On the first day of the work of this Body, we called on all of us, and I think this understanding was reached, that we would try to resolve our problems related to the conflict in Ukraine in the framework of Item 3 of the Agenda.

The statement made by the representative of Czechia on behalf of the European Union (EU) States unfortunately showed that these countries do not so much want to melt ice as they want to build new walls. Some of these countries are already doing this in practice. After the Berlin Wall, which was knocked down, new dividing walls are being made, including for the development of agriculture and the economy.

I would like to call on the participants of this discussion, and I understand quite fairly our colleague, the distinguished Ambassador of Mexico, mentioned this, that we need to have at least a minimum amount of time to resolve practical issues that are on the Agenda for the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN), and not try to, once again, use the microphone in this platform for political statements, otherwise, I am afraid, we will have to sit not until Friday evening, but simply end our Session with the Report not being adopted.

Sra. Natalia ESCOBAR (Chile)

Chile toma nota con aprecio de la información detallada respecto del estado de la aplicación de las decisiones adoptadas por este Consejo para los periodos 169 y 170.

Solo quisiéramos referirnos a un punto que hace relación al Centro de Coordinación y al proceso de seguimiento de la Cumbre de sistemas alimentarios que celebramos en el año 2021. Sobre el particular, Chile quisiera solicitar mayor información respecto al proceso de evaluación que se ha señalado para el año 2023, especialmente en relación a si existen avances de información en cuanto a su fecha y modalidad de celebración.

Mr Tsutomu KOYAMA (Japan)

Japan expresses appreciation to FAO's efforts to implement the decisions taken by the Council. In particular, Japan would highly appreciate FAO playing a leading role to fight against the global food crisis since the creation in 24 February. In response to FAO's efforts, Japan has also been promoting support to address the global food crisis.

Based on the rapid response plan and update from FAO, Japan launched FAO project to support the recovery of the Ukrainian agriculture production in April, and the expansion of grain storage capacity in July. The project formulation required the full cooperation of all Ethics Office (EO), FAO Ukraine team, Liaison Office with Japan (LOJ) and other relevant FAO staff. Japan would like to thank them again.

For your information, last week, as an emergency response to the current food crisis, Japanese government decided to formulate 17 projects totalling more than USD 29 million through the FAO in the Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Sahara Africa and Asia region. The Japanese approach focuses not only on the amount of money involved, but also, on how much outcomes the project will generate. In this regard, Japan would like to thank the Resource Mobilization and Private Sector Partnerships Division (PSR) and FAO Country Office for their dedication to obtain the project.

Ms Kristen PISANI (United States of America)

The United States thanks FAO for its response to the list of Council Member decisions in the 169th and 170th Councils. In addition to the Flagship State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World publication, we appreciate FAO's updates to disseminate market information and outlook, including through the agricultural market information system, the FAO Food Price Index, crop prospects and food situation Reports, and periodic informational webinars.

As we know, beginning in February 2022, FAO provided regular and updated analyses of the food security and economic consequences of Russian Federation's war against Ukraine. We note that FAO's analysis shows that this war is affecting global agricultural markets during a period of already high and increasingly volatile international food and input prices.

Furthermore, that the regions most at risk of undernourishment due to the war are Sub-Saharan Africa, the Near East, and North Africa. There have been limited updates since July 2022. As noted on Monday, we support FAO publishing national level assessments and quarterly Reports on the impact from Russian Federation's war against Ukraine in the coming months. We encourage FAO to follow up on its analysis, review and assessment as requested in the decisions and conclusions of the 169th, 170th and now 171st Councils.

We are pleased to learn that FAO's data coordination group held its first two meetings this year. We encourage swift drafting and adoption of the group's terms of reference. We strongly support the six priorities for the data coordination group's programme of work, and we look forward to regular updates from this group. As this group is in its early days, we also invite the executive data champion, Chief Economist, to convey to the Council any challenges or needs to ensure the Governance Unit (DCG) is empowered to improve internal coordination and alignment of FAO's statistical activities with the relevant policies on data protection and management.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

Je souhaite souscrire à la déclaration prononcée par mon collègue de la République tchèque, et ajouter les observations suivantes. Nous remercions la FAO pour ses actions et ses publications, pour mettre en œuvre les décisions précédentes du Conseil. Nous appelons en particulier la FAO à mettre pleinement en œuvre les décisions et les demandes du Conseil adoptées à sa 169^{ème} et 170^{ème} Sessions, et désormais, 171^{ème} Session, mais aussi par la Conférence Régionale Europe, telle qu'endossée par le Conseil à sa 170^{ème} Session.

Nous appelons la FAO également à fournir des actualisations régulières, de manière proactive, et fournir des données centrées sur chaque région, comme demandées par ce Conseil. En réponse à mon collègue Russe, je réitère que ce dont nous parlons, c'est le préambule de la Constitution de la FAO, et je l'encourage à le relire et nous passons tous les jours devant, dans le hall de ce Conseil, dans le hall de la FAO.

Donc, nous appelons une fois de plus la Russie à respecter la Constitution de la FAO et à travailler, je cite: "A promouvoir le bien-être commun, et à contribuer à libérer l'humanité de la faim."

Ms LI Xi (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China notes with satisfaction the efficient and proactive implementation of the relevant decisions while maintaining prompt and transparent communication with Members. We affirm FAO's important role in responding to the impact conflict and the pandemic have on global food security.

This includes closely monitoring the situation, providing information to Members, developing financing through various measures, collecting and analysing information and strengthening cooperation with relevant United Nations (UN) agencies.

We encourage FAO to continue implementing the relevant decisions of the Council, and call on Council Members to focus on topics related to agriculture and food with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such as Zero Hunger, no poverty, and reducing inequality.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

Once again, I need to take the floor and draw attention again to what we agreed on regarding discussing the situation in Ukraine, the conflict, we decided at the first meeting.

I understand that the constitution of the FAO was signed not on 26 February this year but much earlier, and I believe that the distinguished representative of the United States being in this hall has also read the constitution of the FAO, prior to becoming involved in Vietnam, prior to carrying out aggression in Iraq, prior to becoming involved in a war in Libya and prior to being involved in a war in Yugoslavia.

I understand that reading this constitution could also have been applied to the representative of France, when it became involved in Nigeria, or when other Members of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) applauded when there were other interventions, including the execution of Saddam Hussein and other leaders. Therefore, let us once again focus on our Agenda, which is devoted to food, and not carry out propaganda using the FAO platform.

CHAIRPERSON

I do not have any other requests for the floor. I now turn the floor to Management for responding to several questions.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

Let me explain how we are working to respond to the requirements. Regarding the assessment of the impacts, the Information Note was updated on Sunday, and it is on the website. Now, why we do these updates every six months and not quarterly? Because honestly it does not make too much sense to do it in a higher frequency, given the level of information on the changes that are happening.

Therefore, what we are trying to do is to update that note every six months so that you have the latest information and we tried to do that for this Council, so you have it updated on Sunday so that you have all the information available. What we do in the middle is we are constantly updating through PowerPoints presentations the situation.

Now, there are other elements depending on the urgency that we are constantly updating. Fertilizers is one of the issues that is a top priority right now, and we have a tracker, which is permanently updated to see what are the countries missing. That is not quarterly, it is continuously being updated.

Similarly, for the Black Sea Initiative, we update that every week so that you have the latest information, so the frequency is a lot higher because it is very important to see the evolution, especially because of the renewal periods of the Black Sea Initiative.

We also update permanently our prioritisation tracker for fertilizers, which is the priority of Sub-Saharan Africa, and we are hoping to extend that to the whole world, but right now, we are focusing in Sub-Saharan Africa because it is a region that could be significantly affected, given the low level of intensity of use of fertilizers right now. So, the smaller the number, the more complex the impact.

Emergencies also update their response. It had also been updated on Sunday, it is on the website with all the current information.

Then, depending on the importance of the topics, we update the notes and you have seen there were three complementary notes that were uploaded. One on impacts of gender, FAO is the only one looking at this in terms of the impacts of the war in Ukraine, even this was shared yesterday with other international organizations so that they have the latest information. We also did a complementary note on land, and a complementary note on employment impacts.

Now, there was also a request that the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) shared with me regarding the investment requirements and my response to him is that there was a latest Report done by the World Bank (WB) and the European Commission (EC) on this topic, which is extremely detailed. So, it would mean duplication of efforts to do that again, because it is already online and is available to everybody, which is extremely detailed on what the levels of investments that are required.

We also do our constant surveys in Ukraine to track what are the potential concerns and impacts and that is done by the emergency group.

That is the sequencing which we follow, and that is what we can do with existing resources that we have at FAO to try to fully keep you informed and updated of what is happening.

In addition, we are working with partners, for example, we work with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) on tracking of trade issues, of the trade distortions and the trade restrictions, and also with World Trade Organization (WTO) of course. IFPRI has developed a very good tracker that we are completely linked, that is the one that I normally show, showing how the calorie is traded and reused and that is constantly also updated and is on our website.

We also are working with WTO on the Fertilizer Joint Paper that was issued last week, or two weeks ago, in the G20 of Indonesia, which was a request by the French Presidency, that was also online in the system. We are also now working on the Gaps Paper that has been requested by the G20 for FAO and the World Bank to lead on the development of Gaps Paper that will allow us to identify where the gaps in terms of what is required, given the current situation.

Finally, we also are supplying constantly data and information to all our different international organization partners on the work that we do. We are constantly working with the Global Food Crisis Response Group of the Secretary-General, I co-lead the Food Group, and we are in constant dialogue with Mr David Nabarro, which is the other co-lead, and with all the different partners in the different sectors, and we are reactivating this week the Fertilizer Working Group again.

These dialogues happen every week with the different partners, so that we all are updated and, as I mentioned during the Programme Committee, we support with information, the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) of course - it has a Secretariat hosted in FAO, we have a team that supports constantly it, and we are also supporting with information as a result of that of course to the FARM Initiative, because AMIS is part of the pillar one of the FARM Initiative. We are also supplying information that we have to the Gaps Initiative because the dashboard that was developed under the Gaps Initiative is using a lot of information from FAOSTAT, which is a public good, but we need to be sure that it is being used in the proper way. Therefore, we have to be supporting them technically so that the information is presented in the best possible way.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Chief Economist, for your update of where we are with the information. I now give the floor to Mr Stefanos Fotiou.

Mr Stefanos FOTIOU (Director, Office of Sustainable Development Goals)

In response to this stocktaking moment, the current plan, an update that was presented in the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees is to organise it late July 2023, but the final date will depend on the host country that it will decide to support the organisation of this event, and might happen even a bit earlier, like late June.

On the way forward, we are planning next week, between 13-15 December, as part of regional Food Systems Solution Dialogues, to focus entirely on preparations of this stocktaking moment. We have served both with the UNRCs and with the national convenors in the capitals, a concept note for these online meetings next week alongside the registration links, and these will be dialogues that we will be looking forward to listen the expectations and the ideas of the Members on what this stocktaking moment should deliver.

CHAIRPERSON

I think with that we have answers to the requests of Members for further information. I now would like to conclude this Item by proposing the draft conclusion.

51. The Council took note of the status of implementation of decisions taken at its 169th and 170th Session, and noted the responses provided by the Secretariat to specific queries raised by Members during this Session.

Can we agree to this brief and short conclusion? I do not see any objections, so decided.

Item 18. World Food Programme:**Point 18. Programme alimentaire mondial:****Tema 18. Programa Mundial de Alimentos:***Item 18.1 Election of six Members of the WFP Executive Board**Point 18.1 Élection de six membres du Conseil d'administration du PAM**Tema 18.1 Elección de seis miembros de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA**(CL 171/15.1; CL 171/LIM/4)***CHAIRPERSON**

Before the lunch break, we have one other Item which we can finalize hopefully. It is the Sub-Item 18.1 World Food Programme, *Election of six Members of the WFP Executive Board*. The documents before you are *CL 171/15.1* and *CL 171/LIM/4*.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to the World Food Programme's Secretariat Members who are attending this Session, and I would like to inform the Council that Denmark and Norway will resign from the Board on 31 December of this year, with Ireland and Italy standing to complete the mandate.

On the candidates listed in the document *CL 171/LIM/4*, for List A, there are two candidates for two seats, as the Secretariat had received communication from the Embassy of the Republic of Angola on 1 December that it wishes to withdraw from the election. Therefore, we have two candidates that are Gabon and Kenya. Members are invited to note the seat sharing arrangement reached within List A as outlined in *CL 171/LIM/4*, with Gabon occupying the seat from 1 January 2023 to 30 June 2024, and Chad occupying the seat from 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2025.

For List B, there is one candidate for one seat and that is Saudi Arabia.

For List C, there is one candidate for one seat, as the Secretariat received a communication from the Dominican Republic on 1 December that it wishes to withdraw its candidacy for this election. Therefore, the one candidate for List C is Brazil.

For List D, there are two candidates for two seats, that is Canada and Germany.

The floor is now open for comments. Of course, we can also decide on the nominations, but are there any comments to be made? I see none, so given that we have the same number of nominations as seats to be filed for List A, B, C, and D, I propose that the Council appoints these countries by general consent.

*Applause**Applaudissements**Aplausos*

I wish to congratulate the newly appointed elected WFP Executive Board Members and wish them well for the work that lays ahead of them. It is a very important work in very difficult times. Thank you so much.

With this, we have concluded this Agenda Item and it is a positive ending of this morning's Session. We now break for lunch. Come back energized, positive and flexible, so that we can hopefully continue and finalize our work this afternoon even before the snack. We adjourn the meeting until 14:00 hours.

*The meeting rose at 12:07 hours**La séance est levée à 12 h 07**Se levanta la sesión a las 12.07*

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Seventy-first Session Cent soixante et onzième session 171.º período de sesiones
Rome, 5-9 December 2022 Rome, 5-9 décembre 2022 Roma, 5-9 de diciembre de 2022
EIGHTH PLENARY SESSION HUITIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE OCTAVA SESIÓN PLENARIA
8 December 2022

The Eighth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14:04 hours
Mr Hans Hoogeveen,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La huitième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 04
sous la présidence de M. Hans Hoogeveen,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la octava sesión plenaria a las 14.04
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Hans Hoogeveen,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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Item 19. Strategic policy framework for multilingualism**Point 19. Cadre stratégique pour le multilinguisme****Tema 19. Marco normativo estratégico para el multilingüismo***(CL 171/17)***CHAIRPERSON**

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, dear friends, I hope you had a very good lunch.

We now turn to Agenda Item 19, *Strategic Policy Framework for Multilingualism*. The relevant document is *CL 171/17*, and the introduction by Mr Rakesh Muthoo, the recently appointed Coordinator, besides Director of the Governing Bodies Servicing Division (CSG), has been circulated to you.

Introduction to Item 19: Strategic policy framework for multilingualism

Mr Rakesh Muthoo, Director of the Governing Bodies Servicing Division (CSG)

Multilingualism is a defining characteristic of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) as an international, intergovernmental agency. It is firmly rooted in FAO's Basic Texts, where Rule XLVIII of the General Rules of the Organization establishes that "Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish are the languages of the Organization". All six languages enjoy equal status within FAO and as such, they provide an effective tool for the Organization to engage and interact with Members, partners and recipients of its goods and services.

Multilingualism enables the participation of Members in the governance of the Organization in an efficient, effective and transparent manner; it promotes unity in diversity; and it is pervasive in the composition and workings of the Secretariat. As a specialised and knowledge-based organization, FAO provides a wide range of multilingual products and services from headquarters to decentralised levels.

Since the 2020-2021 biennium, there has been increased demand for, and commitment to, multilingualism at FAO. Building on such momentum, this strategic policy framework for multilingualism is developed to identify the corporate approach for further promoting multilingualism across FAO. It aims to serve at the corporate level and provide a holistic and practical approach to meet the demand for improved performance and optimised resource mobilisation on multilingualism in the Organization.

Document CL 171/17, *Strategic policy framework for multilingualism*, outlines the various components that form together the framework for enhancing the use of all FAO languages in a balanced, coherent, efficient and effective manner to facilitate the governance and branding of the Organization, as well as the delivery and communication of FAO's programmes of work in support of the implementation of the Strategic Framework 2022-31. It encompasses the role of the Corporate Coordinator for Multilingualism; presents the landscape of FAO's multilingual products and services; covering translation, interpretation, publications and communication and other products; and outlines the use of non-FAO languages and finally the Organization's prioritisation of the multilingual skills of FAO staff.

Based on this framework, the integrity and enhancement of the plethora of language goods and products within FAO is ensured as a synergetic corporate commitment, supported by quality and qualified in-house language expertise, and facilitated by the Corporate Coordinator for Multilingualism. Above all, the strategic policy framework offers Members a dedicated vehicle to drive the determination, assess the delivery and update dynamically the direction of multilingualism at FAO.

The Council is invited to endorse the strategic policy framework for multilingualism as provided in document CL 171/17.

CHAIRPERSON

This Item was discussed at the Joint Meeting I now follow the usual practice and give the floor to you for making your remarks, introductions, and suggestions on this Item.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

In the European Union Group, we use at least three languages which are official languages of the United Nations system. So, thank you very much, merci beaucoup, gracias.

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States.

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia, San Marino, Türkiye and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

The EU and its Member States have always supported multilingualism at FAO and elsewhere. In this context, we are fully aligned with the conclusions on the importance of multilingualism expressed in the Report of the 166th session of the Council held in 2021, and welcome the progress reports on the subject, requested at that session, including the strategic framework.

We appreciate the integrated approach to the five multilingual groups of products and services that FAO has made available. This approach takes into consideration the importance of optimising limited resources, both financial and human, in order to meet the growing demand of products and services.

We fully agree with the importance of accuracy and quality in language products. With this in mind, we highlight the role that FAO's terminology databases and the FAO Term Portal can play to facilitate accurate communication about food and agriculture at FAO level and elsewhere.

We also welcome the commitment to the continual enhancement of multilingualism. To that end, dedicated staff who can adequately support the delivery of the strategic policy framework are needed. Moreover, we agree that the use of non-FAO languages is important, especially in local contexts, to enable efficient communication with partners and recipients, ensuring that audiences have access to the latest information and expertise. Accordingly, it is also relevant to seek the integration of innovative technologies (such as Artificial Intelligence and Computer-Assisted Interpretation (CAI)) once those tools shall be sufficiently developed.

Finally, further to this document, which presents FAO's approach to multilingualism, we look forward to follow-up on monitoring the implementation of the strategic policy framework and the progress of multilingualism at FAO. We would like also clarification as to how the strategic policy framework for multilingualism will be addressed in the next medium-term plan and in the programme of Work and Budget 2024-2025.

Sra. Claudia GONZÁLEZ TOLEDO (Cuba) (Observer)

Cuba tiene el honor de hacer esta declaración a nombre del Grupo de Países de América Latina y el Caribe (GRULAC). Al referirnos al documento *CL 171/17* sobre el *Marco normativo estratégico para el multilingüismo* reconocemos su importancia como valor fundamental y garante de la diversidad y de la inclusión en los trabajos de la Organización. Su implementación permite a la Organización ser una fuente de información fidedigna, actualizada, verificada y basada en la ciencia alcanzando su objetivo principal que es la divulgación y difusión de conocimientos, la coordinación de comunicaciones, entre otras cosas, con el objeto de llegar al mayor número de personas posibles.

La pandemia por COVID-19 ha tenido un gran impacto en nuestros países, así como en la agenda y los trabajos de la Organización. Reconocemos el crucial papel que desempeña la página web, las redes sociales y las noticias de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas (ONU) como fuente de información objetiva, imparcial, verificada y fiable para el mundo. Reiteramos la necesidad de repensar la elaboración de contenidos para que estos sean verdaderamente multilingües, preparados y dirigidos por y para personas que piensan y ven el mundo en distintos idiomas. Instamos a evitar las traducciones automáticas y a confeccionar contenidos en el idioma original respetando el principio de paridad de los seis idiomas oficiales de la Organización con una entrega a tiempo.

Con estos comentarios, el Grupo de Países de América Latina y el Caribe, GRULAC, respalda el Marco normativo estratégico para el multilingüismo.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

Je souscris à la déclaration prononcée par mon collègue tchèque et ajoute les éléments qui suivent à titre national. Nous saluons la mise en œuvre d'un cadre stratégique pour les politiques menées par la

FAO, en faveur du multilinguisme. Nous saluons également les évolutions mises en avant, notamment la désignation d'un coordinateur, chargé du multilinguisme. Le multilinguisme est une valeur fondamentale des Nations Unies, conformément aux résolutions de l'Assemblée Générale et de la Charte. En ce sens, nous soulignons l'importance du respect systématique et intégral du multilinguisme au sein de la FAO.

Le multilinguisme n'est pas et ne doit pas être une variable d'ajustement. Il doit être promu au même titre que les objectifs de parité et de répartition géographique. Nous invitons la FAO à fournir plus régulièrement et de manière transparente des données chiffrées et objectives sur le respect du multilinguisme, et l'invitons à institutionnaliser cette collecte sous forme de rapport régulier.

Le rapport biennal élaboré par le Coordonnateur chargé du multilinguisme constitue à cet égard une bonne pratique. Ses fonctions doivent notamment l'amener à suivre, rapporter et éventuellement sanctionner la violation des règles. Nous invitons la FAO à renforcer encore davantage sa stratégie de promotion du multilinguisme. Notamment via la mise en place d'indicateurs, ainsi que de mécanismes de suivi concernant les produits et services produits multilingues de la FAO.

Nous appelons notamment à tirer le meilleur profit des nouvelles technologies pour traiter de l'ensemble de la vie de l'Organisation, carrière des agents, communication interne et externe, respect des régimes linguistiques, etcetera. Conformément à l'engagement du Secrétaire Général des Nations Unies, nous invitons la FAO à faire de la diversité linguistique, le troisième pilier de la politique des ressources humaines, au même titre que la parité et la diversité géographique. La diversité linguistique du personnel doit aller de pair avec cette diversité culturelle géographique.

Nous invitons en particulier la FAO à respecter les règles linguistiques en vigueur lors du recrutement et de l'évolution de carrière, et nous rappelons l'importance capitale à cet égard des politiques relatives aux ressources humaines qui doivent permettre de renforcer les capacités linguistiques des agents. Nous rappelons dans ce cadre l'existence du cadre des Nations Unies pour les langues, qui a notamment pour objectif de renforcer la cohérence de l'évaluation des compétences linguistiques dans les langues officielles des Nations Unies.

Nous invitons la FAO à mettre en place des outils d'évaluations, pour l'évaluation des agents, leurs mobilités et le recrutement. Enfin, nous appelons de nouveau les membres du Secrétariat de la FAO à être exemplaires lors des réunions des organes directeurs notamment, mais pas uniquement dans le respect du multilinguisme, et en particulier à utiliser leurs langues maternelles dès lors qu'elle est une langue de l'Organisation.

M. Bienvenu NTSOUANVA (Congo)

La présente déclaration est présentée par la Tunisie, la République Unie de Tanzanie et la République du Congo au nom du Groupe Régional Afrique (GRA) au titre de ce point de l'ordre du jour.

Le GRA reconnaît et salue l'énorme contribution de la Division des services aux Organes Directeurs (CSG) dans le travail de la FAO, en particulier les interprètes et les traducteurs. Il tient donc à féliciter ces artisans de l'unité dans la diversité et à exprimer sa gratitude à la Direction Générale de la FAO pour des améliorations apportées dans ce secteur important, notamment l'augmentation de 100 pour cent des services d'interprétation pour assurer l'inclusivité de l'audience sans cesse croissante en raison de l'organisation des réunions hybrides.

Il note avec intérêt l'ambition de moderniser les outils de travail et la volonté d'innover, notamment, la proposition des produits et des services dans les langues locales pour répondre aux besoins concrets en ce qui concerne la communication efficace avec les partenaires et les bénéficiaires et la bonne exécution des activités des programmes et projets. Car en Afrique, l'importance des langues locales, dont certaines sont parlées à l'échelle sous-régionale, n'est plus à démontrer.

Par ailleurs, concernant le multilinguisme dans le recrutement des membres du personnel, pour les régions ou pays sous représentés dont bon nombre sont d'Afrique, une souplesse doit être de mise pour assurer la représentativité de toutes les régions. Il s'agira par exemple de privilégier la compétence technique en premier lieu, puis la formation continue post-recrutement dans la principale langue de travail de l'Organisation en second lieu.

Tenant compte de la vocation du cadre stratégique du multilinguisme de développer de manière équilibrée, cohérente, efficace et efficiente l'utilisation de toutes les langues pour faciliter la gouvernance et la gestion de l'image de l'Organisation, il est important qu'un cadre de suivi avec des indicateurs clés de performance soit clairement établi.

Avec ces quelques commentaires, le GRA prend note du cadre stratégique.

Ms LI Xi (China) (Original Language Chinese)

China welcomes FAO's strategic policy framework for multilingualism and encourages the Organization to build up on it and to further enhance the equal use of the six official languages.

China highly recognizes FAO's tremendous progress and outstanding performance in the implementation of multilingualism over the past three years, which facilitates better governance and branding of the Organization and effective communication of knowledge products. China wishes to take this opportunity to express our gratitude and great recognition towards the entire translation and interpretation team from the Governing Bodies Servicing Division (CSG) for their hard work and high-quality outputs.

China aligns itself with what is stressed in the objective of the framework to enhance the use of all of FAO's languages in a balanced, coherent, efficient, and effective manner. In view of this, China respectfully requests the following from the Organization.

One, meeting documents should be provided in all FAO languages during Sessions of the Governing Bodies, in particular those of all the Council Committees, to ensure the Members' efficient and fair participation to FAO's governance.

Two, balanced use of all the official languages in publications shall be further promoted, especially the publications in the languages that account for a smaller share of all the languages should be made available in larger quantity and higher quality. We have noted the huge increase of the workload in translation and interpretation, and we encourage sufficient and the proper resource arrangements.

With the comments above, China agrees that the Council endorse the strategic policy framework for multilingualism.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

Malaysia commends the strategic policy framework for multilingualism that shows important measures taken by FAO to meet the expectations of Members regarding equality, inclusiveness, and linguistic balance, as stated in FAO's Basic Texts.

Malaysia supports FAO's effort to ensure that all six languages at FAO have equal status and recognition. Multilingualism is essential in order to enable all Member States to participate actively and productively in FAO's fora and allow greater dissemination of FAO's products and services available to all Members. This is a defining characteristic and a core value of the United Nations.

Malaysia also appreciates the work of FAO to promote the principles of multilingualism in FAO's multilingual products and services, such as translation, interpretation, publication, communication products and linguistic knowledge products. In this regard, the teams and fields that are important and significant should be added to a list of flagship publications and made available in all six languages. With these words, Malaysia endorses the strategic policy framework for multilingualism.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

We would like to use this opportunity to thank the Interpreting and Translation Services for their dedicated work. We would like to thank you and thank them for indeed ensuring and enabling us to have a successful outcome in our Session.

The Russian Federation supports the endorsement by the Council of the strategy, and we welcome the work of the Secretariat based on the Joint Inspection Unit report. We consider that multilingualism is an equal treatment of the various languages in the Organization, and it is a basic principle of the United Nations, and more specifically of FAO.

We would like to thank the Coordinator for Multilingualism for his work. We note the relevance of having a proper budget and working conditions for linguistic servicing. The work of translation and interpretation can be supported by technology, including through the use of artificial intelligence. We consider, for instance, in this respect that these new technologies are properly used. We recognize that support to the language services is indeed a classic position.

M Anatoliy SHATKOVSKYY (Canada)

Nous nous félicitons de la discussion qui continue sur ce point lors de la réunion conjointe. En tant que nation bilingue, nous reconnaissons pleinement l'importance et les valeurs de mener nos travaux dans plusieurs langues. Pour bâtir une approche inclusive, peu de moyen sont plus efficaces que de travailler dans la langue officielle des intervenants.

Continues in English

Canada strongly supports the continued promotion and use of all official languages of the United Nations (UN). We encourage FAO, as we do in all UN agencies, to draw upon UN best practices, including technological advancements to enhance efficiencies and to ensure cost effectiveness. We welcome the promulgation of the Strategic Policy Framework for Multilingualism and look forward to working multilingually in the years to come.

As my last point, I would like to thank our interpreters and translators for their work to facilitate the business of this Council and other meetings.

Mr Yousef JUHAIL (Kuwait) (Original Language Arabic)

Firstly, I would like to thank FAO for its efforts in this regard. Of course, we cannot talk enough about the significance of multilingualism in international organizations. I would like also to pay tribute to interpretation. We daily witness the efforts exerted by the interpreters.

I believe that we need to take care of all the websites as well as the technological science that provide all the Members with the relevant information. I would like to say that there has been a lot of advancement on terminology. Regarding terminology, we have to look into all the terminology regarding water and technical issues.

We need capacity building as well as the assessment of translations, as well as interpretation posts. We need also to stress the importance of using technology in translation and interpretation. On the other hand, we would like to know how we can employ local languages in order to help the small-scale farmers and fishermen and this linguistic service should be circulated to others.

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

Japan endorses the strategic policy framework for multilingualism and welcomes the reference to the use of all FAO languages in the local context described in paragraphs 43 and 44 of the Joint Meeting of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and 194th Session of the Finance Committee document, and also in paragraph 11 of the Joint Meeting Report.

CHAIRPERSON

This is the moment to really thank the interpreters and the translators for their hard work, for preparing the Council and helping us in all six United Nations languages during the Council. Give them a really big applause.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

With that, I would like to give the floor to the Coordinator for Multilingualism to react to some of the remarks.

Mr Rakesh MUTHOO (Coordinator for Multilingualism)

At the outset I would like to thank the Members for their interventions and for their guidance, which is well-received and duly noted, as we move forward.

This journey of partnership between the Members and the Secretariat, which started two years ago, to define a strategic policy framework for multilingualism, leveraged the enhanced attention given to multilingualism by the Director-General since 2019. In turn, this has led to a surge in the provision of language products and services to Members in the six languages of the Organization, and in other languages and local languages, as noted by some Members.

This process has bolstered interpretation, translation and terminology. It has transformed communication and publication products of FAO. It has galvanized human resource policies. This process has led to the appointment of a Corporate Coordinator for Multilingualism. It has strengthened the internal language expertise capacity of the Organization, and it has launched already a dedicated reporting to Members.

In short, this process of consultation over the past two years has *de facto* articulated and operationalized a strategic policy framework for multilingualism at FAO. Its definition, which is in front of you in document *CL 171/17*, has such a critical mass of maturity that its endorsement today by the Council represents an historic opportunity not as a *fait accompli*, but as a starting point to improve, enhance, monitor, report and review for years to come. And to cement, indelibly, multilingualism as a fundamental and defining characteristic of the Organization.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Mr Rakesh Muthoo, for your remarks in response to questions and issues raised. Now, I turn to you for the Draft Conclusions of this Agenda Item and I put them on the screen:

54. The Council welcomed the strategic policy framework for multilingualism, and in particular:
- a) stressed that multilingualism is a fundamental principle of FAO as an international, intergovernmental agency and implies the use of all six FAO languages in the delivery of the Organization's mandate;
 - b) noted the importance of the provision of multilingual products and services at both Headquarters and decentralized levels;
 - c) noted that progress on the implementation of the strategic policy framework will be reported to Members through a number of reporting instruments, including the Programme Implementation Report and the Human Resources Annual Report;
 - d) recognized that the strategic policy framework will be subject to review, in consultation with the Membership and through the Governing Bodies as appropriate; and
 - e) endorsed the strategic framework for multilingualism.

I go up now for the endorsement. Can we agree to the *chapeau*? I do not see any objections.

I go to subparagraph (a). Can we agree to subparagraph (a)? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (b). Can we agree to subparagraph (b)?

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

Just to drop an idea, after "*decentralized levels*," something like "*including local languages*," as is mentioned in paragraphs 43 and 44 of the Report, especially for the people in the field, that is important for them.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this certainly important addition? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (c). Can we agree to subparagraph (c)? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (d). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (e).

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

We want to put, perhaps, in subparagraph (c), a language which would say that this strategic policy framework will be addressed also in the next Medium-term Plan in the Programme of Work and Budget 2024-2025. Of course, there is the question how, but basically when we have *"reported it to Members through a number of reporting instruments,"* it is a report and you can perhaps put a semi comma after that and put *"the strategic policy framework for multilingualism should be addressed in the next Medium-term Plan and in the Programme of Work and Budget 2024-2025."*

Ms LI Xi (China)

We agree with all this, we just have a small request. In our statement we also mentioned that we kindly requested the Sub-Committee's document all be prepared in six official languages and also promote the balance of these languages in the publications. We would like to know whether it is appropriate to add a similar expression here, or Mr Rakesh Muthoo will take it.

Mr Rakesh MUTHOO (Coordinator for Multilingualism)

Perhaps to capture China's intervention, at the end of subparagraph (b) one could add a comma, *"and emphasised the importance of balance in all the languages of the Organization."* That would cover broadly the principle that has been articulated, and it would be clear guidance for us as to what it means, both in terms of publication products and meetings services.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Just a quick point, perhaps *"including local languages where possible,"* because that will depend on resources from partners coming in as appropriate. I believe a number of delegations mentioned the technical advancements as well, which can facilitate the work of the Council. Perhaps at the end of that same subparagraph (b), we could add *"and recognized the potential for the application of technological advancements to facilitate multilingualism."*

M. MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

Through you, Chairperson, I wish to better understand from our colleague of the European Union the intent behind this addition, because we are talking here on reporting on the progress of implementation. I do not know if reporting on the progress of, we already have issues or foresee that there will be issues to be addressed. Through you, Chairperson, as I am not in a position to ask the question to a Member, I wish to understand better what is behind that so that I have a clearer view.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

It was the way to put it into some subparagraphs, but of course we can add a separate subparagraph just to have more clarity on that. Basically, the question behind that was *"how the Strategic Policy Framework will be addressed in the next Medium-term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget 2024-2025."* We can add a separate subparagraph, just to distinguish it from the reporting subparagraph *"requested clarification how Strategic Policy Framework will be addressed in the next Medium-term Plan and in the Programme of Work."* The rest can stay if it helps.

M. BIENVENU NTSOUANVA (Congo)

Je pense qu'au "e", nous avons parlé des indicateurs de performances du cadre de suivi. Donc, si après "as appropriate", on peut dir : *"à souligner la nécessité de définir les indicateurs de performances du cadre de suivi."*

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

We fully support the proposal made by our Chinese colleague as concerns the equal relationship and treatment of languages in the provision of these services by the language department, and notably as concerns the translation of text. We would like to thank Mr Rakesh Muthoo for his proposal, but from our point of view I think we need to clearly distinguish between two categories of languages. First, the six FAO languages, and then the others which are the local languages. In this context, we should like to offer a small addition to subparagraph (b).

Continues in English

"Including local languages where possible and emphasised the importance of balance in the provision of linguistic services and products in all FAO languages."

Continues in Russian

In so doing, we show that we need to have an equal treatment in the provision of services and products proposed by the Secretariat in the FAO languages and not in any and all languages that FAO might be using at some point or other.

If you would allow me, I would like to comment on Czechia's proposal. We feel that such a proposal should really bring some added value, but it is not particularly concrete. The next Medium-term Plan, as far as we understand, covers the years 2026 to 2029, unless I am very much mistaken. The Programme of Work and Budget only covers 2024-2025. So, I think we should probably flip these programme's order in the sentence. Programme of Work and Budget first, and then the Medium-term Plan.

In any case, we feel we need to have some kind of mention of a timeline in which something might happen. Whatever the information we request, the Secretariat will indeed provide information, I believe, in the format that Czechia mentioned.

Ms LI Xi (China)

We agree with the amendment made by Russian Federation and we also agree with Czechia's proposal. Just one small clarification- we request for the balanced use and the provision of these official languages, but we know that their work is mounting, so we would like to make sure that they have an adequate allocation of resources. And it is not just about the clarification regarding how it was stressed, but we want to guarantee they get proper resources. We wonder if we can have some expression about that.

CHAIRPERSON

We think about it.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Aparte de apoyar la sugerencia del Congo y la propuesta de la Unión Europea enriquecida con el aporte de la Federación Rusa, quisiera ver si puedo capturar lo mencionado recién por China, pues yo había pedido la palabra justamente por la misma cuestión. En el subpárrafo (b), quiero ver si les parece bien incluir lo siguiente:

Continues in English

"Noted the importance of balanced resource allocation for."

Continúa en español

Me parece que apunta a capturar lo planteado por China y, por varias delegaciones que teníamos esa inquietud que quizás lo plantea de manera más general la sugerencia planteada por la República Checa, por eso insisto que sería bueno ser específico en esto.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

Let me also thank the European Union for clarifying. I wish to suggest that we could merge subparagraphs (d) and (e), because it says *"recognize that the strategic policy framework will be subject to review in consultation with the Membership and through the Governing Bodies as appropriate with a view to filling the gaps, and express the need for"*. This is because I am not so sure that the time limitation here for the implementation of this Strategic Policy Framework and the reporting period of 2024-2025 is helpful because it should be a long-term process. Any time that there is a review, the process is now to fill the gaps found by the review.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

I just had a suggestion on subparagraph (d), given this question of the timing of when these will take place. *"Will be addressed in perhaps the next updates to the PWB and MTP,"* but perhaps as a shorter-

term solution, we could ask the Office of Strategy and Budget whether they could provide any clarity on that, at this point, when or if that might happen in the shorter term, so people understand that.

For me the direct link to multilingualism in the Project Implementation Report and the Human Resources Annual Report is clear, but where this framework on multilingualism lands in the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) and Medium Term Plan (MTP) is a little less clear to me. I recognize that perhaps that should be clear to me, but it is not. For the concrete proposal for the text, here would be "*addressed in the next updates to the PWB and MTP,*" and then removing "*the years*". Then we could leave out the "*next*" and the "*2024-25*."

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

Please go up to subparagraph (b). Japan is suspicious for referring to the resource allocation issue in this subparagraph because Japan endorses the strategy of multilingualism, but the resource issue is a more sensitive one and should be considered in broader perspective over the entire allocation issue.

In that sense, I think subparagraph (d) captures what we should do after this Council. Referring to the resource allocation in subparagraph (b), it is a little bit premature from the point of the budget formulation in the next biennium. This is Japan's position.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

If you will allow me, can I look at subparagraph (b)? We have looked at the proposal made by His Excellency, the Ambassador of Argentina, but this issue of "balanced resource allocation" seems to apply to languages that are not languages of the Organization. In fact the language or the coverage of the work in the languages of the Organization, like interpretation and translation, comes from the general budget, and local language work is not covered by the ordinary budget. We feel that speaking about balancing the resource allocation seems unfair and does not match the basic principles of operation of the Organization. We would therefore call on striking the reference to a balanced resource allocation as it comes up here.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

I am just trying to solve the problem here of the "*balanced resource allocation*", because we take note of the issue that this applies to all languages. So, perhaps moving the balanced resource allocation to line number four, after "*services and products in all FAO languages on the basis of balanced resource allocation*." That ties it to the specific FAO languages and the resources then on the basis of balanced resource allocation.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Está bien la propuesta de Canadá y, me parece que, la Federación Rusa tenía un punto importante. Yo estoy de acuerdo con ambos que me precedieron en la palabra.

Mme Céline JURGENSEN (France)

J'avais effectivement une suggestion un petit peu comparable à celle de mon collègue du Canada. Nous pouvons également séparer les paragraphes, si c'est plus clair. À partir de "*emphasize the importance of balance*." Peut-être qu'on peut en faire un paragraphe distinct pour bien faire la différence entre les statuts linguistiques. Je voulais simplement revenir sur un autre paragraphe, et remercier mon collègue du Congo qui a évoqué un point très important. Plus bas, dans le document s'il vous plaît, au petit "e", l'ajout du collègue du Congo est très important : "*stress the need to define performance indicators*." Nous suggérons simplement de remplacer "in", par "*and a monitoring framework*" parce qu'à notre connaissance, il n'existe pas encore de mécanisme de suivi. "*And a monitoring framework*" à la place de "*in the...*"

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

I missed something in subparagraph (a), which I think is very important for us. I wish that we remove "*six languages*" and we say "*all agreed FAO languages*." I am saying this because in Africa we have Portuguese, which is officially recognized for translation. All the documents during the Regional Conference of Africa are in French, English, Spanish, Portuguese. I think this is something which is

agreed. If we say, "*all six languages*," then the issue of decentralized levers will not apply there, because we have that specificity in the Africa Regional Conferences.

CHAIRPERSON

So, we replace "*six*" by "*agreed languages*."

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

We agree with this amendment we have, however due to the mention of "*importance of balance in the provision*" and "*on the basis of balanced resource allocation*", maybe the second one should be struck out and have

Continues in English

"*Adequate resource allocation.*"

CHAIRPERSON

We now try to adopt the subparagraphs, otherwise we continue another debate on this Item.

We go by subparagraph (a), can we agree with the changes to the subparagraph as it is on the screen? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (b).

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Quería agradecer la sugerencia de la Federación Rusa y pedirle su flexibilidad para dejar "*balanced and adequate resource allocation*". Ambas cosas.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to have "*balanced*" in it? I see flexibility of the Russian Federation. Japan, is there also flexibility on your side?

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

As I said, I think the resource issue should be considered in a more careful and thorough manner considering other elements of the budgetary issue, but in the spirit of compromise and cooperation, I can go along with "*balanced*."

Ms LI Xi (China)

I am asking if we can say "*the balanced and adequate resource allocation.*" As the Japanese colleague mentioned, that it is also a very good point. If there is no flexibility to use "*adequate*" here, maybe we can say "*that this issue should be taken into consideration of the next PWB.*" This kind of expression.

CHAIRPERSON

Do not make the text even more complicated. Let us say "*balanced and adequate*," then we capture everything and certainly it will be in the discussion about the allocation of resources.

Can we then go to subparagraph (c)? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (d). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (e). I do not see any objections.

I go to subparagraph (f). I do not see any objections.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

I just want to get a clarification. I see that we always write "*strategic policy framework*" in smaller text, I hope that is how it should be, so that everybody knows if that is how it should be.

CHAIRPERSON

Mr Rakesh Muthoo and I are nodding. This is exactly what we would like to see.

M. Bienvenu NTSOUANVA (Congo)

Nous avons souligné une idée du respect du multilinguisme, dans le recrutement du personnel des Régions sous-représentées. C'est l'idée que nous avons exprimée, est-ce qu'on peut faire figurer ça ? On peut, après "framework", on peut mettre un autre alinéa ? Après le petit...

CHAIRPERSON

Let us see where we do it, because we should not do it in subparagraph (g) and not in a separate paragraph. Let us scroll up. Perhaps we could do it in a new subparagraph after (b).

M. Bienvenu NTSOUANVA (Congo)

Oui: "À souligner l'importance du respect et du multilinguisme dans le recrutement de Ressources humaines pour les Régions sous-représentées." Je crois que la France aussi a souligné cette préoccupation.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this paragraph?

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Maybe "particularly for underrepresented regions," because I think the importance stands for all regions.

CHAIRPERSON

Okay, I see nodding.

CHAIRPERSON

With that we have concluded the work on multilingualism. Sorry, the United States of America.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

I am not going back to the Item on multilingualism, but I do have an issue that I need to raise before we move on to the next Item with your permission.

On Tuesday, our delegation stated, when we discussed Item 5, that we needed to double check if the water rights language that the Chairperson had suggested was indeed agreed upon language. Upon further review, we realized that the United States of America had issued an EOP on that language when it was negotiated and adopted, and we need to revisit that paragraph of the report. We leave it in the Chairperson's hands as to how and when we do that.

CHAIRPERSON

We will look into this issue, and we will come back to it later on because we are going to press time. We have had one hour for this Agenda Item, we still have at least 12 Agenda Items to go. If we take one hour per each, it is 12 hours.

Item 4. Update on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative

Point 4. Informations actualisées sur l'Initiative Main dans la main

Tema 4. Información actualizada sobre la Iniciativa Mano de la mano

(CL 171/4)

CHAIRPERSON

Let us go now to the Written Correspondence Procedure. We start with Agenda Item 4, *Update on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative*, which is document CL 171/4. The introduction by Mr Máximo Torero Cullen was already circulated.

Introduction to Item 4: Update on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative

Mr Máximo Torero Cullen, Chief Economist

The Hand-in-Hand Initiative¹ achieved a major milestone by holding its very first investment forum during 18-19 October 2022, in Rome. The forum provided a platform for 20 countries² to present impact investment opportunities to multilateral development banks, private companies and donors. Three special regional initiatives were also presented for prospective investors.

With a total estimated investment of USD 3 billion, the forum kicked off earnest mobilization efforts, including USD 500 million commitment from the World Bank to support Bangladesh's efforts as part of the Government-led Agriculture Transformation Program. Brazil led off the regional initiative for the Dry Corridor with an initial investment of USD 1 million. Ecuador has committed USD 45 million from its national budget to upgrade its agriculture value chains. Countries are following up with requests for further engagement.

Select Country Progress

In preparation for the investment forum, 20 countries spent months drawing up investment plans based on integrated geospatial, bio-physical and socio-economic analysis, and a market-oriented agrifood systems approach that are the hallmark of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative. Below are some highlights.

- Bangladesh: Through the Agriculture Transformation Plan, the Government of Bangladesh aims to boost food self-sufficiency and access to markets, build resilience, and protect land and soil resources. The Government seeks USD 2.9 billion and has already successfully mobilized USD 500 million from the World Bank and USD 43 million from IFAD.
- Ecuador: The Ecuadorian Government has used Hand-in-Hand to promote agriculture as part of the National Agricultural Plan. Specifically, it plans to develop avocado and cocoa value chains to raise productivity and incomes, and create off-farm jobs. As part of an effort to raise USD 300 million to implement the plan, the Government has allocated USD 45 million of the national budget for value chains development.
- Zimbabwe: The Government of Zimbabwe has developed an agrifood systems transformation agenda, with the goal of tripling agricultural trade, cutting poverty by half, and building resilient and inclusive food systems. It seeks to raise investment to scale up irrigation systems, develop tomato value chains, and build banana packing stations.
- Ethiopia: The Ethiopian Government started the development of Integrated Agro-Industrial Zones to modernize its agriculture sector and accelerate economic development. The Hand-in-Hand support has prioritized two territories for immediate support and is strengthening the inclusion of smallholder producers.

Special Regional Initiatives

- The goal of the Sahel Regional Initiative is to complement ongoing efforts of countries, regional bodies and development partners. It amplifies the existing efforts to direct resources to where they can have maximum impact. It comprises three pillars of improving water management and governance, protecting productive assets on land and building resilience, and strengthening institutional capacities.
- The Central American Dry Corridor initiative aims to tackle poverty and food insecurity challenges by building resilience in the region. Investment plans are centred around technological innovation on water, soil, climate risks, and assisting small- and medium-sized agribusinesses. The Government of Brazil has given an initial support of USD 1 million.
- The Panama Canal facilitates key routes in global agrifood trade, with soybeans, grains and bananas as major commodity groups traded. Establishing new food storage or processing

¹ As of October 2022, 54 Members have joined the Initiative. For more information, visit <https://www.fao.org/hand-in-hand/en>.

² Burkina Faso, Congo, Ethiopia, Mali, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, and Zimbabwe from Africa; Bangladesh, Bhutan, Lao PDR, Nepal, Solomon Islands from Asia and the Pacific; Guatemala, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru from Latin America and the Caribbean; and Yemen from Near East and North Africa participated.

facilities in Panama could bolster agricultural trade further and connect Latin American exporters with Asian importers more easily.

Global Communications Strategy

A global-level communications strategy was developed to capture and promote the progress of Hand-in-Hand. It sets out to boost Hand-in-Hand's capacity to engage investors, donors and partners, and provides a roadmap to amplify Hand-in-Hand's strengths. It is crucial to promptly execute the communications strategy to build on the momentum created during the investment forum to facilitate partnerships between countries and investors, and build consensus on the strategic measures needed to transform agrifood systems.

The Next Steps

- Countries are using Hand-in-Hand tools, such as typology maps and data analyses, at a more local or provincial level to identify their planning and investment needs. As such, additional monitoring and support from FAO is necessary.
- Following the investment forum, more opportunities to deepen engagement between countries and investors are needed. Prospective investors also gave feedback that countries' investment proposals emphasize climate-smart approaches.
- There is a strong need to accelerate the development of performance management and evaluation dashboards to strengthen coordination and maximize impact.

Comments from Members
Commentaires des Membres
Observaciones de los Miembros

AUSTRALIA

Submitted Wednesday 16 November 2022, at 14:13

Australia thanks FAO for this timely update on the Hand-in-Hand (HIH) Initiative, and we acknowledge the successful recent hosting of the HIH Investment Forum for which we respectfully request Members be provided with further detail, particularly in regards to its outcomes. We are pleased to note the continued growth in the number of countries participating in the HIH and encourage FAO to continue to identify and maximise potential partnerships and investment opportunities, particularly in the South-West Pacific region. We provide the following comments:

- We reiterate the importance of clear and consistent communication with Members, particularly around the status of HIH implementation in those countries not included in this most recent update. We welcome the potential contribution that the development of the dashboard and the global level communications strategy could make in this regard.
- We welcome further information as to how FAO intends to realise more efficient donor and investment matchmaking, including detail on outreach activities and coordination with development and resource partners. We emphasize the value in regular engagement and coordination with existing development and resource partners in country, to help maximise synergies and prevent duplication and/or misalignment of objectives across programmes and investments.
- We note the importance of ensuring HIH activities and processes are integrated and aligned with development and planning processes at the country and regional level, including inter alia, Food Systems Summit National Pathways, One Country One Priority Product and Country Programming Frameworks – and we respectfully request that further information be provided to all Members (for example via a webinar) as to how the HIH, as a Programme Priority Area under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, is aligned with, contributes to, and/or may be utilised as a tool in these contexts.

JAPAN

Submitted Wednesday 16 November 2022, at 16:09

Japan expresses its gratitude to FAO for regular progress updates on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

Recalling the discussions at the last Council, it was explained that the identifications of the operators for development of the Dashboard will have been finished within the next few months. Japan wishes to receive updates on the progress being made, as well as those on the most recent plans going forward.

Can we assume that a global communications strategy, as described in CL 171/4, will eventually be made available to the public, although it has yet to be uploaded on the FAO website?

Japan wishes to request FAO to give thoughts and carry out an exercise to sort and determine what can be made public in the initiative and those that must remain for internal use and share with us the outcomes. Japan would also wish to request FAO to ensure timely communications with its member countries of any information that has been made public through such measures as the CSGS and others.

EUROPEAN UNION

Submitted Friday 18 November 2022, at 11:08

Chairperson, I am honoured to write to you on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States regarding the abovementioned agenda item for the 171st Session of the FAO Council.

The EU and its Member States take note of the latest progress report on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative (HIH). We would recall the continued importance of ensuring alignment of the Initiative with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), the joint programming of the UN development system and the 2030 Agenda. To that end, we encourage FAO, in accordance with its mandate, to continue the close coordination of its work on the Initiative with other relevant agencies and developing partners.

We note the information on last October's Hand-in-Hand Investment Forum, in particular the overview of the achievements in the various regions. Exploring possibilities for mobilising additional funding and attracting investments is essential for taking the Initiative forward in participating countries. It is critically important to ensure that such investments are duly aligned with the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems and other relevant CFS policy recommendations and guidelines. In addition, continued attention is needed in order to provide full transparency on the financing and to ensure that the Initiative will have no further impact on the regular agreed budget.

We welcome the continued development of the Programme Dashboard, the outsourced development of a Global Communications Strategy as well as the increased number of databases integrated within the HIH Initiative Geospatial platform.

To conclude, we thank FAO for the information provided on the Initiative as an additional means of contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within FAO's mandate and ask that FAO continues providing regular updates on the progress made in implementing the Initiative and the results achieved.

BURKINA FASO

Soumis Mercredi 23 Novembre 2022, à 21 h 00

Le Burkina Faso:

1. Se réjouit de l'engouement de plus en plus croissant suscité par l'Initiative Main dans la Main qui enregistre de nouvelles adhésions;
2. Apprécie l'élaboration d'un tableau de bord régulièrement mis à jour qui fournit des informations en temps réel sur les progrès accomplis afin d'éclairer et d'améliorer l'exécution de l'Initiative et l'évaluation de ses effets;
3. Salue la résolution prise lors du Forum Mondial de l'Alimentation 2022 de lancer l'Initiative régionale pour le Sahel;

4. Se félicite du cadre offert aux pays ayant adhéré à l'Initiative Main dans la Main dont le Burkina Faso lors du Forum d'investissement d'octobre 2022 et qui a permis à ses délégués de présenter des propositions d'investissement. Celles-ci ont suscité l'intérêt de partenaires et nous espérons la concrétisation de ces partenariats, et ce, avec le soutien de la FAO;
5. Prend note de l'élaboration de la stratégie de communication à niveau mondial pour exploiter et mettre en relief les progrès accomplis dans le cadre de l'Initiative Main dans la Main et encourage à sa mise en œuvre dans les meilleurs délais afin de tirer parti de l'élan impulsé par le forum en octobre 2022.

Response from Secretariat
Réponses du Secrétariat
Respuestas de la Secretaría

The Secretariat takes note of the recommendations made by Australia on improved communication. The FAO Hand-in-Hand (HIH) Initiative webpage has been substantially expanded and is now a rich source of updates for all countries under HIH. It also contains all the detailed presentations made by the participating countries at the Investment Forum. Some countries, such as Zimbabwe, have also prepared more detailed Investment Profiles to attract investment, and these are also included on the HIH website. We are pleased to advise that the HIH Global Communications Strategy is now approved and a Summary is available on the HIH website for ease of reference.

FAO appreciates Australia's positive feedback on the recent Hand-in-Hand Investment Forum which was held in October 2022. In addition to the results such as increased investments for Bangladesh and Ecuador, we understand that seven countries are now also planning national level Investment Fora, including some countries, such as Pakistan, who were not part of the first Investment Forum. A regional forum is also being planned in Latin/South America. There are a number of new engagements with international financing institutions (IFIs), regional banks and investment funds and private sector partners, which are being developed by the HIH countries and we continue to monitor and support them.

We continue to support the Investment Forum (IF) participating countries to follow up on the investment opportunities, through the Government HIH teams, which are active in many countries, supported by FAO Representatives and the HIH team at headquarters. This ensures close alignment and synergies with ongoing programmes and planning for investments by partners. In addition to the Investment Forum, the HIH team has also been forging strong partnerships with the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) and in a selected number of pilot countries under which HIH can both guide and work closely on the follow-up of national pathways and related activities. A webinar on these pilots and other collaborations, as well as the alignment of the Programme Priority Areas under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and other initiatives can be arranged in the coming months, as requested.

FAO appreciates the comments received from Japan and is pleased to advise that the development of the dashboard is now progressing. A draft dashboard is now being piloted based on existing data and is being updated with the data from the HIH Investment Forum. This will inform the next steps in the expansion of the dashboard to cover all the participating countries within available limited resources.

We are pleased to advise that the HIH Global Communications Strategy is now approved with a Summary available on the much expanded HIH website for ease of reference. In addition to the website, all relevant information and Council and Governing Body documentation has been provided to the Secretariat Services branch (CSGS) for timely sharing with Members.

The HIH is essentially a federation of existing GIS data combined with Stochastic Frontier Analysis and data analysis. The maps and other data generated is open to the public and is managed in line with the new FAO data policy (ref: <https://www.fao.org/contact-us/data-protection-and-privacy/en/>). FAO facilitates and creates match-making among governments and partners, while the details of the engagement are country-owned and country-led.

As regards the comments received from the European Union, FAO noted and agreed on the need for follow-up to the successful HIH Investment Forum so that Members can continue to source the

investments needed to progress towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1 and 2, in particular. This will continue within the limited HIH extra budgetary resources available. This follow-up is currently planned at the national levels as well as at another global level forum in October 2023.

The HIH team has initiated engagement and proactive collaboration with a range of partners and across in-house initiatives on a pilot level, such as the Food Systems Summit follow-up, the Digital Villages Initiative, and other strategic work on Governance and Modelling, as well as the ongoing work on improving capacity for Members on GIS.

Members' guidance on alignment policy recommendations and guidelines of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), e.g. Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems, is noted and welcomed. A direct link to the Principles has now been added in the Investment Forum webpage (see: <https://www.fao.org/hand-in-hand/investment-forum-2022/en>) and will be included in next year's Forum also.

FAO highly appreciates the comments made by Burkina Faso and welcomes the positive feedback on the 2022 HIH Investment Forum, with particular reference to the interest generated in additional investments for Members. The Organization will continue to support Members in following up on this interest and contacts for additional investments within our limited resources.

FAO also acknowledges the recognition of the interest of more countries in receiving support from HIH as well as from the newly launched Sahel Initiative. The development of the HIH dashboard is an important part of our work and is currently being piloted using the new FAO selected software.

The Organization agrees that the HIH Global Communications Strategy will be important for ongoing implementation and partnerships. A Summary of the Strategy is now available online in the much expanded HIH website at <https://www.fao.org/hand-in-hand/en>. The Strategy will be implemented within the available resources.

CHAIRPERSON

We put now on the screen the draft conclusions, which I read out, and then we go through them one by one:

16. The Council welcomed document *CL171/4*, Update on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and:
 - a) commended the increase in the number of countries participating in the Initiative to 54 and noted the challenges faced by participating member countries, especially those facing conflict, and appreciated the flexibility and agility of the Initiative to help them sustain work-in-progress under crisis conditions;
 - b) commended the alignment of the Initiative with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), joint programming within the UN development system and increasing synergies such as the follow-up to the United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021;
 - c) recognized that all Members may participate in the Hand-in-Hand (HIH) Initiative, not only as beneficiaries but also as development and resource partners through multiple channels, including direct support from member countries through the Flexible Voluntary Contribution;
 - d) welcomed the successful first Hand-in-Hand Investment Forum, which took place during the World Food Forum in October 2022, and recognized it as an innovative way to facilitate dialogue between Members, development partners and private sector;
 - e) took note of substantial progress made on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative website and on the development of a dashboard that tracks delivery and impact, and looked forward to receiving information on the next phase of development and
 - f) welcomed the provisions of the Hand-in-Hand communication materials and the development of a global HIH communication strategy as a way to deepen internal engagement and expand HIH partnerships at global and local levels.

We go now to the *chapeau*.

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

I believe it would be useful for us to understand when we will revisit the subparagraph on water rights, because we want to avoid doing it during the Adoption of the Report on Friday. If you could give us some clarity that would be very useful.

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, but first you could perhaps give me the time to look into it and then I come back when we know exactly. But my idea would be not to leave anything open for tomorrow. So certainly we will do it today?

Mr Rodney M. HUNTER (United States of America)

Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON

We go to the *chapeau*. Can we agree to the *chapeau*?

Then we go to subparagraph (a). Can we agree to subparagraph (a)? I do not see any objections.

Let me go to subparagraph (b). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (c).

Mr Moungui MÉDI (Cameroon)

I thought the acronym was HIHI? So here I see HIH Initiatives comes later. It is getting confusing. I do not know, what is the real acronym? Please, we used to see HIHI in all the documents and here we see HIH Initiative.

CHAIRPERSON

Perhaps it is a new word we are going to use. But I will ask Mr Máximo Torero Cullen.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

It is correct how it is in the text. It is Hand-in-Hand Initiative apart. Some countries like to call it HIHI, but we call it Hand-in-Hand.

M. Michel LEVEQUE (France)

C'était juste une petite remarque sur le paragraphe B, si on pouvait y revenir un instant. Au dernier Conseil, nous avons utilisé l'expression "*stressed the need*", plutôt que "*commended*". Donc nous proposons plutôt de réutiliser l'expression que nous avons utilisée au dernier Conseil qui était. C'était au point 21.C, "*stressed the need to continue ensuring the alignment*" et on supprime "*commended*".

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (c). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (d).

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

Actually, on subparagraph (c) I have additional wording which may be put either under subparagraph (c) or in the separate subparagraph, which would closely follow subparagraph (c).

I can dictate and then we can decide whether it fits naturally into subparagraph (c) or in the separate one.

The wording would be "*emphasize the need for full transparency on the financing of the HIH and requested assurance from FAO Management that it will have no further impact on the regular budget or the Organization*".

Ms LI Xi (China)

This is a subparagraph that has been mentioned many times and I have two questions. One is about the transparency issue. It is a question both for the proposal that you and maybe Management can also help us to see.

When we talk about transparency, we all welcome further transparency, but our question would be in which specific kind of transparency and which kind of information it will be requested from Management so that we can provide them clear guidance exactly on what kind of information to be provided. Otherwise maybe Management, they try to be transparent, but they do not know. Just get this word but they need clear instructions.

The second thing is that we cannot foresee what will happen in the future to the regular budget of the Organization. Maybe we can use the previously approved regular budget. We can accept either this one or we need to delete it because we understand that no matter whether we have this assurance from FAO's Management or not, it is impossible for them to change or to have any further impact on the approved regular budget.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I think it is not up to the European Union to define how FAO's Management should be transparent in giving all the information on the financing. I think it should be as transparent as it is on other issues, topics and areas.

In the end, initiative should not be just sitting aside. All the information FAO's Management is providing for other areas should be provided for the Hand-in-Hand Initiative as well.

We have regular Sessions of the Finance Committee. The information should be provided within the Finance Committee meetings.

If we want to redefine it right now during Council, I am happy to do that. I can provide a very long list and then we can spend a couple of hours on deleting or adding onto that list. I would rather leave it as it is right now and perhaps, we can invite the Finance Committee to discuss it properly. We can put in some language and it can be discussed within the remit of the Finance Committee.

Ms Ronit KIRSHNER-GERARD (United States of America)

The United States of America would just like to recognize and concur with the European Union's edition on subparagraph (d). We fully support that.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

Just to clarify that in the Strategic Framework approved by the Members the Hand-in-Hand Initiative is a Programme Priority Area (PPA) approved by the Members. As such it is reported as every other PPA. So, all the information is there.

Now regarding this specific request by Canada in the written comments, on the information about the expenditures specifically to the World Food Forum. We have responded there that we will do a briefing to go in detail together with the Chief Scientist, because its reforms are happening at the same time and therefore the costs are split through the three forums.

As I said yesterday, you will see the costs are small. But regarding everything else is reported like any other PPA of FAO.

CHAIRPERSON

We had a discussion about full transparency.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

On the transparency of all the countries' actions, there is a dashboard. It is a work in progress. The dashboard is already in the work page. In the first version on the aggregate level, we show exactly which countries were working, what are the impacts in each of the countries, and what are the expected beneficiaries. That dashboard will evolve into a very detailed country-level dashboard to bring all the information on how many resources are invested and so on.

And remember, the process of the Hand-in-Hand is to facilitate investment in countries not to go through FAO. Basically investments go directly to the countries, and that is what will be reported in detail at country level. Right now we have the aggregate data and then we will go country by country, but that is a complex operation because it must fit into the system of each country so we can have the system running properly.

CHAIRPERSON

At least we have what was suggested by China in the second line, “*the approved regular budgets*”. So we have included the word “*approved*”.

Ms Siti Normaznie ABDUL MUTTALIB (Malaysia)

Would it be acceptable if Malaysia proposes to insert “*agree*” before “*regular budget*”?

CHAIRPERSON

So replace “*approved*” by “*agreed*”.

Ms LI Xi (China)

We can accept the first sentence about the full transparency because this is also what we want: not just the Hand-in-Hand initiative, but also the other Programme Priority Areas (PPAs). I just have one question for Management. The Members ask for transparency, so they should always be triggered from two issues. As Management explained, the Hand-in-Hand Initiative is the same as the other Programme Priority Areas (PPAs). As we also heard from the European Union, Hand-in-Hand initiatives should not be set aside but should be treated equally to all other initiatives and other PPAs.

My first question to Management is if there is any information about the Hand-in-Hand Initiative which is not provided compared to other PPAs.

The second question is if there is there any information Management did not provide upon the request from the Members.

Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

Regarding the first question. Information can be found at the website of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, and I think this Initiative provides the most information in all FAO’s history. In any case, the appreciations could be different.

Regarding the Programme Priority Areas (PPAs). As any PPA, all the financial information is provided and will continue to be provided as part of the mechanism of FAO.

I do not see why we have to make a difference between one PPA and the other PPAs; it is part of the system that we have in place. But we are happy to answer any question.

The only question we got in the written comments was a request from Canada, which we answered and we are happy to do. The question is specifically related not only to Hand-in-Hand, but to the World Food Forum (WFF) as well. That is what we are going to do and yesterday I think we agreed on that. We are happy to answer any other questions.

You must understand the Hand-in-Hand initiative is an initiative that tries to bring One FAO to work on supporting countries. FAO has hundreds of different activities across the different PPAs and that is what we are doing. We are just facilitating the process. Again, everything is reported. The system that we have in place in FAO is the same for all the PPAs.

Ms LI Xi (China)

Thank you very much Management for solving our problems. It seems Mr Máximo Torero Cullen has already claimed that the Hand-in-Hand Initiative’s information provided is the most up to date even compared with that of other Programme Priority Areas (PPAs). So maybe we accept this sentence that changes the expression into “not emphasize the need”, but welcome the full transparency of the Hand-in-Hand initiative. Welcome or comment the full transparency. And not just about financing but about all the aspects of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative. So that is brackets on the financing.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I think that what we can do is put an additional adverb or adjective there, which will do the trick. “*We emphasize the need for continued full transparency*”. Not too much complicated, and the rest can remain.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

Similarly, I was going to suggest that we just include the word “*ongoing*”. So “*emphasize the ongoing need for full transparency*”, which recognises that it is currently occurring.

The other proposal is taking into account the advice that we have received about the Hand-in-Hand Initiative being a Programme Priority Area (PPA). That at the very end of the subparagraph after the word “*Organization*” we put in a comma and say, “*unless agreed by Members as part of the PWB*”. That would take into consideration that the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) is agreed by Members, and if there are any budgetary changes it would be reflected in that place.

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

Basically, I go along with the proposal made by Australia just now. I had another idea, but I think Australia’s proposal is very much reasonable and I can go along with it only if it is acceptable for other Members.

Ms LI Xi (China)

I do not want to complicate this issue but maybe we can keep “*welcomed*”, put it in before “*emphasized*”. “*Welcomed the full transparency and emphasized the ongoing need*”.

CHAIRPERSON

So we start the sentence with “*welcomed the full transparency and emphasized the ongoing need for continued full transparency*”. Can we agree to that compromise language? Of course, we have to delete “*welcomed*” in the second sentence.

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

I think we should remove the word “*full*”. Just “*welcomed the transparency and emphasized the ongoing need for continued transparency*”. Because there are different interpretations of the word “*full*”, but transparency is a shared value for Members.

In that sense, as I said in the other interventions, transparency is not just putting the information on the website. Transparency is a sincere communication between Members and Management. Just putting in the word “*transparency and continued effort*” between the Members and Management is important.

Just as Mr Máximo Torero Cullen said, we asked some questions and Management tried to answer them. Just the one word “*transparency*” captures that practice from my point of view.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to delete the word “*full*” in the sentence? Is there flexibility so that we have an agreement on this subparagraph?

Ms LI Xi (China)

We agree with Japan and thank you very much for reminding us that everybody has different understanding about the “*full transparency*” issue. We can go along with removing “*full*”. We agree with the first part, but we still have a big issue with the second sentence. The “*requested assurance from FAO Management*”.

One issue is, how can we possibly request Management’s assurance? Because no matter whether we request it or not, it is impossible for Management to have any further impact on the Programme of the Work and Budget (PWB) that was approved by the Members? This is something that is not legitimate for the Council to request, because they cannot do it anyway.

The second issue is that I would like to recall what happened during the discussion of the previous Council, when we talked about an Office of the Inspector General (OIG) issue. There is also an

expression “*there should be assurance of no impact on the PWB*”. That is a common principle and there is consensus reached by the Members that if this is an unnecessary expression, it should be deleted and not exist here.

This is our request: we would like to delete the second part of that. It is not because we want Management to have some impact on the approved budget, but it is simply because Management cannot do that. It is not in line with the Basic Texts. And we think that is an unnecessary word. It should be here.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Not on the last point, but it seems that “*ongoing and continued*”, is a bit redundant. So “*would recommend, the ongoing need for transparency*” and perhaps taking note of Japan's point on the engagement and the exchanges that we are having, it could be “*the ongoing need for transparency and engagement of the financing of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative*”.

Mr Asmerom KIDANE TECLEGHIORGHIS (Eritrea)

I really appreciate the way you are leading us because we are just talking about words. We do not have to do that. In fact, I remember that during the entire four or five days the Chairperson has been repeating again and again, that we should not conflict on words.

In fact, on this issue what does “*emphasized the ongoing need for transparency and engagement*” mean? I do not understand. If we say “*welcomed the transparency*”, that is enough.

I have the following statement to be adjusted. When we say first “*welcomed the transparency*”, delete all the phrase and “*emphasized the ongoing need for transparency and the engagement*”. We do not need this phrase. Simply we can say “*welcomed the transparency on the financing*” and so on. Because what does “*welcomed*” mean? We appreciate it. We accept it, and not only for now, but even for the future. So let us say and make it very short by saying “*welcomed the transparency on the financing*” and so on and so forth.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

I am working with the second part of the sentence addressed by China, and I believe China had a point there. We do not want the Council to shy away from this responsibility, because if in a report we see “*requested assurance*” where will that assurance come from? It is probably during our discussions that we are given that assurance.

For the sake of bringing people together, after “*Initiative*” we could probably use a different wording to express the fact that we instructed expenses within the approved regular budget in the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB).

CHAIRPERSON

Can you repeat that sentence so that we can put it in the text in the second line?

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

After “*Hand-in-Hand Initiative*”, “*emphasize that all expenses within the regular budget should be done as agreed in the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB)*”. Then we assure that we leave open the part of “*voluntary contributions*”. However, this one only fits on the portion which is earmarked in the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB). If this cannot work, I believe I support the idea of China to do away with it.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

This is just trying to help. If it does not work, I will withdraw it as well.

For the first part, maybe we could say “*welcomed continued transparency and engagement*” and then we move everything and continue on to financing. “*Welcomed the continued transparency and engagement on the financing*”.

Then on the second point, I could go along with suggestion of Cameroon.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

We support China's comment about the second part of the sentence. We are arguing on something which the Organization is not allowed to do, which is to exceed the approved regular budget. So, I do not know why this discussion is not done. The Organization has never done it; it is not allowed to do it so why are we concentrated on something which is not relevant?

Ms Ronit KIRSHNER-GERARD (United States of America)

Rather than continuing to complicate the text could we suggest a great language from the last Council with one minor edit?

“Looked forward to continued regular updates on the Initiative, including [...] [continued] transparency on the financing, with the assurance from Management that it will not have any impact on the agreed regular budget”.

This is from subparagraph 21 (h) from the last Council.

CHAIRPERSON

As we have to shortcut now our deliberations, could we not go with agreed language as was done at a previous Council. I see several nodding in the room. Would this be agreeable? Because it is agreed language of the last Council.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

As the United States of America said, that was the agreed language in the last Council. However, as I said, the Organization is not permitted to go beyond the approved budget. Thus, just because we made an error in the last Council, it does not mean we should carry on with that error by quoting the past.

Ms LI Xi (China)

We appreciate the proposal from the United States of America (USA), but we just want to say that it is also in the last Council, exactly what USA proposed. That this kind of expression should not appear here, because no one can change the approved Programme of Work and Budget (PWB).

We would propose to delete the second part of that even though it was from the previous Council, and we would kindly request that you add the *“welcomed the transparency”* at the very beginning of this sentence. Seems like the Management has already clarified this. The most *“transparent initiative”* here.

CHAIRPERSON

We keep this subparagraph pending probably until the end of the evening because I see again a long list of speakers.

We continue now with the other subparagraphs to see whether or not we can reach agreement. Otherwise it takes too much time and we cannot finalize the Council.

We go to subparagraph (e). Can we agree to subparagraph (e)?

Ms Ronit KIRSHNER-GERARD (United States of America)

I would like to note, maybe a little brevity here, *“welcomed the first Hand-in-Hand investment forum”*, striking out *“successful”* and then, *“which took place during the World Food Forum in October 2022”* and ending it there – just for some brevity in subparagraph (e).

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

I raised the hand for subparagraph (d), so I refrain from talking at this moment.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we go along with the proposal of the United States of America to shorten the sentence? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (f). Can we agree paragraph (f)? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (g). I do not see any objections.

Let us see whether or not we can conclude this Item otherwise we have to leave it open. Let us go back to the yellow part. Could we go with the proposal which came at the end “*welcomed the transparency and looked forward to continued regular updates on the Initiative, including further updates on the Geospatial Platform*”, but delete “*with*”.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I think that the alternative version proposed by the United States of America with your additional little adjustments is fine. It is already agreed language from the previous Council with some little adjustments.

If there is a need on the second part of the sentence, we may ask Legal Counsel to give us legal advice on whether it is already in line or not with FAO’s Basic Texts as some Members have questioned.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

I understand the question or the concern related to the matter of assurances from Management concerning impacts on the agreed regular budget. As all of you will be aware, the financial regulations establish obligations upon the Organization. And most specifically obligations to only use the funding provided by the Members, approved within the budget, in accordance with the regulations and rules and to the extent approved and not to make expenditures in manners which have not been approved.

In that context, it is possible, but of course this is a matter for you, but it is possible that the text as it currently reads suggests that there have been use of finances in manners which have not been approved. And that may be where some concern may arise.

The question of assurance from Management would maybe suggest that there is a failure or a need to confirm that Management is actually behaving in a manner consistent with the Financial Regulations. This may be one of the reason of the concern of some of the Members in this context.

In this regard, as mentioned by the Chief economist that this already forms part of the regular reporting, the regular accountability structures, the regular oversight structures that exist in the context of the Basic Texts.

CHAIRPERSON

My proposal would be to have a full stop after “*transparency on financing.*” I think, the clear indication what was said by Mr Máximo Torero Cullen at the briefing in January on everything related to and the results of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative in the context of the World Food Forum (WFF).

If there is a reason to come back to this issue, can always do it in the next Council. But my proposal would be to let us work with the old sentence, with a full stop after “*financing.*” Because it was clear in that case that there is a problem: we have the Council in April to come back based on the briefing of Management, so that we do not have to make any assumptions at this moment.

Would that be agreeable to the Council? I see nodding.

Mr Thomas John KELLY (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

I do not mean to delay progress on this, but when we are saying, “*welcomed transparency*” and “*look forward to continued regular updates*”, welcome the transparency of what?

My delegation was making points yesterday in the context of the programme of the Finance and Programme Committees about the need for more transparency on Country Strategy Papers (CSPs) so that we can attract the kind of partners and private sector funding investments we need. My point is a constructive one around improving transparency generally.

Thus, I am just not sure what we are welcoming here when we say “*the transparency*”. It is kind of hanging a bit. Can we not just start that sentence from, “*looked forward to continued regular updates*” and so on? I just do not know what transparency we are welcoming, and we have been so precise throughout this Council to be clear on what we are saying.

CHAIRPERSON

Could we not say “*welcomed the transparency on the financing of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative?*” “*Looked forward to regular updates.*” Then have a full stop after “*the platform*” because we already had “*the transparency*” in the beginning.

Would this be agreeable? We are specific now and if there are any problems we can come back to it in our next Council based on the discussion prepared by the Finance Committee, based on the briefing which was sent by Mr Máximo Torero Cullen (that will be out in January on everything related to the World Food Forum), and the outcomes of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative investments), etc. Is this agreeable?

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

Japan strongly supports the original proposal from the United States of America; my comment is relating to the United Kingdom’s comment. If we add “*welcome the transparency*” in that case I would like to add, after that, “*emphasize the ongoing need for transparency and engagement*”, something like that.

I do not want to prolong the discussion, so I would like to strongly prefer the original proposal made by the United States of America. It is the shortest way to reach a consensus from my point of view.

Ms Siti Normaznie ABDUL MUTTALIB (Malaysia)

I actually just wanted to make some amendments to the text that you suggested earlier, as it made sense. I think the issue would be taking the cue from the Legal Counsel. There has been transparency as we know, with regular updates. I think rather than just saying that there is no transparency at the moment, because this could imply that there has been no transparency before, we could use “*continued transparency*”. This shows that there has been transparency and what we need is additional transparency.

Like I said, it looks better in the initial subparagraph which you suggested, but you know, in this case we can also say “*welcome the continued transparency*”.

We can certainly support Malaysia’s suggestion there. I think that is helpful, to perhaps also address Japan’s concerns, to add at the tail end of the sentence “*including further updates on the Geospatial Platform and financial considerations*”. Then we get updates on that as well, which presumably will also contribute to that ongoing continued transparency.

CHAIRPERSON

Would this be now the text that meets everybody’s concerns? We would like to make an appeal to you to go along with this, so that we can continue, because we will certainly come back to it. We have an interesting briefing to look forward in January. Certainly, there will be many detailed questions to be answered, but that is why we have those briefings. Then we will have the Finance Committee, probably also the Programme Committee, and then we have a Council again. Can we go along, at least in this Council, with this text? I do not see any objections.

With that, we have concluded our work on this Agenda Item.

Item 12. Progress Report on Rome-based Agencies collaboration

Point 12. Rapport de situation sur la collaboration entre les organismes des Nations Unies ayant leur siège à Rome

Tema 12. Informe sobre la marcha de las actividades de colaboración de los organismos con sede en Roma

(CL 171/13)

CHAIRPERSON

We continue with the conclusions on Item 12, *Progress report on Rome-based Agencies collaboration*, which you have found in document CL 171/13.

Introduction to Item 12: Progress Report on Rome-based Agencies collaboration

Ms Beth Bechdol, FAO Deputy Director-General

In line with the Rome-based Agencies' (RBAs) commitment to provide an annual update on their collaborative activities to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Council and to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Boards, the three Agencies jointly present this progress report. The report showcases how the three Agencies have been working together during the reporting period 2021-2022, building upon the results of the independent Joint evaluation of collaboration among the United Nations Rome-based Agencies. The evaluation reiterated the importance of this partnership for the advancement of the three Agencies' common objectives in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), while also recognizing the collaboration taking place under the auspices of the UN development system (UNDS) repositioning.

The RBAs continue to pursue critical work in terms of joint global advocacy and policy development as well as knowledge and information sharing. In 2022, FAO, IFAD and WFP succeeded in putting food security high on the global political agenda, calling for urgent action to address the global food security crisis in high-level fora, including the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the Global Crisis Response Group (GCRG), the Group of Seven (G7) and the Group of Twenty (G20). In the context of the current global food crisis, the three Agencies successfully coordinated their responses on the ground whilst jointly addressing the global implications of the conflict in Ukraine. The three Agencies' active engagement in the Food Security Cluster, as well as their leadership role within the Global Network against Food Crises, and the production of the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) constitute solid examples of such collaboration. The RBA collaboration proved to be particularly effective in the process towards the UN Food Systems Summit as well as in its follow-up.

At regional and country levels, the RBAs reinforced coordination within the new generation of United Nations country teams to promote joint strategic advocacy related to SDG 2 under the leadership of Resident Coordinators. By bringing together their distinct and complementary capacities and expertise, the RBAs are effectively contributing to joint planning through Common Country Analyses and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs).

Mindful of the critical need to secure political commitment and joint funding for their activities on the ground, the RBAs continue to engage in UN joint programmes such as the Joint Programme for the Sahel in Response to the Challenges of COVID-19, Conflict and Climate Change (SD3C), which represents a flagship example of regional level coordination. The RBAs also deepened their joint work in several thematic areas such as gender equality and women's empowerment, recognizing and supporting the catalytic role played by women in food systems. Through the framework provided by South-South and Triangular Cooperation, the RBA collaboration also played a key role in facilitating innovative partnerships and coalitions to ensure food security and resilient livelihoods, promote innovations, and catalyse investment for more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems. Lastly, the RBAs supported each other with the design and implementation of specific country-level investment projects, as in the case of the longstanding partnership between IFAD and FAO through the FAO Investment Centre.

Over the reporting period, the three Agencies have successfully redirected their humanitarian and development efforts to effectively respond to the global food crisis, demonstrating flexibility and adaptation to emerging priorities. Leveraging the instruments provided by the ongoing UNDS repositioning to make their collaboration more effective, cost-efficient and impactful, the RBAs will ensure both a stronger contribution to the attainment of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, as well as substantial efficiency gains.

Comments from Members
Commentaires des Membres
Observaciones de los Miembros

CHILE

Presentado el lunes 14 de noviembre 2022, a las 17.16

Sr. Presidente, Problemas globales requieren de respuestas conjuntas, esta es la base del multilateralismo y la acción cooperativa internacional.

1. El informe que se nos presenta da cuenta como los tres organismos en un trabajo conjunto han podido avanzar en el logro de objetivos en los planos mundial, regional y nacional.
2. Como bien sabemos y lamentamos la pandemia del covid, el cambio climático, los conflictos latentes entre Estados y la crisis económica, han generado un escenario de retroceso en los ODS y de seguridad alimentaria a nivel mundial.
 - Nuestro deber es trabajar en conjunto para generar certezas y esperanzas fundadas en la población que en todos nuestros continentes anhela el desarrollo social, la paz y la estabilidad.
 - Volver a los principios y trazar la hoja de ruta
 - Restablecer las prioridades
 - Intensificar las coordinaciones y colaboraciones entre el sector público, privado y la sociedad civil.
 - Fomentar la asociatividad y evitar la duplicación de esfuerzos.
 - Respalda al SG ONU y al Centro de Coordinación Conjunta (CCM) en la Iniciativa Granos del Mar Negro, para prologar su vigencia.
3. Quisiéramos destacar el trabajo desarrollado en 2022 por FAO, el FIDA y el PMA en tres campos.
 - 1) El asociado a la situación Rusia - Ucrania que movilizó profundos debates en el seno de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, el Grupo de Respuesta a la Crisis Mundial, el G-7 y el G-20, y el Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas, presentando propuestas concretas ante la crisis alimentaria.
 - 2) El proceso de Post Cumbre de Sistemas Alimentarios, en relación a las funciones del Centro de Coordinación conjunta dentro del Comité y 3) en el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial (CSA). Los temas que requieren concertar nuestra atención son por una parte el tratamiento del impacto del conflicto Rusia-Ucrania en las materias de seguridad alimentaria, abogando por un compromiso continuo de los Estados para transformar urgentemente los sistemas agroalimentarios y así aumentar su eficiencia, inclusión, resiliencia y sostenibilidad, todos elementos claves hacia la consecución de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS). Toda vez que la falta de consenso no permitió adoptar el informe final del CSA. Y en segundo lugar retomar las negociaciones de las Directrices sobre la igualdad de género y el empoderamiento de las mujeres y las niñas en el contexto de la seguridad alimentaria y la nutrición.

JAPAN

Submitted Wednesday 16 November 2022, at 16:09

Japan welcomes the Progress Report on Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) collaboration.

In addition to the prolonged impacts of COVID-19, the aggression against Ukraine by the Russian Federation is worsening food insecurity and malnutrition. Under such circumstances, it is important for the RBAs to collectively call for urgent action to address the global food security crisis in high-level global fora including the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the Global Crisis Response Group (GCRG), the G7 and G20.

Towards strengthening the global food security, in addition to emergency food assistance, we emphasize the necessity of mid- and long-term approaches to build more resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems. Japan expects further cooperation among RBAs in the mid- and long-term, going beyond the current crisis.

Moreover, it is important to support evidence-based decision making and promote policy coordination for ensuring transparency of the food and fertilizer markets and preventing both arbitrary measures and abuse of the resources for political purposes. From the point of view, we encourage the three Agencies to continue providing up-to-date and objective data and information, market assessment and outlooks through tools such as Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS).

The document states that, as a part of RBAs collaboration activities at regional and country level, more than USD 16 billion has been provided since 1977 to almost 400 IFAD-funded projects through the

partnership between the FAO Investment Centre and IFAD. We would appreciate seeing them in time-series, i.e. the number of projects and the amount invested each year.

EUROPEAN UNION

Submitted Friday 18 November 2022, at 11:08

Chairperson, I am honoured to write to you on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States regarding the abovementioned agenda item for the 171st Session of the FAO Council.

We welcome the Rome-based Agencies' (RBAs) Progress Report, which gives a good overview of the activities implemented at global, regional and country levels for the period 2021-2022. We call upon FAO to continue to improve collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), focusing on five long-term priorities and the set of recommendations resulting from the 2021 evaluation. In the future, we would welcome an analysis of the challenges of RBA collaboration and plans on how to address them.

We commend the RBAs for their coordinated efforts and collaboration in response to the global food crisis exacerbated by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. We appreciate the central role they have played in supporting countries, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other UN agencies, particularly through short and long-term measures, policies and analytical support in mitigating the consequences of the crisis.

We acknowledge the RBAs' collaboration and active involvement in the follow-up to the UN Food Systems Summit. The RBAs represent a key player in the transformation to sustainable and resilient global food systems. In this regard, we emphasise the importance of continued RBA support to the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), including through financing and staffing, and of ensuring that the CFS, its High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) and its products, remain an integral part of the RBAs' follow-up activity to the Food Systems Summit.

We welcome the annual preparation of The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) reports, which serve as an important scientific basis for discussions involving the CFS, RBAs and the larger UN system.

We express our full support for strengthened RBA collaboration, including the efforts to effectively respond to the global food and fertilizers crisis or food systems transformation.

We welcome the launch by the RBAs of the national home-grown school feeding (HGSF) programmes and encourage the RBAs to continue their support to school meals programme for better food security and nutrition. With these comments, we welcome the Progress Report.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Submitted Wednesday 23 November 2022, at 14:18

The United States welcomes ongoing efforts by the UN Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) to strengthen collaboration at the global, regional, and country levels. The international community soberly acknowledges that in addition to a global pandemic, pressures and shocks from climate change and existing conflicts, Russia's unprovoked and unjustified invasion of Ukraine, illegal purported annexation of agricultural lands, and use of the Black Sea as a geopolitical pawn further imperils global food security and sustainable development. This compounded global food crisis calls for enhanced humanitarian and development coordination among the RBAs and all relevant partners at the regional, country and headquarters levels, including determining and leveraging each agency's comparative advantages and strengths – to do more with less. We recognize that each agency has a specific mandate and role in addressing hunger and food security, but in a world of increasing crisis and finite resources, the RBAs must work together more closely.

We note the important collaboration between FAO and IFAD through the FAO Investment Center on projects addressing development and climate adaptation needs, which in 2021 supported over USD 600 million in investment across 10 projects and are poised to expand projects with the Green Climate Fund. As the document states, the RBAs must more broadly position themselves in global initiatives and play a more pivotal role in the UN system-wide response to global food and nutrition challenges.

We urge FAO, working with WFP and IFAD, to think creatively about how to use your convening power and expertise in food security to more concretely address the food crisis, including leveraging all the agencies' recent private sector engagement strategies and commitments to science and innovation.

Finally, we encourage continuous assessment of the enablers and challenges in each context, as well as the sharing of lessons learned from RBA collaboration to avoid competition and duplication of efforts.

Groupe Régional Afrique (GRA)

Soumis Mardi 29 November 2022, at 13:56

La République de Guinée et la République du Congo délivrent la présente déclaration au nom du Groupe Régional Afrique (GRA) au titre du Point 12 de l'ordre du jour de la 171eme session du Conseil.

Le Groupe Régional Afrique se félicite de la politique de collaboration entre les trois Organismes des Nations Unies ayant leur siège à Rome (OSR) qui s'inscrit dans le cadre du repositionnement du système des Nations Unies, de la promotion des solutions durables pour la transformation des systèmes agroalimentaires et de la réalisation du Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030.

Parmi les problématiques soulevées, le rapport de l'évaluation révèle que : « l'intensification des principaux facteurs à l'origine de l'insécurité alimentaire et de la malnutrition (les conflits, le changement climatique et les chocs économiques) autrement dit la crise alimentaire mondiale éloigne le monde de la réalisation des objectifs mondiaux de 2030 ».

Ainsi, malgré les efforts inlassables consentis par les OSR dans le cadre des situations de crise humanitaire, le GRA note avec préoccupation l'augmentation constante d'année en année du nombre de personnes souffrant de la faim et plongées dans l'extrême pauvreté dans le monde, et l'Afrique n'est pas en reste. Vraisemblablement, si les causes profondes de la crise alimentaire mondiale précitées, y compris le manque de financements, la crise de l'énergie et la crise sanitaire, ne trouvent pas de solution, le travail des OSR, nonobstant l'efficacité et l'efficacité de leur collaboration, ne permettra pas d'atteindre les cibles fixées pour la réalisation des ODD 1 et 2.

Par ailleurs, le rapport évoque la baisse des ressources provenant des donateurs et la concurrence entre les Organismes des Nations Unies. Tenant compte de cette situation et du fait que la plupart des causes qui affectent le travail des OSR sont exogènes à leur mandat et sont du ressort des organismes spécialisés des Nations.

Unies, le GRA encourage au renforcement de la collaboration et de la coordination des institutions des Nations Unies autour du nexus action humanitaire-développement-paix et reste attentif à l'évaluation indépendante du gain d'efficacité résultant des synergies d'interventions sur le terrain. Dans cette perspective, les OSR sont appelés avoir des orientations communes afin d'éviter la concurrence et les chevauchements entre eux.

Le GRA salue également la collaboration des OSR dans le cadre:

- de la mise en œuvre le Programme conjoint au Sahel en réponse aux défis du COVID-19, des conflits et des changements climatiques (SD3C) au Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritanie, Niger, Sénégal et Tchad et dit attendre avec intérêt le retour d'expériences de cette initiative en vue d'une éventuelle mise à l'échelle;
- de l'appui apporté au Groupe des «Sherpas» du G-20;
- du pôle de coordination des Nations Unies sur les systèmes alimentaires,
- de la coopération Sud-Sud et la coopération triangulaire ;
- des questions du genre.

Enfin, le GRA exhorte les OSR à amplifier les expériences positives de collaboration et à privilégier progressivement la mobilisation des ressources autour des initiatives communes du pôle de sécurité alimentaire de l'agenda 2030 dont ils sont piliers essentiels.

Avec ces commentaires, le GRA prend note et accueille favorablement le rapport de situation sur la collaboration entre les organismes des Nations Unies ayant leur siège à Rome.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Submitted Friday 2 December 2022, at 10:55

We are grateful to the Secretariat for the Progress Report on Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) collaboration. Undeniably, the agrifood organizations play a special role in countering the effects of the current food crisis at the global, regional and national level, within the scope of their clearly established constitutional mandates. We support this work to strengthen the efforts of the RBAs, minimize shared costs and increase the overall impact and effectiveness of joint actions, including by “splicing” administrative structures and some supervisory functions.

We assume that the RBAs will use their capacity to combat the root causes of the crisis. The topic of the agencies’ collaboration should not be used by individual countries to continue their politicized assessment of the situation in the Ukraine.

In developing joint work for the future, we attach great importance to taking into account the recommendations resulting from the evaluation of the effectiveness of RBA collaboration, presented in the framework of the independent evaluation of collaboration in 2021. In the context of the current report, we would have liked to have seen the results of the evaluation of these recommendations, which called for renewal of the coordination architecture and raising the overall quality and effectiveness of collaboration. This is extremely topical in view of the upcoming extension of the 2018 RBA Memorandum of Understanding. Unfortunately, in the current material the Secretariat has placed the emphasis only on programmatic cooperation, which, as summarized in the 2021 independent evaluation, is characterized by the absence of clear separation of powers on the ground as a result of a lack of understanding of respective mandates, according to the comparative advantages of each RBA, in the first instance FAO and WFP.

As regards the RBA response measures to the current food crisis, as is known, on the basis of the Memorandum, each organization shall contribute to strengthening global food security in accordance with its constitutional mandate. The format of RBA collaboration is not called upon to create new programmatic priorities for cooperation between organizations in the UN system. We note with regret that the RBAs, under pressure from donors, are taking on tasks and functions formulated in the context of separate initiatives by a group of countries without the required discussion and agreement with Member Nations of FAO. We are thinking, first of all, of the European Union-promoted Global Alliance for Food Security and the Food and Agriculture Resilience Mission (FARM). These projects have a certain political bias in the context of the current situation in Ukraine. They have not received support at the level of the United Nations organization and organizations in the UN system.

Response from Secretariat
Réponses du Secrétariat
Respuestas de la Secretaría

The Secretariat expresses its appreciation of the comments from Members on Item 12, Progress Report on Rome-based Agencies collaboration. The Secretariat takes note of all comments and suggestions and is pleased to acknowledge Members’ recognition of the importance of Romebased Agency (RBA) collaboration to address the many challenges posed to global food security and nutrition. As stated in the Report, the three Agencies have enhanced collaboration at the global, regional and country levels, building on the results of the Joint Evaluation on RBA Collaboration carried out in 2021, considering its relevance within the context of the UN development system (UNDS) repositioning. The RBAs recognize the importance of building synergies and complementarities in order to reduce overlap, competition and duplication of work, particularly at the country level. The three Agencies have successfully redirected their humanitarian and development efforts to effectively respond to the global food crisis, demonstrating flexibility and adaptation to emerging priorities. At the global level, the RBAs further strengthened their coordination across high-level global fora, including the United Nations General Assembly, the Global Crisis Response Group, the G7, the G20 and other joint initiatives.

The RBAs continue to work very closely together in the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) follow-up process. In this context, the new Scientific Advisory Group of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub includes eight members from the High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) to ensure proper links with the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and its products, and the development of complementarities on the UNFSS follow up.

The Secretariat appreciates Members' interest in the collaboration between FAO and IFAD through the FAO Investment Centre. A notable increase in such collaboration has occurred over the last decade compared to the past period, both in terms of number of projects and amount of investments in USD, as highlighted in the table below.

Period of Investment Centre support	Number of IFAD financed projects	Total investment (USD million)
1979	5	269.90
1980-1989	85	2,085.58
1990-1999	90	2,293.40
2000-2009	84	2,630.71
2010-2019	114	7,572.89
2020	8	616.03
2021	10	605.75
TOTAL	396	16,074.26

With respect to Green Climate Fund (GCF) collaboration, the FAO Investment Centre supported IFAD with the design of two GCF approved proposals worth over USD 222 million and is poised to further increase the volume of the GCF collaboration with IFAD to over USD 805 million, with four additional projects and one programme on Net Zero Dairy in East Africa involving the Global Dairy Platform. Additional initiatives are currently being explored including a global programme for Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Of particular note, FAO and IFAD are prioritizing climate change as part of their joint strategic dialogue to enhance investment collaboration for 2023 and beyond.

The Secretariat welcomes Members' request for analysis of the challenges of RBA collaboration and looks forward to providing further details on this matter in the next Progress Report on RBA collaboration.

The Secretariat takes note of Members' request to strengthen collaboration around the humanitarian development peace nexus and to jointly seek funding and resources for the successful transformation of agrifood systems.

Regarding the Joint Evaluation on RBA collaboration, the Secretariat notes that all actions to respond to the recommendations are on track and due to be completed according to the agreed schedule.

With regard to the queries on the Food and Agriculture Resilience Mission (FARM) and Global Alliance for Food Security (GAFS), FAO, within its mandate, provides data and expertise to various global initiatives. Accordingly, in FARM, it has provided data which is already publicly available, at the request of its RBA partners, and it is not directly providing staff support or other resources. FAO's contribution comes via the Pillar of Transparency under which the intent is to continue to strengthen the support provided by the Agriculture Market Information System (AMIS), which is a G20 initiative hosted at FAO.

Regarding the GAFS initiative, the World Bank has been given the task to develop a dashboard on food security. The World Bank is using FAO data and Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) data, both of which are publicly available. FAO's role has been to offer some modest technical support to the World Bank specifically connected to the use of FAO data.

CHAIRPERSON

We present the draft conclusions:

40. The Council:

- a) welcomed the Progress Report and noted the concrete achievements of the Rome-based Agencies (RBA) collaboration, especially at country level, in line with recommendations of the *Joint evaluation on collaboration among the United Nations Rome-Based Agencies*;
- b) stressed the importance of RBA collaboration in the context of the current food crisis based on each Agency's distinctive strengths and comparative advantages; and
- c) welcomed the updates provided on the status of implementation of the Joint evaluation and the strategic collaboration within the framework of United Nations development system (UNDS) repositioning.

Can we agree to subparagraph (a)?

Can we agree on subparagraph (b)?

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

We do not have any objections on the content of subparagraphs (a) and (b), but we would propose an additional subparagraph and we are ready to enclose this with the Report on the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees. Perhaps to save time I can give the Secretariat the number of the subparagraph in order for the Members to be able to see this displayed, paragraph 5 (f) of the Report of the Joint Meeting of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and the 194th Session of the Finance Committee which took place from 7 to 11 November, and I will read out the text in English.

Continues in English

“Underscored that FAO shall be guided by its agreed mandate in RBA collaboration including on non-UN system-wide initiatives”.

It is paragraph 5 of the Progress report on Rome-based Agencies collaboration of the Joint Meeting of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and the 194th Session of the Finance Committee. It is paragraph 9, subparagraph (f).

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

I do not have a problem with the subparagraph. I just wanted to say that one of the aspects mentioned in the document on this issue is that there is an administrative feasibility assessment being carried out. That is an important study that should be completed by the end of the year.

I think we should make some reference to that study because its results would have an impact on how the three Agencies handled their administrative and financial aspects.

CHAIRPERSON

Do you have a concrete proposal for the text?

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

If you give me a few minutes.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first go to the subparagraph proposed by the Russian Federation. It is agreed language of the Joint Meeting that we already approved.

M. Bienvenu NTSOUANVA (Congo)

Je crois que la collaboration dans le "b", le paragraphe "b". La collaboration aussi c'est dans la réalisation des ODD. Donc, au lieu de mettre seulement "dans ce contexte de crise", on peut aussi "dans la réalisation des ODD."

CHAIRPERSON

Where do you want to insert it in the text?

M. Bienvenu NTSOUANVA (Congo)

Oui, après "crise", "and..."

CHAIRPERSON

With this suggestion, can we agree to subparagraph (b)?

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

We can agree with this subparagraph. We have two little paragraphs to add. I just wanted to flag it, so you will not conclude before I put it on the table.

CHAIRPERSON

Then I go to the subparagraph proposed by the Russian Federation. Can we agree to this subparagraph? I do not see any objections.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

The first subparagraph would be "*Commended the RBAs for their collaboration and active involvement in the follow up to the United Nations Food System Summit (UN FSS) and emphasize their crucial role in making the transformation to sustainable and resilient global food systems*".

The other subparagraph would read: "*Encouraged the RBAs to continue to support the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and to ensure that the CFS and its products remain an integral part of RBAs initiatives and the follow up to the UN Food System Summit*".

CHAIRPERSON

I must say just as an observation, it is not without reason that we use the written correspondence procedure and none of those comments were made in the written procedures. But anyway, it is now on the table. I think with that, at a certain moment, we should review whether or not we want to have written correspondence procedures.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

It could be a new subparagraph which says "*noted that a RBAs administrative feasibility assessment is being carried out and look forward to reviewing the results of this assessment at the next Session of the Council*".

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

I have a few comments on what was suggested.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us go subparagraph by subparagraph. Let us first go to subparagraph (c).

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

We would like to suggest a few changes. The first one: we would like to change "commended" for "*took note of the RBA collaboration*".

We would like to add at the wording "*global food systems*", the following "*global agrifood systems*" and also add our traditional caveat, "*should be made in a coherent manner, as appropriate, in accordance with and dependent on national contexts and capacities*".

Ms Ronit KIRSHNER-GERARD (United States of America)

Appreciating the addition, here we would make note of the additional additions just made, but strike out "*global*" just before "*agrifood systems*" as to make sure we are inclusive of all agrifood systems. Perhaps, instead of that, it should be made in a coherent manner.

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

We can support the proposals made by Brazil and the United States of America to reach the text.

We would like to have a further amendment because our understanding is that the follow up of the Food Systems Summit should be conducted by the UN Coordination Hub. So, we would like to include *“took note of the RBAs collaboration and active involvement through the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub which indeed is coordinating this process”*.

CHAIRPERSON

We almost have the perfect subparagraph, can we agree to this subparagraph? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (d).

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I am not going to amend my proposal.

Just a little remark on the written correspondence procedure. We indeed sent the remarks observations through the written procedure and we received quite voluminous response from the Secretariat to that. So, I would say that our little suggestions are based on remarks we sent to this particular Item.

CHAIRPERSON

Then we continue with subparagraph (d).

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Regarding the tail end of subparagraph (c) appreciating Argentina's addition *“through the Food Systems Coordination Hub”*. That is one way through which the RBAs are providing follow up to the Food Systems Summit. But presumably in the implementation of national pathways, there are other ways as well. So not limited only to the Food Systems Coordination Hub but perhaps *“and active involvement, including through the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, in the follow up”*.

CHAIRPERSON

Is that agreeable?

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

I had a few more commas to add in the following: *“in accordance with, and dependent on, national context and capacities”*.

CHAIRPERSON

At least that saves the time for the Drafting Committee.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

On subparagraph (d) we strongly support the work of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and we also want to end that subparagraph at “initiatives”. So, striking out the part *saying “and the follow up to the UN food Systems Summit”*.

Ms Ronit KIRSHNER-GERARD (United States of America)

We are okay with this addition, but we would like to make one small edit “to ensure that the CFS products are promoted.”, and then delete the remaining part.

Mr Guillermo Adolfo SPIKA (Argentina)

We can go along with what has been proposed by Brazil and the United States of America. Although in the first line instead of *“to continue to support”*, we would like to use the exact language coming from the reform document paragraph 19. It would be *“encouraged the RBAs to advance the joint work within Committee on World Food Security (CFS)”*. And then we would like to have *“CFS voluntary products are promoted”*.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to the subparagraph, without brackets? I do not see any objections. We have an agreed subparagraph.

Then we go to subparagraph (e). Can we agree to subparagraph (e)?

M. Michel LEVEQUE (France)

Nous sommes tout à fait d'accord avec la proposition de notre collègue du Pakistan. C'était juste une précision de langage. "*RBA administrative feasibility assessment*". En fait, le titre exact est: "*Feasibility Study on the Integration of Administrative Services among the RBAs*". C'était d'ailleurs le titre au Conseil 170, paragraphe 11.D. Donc, c'était juste proposer de revenir au titre officiel.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this subparagraph? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (f). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (g).

Ms Nosipho Nausca-Jean JEZILE (South Africa)

On subparagraph (f), just a small language edit. But maybe you can leave it for the Drafting Committee. It should be it is "*looking forward*" not "*looked*".

CHAIRPERSON

Now we have concluded this Agenda Item.

Item 13. Arrangements for the 172nd Session of the Council (24-28 April 2023) and 43rd Session of the Conference (1-7 July 2023)

Point 13. Organisation de la cent soixante-douzième session du Conseil (24-28 avril 2023) et de la quarante-troisième session de la Conférence (1-7 juillet 2023)

Tema 13. Disposiciones para el 172.º período de sesiones del Consejo (24-28 de abril de 2023) y el 43.º período de sesiones de la Conferencia (1-7 de julio de 2023)

(CL 171/14)

CHAIRPERSON

We continue with Item 13, *Arrangements for the 172nd Session of the Council and the 43rd Session of the Conference*, which you can find in document CL 171/14.

Introduction to Item 13: Arrangements for the 172nd Session of the Council (24-28 April 2023) and 43rd Session of the Conference (1-7 July 2023)

Mr Rakesh Muthoo, Secretary-General of the Conference and the Council

Document CL 171/14, *Arrangements for the 172nd Session of the Council (24-28 April 2023) and 43rd Session of the Conference (1-7 July 2023)*, contains a number of proposals regarding the preparations for the upcoming Council and Conference Sessions for decision by the Council at its 171st Session.

The 43rd Session of the Conference will be held in Rome from Saturday, 1 to Friday, 7 July 2023. The 171st Session of the Council is invited to endorse the Provisional Agenda for the Conference given in Appendix A of document CL 171/14. A Tentative Timetable for the Conference session will be submitted for consideration at the next Session of the Council in April 2023.

The Council is invited, in line with established practice, to recommend the establishment of two Commissions for the 43rd Session of the Conference, namely Commission I to deal with substantive and policy matters, and Commission II to consider programmatic and budgetary matters.

In line with past practice, the Council is invited to recommend that statements by Heads of Delegation in the General Debate be limited to a maximum of five minutes each. In addition, delegations will have the opportunity to deliver their statements in digital format, in line with the working methods implemented at the 42nd Session of the Conference.

Following endorsement of the working methods for the Conference by the 165th Session of the Council, Round Tables are envisaged to take place at the 43rd Session of the Conference in order to foster senior or high-level official action-oriented dialogue.

The Council is also invited to endorse “Water resources management for the four betters: better production, better nutrition, better environment and better life” as the topic for the General Debate of the 43rd Session of the Conference, and as the Biennial Theme for Governing Body Sessions 2024-25.

With regards to the appointment of the FAO Director-General, procedures concerning the address to the Conference and the 172nd Session of the Council by candidates for the office of Director-General are set out in Appendix C of document CL 171/14. These procedures follow those used and endorsed at the 161st Session of the Council for the appointment of the Director-General in 2019. The Council is invited to endorse such procedures to be used at the Council Session in April 2023, and at the 43rd Session of the Conference in July 2023.

With regard to the election for appointment of the Independent Chairperson of the Council at the 43rd Session of the Conference, the Council is invited to establish 12.00 hours on Tuesday, 4 April 2023 as the closing date for submission of nominations, and Tuesday, 11 April 2023 as the date by which such nominations are circulated by letter and through the FAO Members Gateway by the Secretary-General.

The Council is also invited to recommend the Conference sets 9.00 hours on Monday, 3 July 2023 as the deadline for the receipt of nominations for Council Membership.

Finally, the Council is invited to recommend that Thursday, 6 July 2023, be set aside for the: (i) election of the Independent Chairperson of the Council (by secret ballot); (ii) election of Members of the Council; and the (iii) vote on the budget level for 2024-25.

Comments from Members
Commentaires des Membres
Observaciones de los Miembros

CHILE

Presentado el lunes 14 de noviembre 2022, a las 17.16

En relación a la propuesta del Director General de FAO, de invitar a Palestina en calidad de Observador a la próxima Conferencia de FAO a realizarse en Julio 2023. Chile manifiesta su apoyo a la propuesta toda vez que esta constituye una práctica habitual del organismo.

JAPAN

Submitted Wednesday 16 November 2022, at 16:09

Japan welcomes that FAO provides the information on the Arrangements for the 172nd Session of the Council and 43rd Session of the Conference. In recognition that management of water resources is one of the most important themes, we support the consideration of the topic for the General Debate at the 43rd Session of the Conference and the biennial theme for 2024-25 as “Water resources management for the four betters: better production, better nutrition, better environment and better life”

EUROPEAN UNION

Submitted Friday 18 November 2022, 11:06

Chairperson, I am honoured to write to you on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States regarding the abovementioned agenda item for the 171st Session of the FAO Council.

We welcome the proposal to have “water resources management” as the topic for the General Debate at the 43rd Session of the Conference. Indeed, addressing water-related challenges is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda and concerns directly or indirectly a whole range of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The sustainable, integrated and efficient management of water resources is critical in the context of climate change and the transformation of food systems. It also has a fundamental role to play in

addressing the increasing problem of severe drought episodes. Moreover, sustainable integrated water resources management, based on an inclusive, territorial and systemic vision of rural development, can make a significant contribution to fighting global poverty.

It is critically important to ensure that FAO's work on water resources management is duly aligned with ongoing UN initiatives in this area and that FAO works in close cooperation with other UN agencies and international fora dealing with water-related issues.

With these observations, we support "water resources management" both as the topic for the General Debate at the 43rd FAO Conference and as the theme for the 2024-2025 biennium.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Submitted Wednesday 23 November 2022, 14:18

The United States would appreciate confirmation that the secret ballot vote will be conducted only in an in-person modality, similar to the ICC election held at Conference 42.

***Response from Secretariat
Réponses du Secrétariat
Respuestas de la Secretaría***

The Secretariat thanks Members for their comments and support for the arrangements as outlined in document CL 171/14, *Arrangements for the 172nd Session of the Council (24-28 April 2023) and the 43rd Session of the Conference (1-7 July 2023)*.

In response to the United States of America, all votes, including secret-ballot votes, at the 43rd Session of the Conference will be conducted in conformity with the applicable rules and regulations of the FAO Basic Texts, as was the case inter alia during the 42nd Session of the Conference.

CHAIRPERSON

Before going to the conclusions, I got requests. When we have the Conference, we have something which we do only every four years, the elections for the Director-General. I give the floor to Ms Donata Rugarabamu about the procedure, because of questions received.

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

I understand there have been some queries about the process for the secret ballots. Indeed, of course, at this upcoming Conference, there would be at least two secret ballots arising. In this regard, the Rules are set out in the Basic Texts as you are all very well aware.

Rule XII, in particular paragraph 10 addresses how a secret ballot should be conducted. With respect to the appointment of the Director-General, Rule XXXVII addresses the processes for appointment.

I believe and the Secretary-General would be able to confirm, in all instances, the secret ballot has been conducted in person at Headquarters in Rome. The only time that it was not conducted fully in Rome, by my knowledge, was in the exceptional circumstances of the last election in 2021.

Thus, the reports and records of the previous elections by secret ballots simply reflect the fact that there was an election by secret ballot. The only occasion on which the Conference has addressed and adopted special procedures was indeed in 2021.

In that context, it adopted a specific resolution in which it confirmed the exceptional nature of the process that was being followed there. This in its *Resolution 1/2021*, in which the preambular paragraph specifically confirmed that the practices and here I will quote "*in the conditions in light of the COVID-19 pandemic*".

In operative paragraph 2, the special procedures were specifically stated to be on "*an exceptional basis without creating a precedent and as a one time arrangement for the 42nd session of the Conference*". In operative paragraph 4, nevertheless, as I had noted before, "*the Conference decided to conduct secret ballot votes by in person voting by staggered appointment at FAO headquarters in Rome and the United Nations Headquarters in New York*".

Thus, I just wish to confirm that in the instance of the 2021 election, this was very, very clearly stated to be a very exceptional procedure, but still physical.

Of course, it will be the Conference that would determine the processes that it will actually apply, but I did want to note that, should we be still in a situation of normality, and recalling that all of the elections that have been conducted in the past three years, have all been held physically. Thus, absent a decision of the Conference, absent conditions that would call for any special measures, it would be my expectation that the Conference would return to the practices or adhere to the practices that is followed essentially in the last 50-60 years.

CHAIRPERSON

I see the Russian Federation asked for the floor, I suppose that is for the previous Item.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

Perhaps you will decide to leave this matter to the Drafting Committee but in so far, unless we are mistaken, in 2019 the Council adopted a mandate regarding the feasibility study. Now, the feasibility study does not only concern evaluating the integration of administrative services but of control services. In order to save time and as under the Drafting Committee, perhaps we could go back to the recommendation and to the mandate that was in fact confirmed at the Council in 2019.

I am trying to open the document but unfortunately, I am unable to open it on this Item.

CHAIRPERSON

Yes, we copied and pasted the title we have found in the Report. This is the correct title, as it was also found in the Report of the Joint Meeting. With that, I think we can agree, because it is just the title.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

I was referring to the recommendations of the Joint Evaluation, which has been carried out by the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), and I am referring to the document before us, which is *CL 171/13*. Paragraph 14 of the document deals with Recommendation 4 of the Joint Evaluation. That is where the study is mentioned, which says “*focus administrative collaboration efforts on further embracing the UN efficiency agenda*”. It does not restrict it to oversight functions so I am referring to what is before the current Session of the Council, paragraph 14 of *CL 171/13*.

Mr Denis CHEREDNICHENKO (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

Well it looks like we did not get the exact wording here. If Pakistan is talking about the recommendation of the Report here, the exact reference, in that case we can withdraw our amendment.

CHAIRPERSON

We go back to the original text, and now we continue with the conclusions on the *Arrangements for the 72nd Session of the Council and the 43rd Session of the Conference*. We put the draft conclusions on the screen:

41. The Council recommended the Conference approve the Provisional Agenda as contained in document *CL171/14, Arrangements for the 172nd Session of the Council (24-28 April 2023) and the 43rd Session of the Conference (1-7 July 2023)*, and in particular:
 - a) that two Commissions be established to examine respectively:(i) substantive and policy matters in food and agriculture; and(ii) Programme and Budgetary Matters.
 - b) the deadline for receipt of nominations for election to the Council be set at 09:00 hours on Monday, 3 July 2023, and the election to be held on Thursday, 6 July 2023; and
 - c) the theme of the General Debate at the 43rd Session of the Conference, as well as the biennial theme 2024-25 be “water resource management for the four b:etters - better production, better nutrition, better environment and better life”, and that statements by heads of delegations during the General Debate be limited to 5 minutes each.

42. The Council decided to establish a deadline for receipt of nominations for the Office of the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) at 12:00 hours on Tuesday, 4 April 2023.
43. The Council agreed to recommend to the Conference that Palestine be invited to the Conference in an observer capacity.
44. The Council endorsed the procedures for the address by candidates for the Office of Director-General to the 172nd Session of the Council and the 43rd Session of the Conference.

Can we agree to the *chapeau*? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (a). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (b). I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparagraph (c). Can we agree to subparagraph (c)?

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

Could you please scroll to subparagraph (c)? I am just a little bit puzzled, because I am missing Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). After “*better life*” I would put “*to achieve Agenda 2030 and the SDGs*”. I think that is quite a natural part of FAO’s mandate.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

The team was suggested by, I suppose, by Management or is it? Then Council are allowed to make suggestions to the team, am I right? Okay because teams are usually more concise. Again, if Members agree to this, I am supportive of it.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree to this insertion? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to paragraph 42. I do not see any objections.

Then we go to paragraph 43. I do not see any objections.

Then we go to paragraph 44. I do not see any objections.

We have concluded this Agenda Item. We break now for the snack until 17:05 hours. The meeting is adjourned.

The meeting was suspended from 16:36 to 17:13 hours

La séance est suspendue de 16 h 36 à 17 h 13

Se suspende la sesión de las 16.36 a las 17.13

Item 18. World Food Programme:

Point 18. Programme alimentaire mondial:

Tema 18. Programa Mundial de Alimentos:

Item 18.2 Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board on its activities in 2021

Point 18.2 Rapport annuel du Conseil d’administration du PAM sur ses activités en 2021

Tema 18.2 Informe anual de la Junta Ejecutiva del PMA sobre sus actividades en 2021

(CL 171/15.2)

CHAIRPERSON

Let us now turn to Agenda Item 18.2, *Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board on its activities in 2021*, document CL 171/15.2.

The introduction by Mr Laurent Bukera, Director of the WFP Corporate Planning and Performance Division has been circulated to you.

Introduction to Item 18.2: Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board on its activities in 2021

Mr Laurent Bukera, Director, WFP Corporate Planning and Performance Division

The World Food Programme (WFP) performance highlights summarized below reflect the findings presented in the organization's 2021 Annual Performance Report (APR). The APR 2021 was discussed and endorsed by the WFP Executive Board during its Annual Session in June 2022.

In 2021, the continued effects of COVID-19, compounded by increased conflict, climate shocks and worldwide rises in the cost of living, resulted in unprecedented increases in hunger and malnutrition. In 80 countries where WFP had an operational presence, acute malnutrition almost doubled compared to prepandemic levels in 2019, while a record 45 million people were at grave risk of famine. Significant increases in food and fuel prices, and supply chain disruptions continued to severely affect people's access to food and pushed WFP's food procurement costs up by 36 percent compared to 2019.

A record 128.2 million people were assisted by WFP and its partners in 2021, an increase of 11 percent compared with 2020 and slightly higher than the 9 percent average annual growth in the number of beneficiaries assisted during the five years of the WFP Strategic Plan for 2017-2021. However, the increase in the number of beneficiaries assisted was accomplished by reducing the size of rations or the duration of assistance in many operations because of resource constraints, and food and fuel price inflation.

Most of WFP's operations – representing 78 percent of total expenditures – accounted for 95 percent of the food and 93 percent of the cash-based transfers distributed. WFP implemented eight Level 3 and 11 Level 2 emergency operations in 2021, providing timely life-saving assistance, particularly in Ethiopia, Madagascar, South Sudan and Yemen, where people in some areas faced famine-like conditions. Programmes for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition delivered strong results in improving the nutrition status of the people reached. However, programmes fell short of their targets for the proportion of the eligible population participating.

Success in strengthening food systems was partially demonstrated by the high proportion of the assisted population reporting increased benefits from the livelihood assets created or rehabilitated through WFP's activities. However, a large proportion of assisted households were unable to consume a diversified daily food basket or avoid adopting negative coping strategies. Strong performance was recorded in enhancing national nutrition and other policies and programmes, and the capacity of national governments to implement the related Sustainable Development Goals. Moderate progress was made in strengthening national partners' ownership of emergency preparedness activities. WFP approved USD 32.2 million for critical corporate initiatives for 2021 and generated an estimated USD 164 million in cost and time-saving efficiencies, 87 percent of which came from the top ten efficiency initiatives. In 2021, the average cost of serving WFP's direct beneficiaries was USD 0.38 per day and USD 53 for the year.

These results were achieved with the generous support of WFP resource partners. In 2021, WFP received record contributions of USD 9.6 billion – 15 percent more than in 2020. WFP's top ten donors accounted for 79 percent of contributions. Direct expenditures, excluding indirect support costs, totalled USD 8.6 billion with eight of the ten countries with the highest expenditures facing Level 3 or Level 2 emergencies, and direct expenditures in Afghanistan increasing by 126 percent over 2020. Needs in the remaining two countries, Somalia and Sudan, remained high due to protracted conflict, climate shocks and economic instability. For the fifth consecutive year, the operation in Yemen remained WFP's largest, and direct expenditures increased by 27 percent over 2020.

Comments from Members
Commentaires des Membres
Observaciones de los Miembros

JAPAN

Submitted Wednesday 16 November 2022, at 16:09

Japan is deeply concerned about the unprecedented increases in hunger and malnutrition in 2021 due to the continued effects of the COVID-19, compounded by more conflicts and issues surrounding climate change. Furthermore, Russia's aggression against Ukraine has only exacerbated the situation, hampering secure food supplies for people around the world and creating further humanitarian crises.

To meet increasing needs, for assistance, Japan contributed approximately USD 226 million in 2021 and has made further financial contributions in 2022 to address the global food security crisis deriving from the situation in Ukraine (totalling approximately USD 246 million as of 10 November 2022). In addition, on 11 November 2022, Japan decided to provide Emergency Grant Aid of USD 14 million to implement humanitarian assistance activities through the World Food Programme (WFP) to transport Ukrainian wheat donated by the Ukrainian government to Somalia and distributed to populations in need of food assistance.

Japan will continue to work closely with the international community to address the global food insecurity.

Response from Secretariat
Réponses du Secrétariat
Respuestas de la Secretaría

The World Food Programme (WFP) welcomes the generous contribution of the Government of Japan, and shares the concern expressed about the unprecedented increases in hunger and malnutrition due to the ongoing food, fuel and fertilizer crisis. WFP would like to express its gratitude also for the financial support, particularly with regard to the recent contribution made to support our operations in Ukraine. WFP appreciates the close cooperation between the Government of Japan, the international community and all stakeholders in the continued need to address global food insecurity

CHAIRPERSON

I directly continue with the draft conclusions on this Agenda Item.

53. The Council:

- a) acknowledged WFP's programme performance results in meeting its Strategic Objectives, supported by Management Results Dimensions;
- b) recognized the commitment of WFP staff in the field that worked in challenging circumstances to respond to complex humanitarian crises throughout 2021, despite significant reversals in poverty reduction and food security and nutrition caused by quadruple threat of COVID-19, crisis, climate and costs;
- c) welcomed WFP's commitment to annual targets for key programme outputs indicators to show where resources are directed and demonstrated the breadth of WFP's work; and
- d) supported the WFP's continued effort to strengthen its work on partnerships at all levels and its contribution to efforts to achieve Zero Hunger and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We turn now to the *chapeau*.

But first, as I said at the beginning of this meeting, we spoke about RBAs collaborations and not only the staff of FAO is working at regional and country level under very difficult circumstances, also the staff of WFP many times in crisis situations, as well as IFAD's are working on very difficult circumstances. Let us honour them for the efforts with a big applause.

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

We have the Chairperson of the Executive Board of WFP with us, the Ambassador of Bangladesh, very much welcome.

We can now we go to subparagraph (a). Can we agree to subparagraph (a)? I do not see any objections.

We go to subparagraph (b). I do not see any objections.

We go to subparagraph (c). I do not see any objections.

We go to subparagraph (d). I do not see any objections.

With that we have concluded Agenda Item 18.2.

Item 20. Developments in fora of importance for the mandate of FAO

Point 20. Évolution des débats au sein d'autres instances intéressant la FAO

Tema 20. Novedades en foros de importancia para el mandato de la FAO

(CL 171/INF/4; CL 171/INF/4 Web Annexes 1-3)

CHAIRPERSON

We continue now with Agenda Item 20, *Developments in fora of importance for the mandate of FAO*. The relevant documents are at CL 171/INF/4 and CL 171/INF/4 Web Annexes 1 to 3.

I present again the draft conclusions, which will read as follows:

55. The Council received Briefing Notes on the following topics for information only:

- a) the VII Meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO);
- b) update on the 27th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and negotiations for a Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework;
- c) update on the Science and Innovation Forum and FAO's leadership and collaboration to repurpose food and agriculture support to transform agrifood systems.

We start with the subparagraph (a). Can we agree to subparagraph (a)? I do not see any objections.

We go to paragraph (b).

Ms Alison STORSVE (United States of America)

We have no issue with the text at (a), but we would like to either as (a) or even (b) suggest that "*Members requested a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization*". We think it is really important that these Memoranda of Understanding be shared with the Members because it is important for the Members to understand what types of cooperation are ongoing, not only with the private sector, but also with other international bodies. It simply helps inform all of our engagement both with FAO and with our voluntary contributions and in all of the work that we do together.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we agree? I do not think there was any problem giving a copy to all the Members.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

In principle, we do not have any problem about conveying the Memorandum of Understanding between the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and FAO. I do have a question, the practice regarding other documents from other regional organizations, do we have an established practice or not?

As far as I know the Memorandum of Understanding is part of the work of the FAO with specific organizations and the circulation of these documents is done in agreement with those countries which are Members of these organizations, so we would like to have an answer to that question please.

CHAIRPERSON

Let me say this, let us agree to this subparagraph to make sure that the parties to this agreement are informed that a copy will be circulated with the Members. If they oppose which would be a surprise - at least for me, we will come back to it later. But let us agree to it and to be certain that we will ask those who have signed this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that they do not have a problem with circulating a copy of this MoU. Would it be agreeable?

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

I would like to have an answer from the Secretariat to my question, is there a practice whereby the Council asked for a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding and are these documents already included as part of the FAO resources? We are unable to agree to this wording until we have an answer to that question.

CHAIRPERSON

In the meantime, we go to subparagraph (c). Can we agree to subparagraph (c)? I do not see any objections.

We go to subparagraph (d).

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

We do not have a comment specifically on subparagraph (d). We have a question more broadly about the fora of importance that that this documents speaks to because we note that while there is a Report on a regional meeting of Ministers of Agriculture, FAO was a key participant at meetings of the G20, of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the G7 also Agriculture Minister Meetings.

These indeed seem to be fora of importance, both for themselves, but also for the work of FAO. We were just curious if Management might be able to inform us how the fora of importance are selected, because we think we would all benefit from readouts of updates of those locations.

Then an additional observation with relation to all of these points to some extent, that while these are Reports of the events, added value could be provided if links to additional materials from those meetings were made inside the documents to connect the work of FAO and the Members to the those fora of importance.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Legal Counsel to answer the question about the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

I understand the Russian Federation asked whether the dissemination of Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) which have been signed is a practice of the Organization and indeed, whether or not they are signed with the members of those organizations. Here I would clarify firstly, these MOUs are normally for technical collaboration, they are general arrangements for collaboration on capacity building, for example, joint implementation of projects.

With that understanding of course, these would then be concluded normally with the Secretariat of the organizations concerned. Some of those organizations will of course, be informing their members, others treat it as an internal Secretariat arrangement.

We do not have a general practice of distributing these publicly, of course, if the members wished us to systematize this, it can be done. As noted by the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC), we would need to first obtain the consent of the other parties to do so, in the manner that we have done with the other MoUs that have been made available at the request of the members. However, at this moment in time, there is not a general practice of publicizing these.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Observer Bolivia.

Sra. Maria Eugenia GAZAUI (Bolivia, Estado Plurinacional de) (Observador)

Refiriéndome a las cartas de entendimiento, yo creo que en el pasado FAO ha tenido miles de cartas y jamás se han publicado ni distribuido mucho menos. O sea, que tal vez siguiendo esa práctica se podría continuar.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVNIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

Now it is because there is no established practice regarding the work on these documents, some organizations circulate them on their own initiative, others do not circulate them. In any event, this requires the agreement of the Members of the regional organization for the circulation of such a document.

Therefore, I think that in this specific case this proposal is not appropriate, either we have to get the agreement from all Members of all organizations or a Council decision because otherwise what we end up with is varying emphasis in terms of cooperation between FAO and organizations. So either we have to circulate all memoranda or we have to decide in each individual case, but regarding this Session of the Council we feel that this proposal is not appropriate.

CHAIRPERSON

Can we not just say “*Members requested more substantial information about the Memorandum of Understanding between the SCO and FAO*”.

In this way, we go around the legal question. We do not ask a copy, but we ask Management to give us more information with the involved parties about the content of the Memorandum of Understanding. Would that be your way forward? I have six seven speakers, but will this just not be a compromise, which could fly? Does this mean that Japan, Czech, USA and France cannot go with this compromise?

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

First, I can go along with the compromise text.

Another point, I would like to support the comments made by Canada, I think it is better to have a kind of soft criteria. What kind of meeting is selected for this Council document? Of course we cannot find a definitive criteria, but a kind of soft types of criteria for selection would be better for us in understanding why this meeting is selected for information sharing.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

Frankly speaking, I do understand why it is not possible to have this Memorandum of Understanding. While having listened to the reply of the Legal Counsel, I think it is time that the Council spend some time on discussing the practice of the transparency of revealing those documents, which I understood are rather innocent. Just give the information or overview of the common projects and capacity buildings or whatever.

I do not see that there is something which needs to be kept secret, like a commercial, or law or some kind of agreements. Perhaps we should plan some discussion on that and perhaps change the practice. If I understood correctly, there is no practice. So we should perhaps change it and set up the new practice. If it means that we will put on the website all the Memoranda of Understanding even better, I will say.

It will show that FAO has nothing to hide, to put it bluntly. On the other hand, that the scope of the cooperation between FAO and whatever other organizations is going in the right direction, in line with the FAO Strategic Framework and all the guidelines we have for FAO to work with the other organizations.

CHAIRPERSON

First, I do think we should have more discussion about this, but not during this Council.

Secondly, I am still an international lawyer, we have the legalities at international law that you can only circulate a copy of the text of any Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), if all the signatories of that MoU agreed with its international law. It is not that FAO is trying to hide anything, because even if FAO would like to circulate it, it still has to have the consent of the signatories of a MoU to circulate.

But they can give information about the content, because that is free for every party. That is why I tried to go a little bit around it, so that we get that information to overcome a lengthy discussion about this draft conclusion. But, we should follow up on what we can and cannot circulate, in the future. But anyhow, you have legal conditions before going into this.

Ms Alison STORSVE (United States of America)

I just wanted to give a little more information as to why we made this request. We have made a request for this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the past in writing to FAO and, like Czechia, we think it is a matter of transparency that the Organization be as forthright as possible with the partnerships and the agreements that it is entering into. So I can go along with your re-wording, Chairperson.

I would love though, if at the end of this, we can indicate the sentiment that Czechia just suggested, which is *“and suggested that Council discuss”* - I do not know the words exactly but, *“take up as a future discussion, the practice of transparency with regard to its agreements”*, which would then prompt us to have that discussion at the appropriate time, in preparation through the Governing Bodies.

Ms Nosipho Nausca-Jean JEZILE (South Africa)

I think we would suggest, just along the suggestion by Czechia to request Management to make available all information about Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) concluded. And based on that, we then can establish what would then be the future practice.

If we can just go back on the subparagraph (a) so that we can see how subparagraph (b) relates to (a).

We agree that mostly Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) are legal documents and there are other parties that would have to understand this requirement upfront before they sign an MoUs in future.

For now, we need to first have an appreciation of the portfolio of MoUs that we have whether they own capacity or technical assistance, and what is the relevant information that would be of use for the Council in the long run.

M. Michel LEVEQUE (France)

C'était pour dire que je rejoignais tout à fait la proposition de mes collègues des Etats-Unis et de la République tchèque. En plus, puisque le sujet de discussion est effectivement l'accord, le Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) plutôt avec Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. Je regardais le site de la FAO, qui indique toutes les choses positives impulsées par ce MOU. Effectivement, le principe général doit être finalement de publier les MOU, et c'est bien à partir de ce principe général que nous devons travailler. C'est ce que je voulais rappeler.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

I go along with the current text suggested by the United States and by my colleague from South Africa. I would just want to perhaps request a change from *“more”* to *“additional substantial information”*. I think also the sequencing of the subparagraphs, because the *chapeau* states *“for information only”*, so perhaps subparagraph (b) could be brought at another numberings, the first part only reflects the topics for information on it.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

We can agree on the adjusted text. And thanks very much to South Africa for the additional comments and inputs.

I am not actually international lawyer, but I would say that FAO can put easily a clause for disclosure. At least in the future, it has to ask particularly all those to be disclosed. But for the future it can be quite usual practice.

Ms LI Xi (China)

We know that it is not a common practice and it is not established practice for your request to FAO to publish the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) but we did not oppose it.

We do not want to make it a transparency issue because simply it is not like we want to hiding something, because I do not think that this is an issue. Similarly, it was not that common in the past. Can we make it a more general expression, for example, *“provide additional substantial information about this and - as appropriate, a for the next Council to take up”*.

I do not know whether everyone has this appetite to discuss about this issue in the next Council, because, as you previously mentioned, we actually have a pretty packed Agenda for the next Council. I wonder if it is necessary for your consideration, and for other Members consideration.

CHAIRPERSON

Indeed, the next Council is already in April and I think we need some more work to be done. I would suggest to insert a suggestion that “*a future Session of the Council take up*”, so that we have a little bit of flexibility that we do our preparations well. So that we have a good background note, with all the legalities, all what is out there. Let us not stress our Council, but give us some time because there are legalities, so at least we have some time to prepare.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

We would suggest to remove the fact that “*the additional information would be received after agreement by the signatories*”. In other words, we would actually rewrite it and have after FAO in the second line we suggest we add, “after the consultations with FAO Members.” That should be enough.

M. MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

This is agreed that this is a subject that should be treated in a separate subparagraph. I believe Malaysia has made that proposal, we agree with it.

Now, the first part of the sentence is a bit problematic to me because when you see “*Members requested additional substantial information about Memorandum of Understanding*”, what is there is a clause in that Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the disclosure of that document. You know, we cannot say we want that information without knowing what the Memorandum says about the disclosure.

The second thing is we are a Governing Body. You have given mandate to a Secretariat to carry on certain activities, and MoUs are instruments that they use to carry those activities.

If we come back now, as Governing Body to request that, after a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed in good faith, we come back and say “give us the content of that memorandum” I think it is a little bit and into the nitty-gritty of the functioning of the Organization.

I strongly suggest from my part, that we leave it simple that and I read it, as for the general issue of the MoUs, “*the Council looked forward to discussing the process for transparency sake*”.

But this is what I am trying to submit as placement of paragraph 56. We keep it simple. And we do not go beyond what is our competency as a Governing Body.

Ms Alison STORSVE (United States of America)

I appreciate this effort by Cameroon to simplify or maybe to divide the two clauses that are currently in paragraph 56.

I wanted to respond first to the suggestion by the Russian Federation to add the consultation with SCO Member States, if I understood the Legal Counsel correctly, and share your explanation as well, the publication of the MoU itself may require - depending on how it is written, the consultation with Members or the consent of signatories. My understanding was not that information about the memoranda required consultation.

In fact, I would note that there have been two press releases from FAO about the SCO-FAO Memorandum of Understanding one in November 2019 and the other in March 2022.

Therefore, I think that as the first clause stands, Members requested additional substantial information about the MoU between SCO and FAO is a fair request, maybe to fill in some of the detail between November 2019 and March 2022 on what has been going on in those intervening three years. That information should not be subjected to an elaborate consultation process, I do not think.

If we wanted to end there, and then go to the Cameroon suggestion for the second clause, I think that is a correct understanding of what we were trying to state. So these are two ideas.

One, we would like more information about the SCO-FAO MoU, since that was raised at this Item, and two at a future Session, we would like to take up this idea of not just the process of signing MoUs, but the transparency of MoUs and their publication.

If we were to work off that altar, we would just add to discussing the process of signing and publishing MoUs or just discussing the transparency around MoUs, I think would meet the need there.

We are okay with the division of the two clauses, but I do think that we would not be okay with adding consultation as an interim step for just more information.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us make our life easy, let us make it two subparagraphs. Have a full stop after “*FAO*” in paragraph 56. I think it was rightly proposed by Cameroon to have paragraph 57 as a separate issue to be discussed and leave all the others.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

We can agree on the already adjusted text. I will just put a little timing in that, so we assure that the discussion will take place in 2023. Of course having understood that the Council in April is already packed, but the Council in December may be the right timing. We will have one year for preparing for the discussion and assemble all the documents, etcetera. As for the general issue of Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs), “*the Council look forward to discussing the process of signing MoUs for transparency in 2023*”.

If you want to be more specific, I think that we can put already the reference to the Council in December: “*at its 174th Session in December*”

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Tengo un comentario por un Item que es anterior. Yo pedí la palabra pensando que ya este tema lo cerrábamos y podía hablar del subpárrafo (c). No sé si es el momento, usted me dirá cuándo, pero simplemente le aviso que quiero hacer un comentario sobre el subpárrafo (c).

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first deal with this, otherwise we go back and forth. We first go to China, Malaysia, Russian Federation on this and then we come back to your Item.

Ms LI Xi (China)

I request Legal Counsel’s explanation about the signing of Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) and the publication. Is there any common practice for this and what is the legitimate request about this process?

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

The request was for dissemination or circulation for the purpose of transparency, as opposed to say, the process of signing but of course, this is in your hands. Because the process of signing could be the actually looking at how do we negotiate, who signed, how do you delegate authority, etcetera. Whereas my understanding was that Members originally were requesting in a manner similar to what has been done for the private sector MoUs, making them available.

Indeed, we can do that and following a process as was done with the private sector ones, which, as has been noted, needed for past MoUs some consultations, as the other parties would maybe need to follow their internal procedures. For the future, we can make it clear that we would be making these available to our Members through the Members Gateway, for example. But yes, there is a distinction between process of signing and the process of dissemination or making them available to the Members. Of course, it is for you to decide which discussion you would prefer to have.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

I was about to bring that topic you just raised because I think we started with the whole issue of obtaining additional information on the Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with the Shanghai Corporation Organization (SCO). I think now we have gone to another realm altogether, actually

impeding some of the work being done by FAO Management when they talk about understand the process of signing. Like I said, up to the Members again, but I would advise perhaps on paragraph 57 we say “*look forward to discussing the process of obtaining additional information on future MoUs for transparency*”. I think that is where we started and that is where we are at now, but anyway if Members feel, it is up to the Members to decide.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVİK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

I must say I am not entirely sure I understood the comment from the United States. I do not quite understand precisely what kind of information should be requested or submitted rather to the Members. If we are looking at information on the process of getting to a Memorandum - what goes in to the Memorandum, that is one set of questions. If we are talking about presentation or submitting the Memorandum to Members of the Council, then that is a different set of questions.

As the Legal Counsel has told us, the Secretariat of FAO and the Secretariat of other regional organizations sign the Memorandums. In this case we are talking about the Secretariat of FAO and the Secretariat of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The SCO Secretariat acts on behalf and in the interest of the members of the organization, so if we are talking about circulating the Memorandum as a whole, then we must get the agreement of the members of the organization so that it can be circulated, as I said.

But if we are talking about information about the implementation of the Memorandum, the kind of events that are organized within the Memorandum, this is something that we have already received here in the Council. We know what kind of meetings and events have been organized, so I think before we start drafting this paragraph 56, we need to understand precisely, specifically what it is that we are trying to get. Either the text of the Memorandum or information about the way it is actually being implemented. I think it is a real issue of principle. Therefore, we can only get the Memorandum after consultation of the Members of SCO.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us first get a little bit more additional information and then see what we need more.

We do not ask anymore for circulation of the signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) because that is not feasible. It is clearly what was said.

At the same time, we need a little bit more information. Let us first have that information, and then see whether or not we are satisfied. We can always come back to it in our next Council to further discuss it. But let us not prolong this discussion, and make it a matter of principle because I think for that we need first to have a more general discussion, which we will do in December 2023. Then, we can get all the elements we need to discuss on the table.

My plea to you would be let us have another five speakers. Probably this will be more on the screen. Can we not just agree to paragraphs 56 and 57. At least to finalize our Council, this is what we need for the Report tomorrow this evening.

My plea would be let us not make our life more difficult or more complicated. Let us first get some additional information and then see whether or not we are satisfied. We will have a general discussion in December on the more broader issue about MoUs. Would that be agreeable?

M. Michel LEVEQUE (France)

Je comprends bien votre proposition, juste quand même, nous sommes partis des mémorandums signés, pour arriver maintenant uniquement au “*future MOU*”. En tout cas, il nous semble qu'on devrait peut-être supprimer le mot “*future*”, puisqu'en fait, évidemment, il y a des mémorandums qui sont encore signés, qui vont être signés l'année prochaine, et cetera, donc ne reportons pas trop non plus la discussion. Je proposerais en tout cas d'enlever “*future*”.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

That was my point too actually, to delete “*future*”. I was listening to what the Legal Counsel said that it was the original purpose of the discussion to make the MoUs available to Members, for instance, via the Members Gateway. So I will put there “*and of making MoUs available to Members*”.

Mr Mina Rizk ATTIA RIZK (Egypt)

We started this Agenda Item discussing the updates from the FAO's involvement and other fora, but now I feel like we are discussing a totally different Agenda Item.

I totally understand your legal perspective that there is another party for each and every single Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and then understand that in every MoU we need to make sure that the other party is agreeing on the availability of them. However, for the sake of moving forward and compromising, we support your proposal for paragraph 56 as well, the original paragraph 57.

Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)

I would like to propose a minor amendment in addition to the end of paragraph 56, which will hopefully solve the issue. After FAO put a comma, "*taking into account any legal obligations*". For paragraph 57, I think we can simplify this and if I am not wrong, I do believe the US did propose a slight amendment when they took the floor the last time. I cannot remember their exact words, but I would like to suggest, "*As for the general issue of MoUs, the Council looked forward to discussing the transparency of MoUs signed by FAO at its 174th Session*" keeping it general means we have got everything on the table.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us delete the rest, so we will see whether or not we could have now an agreement.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

I appreciate the addition made by Australia on paragraph 56, because that was my first concern at the beginning. If I may add something after "*obligations*", "*in line with FAO data protection and privacy policy*".

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

Paragraph 56 as it appears on the screen now is indeed much better, but seeing as this is a question to the Secretariat that we are asking the Secretariat for additional substantial information about the Memorandum, we probably need to know what we are talking about and what does "*additional substantial information*" mean. As the United States of America have reminded us, on the website of FAO and also of SCO, I have checked myself, there are at least four messages or mentions of the fact that a Memorandum has been signed.

There are extracts from the memorandum for instances the purpose, the principles that underpin it, the name of who represented FAO and the Secretariat of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) at the signature. So, what exactly would we get by way of "*additional substantial information*". I am asking this so the Secretariat can be fully cognisant of what kind of information they can get to us. Otherwise, they will be unable to do it so what kind of information do we really want to get, we need to understand that before we can agree to the paragraph.

CHAIRPERSON

May I ask to be flexible? We can have two hours of discussion line by line with the 49 Members of the Council on which kind of information they want to have. That means another day of the Council because everybody wants something different.

We trust and have confidence in FAO management what they can share with us. Let us first get that information and we can always see and otherwise we can always form an informal group to see whether or not they are satisfied. But let us give this as a guidance to the Secretariat that we want to ask for more information. And let us see what we can get and then see whether or not it is enough. But let us not micromanage the work of the Secretariat. Let us first get on with our Agenda of this evening.

Ms Nosipho Nausca-Jean JEZILE (South Africa)

I think you have accommodated us. As Members, we have had a long discussion on the matter. Basically, we somewhat agree already on what is on 56, based on the fact that law does not apply retrospectively.

In most instances, whatever else we want to do, which we did not anticipate, or FAO Management did not anticipate would come up in future. So I agree that we leave it at the “*additional information that is required, taking into account the legal obligations*”. And I was going to implore my colleague and friend here from Cameroon, to live out there “*in line with FAO data protection and privacy policy*”, because that is already within the legal obligations, that that would have been covered.

If we keep it as short as it was, maybe if Cameroon agrees, we will then suggest that we leave it as it was before.

Paragraph 57 also is forward looking, and in terms of how we improve transparency, in terms of sharing information about the MoUs. So I think that is basically what we would like to support and nudge other colleagues from other regions to accept now the text that you have proposed.

Ms LI Xi (China)

We appreciate Australia's proposal “*taking into account any legal obligations*”, that has also solved our concern.

For the paragraph 57, we understand the concern from some Members, they want to know more about the signing process and dissemination, this kind of issue, but it is fast, we do not have this kind of concern for this one. Like our distinguished delegate from Japan previously mentioned, everybody has different understanding about the transparency issue.

Maybe we recommend it to the relevant the Governing Body. For example, the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) to review whether it abide with the Basic Texts, to check it. For example, FAO did something wrong, CCLM check it. Or if they are sending things that should be updated, and the CCLM can give it a recommendation. We do not need to jump into directly into the conclusion. There is a transparency issue with this MoU things and we requested the professional organization CCLM to check whether it abide with the Basic Texts and the any legal obligation about this issue. So we not like this idea to be discussed in the Council. We do not want to prejudice.

CHAIRPERSON

We work on some language for paragraph 57.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

Brazil can leave with both paragraphs without any problem. My doubt, in line with China is discussing this straight into the Council is not a very good idea. Maybe instructing some other, like the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) to come up with a text saying “*previous MoUs were signed in this way and now we suggested next MoUs signing this way*”. But coming here will go exchange national positions and not go anywhere.

CHAIRPERSON

In the meantime, we have inserted that we first get some advice from the leading Governing Bodies of FAO, which means also the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM).

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

I am certainly not trying to micromanage, but my delegation still does not understand what “*additional substantial information about the MoU*” would be.

Therefore, without further additional consultations, I cannot agree to this text because it is not concrete and it does not clearly tell the Secretariat what is expected.

The Secretariat of the Shanghai Corporation Organization (SCO) will also have to try and understand what kind of additional information might be circulated; it would have to tell its Member States who might have to report back to Capitals, so at this point in time, I cannot agree to it. I need at least half an hour.

CHAIRPERSON

I think what we could do, as we have done with other paragraphs, you can disassociate yourself from agreement to this paragraph so that we can continue and not uphold the paragraph; unless you can find

the consensus within half an hour, but we cannot continue this discussion in the Council, because we have to continue our work.

I can come back to you when you have done your consultations and as we have always said, “Nothing is agreed until everything is agreed”. We still have tomorrow for the adoption of the Report, hopefully before 16.00 hours, there is still time.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

I totally agree with you. I think the paragraphs we have now on the screen is the best option we have. I think it covers everyone’s concerns whether or not they are for it or not.

Also, I think we should give Management due respect in terms of identifying what information they would be able to give in addition to what already is on the screen, and of course Management will be the best judge of that. Based on that, I would like to request my dear colleague from the Russian Federation to please agree on this, on the consensus. I am asking because, like I said, we need to carry on but again I respect, of course, your point but this is the best we have come up with and I think it covers every issue.

Ms LI Xi (China)

With all due respect, I think that consensus is needed, but to disassociate with this Report is not a desire for any of us. So, we would kindly request you go on until a complete consensus is reached.

This one concern is that, we noticed the United State of America’s concern and so maybe we can say that “*look forward to discussing*” not “*the transparency*” but “*the dissemination of MoUs*”.

In paragraph 57, this is the initial “*dissemination,*” and we delete “*the transparency*”.

CHAIRPERSON

I keep this Item pending until the end of the Council, at least this evening, and see in the meantime whether or not the Russian Federation has gotten a positive feedback that it could go along with the text as it is.

Item 21. Margarita Lizárraga Medal
Point 21. Médaille Margarita Lizárraga
Tema 21. Medalla Margarita Lizárraga
 (CL 171/LIM/5)

CHAIRPERSON

We will come back to the issue also in subparagraph (c) where we have finalised the Council.

Let us go to Item 21, *Margarita Lizárraga Medal*, which information is found in document CL 171/LIM/5.

Comments from Members
Commentaires des Membres
Observaciones de los Miembros

CHILE

Presentado el lunes 14 de noviembre 2022, a las 17.16

Chile respalda la nominación de la Sra. Meryl J. Williams y recomienda que el Director General entregue la Medalla en el curso de una ceremonia de premiación que se celebrará antes del 31 de diciembre de 2023.

AUSTRALIA

Submitted Wednesday 16 November 2022, 14:13

It is with great pleasure that Australia welcomes the nomination of Dr Meryl J. Williams for the Margarita Lizárraga Medal.

Through her career, Dr Williams has been and continues to be a strong advocate for empowering women, eradicating poverty, improving nutrition, and strengthening environmental sustainability. She has demonstrated a sustained and catalytic commitment to sustainable fisheries, with a particular and deep focus on building capacity in developing countries. Her leadership of the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research Commission and the WorldFish Center progressed sustainable and innovative agriculture and aquaculture and advanced sustainable development, including by working to transform food, land and water systems with aquatic foods to promote food security, nutrition, health and an enduring planet. Her scientific contributions have also supported the important work of the Global Environment Facility and the Census of Marine Life.

Australia offers its endorsement for the nomination of Dr Williams for the Margarita Lizárraga Medal 2022-2023 and supports the suggested action by the Council as per CL 171/LIM/5.

Response from Secretariat
Réponses du Secrétariat
Respuestas de la Secretaría

The Secretariat fully appreciates the endorsement of the nomination and recommendation for the awarding ceremony, expressed by Members, for the Margarita Lizárraga Medal 2022-2023.

CHAIRPERSON

56. The Council endorsed the nomination of Dr Meryl J. Williams, Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF), in Malaysia, and recommend that the Medal be presented by the Director-General at an award ceremony to be held before 31 December 2023.

Can we agree, by applause, with the endorsement of this nomination?

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

Item 22. Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2022-2024

Point 22. Calendrier 2022-2024 des sessions des organes directeurs de la FAO et des autres réunions principales

Tema 22. Calendario de los períodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores de la FAO y otras reuniones importantes en 2022-24

(CL 171/LIM/1)

CHAIRPERSON

We go to Item 22, *Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions for 2022-2024*. The document in front of you is CL 171/LIM/1.

And of course, you know that to avoid meetings overlapping, FAO draws up this calendar in close cooperation with WFP and IFAD and through the web-based RBAs common calendar. This may be consulted by Members at any time through the Members' Gateway.

The schedule of meetings for 2023 is before the Council for approval, but of course it is a provisional approval because you never know what will happen in 2023.

Comments from Members
Commentaires des Membres
Observaciones de los Miembros

CHILE

Presentado el lunes 14 de noviembre 2022, a las 17.16

Chile respalda la propuesta de calendario de sesiones 2023 y 2024.

EUROPEAN UNION

Submitted Sunday 20 November 2022, 19:40

I am honoured to write to you on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States regarding the above-mentioned agenda item for the 171st Session of the FAO Council.

We would like to request further information and clarification from FAO Management on the following:

- At the request of the Members of CFS (Report CFS 33, 2007), the CFS Plenary is held in October and linked to World Food Day.
- This has become the common practice since 2008.
- The Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions for 2023 and 2024 now shows that the regular CFS sessions have been rescheduled without any consultation of the Membership and are no longer linked to World Food Day.

***Response from Secretariat
Réponses du Secrétariat
Respuestas de la Secretaría***

The Secretariat thanks Members for their support of the Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2022-2024.

In response to the comments by the European Union, the Secretariat confirms that sessions of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) retain their placement in October, alongside FAO's World Food Day and other high-level corporate events.

CHAIRPERSON

The conclusions would be, and I put them on the screen:

56. The Council approved the Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies for 2022-2024, as reproduced in *Appendix F* to this Report.

Can we agree to this paragraph?

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

On this particular point, we submitted written comments in the framework of the written correspondence procedure and we received unclear reply from the Secretariat. We posed some questions *vis-à-vis* the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and World Food Forum Calendar.

I do not know whether the Secretariat could be so kind and provide some more clear replies, because what I saw in the written reply that was just confirming the decisions will happen in October. But it did not actually address the core question, why the CFS week was completely rescheduled? Why the World Food Day was completely detached from the CFS week? When we actually had, in the original Calendar from the last Council, the CFS in the right time together with the World Food Day.

I am actually missing this part of the reply from the Secretariat, so if the Secretariat could be so kind and explain to us more in detail, and then I can make some follow up comments if need be.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to Canada and then I give the floor to the Secretariat.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

Just a question for the record because we have noted that in the Calendar for 2024, the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) and the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) are scheduled to be two weeks apart, and for many years, COAG and CCP have always been back-to-back and that has facilitated participation by Capital delegations because they could travel once and attend two different meetings.

We would request a review of that scheduling for convenience so that they could be back-to-back.

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

I would like to raise one quick question for clarification. Meetings on this Calendar is basically based on the legal provisions, but the World Food Forum is not based on the legal provisions.

Therefore, I would like to know why the World Food Forum is on this Calendar, because the title of this Calendar is "*Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions*", a little bit different connotations I feel from the World Food Forum. This is the question for clarification.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

First of all, in response to Canada; indeed we will take note of your request and see if this could be looked at. As you know, this calendar comes to the Council every session. And, as the Chairperson indicated earlier, sometimes the calendar of meetings, which we have to coordinate with the other Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) covering a vast number of meetings - not only Governing and Statutory Body meetings, but also other meetings that are of importance for the Members of the three RBAs - I hope that addresses Japan's query - needs to be looked at.

With regard to the specific question from the European Union, I am sorry that the written reply was a bit too succinct, even though it was accurate, and maybe I can elaborate a little bit in that regard, and give some more background information on scheduling of meetings of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

The first point I would like to take you back to is the Report of the 33rd Session of the CFS from June 2007, which reads, and this is the Report of the session, document CL 123/10 paragraph 30, and I quote: "*the Committee recommended that its 34th Session be held in October 2008 and linked to the World Food Day, to the extent possible*".

Similarly, the Report of the 35th Session of the CFS held in October 2009 and here I refer to document C 2009/21 Rev.1 Paragraph 20, and I quote: "*the Committee recommended that its 36th Session be held in October 2010 and linked to the World Food Day*".

There we have it, two instances of an expression of desirability on the part of the CFS to hold a specific session linked to the World Food Day. Not a general such exhortation, neither a prescription for the two to be held in the same week, nor a blanket decision by any FAO Governing Body in this regard.

Furthermore, since then, there have been a number of instances where the CFS and the World Food Day have not been held, for example, in the same week as the EU was hoping for. Most recently in 2013, the Session of CFS was held between the 7 and 11 October, World Food Day into the following week on the 16th 2016, 2017, the 43rd, the 44th Sessions. I will not bore you with the details, but the point is, in each of these instances as always, the dates of the CFS and World Food Days for a particular given year were approved beforehand by the Council when considering the calendar of the meetings, like the one in front of Council at this session.

In conclusion, I would say that the dates scheduled for CFS in 2023 and 2024, as they appear in document CL 171/LIM/1, are fully consistent with past guidance and with longstanding practice.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

Thank you very much to the Secretariat for more detailed information, which is really appreciated.

Let us make it simple. So you referred to some reports of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), but since 2008 it has been 14 years in a row. That is the first point.

Second, but as you said, we might be flexible. The more pertinent is that the change from the last Council Report, in which we agreed the Calendar where CFS meeting was scheduled from 16 to 20 October and having the World Food Day on 16 October, so making basically World Food Day linked directly to CFS, we approved it in the last Council. To our surprise, we have a new proposal for this Council to reschedule the CFS week for 23-27 October, while the World Food Day will be held as usual, on the 16th, together with World Food Forum.

The question is why World Food Forum cannot be held as originally planned and CFS cannot remain in the same scheduling as originally planned? Of course, there is a question for 2024 which was not

actually addressed in the Calendar in the last Council, I can imagine, but still, keeping the logic that the World Food Day should be linked to the CFS, which is the most desirable wish of the Members.

Has it not been the practice actually? at least according to the proposal for the next two years. If I may say so, what might be the future planning for the years after 2024? Will it still remain the common practice to have World Food Day linked to World Food Forum or to CFS? Because I can imagine the CFS members may still wish to have World Food Day linked to the CFS week, as they had almost 14 years in a row.

know there was some flexibilities. If I have to propose some language actually, to this end, I would say that *“the Council requested that the Calendar scheduling, in particular vis-à-vis the CFS, will be retained as in the approved scheduling from the last Council”*.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Me mantuve reflexivo en los últimos puntos, sobre todo para no participar a veces de discusiones que podían demorar o dilatar la aprobación o la finalización de nuestro trabajo. Por supuesto que, escuché muy atentamente la explicación de la Secretaría y el planteo de la Unión Europea sobre este punto.

Y yo veo dos cuestiones. Y ahí sí, pido disculpas, pero tengo que hablar como abogado o por mi formación jurídica. El primer punto es que no existe ningún compromiso, ninguna obligación legal de que tengamos que vincular, digamos, un día como el Foro Mundial sobre la Alimentación y la Agricultura con el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial. Y este es un tema fundamental tenerlo claro porque cualquier interpretación en contrario implicaría que no lograr que se puedan coordinar o puedan estar en la misma semana o muy cerca, esto podría ser interpretado como que, de alguna manera, FAO está violando alguna normativa o alguna prescripción.

Entonces, en primer lugar, debe quedar claro que aquí no existe ninguna normativa que establezca esa determinada práctica. Segundo lugar, es cierto que la Secretaría tiene que tener la potestad de poder coordinar diversas reuniones y diversas actividades durante cada uno de los calendarios durante todos los años, por lo cual es muy complicado poder exigirle a la Secretaría que pueda tener la capacidad de coordinar y de ver, como si tuviera una especie de bola de cristal, de cuáles van a ser las diferentes iniciativas y reuniones que FAO va a tener que organizar o en las que va a estar involucrada.

Por lo cual, creo que, por el otro lado y de manera legítima, no los Miembros del Consejo sino algunos Miembros expresaron su deseo, su expectativa de que, de alguna manera, si fuera posible que trataran de acercar las fechas del Foro Mundial sobre la Alimentación y la Agricultura con el Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Mundial.

Hago estas precisiones para poner el debate en su justo punto y no en un contexto en el cual pareciera que la Secretaría estuviera, de alguna manera, afectando alguna normativa, algún principio. Me parece que no hay nada objetable. En todo caso, siempre puede haber expectativas, deseos que, creo, en todo caso, seguramente la Secretaría tomará nota de esas aspiraciones o de esos deseos.

Lo digo en términos generales. No estoy proponiendo un texto, pero sí creo que hay —repito— diferentes planos. Uno lo que es jurídicamente obligatorio para la Secretaría y otro, tomar nota de aquello que es la expectativa de algunos Miembros.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Director of Cabinet.

Mr Godfrey MAGWENZI (Director of Cabinet)

The first point I want to say is that we must not forget the origins of the World Food Day. It was promulgated to make the founding of FAO as an Organization, dealing with food and agriculture.

The World Food Day on 16 October is FAO’s birthday. It has nothing, absolutely nothing, to do with the Committee on World Food Security (CFS). When it was celebrated, linked to CFS, it was at the request of CFS, and FAO generously agreed to allow CFS to hold its meeting next to World Food Day, because there was no disturbance to the observance of that day.

Now, whilst the Permanent Representatives in Rome might want to think that this belongs to CFS, worldwide people know that the World Food Day is the birthday of FAO. This is why the Ministries of Agriculture around the world request the Director-General, not the Chairperson of CFS, to record a message that they will use in celebrating the World Food Day.

In the past, FAO did not refuse to link this to the CFS week, but this time we have activities that we want to do that are linked to FAO's business, and this is why we have proposed to start with World Food Day on a Monday and then continue throughout the week to carry out the activities that we have planned for the Organization.

CFS has to meet in October, anywhere in October; it can meet at the beginning, it can meet at the end, it can meet in the middle. But what is being proposed is taking one's inheritance and giving it to another.

Why would you want to give FAO's birthday to CFS?

They have nothing to do with World Food Day. It does not add to their deliberations or detract from their deliberations.

Right now, CFS should focus only on conducting their own business. They are still admitting that they have not concluded, that should be the focus of CFS, not trying to take over the birthday of FAO.

CHAIRPERSON

I see still my list growing. Can we not be pragmatic and, after this explanation, give some flexibility to the Secretariat? Because you are going to discuss dates, weeks, days... I still hope that we could approve this simple conclusion in paragraph 57.

Mr Yoshihiro KURAYA (Japan)

The reason why we have this kind of discussion is the different nature of the World Food Forum. As I said before, World Food Forum is just an event, not a "*Governing Bodies and other main sessions*" of the Technical Committee or a Sub-Committee of Council. But it is inside this Calendar –that is making the confusion for the people.

And also, the World Food Forum does not have a legal basis, different from other Governing Bodies meeting, so what I would like to suggest is to remove the World Food Forum from the table. If we put the information, we should put it under the table like other national holidays or something. It makes us confused. World Food Forum is just an event, not a Governing Body. That is my point. I would like to make it clear.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor back to the Director of Cabinet, but let us not go repeating our position.

Mr Godfrey MAGWENZI (Director of Cabinet)

In addition to what Mr Rakesh Muthoo had said, in the reply to Japan, let us say that the Calendar is a planning tool that the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) use to plan their activities.

We only put it there to block and indicate to the other RBAs that that week has now been occupied. This is a planning tool and the Calendar is coordinated by Mr Muthoo. When the other RBAs want to do something, they call him, "*Is there anything programmed on the Calendar?*" He looks at the Calendar, he approves.

When the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) wants to hold informal consultations, he talks to Mr Muthoo, "*How is the Calendar positioned?*"

He looks at the Calendar, "*Yes, this day is free, that day is not free*", because he coordinates this Calendar on behalf of the other RBAs.

So what FAO is simply doing now is not turning this World Food Forum into a Governing Body meeting. We are simply blocking that week, so that the other RBAs know that FAO will have an activity during that week. This is why that is on the Calendar.

Ms Nosipho Nausca-Jean JEZILE (South Africa)

I understand the role of the Council, as a Governing Body, to approve the Calendar of dates that relate to the Governing Bodies. I think probably we should then, as a Council, approve the Calendar in relation to those Governing Bodies and note the other aspects of the Calendar, so that we do not have to debate, if that assists colleagues.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much and that is exactly what is in the draft conclusion because we approved the Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies, nothing more, nothing less, because whatever is in there is up to the Secretariat to plan, also in close collaboration with the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), as was said.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

I think to some extent the question was asked by Japan and South Africa as well, just to understand the status of the World Food Forum in relation to any of the other things because everything else is a Governing Body, except for the World Food Forum. Perhaps we need to be indeed clear because this Calendar is more than just the Governing Bodies. But I think what you have said clarifies it.

CHAIRPERSON

I would say, the birthday of FAO is in the Calendar, but just reflecting that we have several days, and of course, we can remove them all from the *Appendix*, but let us not forget that we still have the birthday of FAO which we certainly should celebrate one way or the other.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

The first thing we have to go by is that the Secretariat is responsible for scheduling the meetings. It is not us as Members, and when they schedule the meetings, as Mr Rakesh Muthoo pointed out, it is no easy task because there are three organisations, which not only are organising their Governing Body meetings, but they have other meetings. In fact, in the last week I have had invitations to attend meetings in FAO and IFAD. I did not know how to choose – whether to throw up the coin or decide in some other way. So, the Secretariat has to follow the schedule and we are not aware of the problems which Mr Muthoo faces when he deals with the three Rome-based Agencies (RBAs). Secondly, as it was pointed out, 16 October is the birthday of FAO. It is celebrated worldwide; it is celebrated at headquarters.

Why is it linked to the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)?

I do not think there is a link with CFS. It was agreed because there was a vacant spot then. Now the Calendar is showing not only the Governing Body meetings but other activities of FAO as well because FAO is not just the Governing Body meetings, it has to do with other things and to the Report to the Governing Bodies. The Calendar is full.

Why does it have to be connected to the CFS?

Instead of one week in a particular section of October, it is being held in another week. So what is the problem?

Why create this link between World Food Day and CFS?

M. Michel LEVEQUE (France)

Effectivement, je voulais d'abord rejoindre la remarque de mon collègue japonais, mais je crois qu'elle a été expliquée, mais effectivement le World Food Forum, n'est pas une instance de FAO. Ensuite la tradition, et c'était aussi, nous revenons là sur une décision qui a été prise au dernier Conseil qui était de fixer la date du Comité de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale (CSA) en 2023.

Donc, c'est quand même, je dirais, alors que nous fonctionnons en général par consensus et par des décisions agréées. Cette décision avait bien été prise pour 2023 en tout cas. Enfin, j'ai une dernière remarque, effectivement, nous fixons les instances légales. Dans le fonctionnement de la FAO, qui est important, il me semble que le fonctionnement des instances est un sujet important. Finalement, ne

devrait-elle ne pas assurer le bon fonctionnement de ces instances aux dates qu'elle souhaite, en tout cas que beaucoup de membres de cette instance privilégié, ne doit-il pas être la priorité?

CHAIRPERSON

Again the list is growing. May I make the following suggestion? We have to approve, as stated, the Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies. So we will make an *Appendix F* with only the dates of the Governing Bodies. We remove all other dates and it means we remove the date for the World Food Forum, we remove the date for the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), because CFS is not a Governing Body of FAO, and we only mention the Governing Bodies of FAO because that is the decision we have to take.

That will be the way forward, so we have an *Appendix F* which only states the Governing Bodies of FAO and we all know what the Governing Bodies of FAO are. That is what we approve because that is in the draft conclusion.

I leave the rest for any informal consultation but to the responsibility of the Secretariat, in close cooperation with the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs). That would be my pragmatic solution to find a way forward on this issue. So, my proposal would be:

“*We approve the Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies for 2022-2024*”, which means we only mention the Governing Bodies of FAO in *Appendix F* and the rest is up to the planning for those who are responsible for the planning. Would that be a way forward? Because otherwise we will be sitting here for another hour.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

I was just about to suggest that because I think that the Council's mandate is to approve only the Calendar of the Governing Bodies. The rest needs to be, of course, on consultation, and I think we are not in a position today to discuss the dates of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) or the other dates.

So, let us stick to the essential, like you suggested, “*approve the FAO Governing Bodies 2022-2024 as produced in Appendix F*”, with the understanding that *Appendix F* will now be a new *Appendix F*.

Ms Josyline C. JAVELOSA (Philippines)

I was just wondering if changing the title of the Calendar to say, “*Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Events*” would be okay?

If it does not, then I erase my case.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us also stick to the mandate of the Council, because our mandate is not to decide on all main events of FAO. Perhaps we wish to, but then we have to change the mandate of the Council.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Solo para apoyar su propuesta, Presidente, que de alguna manera captura la idea de que la Secretaría tenga la libertad de trabajar escuchando, obviamente, las sugerencias de los diferentes Miembros de acuerdo a las posibilidades que tenga y sin que el Consejo haga *micromanagement* en el trabajo de coordinación compleja que tiene la Secretaría.

Mr Asmerom KIDANE TECLEGHIORGHIS (Eritrea)

I support what you have proposed but before that, I would also like to say that we do not have to spend a lot of time on scheduling, programming, timetables. That is not the main issue of our task. The main issue of the task is another one. If you were to spend a lot of time on that, yes. But on table, on scheduling, timetable, I do not think this is appropriate. In fact, it has been also mentioned by Mr Rakesh Muthoo, the Director of Cabinet and others. But why?

I am not going to take my time because the time is almost over. So to come to the conclusion, I really support what you have proposed.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

I do not think I can support your idea although I support enthusiastically your vision of reaching consensus. I think this Calendar is not only of FAO Governing Bodies, although it is called that. There are International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and World Food Programme (WFP) there. It has a legal reason to exist that this Council has to approve, but it also has an organizational reason to exist so that the Secretariat could, in consultation with the Secretariat of the other two Rome-based Agencies, organise it here for us.

I have not heard here so far, any reason for not keeping the Calendar as it is, as it has come to us. The fact that the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) next year is in those days does not mean it will always be on those days. It can go back and forth a little bit, if it remains as it was in October.

So, I am sorry, but I cannot accompany you on this.

CHAIRPERSON

We are going to have another issue for the end of the Council this evening. It will be a long evening as I see.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

I do not know what regard the discussion is today, because this is an Item which always pass like water under the bridge. Today, what regard the discussion really? I want to support what Brazil said that let us leave the Calendar the way it is prepared, because some of the events that are in the Calendar are there for reference only, because we need to keep that in mind; the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), the World Food Day, we have to keep that in mind just to help the Secretariat keep that in mind regularly.

We support that we approve this paragraph 57 the way it is drafted now.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

Is it possible for the Legal Counsel to clarify what is the mandate of the Council in regard to this Calendar?

Is it just the Governing Body meetings or does it involve other meetings too?

Ms Donata RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

I just need a couple of moments just to look at the applicable Rules and then I will refer to you.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us continue with our Agenda and we come back to this issue, because I see the list of speakers growing again and that means that we will have another half an hour to 45 minutes on this Item.

Let us now continue with our Agenda.

Item 23. Tentative Agenda for the 172nd Session of the Council**Point 23. Ordre du jour provisoire de la cent soixante-douzième session du Conseil****Tema 23. Programa provisional del 172.º período de sesiones del Consejo**

(CL 171/INF/2)

CHAIRPERSON

We go now to Agenda Item 23, *Tentative Agenda for the 172nd Session of the Council* and the document is CL 171/INF/2, which is in front of you. We know that we have taken the decision on Monday already on an agenda item for the next Council, so that is included, of course.

Comments from Members
Commentaires des Membres
Observaciones de los Miembros

CHILE

Presentado el lunes 14 de noviembre 2022, a las 17.16

Chile respalda la propuesta de programa provisional. Señala que en la medida que avances las gestiones y si se renueva el mandato de la iniciativa granos del mar negro, se podría incluir en agenda.

AUSTRALIA

Submitted Wednesday 16 November 2022, 14:13

Australia notes the tentative agenda for the 172nd Session of the Council, and provides the following comments:

- In light of the unprecedented challenges currently impacting global food systems including, *inter alia*, the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, rising cost of living, and conflicts, - Australia considers that there would be merit in expanding the scope of Agenda Item 5, *Update on FAO's Response to COVID-19: Building to transform*, to provide a more inclusive update to Members on FAO's integrated efforts to tackle the global food security crisis, beyond the immediate focus of the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme.
- Australia continues to appreciate the regular updates provided to Members at Governing Body sessions on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative. We also note, however, the recent launch of other "flagship" FAO initiatives including, *inter alia*, One Country One Priority Product, FAO DataLab and 1000 Digital Villages. We consider that there could be value in expanding the focus of Agenda Item 6, *Update on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative* to incorporate updates on additional flagship initiatives, noting also the significant linkages and synergies between these.

JAPAN

Submitted Wednesday 16 November 2022, 16:09

Though the tentative agenda for the 172nd Session of the Council doesn't include any items on the update of the implementation of the *FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031* and the *FAO Science and Innovation Strategy*, we recognize that they will be discussed in the 135th Session of the Programme Committee.

We would like to know the schedule for developing each action plan, including the consultation process.

Also, we recognize that the first stocktaking meeting on the UN Food Systems Summit will be convened in July 2023. We are looking forward to hearing the progress from FAO under Item 7, *Report of the Joint Meeting of the 135th Session of the Programme Committee and 195th Session of the Finance Committee* or any other item for information in the 172nd Session of the Council.

EUROPEAN UNION

Submitted Friday 18 November 2022, 11:06

Chairperson, I am honoured to write to you on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States regarding the abovementioned agenda item for the 171st Session of the FAO Council.

We would like to request that the following items be added to the agenda of the 172nd Session of the FAO Council:

- Review of Decentralized Offices Network and presentation by FAO of the strategy concerning the Decentralized Offices Network: for discussion and decision;
- The impact of the war in Ukraine on global food security and related matters under the mandate of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Submitted Wednesday 23 November 2022, 14:18

The United States requests that the Agenda of Council 172 include an item entitled *The impact of the war in Ukraine on global food security and related matters under the mandate of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)*, and invites FAO to update Members with

relevant products and analysis according to the conclusions of the 171st, 170th, and 169th Councils on this topic.

***Response from Secretariat
Réponses du Secrétariat
Respuestas de la Secretaría***

The Secretariat appreciates the support received by Members regarding the Agenda of the 172nd Session of the Council. In particular, the Secretariat appreciates the comment provided by Chile, and if the Black Sea Grain Initiative is renewed, it would be considered to be added to the agenda, as advised.

Regarding the comments made on Item 5, *Update on FAO's Response to COVID-19*, this project is managed and coordinated through a specific programme including seven priority areas of work and supporting teams. Considering the limit for the length of the document and in order to provide detailed and comprehensive information to the Members on this item as well as the global food security crisis (which also includes the impact of the pandemic), it is suggested to have two separate documents to ensure the deserved attention is given to both.

The Secretariat would like to thank Australia for their suggestion on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative. However, we do believe that each flagship initiative would need enough attention, space and opportunity for reporting and providing detailed information to Members. The items which are interlinked could easily be reported jointly, as suggested, whereas others with a different focus could be reported through different documents so as to ensure the level of detail is not lost.

As regards the comments made by Japan, the regional action plans for the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy are developed taking into account ongoing guidance from Members. A document on the Development of Regional Action Plans for the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (2022-25) was considered by the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), the 35th Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO). The Technical Committees reviewed and welcomed the high-level framework for the development of regional action plans. The Regional Offices were then invited to prepare regional action plans based on the high-level framework. A summary of the draft regional action plans was presented to the 134th Session of the Programme Committee. The Regional Offices are currently finalizing their regional action plans and FAO headquarters is integrating the global and inter-regional perspectives, as requested by the Programme Committee. A further update will be shared at the 135th Session of the Programme Committee.

CHAIRPERSON

We now bring forth the draft conclusion.

56. The Council endorsed the tentative Agenda of its 172nd Session as contained in *CL 171/INF/2*, taking into account the decisions of this Council.

Can we agree to this paragraph?

I do not think so because there is the Czech Republic asked for the floor, and then Canada asked for the floor, and the list is growing again so prepare yourself for a midnight Session, or we postpone until Saturday – , that can also be the case.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

We asked several times for one item to be included on the Agenda of the Council. Actually, we ask for the inclusion on this Council, but we understood that the Secretariat needed more time for preparing the background document. I raised this issue, or this request, on the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) meeting several times so I am just a little surprised that it has not been put into the draft of the tentative Agenda.

Maybe, just to be on the safe side, to put it into the text so it will be put on the Agenda.

The title would be “*Review of Decentralised Offices network and presentation by FAO of the strategy concerning the Decentralised Offices network, for discussion and decision*”.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

The global food security situation is evolving rapidly, and Canada has welcomed the Secretariat's reports on food product, trade and prices. Canada believes that the Russian invasion of Ukraine generated some of the most significant shocks to global food systems since World War II.

Given that the war is still ongoing, the risks for food prices and production remain high. Consequently, Canada requests of the Council's Agenda include a *report [by the Secretariat] on current and future forecasts for global food production stocks and trade in key commodities and an analysis of the food security implications with a particular spotlight on developing countries' access to fertilisers and food imports.*

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

La verdad me empiezo a preocupar porque el temario que tenemos para la Conferencia es enorme. Y yo también tengo muchas ideas para sugerir que creo que también son legítimas. Y, por supuesto, ninguno de los temas es menos importante que otro. Porque creo que, si yo hablara de la crisis en Haití y toda la situación de los efectos del cambio climático en el corredor seco en América Latina y el Caribe, y un montón de otras cuestiones, creo que la lista sería interminable. Si mis queridos colegas de la región de África quieren también plantear sus diferentes temas, imaginad la cantidad de temas que podríamos señalar.

Yo sugeriría, al menos en el planteo de Canadá, de hacer una extraordinaria del Comité de Problemas de Productos Básicos (CCP) que nos permita poder discutir en términos generales todos los impactos y efectos de las cuestiones que están planteándose para incluir en esta Agenda, para poder evitar que la Agenda de la Conferencia se convierta en un embudo de un montón de iniciativas que, no solamente este Consejo no va a terminar, sino que tampoco va a poder terminar la Conferencia. Vamos a necesitar, no sé, una semana adicional.

Entonces, yo pido, que en lo posible tratemos de ser razonables porque va a ser muy complicado. Yo creo que todavía tenemos tiempo para poder trabajar por ahí en el marco de la próxima Conferencia y trabajar a través de una extraordinaria del CCP en la cual podamos discutir todos los impactos y elementos que ha mencionado Canadá, pero no es algo particularmente contra ese punto en sí, sino contra la lógica de incluir una lista de temas interminables.

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

We are here in the Council, and it is a high-level of decision making. I would appreciate if we can discuss technical matters in Technical Committees. If I take the issue of Decentralised Offices, why not to discuss it in the Regional Conferences, including the Informal Regional Conference for North America?

If I take the *report on current and future forecast for global food production*, good but this is typically a Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) matter. Bringing it to the Council I do not see really because we are here to examine and then take decisions on what is coming from the Technical Committees. The Council is not a Technical Committee. If we are discussing technical issues for 49 Members where we are 194, there is a problem there.

Please, let us see how we can make good use of the Council and what should be discussed in the Council. We can see in the Basic Text what is required as discussion item for the Council. We leave it at that, but these two topics they have another forum, where we can discuss them and elegantly discuss them. I am not against them but I just want to streamline things for the Council.

Ms Dilyara RAVILOVA-BOROVIK (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

We would like to support the colleagues, who have just spoken on the floor, notably our colleague from Argentina. I think we are going to put a lot on our plate, there are quite a lot of issues, and as Cameroon has just said, we are the Council and therefore we should focus on these large issues put forward to us and brought to us by the specialised Bodies and Committees.

So, anything that would come from the Secretariat and would have, for instance, candidacies, nominations for high positions or preparation for the 43rd Conference, but anything that we would add

to the Agenda would either prevent us from covering all the items or maybe stop us from producing quality work. I think I would agree with what has been said by others.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

I would like to support the original paragraph that stops at “*information to*” and I would like to mention about the other considerations.

First, the suggestion from our esteemed colleague from Canada. Although his suggestion that the title of this here does not mention the conflict in Europe, what we have approved on Monday is about that. So, I was wondering whether what we have approved on Monday does not cover your suggestion. That is “*the impact of the war on global food security*” etc.

I would also like to support the interventions of my colleagues from Argentina and Cameroon. I think all the subjects are interesting, I think we should discuss the Decentralised Office networks, we should discuss the Headquarters, we should discuss everything. But I think those things should not be discussed straight into the Council. They should start somewhere else. I do not want to call them lower, but to call them the competent arena for those discussions, be it the Programme Committee, the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) or whatever. Not straight to the Council, it will not go anywhere as we have been demonstrating for a few times now.

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

I support what Cameroon said that these items should be discussed in different for a of FAO and therefore I support your original conclusion.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

I too would support your original paragraph and one way forward would be to have another simple paragraph 59 just saying that “*the Council requested the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) to continue consultations with Members on any additional items to be considered*”.

Sr. Junior Andrés ESCOBAR FONSECA (Nicaragua)

Nos hemos mantenido siguiendo sus orientaciones de ser breves y concisos. Nosotros queremos apoyar su propuesta. No vamos a repetir las observaciones que han hecho los distintos delegados de Argentina, Camerún, Brasil, Rusia, Pakistán, Malasia. Nos quedamos con su propuesta y tratemos de terminar.

CHAIRPERSON

I would like to remind everybody that it is clearly stated “*endorsed the Tentative Agenda*” because many things can happen in the course of the year. We have the official procedure in the Basic Texts where “*the Director-General, based on consultation with the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) propose the Agenda for the meeting itself*”, so between that moment and now a lot of water will go under the bridge.

I do hope indeed that these items which are mentioned are going to be taken up by the specific Governing Bodies, which deal with them, because nobody contested the need to discuss these items, both the Decentralised Offices network as well as the future forecast for the global food production, because they need to be discussed in the preparatory meetings.

If the preparatory meetings clearly indicated it and they have done their work with Reports, they can be brought onto the Provisional Agenda, then it is not tentative but a Provisional Agenda of the Council, because then we have the material needed to have a thorough consideration of the item in the Council.

With that, could we not go along with what now is said by many, just have a full stop after “*decision of this Council*” and then we evolve from the Tentative Agenda to the Provisional Agenda and see whether or not we have enough material for other items to be included in the Agenda, because we do not decide on the Agenda now because it is only a Tentative Agenda.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I just wish to inform all the Members who actually took part in the discussion that our request was not really a new one. We asked for this item already at the last Council to be included for the discussion on this Council, but we understood that FAO would need more time to prepare itself.

So, our understanding was that, let us say, the discussion of this point would be taken at the next Council in order to give FAO more time to prepare itself for that. It is a little disappointment from our side to hear that this arrangement cannot be actually taken on board.

Of course, for the sake of time, I will not insist on having the particular wording of this item to be included in the Report, but I would rather ask politely the FAO Secretariat and Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) to really consider putting this item on the Agenda of the next Council.

CHAIRPERSON

Two things are well noted; first, your flexibility and secondly, your strong request to work towards a probable agenda item made, but first have the discussions in the Bodies we need for that to do so.

Mr Mougui MÉDI (Cameroon)

I will suggest an alternative solution. We put a full stop after “2”, and then we put what is there in red as a footnote, or, again in the footnote, we request the Secretariat to refer to the Verbatim Records on this issue and follow up on the matters.

Because these are very good ideas, and we say they should be treated in the appropriate forum. So, we do not want to reject that idea we appreciate.

CHAIRPERSON

I like your suggestion of a footnote because then we contain it in the Report that we appreciated the two items to be discussed in the appropriate fora and based on that, see what further action is needed.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

What the proposal from Cameroon is for. What would go into a footnote?

CHAIRPERSON

Both. So we conclude after “*Council*” Both items go to the footnote. In the meantime, we work on some text for the beginning. Certainly, we are not finalizing today, so we come back to the footnote later on when we have the exact text.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

In the interest of knowing that it is 19.16 hours and in the interest of flexibility, I think we can work with that.

CHAIRPERSON

We have an in principle agreement. We will come back to the exact language of the footnote because we still now go to other Items before we finalize today.

Item 24. Any other matters

Point 24. Autres questions

Tema 24. Asuntos varios

Item 24.1 Update on the Sub-Committee on Livestock

Point 24.1 Informations actualisées sur le Sous-Comité de l'élevage

Tema 24.1 Información actualizada sobre el Subcomité de Ganadería

CHAIRPERSON

We go now to Agenda Item 24, *Any other matters*.

As it was agreed, we first have a statement by the Director of the Department for Animal Husbandry on the *Progress Report on Livestock*.

Great to have you here, Mr Thanawat Tiensin, in your new capacity.

Mr Thanawat TIENSIN (Director, Animal Production and Health Division)

It is my privilege to update you on the work of FAO on Animal Production and Health, which actually I would like to take this opportunity to share with you the slides that can have more clear what is our plan and also the achievements that FAO have done so far.

The Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Sub-Committee on Livestock was successfully organized on 16-18 March 2022. The 28th Session of COAG approved three major areas of work: first, focusing on sustainable livestock sectors for food security and nutrition and inclusive economic growth; second, animal health, public health and environmental health through the One Health approach; third, focus on natural resource, youth, climate change and biodiversity.

As all of you know, livestock contribute to healthy people and planet and make contribution to small-scale farmers for their livelihood, women, youth empowerment and rural development. Livestock also have a lot of roles in pastoralism, in drylands and rangelands. It also contributes to the biodiversity ecosystem services and nutritional security, especially for essential micronutrients.

Livestock manure also contribute to biogas and renewable energies. Animal source food is a part of balanced and healthy diets. Crop-livestock soil nutrient cycling system also produced biomass, biofertilizers to have soil health and livestock also uses crop residues and crop by-products to reduce the waste from plant productions. And this one is about the livestock contribution to our people and our planet.

And that is why regarding the work on Sustainable Livestock Transformation, because livestock is a part of agrifood system and of the *four betters*, *better production* and *better nutrition* to make sure that animal's source food is a balanced and healthy diet, that is a part of better nutrition.

According to the Sustainable Livestock Transformation, we would like to address FAO Programme Priorities Areas (PPAs) in building more sustainable, efficient, inclusive, and resilient livestock sectors for all. FAO would like to work with all Members to build the global balanced narrative for sustainable livestock. FAO will continue to work with countries in developing livestock master plan to increase investment in livestock sectors and to strengthen the sustainable pathway and framework for each sub-sector.

Also, we would like to integrate all FAO work on animal production, animal health, One Health, Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), biodiversity, climate actions, crop-livestock, soil, nutrient recycling together to make sure that we can work in holistic approach and also to enhance good practices, knowledge sharing among Members, farmers, producers, and all other stakeholders.

The objectives of sustainable livestock transformation are to scale up and integrate all FAO work on animal production, animal health, One Health and others and also, to have a better plan for the future is to provide more technical support to the Members, to facilitate prioritizations and cooperation with partners and also support resource mobilization.

In terms of the progressive pathway and framework for each species or sub-sector will be based on the national specific context, because each country has different geographical conditions, priorities, development, and also to make sure that it fits well with your country and also regions, to make sure that livestock have solutions and we are not a problem. During the past few months, FAO discussed the issue of sustainable livestock at the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP27). During the situation of emerging infectious disease like avian influenza that spread in several countries, FAO dispatched the mission for emergency animal health response in different countries, and we will continue to act rapidly to support the Members.

At the Joint FAO/International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) centres in Vienna, we have the animal production and health laboratories that we are ready to support all the Members on livestock related issues.

FAO Emergency Center for Transboundary Animal Diseases, so-called ECTAD is working in 35 countries with 350 experts to make sure that we can provide support in terms of capacity-building to all the countries. The new office of ECTAD now is in Peru, in Guatemala and also other countries in Asia and Africa.

As first output after the Sub-committee on Livestock, the global assessment of the contribution of livestock to food security, sustainable agrifood system, nutrition and healthy diets has been launched to make sure that we can work with all of you to build the global positive balanced narrative of livestock sectors and also the approach of sustainable livestock transformation will support all of you to make sure that livestock sectors will build *better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life* for all.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much, Mr Thanawat Tiensin, for your presentation. Of course, we are not going to have a discussion on its substance because it is an Item for information and it is late. I think it will be an Item which will certainly be very interesting for the Sub-Committee on Livestock and the Committee on Agriculture.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Quiero decirle que desde el primer momento el Subcomité de Ganadería trabajó absolutamente en consenso con todos sus Miembros en el buró, con todas las regiones con un enorme nivel de consenso en la primera sesión del subcomité y con un trabajo de coordinación muy estrecho con la división de ganadería y de salud animal de FAO.

Hemos hecho —y estamos realizando— un trabajo muy fuerte de presencia en diferentes foros que tienen que ver con redes globales donde se discuten las cuestiones de la ganadería. Hemos estado en Irlanda en la Reunión global del Programa mundial para una ganadería sostenible (GASL). Hemos participado en la conferencia europea de la Organización Mundial de Sanidad Animal. Hemos trabajado también con el sector privado en diversas reuniones, hemos intervenido en diversas reuniones del sector privado en los diferentes subsectores de la ganadería y estamos dispuestos a promover en el período intersesional diferentes reuniones el crear subsectores de acuerdo a cada uno de los subsectores de la ganadería y reflexionar sobre soluciones a los diferentes problemas que se encuentran pero, sobre todo, priorizando las necesidades de los países más vulnerables y que tienen más necesidad de ser fortalecidas.

Quiero agradecer especialmente su disponibilidad para poner la ganadería en el centro de esta conversación, al menos en *Any other matters*, en otras cuestiones dentro de este Consejo.

Sra. Carla SIERRA ZÚÑIGA (Costa Rica)

Nosotros queremos agradecer al Director Thanawat Tiensin y a Argentina por el liderazgo en los trabajos que han desarrollado en el marco del Subcomité de Ganadería del Comité de Agricultura, COAG.

La ganadería en Costa Rica es una actividad que genera empleo particularmente en el sector agropecuario, así como brinda bienestar económico para una gran cantidad de actores de nuestra sociedad. La ganadería cubre el 38% de nuestro territorio nacional y cuida casi el 45% de nuestros bosques. De hecho, hemos oficializado la estrategia ganadera baja en carbono y la política de ganadería sostenible de Costa Rica. Implementamos también la Acción de Mitigación Nacionalmente Apropriada (NAMA) en la ganadería llegando al 10% de las fincas nacionales y reduciendo aún más la generación de gases de efecto invernadero (GEI).

Nosotros seguiremos apoyando los trabajos de este subcomité para alcanzar sistemas ganaderos sostenibles en aras de la seguridad alimentaria, la nutrición y el crecimiento económico inclusivo, así como la salud animal y la integración de la ganadería en las políticas climáticas nacionales.

Mme Traore Halimatou KONE (Malí) (Observateur)

Le Sous-Comité de l'Élevage se trouve à la croisée des chemins de grands défis de l'ère, notamment la résistance antimicrobienne, Une Seule Santé, lutte contre les maladies animales, les zoonoses

émergentes, l'insécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle. Le Sous-Comité de l'Élevage est un espace de dialogue intergouvernemental, à cet égard, le Mali attend avec impatience la mise en œuvre du thème Système d'Élevage Durable au Service de la Sécurité Alimentaire et Nutritionnelle, et d'une croissance économique inclusive pour améliorer la contribution du secteur de l'élevage à l'éradication de la faim, de la malnutrition sous toutes ses formes, à la réduction de la pauvreté et au développement économique, en accordant une attention particulière aux petits producteurs.

Le Mali demande à la FAO de s'atteler à la mise en œuvre de ce thème, afin de donner une guidance nécessaire aux petits éleveurs qui constituent la grande majorité des éleveurs dans le monde. Nous demandons effectivement à la FAO d'aider les Membres à mettre en œuvre de bonnes politiques de production, ainsi que la gestion de la résistance aux antimicrobiens tout au long de la chaîne d'approvisionnement alimentaire pour réduire le besoin d'antimicrobien et promouvoir l'utilisation responsable et prudente de ces derniers dans le système agroalimentaire.

Item 24. Any other matters

Point 24. Autres questions

Tema 24. Asuntos varios

Item 24.2 Appointment of a Representative of the FAO Conference to the Staff Pension Committee

Point 24.2 Nomination d'un représentant de la Conférence de la FAO au Comité des pensions du personnel

Tema 24.2 Nombramiento de un representante de la Conferencia de la FAO en el Comité de Pensiones del Personal

(CL 171/LIM/6)

CHAIRPERSON

Now we continue our Agenda Item 24.2, under *Any other matters*, *Appointment of a representative of FAO Conference to the Staff Pension Committee*.

You can find the information on this Item in document *CL 171/LIM/6*. As outlined in this document, the Council is invited to appoint the Staff Pension Committee, Mr Kuraya Yoshihiro, Minister Counsellor, Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to FAO, to replace and complete the term of Mr Thanawat Tiensin, former Permanent Representative of Thailand to FAO as Alternate Member Representative of FAO's Conference to the Staff Pension Committee for the remainder of his term from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2023.

Can we agree this appointment by acclamation?

My dear friend, we have full trust in you, and we know for sure that you will do an excellent job.

Item 24. Any other matters

Point 24. Autres questions

Tema 24. Asuntos varios

Item 24.3 Statement by a Representative of the FAO Staff Bodies

Point 24.3 Déclaration d'un représentant des associations du personnel de la FAO

Tema 24.3 Declaración de un representante de los órganos representativos del personal de la FAO

CHAIRPERSON

With that we turn now to Agenda Item 24.3, *Statement by the representative of FAO Staff Bodies*.

I would like to pass the floor to Mr Florence Tartanac, President of the Association of Professionals in FAO to make a statement on behalf of FAO Staff Bodies.

Ms Florence TARTANAC (Staff Representative)

The Staff Representative Bodies are grateful for the opportunity to speak before the Council. This is always an important occasion as it allows us to share with you the frank and result-oriented perceptions of the staff we represent. We are sure that you value this direct, honest, and constrictive feedback from FAO staff around the world.

The people who dedicate themselves to delivering on the critical mandate of the Organization. We are all aware that hunger has increased in recent years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, conflicts, and humanitarian emergencies. Food, fuel, and fertilizer prices are rising and further threaten global food security. As highlighted in the Director-General's opening speech, FAO demonstrated its capacity and professionalism to cope with these emergencies. And this could be achieved only with dedicated employees regardless of the challenges.

When we spoke with you so last time, we voiced concerns over the slow pace of reforms, and we were not optimistic that progress would be achieved through meaningful consultations with the Staff Representative Bodies.

The results of the Employee Satisfaction Survey conducted in 2022 showed some improvements over 2019 related to communication, leadership and direction, ethical behaviour and misconduct. This is a good sign: we are making some progress in certain areas in the field, both in the Headquarters and in decentralized offices.

Despite this progress, the survey also shows there is still much work to be done and opportunities to be explored in terms of further strengthening FAO workplace culture, especially in the areas of enhancing growth and development, promoting health and wellbeing, cultivating a culture of recognition and appreciation, and reviewing and applying human resources policies fairly and consistently.

Other positive developments came when FAO and other United Nations (UN) Agencies approved the co-sharing agreement for the Federation of International Civil Servant Association (FICSA), as well as FAO's willingness to contribute to the cost of secretarial support for the Union of General Service Staff (UGSS) and to allow 50 percent time release for the President and the General Secretary of Association of Professionals (AP) in FAO. These actions support efficient and effective staff representation, which in turn helps build an Organization that is fit for its purpose and that can achieve the extraordinary results requested by the Director-General.

On the topic of job growth for staff members, we have assumed higher levels of responsibility. FAO finally released a new policy to allow for job reclassification based on the ICIC master standard. This year, a corporate exercise has been initiated for General Service Staff, with that for professional staff to follow next year. However, we are keenly aware that the results of this job classification exercise are not likely to meet the hopes and expectation of FAO staff due to lack of proper planning regarding budget variation and workforce structure.

We would like to underscore what Staff Representative Bodies' position: that FAO people are its greatest resource, but staff of all categories have been underappreciated and overlooked for far too long, creating a significant human resources problems for the Organization and its ability to deliver against its mandate. This is a problem that the Organization has shied away from far too long. Addressing this existential problem simply cannot be postponed or delayed any longer. So, there is the organization risk losing invaluable knowledge, experience, and talent of both its General Service and Professional Staff.

Six months after our last address to Council, the Staff Representative Bodies have not received proposal for a revised recruitment policy with more transparency, better oversight mechanisms, and explicitly qualified opportunities for qualified internal candidates. We consider the current recruitment policies inadequate and to the detriment of FAO, be it in view of recruiting of most suitable candidates, of allowing for carrier progression, or of ensuring a fair and MBS process.

We understand that a draft of the new recruitment policy will finally be shared with us soon, and we look forward to constructive engagement on the policies development. This is a topic that cannot wait any longer.

Regarding gender equality, we are still far from achieving gender parity at professional level by 2022, and for senior position by 2024. This issue was highlighted by the 2022 Employee Satisfaction

Survey, as well as by the Ombudsperson 2021 Report. Aiming to improve the situation, AP and FAO will soon release a paper on this topic with clear recommendations for FAO Management. In the same way, but a different topic, we are waiting for clear measures to be taken to reach an Organization with zero tolerance to racism. While the COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging across the board, one positive development has been to improve understanding of what makes FAO a highly productive Organization. Since March, 2022, the pilot flexible working arrangement policy has further enhanced FAO reputation as a flexible result-driven Organization.

As a period for this pilot policy nears its end, the Staff Representative Bodies has formed a working group to assess experiences, identify good practices and challenges, and support management's review of the official policy with our involvement.

So, review is necessary to advance FAO with the flexibility needed for work-life balance and for achieving optimal performance and the scenario in which the Organization excels in delivering its result. This is the approach being taken across the UN System generally and in the private sector as well.

So, collective monitoring of the implementation of the human resources (HR) policies is also needed to ensure the UN Mental Health Strategy is embedded in the Organization's culture and system. Finally, we would like to point out that important groups of employees continue to lack representation, specifically General Service Staff based in the field. I've been waiting a long time for a decision that would officially recognize the staff representation in the same way that professional staff are represented, regardless of duty station.

We look forward to a positive decision on this soon. We are also engaged in preliminary discussions to be able to support consultants in improving their condition and to better integrate FAO's workforce. Staff Representative Bodies always engages with management in a constructive and collaborative spirit. We know we can provide helpful insights and contribute to improving the performance of the Organization. Proper and meaningful consultation with the Staff Representative Bodies enhances the confidence of staff in policy and procedures adopted by the Organization as well as its day-to-day business.

We will remain ready to engage with management in a collaborative spirit and to contribute constructively to the preparation of new policies affecting staff.

CHAIRPERSON

With this we have concluded Agenda Item 24.

Item 20. Developments in fora of importance for the mandate of FAO (*continued*)

Point 20. Évolution des débats au sein d'autres instances intéressant la FAO (*suite*)

Tema 20. Novedades en foros de importancia para el mandato de la FAO (*continuación*)

(CL 171/INF/4; CL 171/INF/4 Web Annexes 1-3)

CHAIRPERSON

So, we go to the remaining Agenda Items. First we try to tackle the remaining Item 20. We are going to ask the Secretariat to put on the screen the Item.

I start with paragraph 56. I do hope that, after considerations, the Russian Federation could go along with paragraph 56, which I think all the other Members were willing to go accept. Could the Russian Federation now go along with this paragraph as well? I do not see any objections.

Then I go to paragraph 57. Here we have the proposal to replace "transparency" by "dissemination of MoUs". Would that meet the consensus of the room?

Mr MOUNGUI MÉDI (Cameroon)

What is the best word? "Relevant" or "pertinent"?

Ms DONATA RUGARABAMU (Legal Counsel)

Typically, in FAO we use "relevant".

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Estoy esperando para intervenir en el punto del subpárrafo (c).

CHAIRPERSON

Then we put “*relevant*”. Can we now agree with paragraph 57? I do not see any objections.

Then we go to subparapagraph (c).

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Simplemente quería mencionar que, en el subpárrafo (c), después de “*collaboration to*” entiendo que estamos hablando de una publicación y, si es una publicación, para evitar tener que discutir texto, pido que se ponga o entre comillas o en mayúscula, de manera que no haya dudas, que no es una afirmación de texto. Estoy hablando de... “*repurpose food and agriculture*”.

Cualquier cosa podremos hacer alguna consulta si hay alguna duda al *Management*, pero tengo entendido que es una publicación y, por lo tanto, pediría que esto fuera identificado de tal manera para evitar discutir texto.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

There is a publication behind the agenda of the work being done on repurposing of food and agriculture support to transform agrifood systems. And the document that came is the combination of both Science and Innovation Forum and FAO Leadership and Collaboration on this agenda based on this publication that we have.

CHAIRPERSON

And this is the correct title.

Mr Maarten DE GROOT (Canada)

We would ask a question on the selection of what is considered a form of importance, raising the points of Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Group of Seven (G7) and Group of Twenty (G20) and wondering whether the secretariat might be able to provide some answer to that.

CHAIRPERSON

I give the floor to the Secretariat.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

This Item now is a standing item on every Council agenda. This comes about, actually, from the Immediate Plan of Action (IPA), following the independent external evaluation of FAO, where the IPA stated that it would be desirable for the Council to be updated on matters of *fora* other than those that are on the formal agenda of the Council for information. This has then evolved over the years, and has been well received.

The idea is to have an informal flow of information for Council Members so that they can receive information, have a discussion, and it does not get recorded then in the Report of the Council. Over the years, Management has selected these kind of items - they are not necessarily only about meetings - they have been a plethora of different types of interesting areas of work by FAO that have come to the Council for information. There have been instances where Members of the Council have suggested items that they might want to have information on. It is very much a fluid and dynamic item on the agenda of the Council. Therefore, there is no ‘set criteria’ for how topics are selected and brought in front of the Council for information.

CHAIRPERSON

With that, could we now conclude this Agenda Item? I think we have now a consensus on the draft conclusions.

Item 22. Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2022-2024 (continued)**Point 22. Calendrier 2022-2024 des sessions des organes directeurs de la FAO et des autres réunions principales (suite)****Tema 22. Calendario de los períodos de sesiones de los órganos rectores de la FAO y otras reuniones importantes en 2022-24 (continuación)***(CL 171/LIM/1)***CHAIRPERSON**

I now turn back to Agenda Item 22, *Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions 2022-2024*, and we put the Agenda Item on the screen again.

Certainly, there is a difference between Governing Bodies and others. So in *Appendix F*, we could put “*the Governing Bodies*” in the colour yellow, so that it means for sure that those are the Governing Bodies which we have to plan, and we have the mandate to do so. And we put all the other Items, all the other issues, in another colour. So that we see clearly what we have on the calendar - because it is also a planning instrument.

With that, could we agree to the text and Appendix as it is now on the screen?

Mr Khalid MEHBOOB (Pakistan)

We support your proposal.

Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)

I would just put “*the sessions of the Governing Bodies and the Council approved the calendar of the Governing Bodies*”. For everything else, we have actually very good online tool, which is updated regularly every day. It is a joint calendar of all the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs). There are all the meetings there, not just the Governing Bodies’, but also the other informal consultations, other regional meetings, *etcetera*. So, no need to complicate it, I would say. Council is approving only FAO Governing Bodies. Keep it simple!

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

Can I see the Calendar?

CHAIRPERSON

Could we not say “*approved the Calendar of Governing Bodies for 2022-2024 as reproduced in yellow in Appendix F to this Report*”? At least we have done a planning instrument as it should be. I tried this and it was rejected because we said we want to see the whole calendar, and it remained the whole calendar as it is in front of us.

So that is why I came now with the second compromise proposal, “*as the Calendar of Governing Bodies for 2022-2024, as reproduced in yellow in the Appendix as to this Report*”. So, we amend the Appendix, but put in yellow the Governing Bodies. So that it is clear in the calendar which are the Governing Bodies, and there is no discussion on that.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (MALAYSIA)

I just wanted to support your proposal and I think the Appendix can be circulated prior to adoption. I think we can look at it and if there is any objection during adoption, we can bring it up again.

CHAIRPERSON

Can this be the final agreement? I see nodding in the room. Thank you so much. We have solved this Agenda Item.

Item 23. Tentative Agenda for the 172nd Session of the Council (continued)**Point 23. Ordre du jour provisoire de la cent soixante-douzième session du Conseil (suite)****Tema 23. Programa provisional del 172.º período de sesiones del Consejo (continuación)***(CL 171/INF/2)*

CHAIRPERSON

Then in the meantime, we also have tried to solve the footnote for Agenda Item 23. We are getting there. We normally ended this week at 20 hours, so I still hope to finalize at 20 hours this evening. Then I come with the good news for tomorrow, but first let us finalize it.

We showed a footnote on the screen for Agenda Item 23. So we say “*took note of the request by Members to consider the following Items for discussion in its future Sessions of the Council*”. Then we have the title, and at the end we say “*to be repaired by the relevant technical committees and Governing Bodies of FAO*”. I think that captures what we wanted to do. Would this be agreeable so that we have a final agreement on this conclusion as well? I see nodding.

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Antes de pasar a un tema polémico, prefiero que pusieramos entre comillas la publicación que mencionó el Economista Jefe. Solo le pido por favor, para evitar una discusión en el *Drafting Committee*, si podemos poner una *footnote* con la publicación para que no haya duda de eso, que es una publicación. Simplemente eso. Es un detalle para evitar discutir esto en el *Drafting Committee*.

Es el subpárrafo (c). Eso requeriría una *footnote* con el documento, si puede ser, citando el documento.

CHAIRPERSON

We put a footnote where we can find a document in the text.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

On the footnote, if I may, I think the Technical Committees do not prepare those technical documents.

CHAIRPERSON

That was on a different Item. This is not referred to the Technical Committees.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

No, I am referring to the footnote. To the footnote that you have presented.

CHAIRPERSON

Yeah, but they discussed the issue.

Mr Máximo TORERO CULLEN (Chief Economist)

Yes, but it says they prepare the document. Because we cannot put the Agenda for them. They find their own Agenda.

CHAIRPERSON

Let us go back to the footnote. It is about the Agenda Item. It is not about the Report itself. “*Following Item for discussion*” then we mentioned the Items. “*And these Items will be prepared by the relevant Technical Committees.*” We could say “*to be reviewed by...*”

Sr. Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

Pediría que no se confundieran las dos *footnotes*. Simplemente es eso lo que quise marcar.

Item 5. Integrated water resources management for food security and climate resilience (continued)**Point 5. Gestion intégrée des ressources en eau au service de la sécurité alimentaire et de la résilience face au climat (suite)****Tema 5. Gestión integrada de los recursos hídricos en favor de la seguridad alimentaria y la resiliencia al cambio climático (continuación)**

(CL 171/6)

CHAIRPERSON

We go to the last Item which was requested by the United States of America. I will not say that it is a contentious issue, because we solved that already many fora, certainly on Agenda 2030. But I give the floor to the United States and we put the text on the conclusions of Item 5 on the screen. We go to subparagraphs (c).

Ms Kristen PISANI (United States of America)

I just want to start out by saying we are returning to this very important issue because the United States of America strongly supports human rights and takes these discussions very seriously. And we really do want to reach consensus. As my colleague mentioned earlier today, we went back to our legal team in capital and given the sensitivity of discussions on water rights, they noted significant concerns with the wording in subparagraph (c).

Based on conversations with other Members, we understand that we are not alone in having reservations with where the language currently stands. So, in the spirit of trying to reach consensus wherever possible, which was mentioned several times today, we would like to propose a small edit for the consideration by the Membership. We would like to propose removing two words only: "*and protect*" in the current statement. We believe this will simplify the text and it will allow us to join consensus without issuing an EOP.

CHAIRPERSON

Is there flexibility to go along with this small change so that we have a consensus in the room? I do not see any objections with that. We have a consensus by all. Thank you so much.

Then dear friends, its 20:00 hours and normally we stop at 20:00 hours as we have done in the past couple of days. And now I bring you the good news.

The Drafting Committee will meet at 9:00 hours tomorrow morning. We are still discussing because we have installed new procedures, which means that we already have sent over the last couple of days agreed conclusions to the interpreters. So, they are working hard every day, every night because we used time differences, time zones to get interpreters from all over the world, preparing the draft conclusions in FAO's agreed languages. And that means that we hope to start the Drafting Committee tomorrow at 9:00 hours.

We already have the information, it is the Green Room. It will meet under the leadership of Marie-Lise Stoll of Luxembourg's, capable leadership. She will guide you through the draft Conclusions. And of course, everything that was changed by the professional editor that is not a wording, but our commas, abbreviations, *etcetera*, will be shown in track changes as we have done in the past.

That means if the Drafting Committee speeds up, we could start the Adoption of the draft Report at 14:30 hours here in the Plenary Hall. It means that one hour before the adoption, as we also agreed, the text will be available in all languages for regional consultation. I think you do not need that much time because you will not see many changes, since we agreed already in plenary.

Mr Claudio GARON (Brazil)

Drafting Committee is in hybrid mode also?

CHAIRPERSON

Yes. The Drafting Committee will be in hybrid mode, either in person in the Green Room or hybrid in the Green Room at 9:00 hours. The planning is that Report will be available at the latest at 13:30 hours. It is our ambition and we will work overnight to make sure that it happens. So then you have one hour to go through the (hopefully not many) changes done by the Drafting Committee.

We start the adoption of the Report at 14:30 hours here in the room. And then it depends on you, whether or not we achieve our target of 16 hours. We hope that we can, that is the wish of Mr Rakesh Muthoo and the whole team sitting here behind this table: that we can adopt it *en bloc*. But that is up to you, it is not up to us. Fingers crossed. And of course, we will have explanations of positions, but that is part of the adoption.

But we still can then adopt it *en bloc*. But let us see for that tomorrow. I thank you so much for your hard work, for your flexibility, your spirit of compromise also on some difficult moments during today. But we found each other in consensus and that is the spirit we need in the Council.

That is the spirit we have shown to the new Chairperson in the last 20 years, which was sitting here, the son of Ms Linda Hayden who will be here chairing the Council in about 20 years or 24 years. But I think we did a great job, and we should be proud of that because we are getting there in a mode of consensus.

Thank you so much. Have a very good rest. We wish those who are sitting in the Drafting Committee very good luck, and we will see each other in the Council setting tomorrow at 14:00 hours sharp in this room. Meeting adjourned.

The meeting rose at 20:07 hours

La séance est levée à 20 h 07

Se levanta la sesión a las 20.07

COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSEJO

Hundred and Seventy-first Session Cent soixante et onzième session 171.º período de sesiones
Rome, 5-9 December 2022 Rome, 5-9 décembre 2022 Roma, 5-9 de diciembre de 2022
NINTH PLENARY SESSION NEUVIÈME SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE NOVENA SESIÓN PLENARIA
9 December 2022

The Ninth Plenary Meeting was opened at 14:38 hours
Mr Hans Hoogeveen,
Independent Chairperson of the Council, presiding

La neuvième séance plénière est ouverte à 14 h 38
sous la présidence de M. Hans Hoogeveen,
Président indépendant du Conseil

Se abre la novena sesión plenaria a las 14.38
bajo la presidencia del Sr. Hans Hoogeveen,
Presidente Independiente del Consejo

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**ADOPTION OF REPORT
ADOPTION DU RAPPORT
APROBACIÓN DEL INFORME**

CHAIRPERSON

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, dearest friends. It is great to have you here a little bit after 14:30 hours in this room. I think this is the first time in history we are half a day ahead of our schedule, and we achieved the target together. At least we now think we can achieve the target, having the Adoption of the Report before 16:00 hours.

I think we all worked hard this week to arrive where we are and if you sit here, you will see many smiles, many relieved faces. I still hope that we continue this way until the end of this meeting, but I am sure that we will do.

Now we have to turn to the document *CL 171/Report for Adoption*, that can be found on the password-protected area, if you have not already seen it.

It is a real pleasure for me to invite the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, Ms Marie-Lise Stoll, to make her remarks about the wonderful session of the Drafting Committee.

Mme Marie-Lise STOLL (Luxembourg) (Présidente Comité de rédaction)

J'ai eu l'honneur d'être élue Présidente du Comité de rédaction de la 171e Session du Conseil. Nous avons tenu une seule réunion du Comité ce matin, et nous avons terminé bien à temps. J'ai beaucoup apprécié le travail effectué avec les membres du Comité de rédaction.

À savoir l'Arabie saoudite, l'Argentine, l'Australie, le Brésil, le Canada, la Chine, la Côte d'Ivoire, la Fédération de Russie, la France, le Luxembourg, et l'Union européenne, en tant que participants. Je tiens à exprimer mon appréciation pour l'esprit constructif de collaboration et de consensus qui a prévalu au sein du Comité de rédaction, et qui a permis un bon déroulement des travaux avec le résultat que vous avez devant vous. Je tiens également à remercier le Président Indépendant du Conseil, ainsi que le Secrétariat pour leur aimable soutien.

Je recommande donc aux membres du Conseil d'adopter ce rapport *en bloc*.

CHAIRPERSON

I would like to thank all the Members not only for the hard work in the Drafting Committee, but also for the very smooth running of the Drafting Committee. We started at 9:00 hours and we saw the earlier you start the sharper the eyes are, because we did not miss any comma or underlining or whatsoever. I think it is all in the text.

As was announced already by the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, we hope that we can adopt the report *en bloc*, but I know that the Russian Federation would like to make a statement about their position.

Mr Victor L. VASILIEV (Russian Federation) (Original Language Russian)

We recognize the very important role that FAO plays by supporting its Members in their efforts to achieve food security and the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. That is why, generally speaking, we support the Adoption of the Report of this session.

Russian Federation's delegation agrees that conflicts, along with climate change, weather disasters, and other extreme events such as, for instance, the pandemic, have an impact on countries' ability to guarantee food security.

At the same time, the way the conflict in Ukraine is qualified in the Council, the fact that there was reference to what was adopted previously by Council and what is also reflected in some reports, namely the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP), Committee on Agriculture (COAG), and the Programme Committee's qualification of the conflict in Ukraine as "*war*", is what we do not agree with.

Therefore, we would like this to be duly reflected in the Verbatim Records of our Session. In addition, our delegation would like the following footnote to be reflected in the Report itself.

This is the footnote we would like to see: The Russian delegation disassociates itself from subparagraphs 9 (i), 9 (j), 11 (d) and 26 (d) of the Report on the work of the 115th Session of the CCP, as well as subparagraphs 15 (g), 27 (c), 27 (d) and subparagraph 29 (b) of the report of the 28th Session of COAG.

We also disassociate ourselves from subparagraph 60 of the Report on the work of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee, due to the fact that conflict, and the way it is qualified, could have legal consequences which fall outside of the mandate of FAO.

Once again, we would like to congratulate you and take note of the excellent conduct of the meeting and would also like to thank the Secretariat as a whole for the quality of the work conducted.

CHAIRPERSON

Thank you very much for your last positive remarks, and of course, we will reflect the explanation of position as well as the footnote in the Report of the Session.

With that, may I ask the Council to adopt the Report *en bloc*.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Thank you very much. The report of the 171st successful Session of the Council is adopted.

Adopted

Adopté

Aprobado

It is great to have the Director-General of FAO, Dr QU Dongyu, amongst us, and I would like to give him the floor for closing remarks.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

I thought it would take a little longer, so let me open my computer in five seconds. No, it is a joke, I have already opened it.

Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear colleagues and Honorable Chairperson, I really congratulate you. You made the Council so efficient for the first time, with your coordination and convening. It looks like Dutch efficiency now.

This week, we have been pleased to see the Council's appreciation and endorsement of the initiatives put into action over the past three years.

This is an important sign that we are truly companions on this shared journey towards the transformation of our agrifood systems together, to ensure the *four betters*, in support of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Thank you all for your extraordinary collaboration, and efficient, effective, and coherent partnership.

Going forward, we can do more and better together, for a better food future for all.

I wish to congratulate the Independent Chairperson of the Council, Mr Hans Hoogeveen, for his efficient management of the session. I know you faced many challenges but you learnt so quickly and so efficiently, together with all the Secretariat of FAO supporting you. Also based on the Technical Committees, of the Governing Bodies, Programme Committee (PC), Finance Committee (FC) and the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) - I should mention all these - but others, also professional. We share the common vision of a consensus-based Organization, working together to achieve our collective objectives.

Dear colleagues and Members of the Council,

This week, you have reaffirmed your commitment to our key initiatives, including the Hand-in Hand, and others.

As well as for the action plans for effective implementation of our thematic and cross-cutting strategies on Science and Innovation, and on Climate Change.

You have also continued the dialogue on increased engagement with the private sector, and all key stakeholders and partners, based on our collective belief that FAO cannot do it alone.

The ongoing, complex, and overlapping challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, conflicts, the war in Ukraine, economic downturns and the increasing impacts of the climate crisis continue to affect global food security, especially in the poorest countries and the most vulnerable populations.

Addressing these challenges continues to be a priority for the Organization, in line with our mandate, and also based on FAO's regulations, rules and Basic Texts, and now specifically guided by the Strategic Framework, and in close collaboration with the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), and all other United Nations (UN) agencies across the UN system.

FAO will continue to provide technical and professional information and analysis on the evolving situation to support effective global policy and decision-making, and will keep Members updated.

As I have said many times, we have already established the digital FAO: it is an instrument, it is a real entry point, and it is also the effective platform to build a transparent Organization. You can make this comparison with others. We should have transparency, but also rules. This is an organization, and we have our own rules. I followed the discussion, and I am glad the Chairperson made the right point: even with transparency, you cannot share everything, but it should follow a rule-based and professional approach. That is what I wanted to highlight here, today.

FAO will continue to do so, to be transparent and accountable. Also, if you have any good suggestions and leading models, tell our colleagues and we will handle it in a professional way. I get a big consensus now with all of you, and a professional approach is the best one.

On behalf of all my colleagues, and also together with other UN agencies, we will continue to effectively support the implementation of national pathways for agrifood systems transformation through the Coordination Hub ~~for~~ to follow-up to the Food Systems Summit.

Dear Colleagues,

The Council recognized the strategic importance of integrated water resources management for food security and climate resilience, and I welcome your endorsement of this theme for the Conference next year. Of course, we have to be broad because the Ministers, when they come, should look more strategic and in a broader sense. That is why I used the language of the *four betters*, because the *four betters* were endorsed by the Ministerial Conference. And since in this Council we only just started to discuss more specifically on climate change and food security, we have to align with the Ministers' decision -not ours. This is what I also wanted to remind you.

FAO will be fully engaged in the UN Water Conference 2023 as an important steppingstone towards the achievement of relevant SDG 6 targets. But not only SDG 6: as I have said many times, water is not only one target. That is why at FAO we have a long history and a comparable advantage in dealing with complex water issues, and that is why we also have the Land and Water Division, unlike any other UN agency.

For so many years we have not realized how strong we were, and how to use that comparative advantage to deal with global challenges. I remember 20-22 years ago when we worked for the CGIAR centers, we had a Global Challenge Programme -water and food- endorsed in Paris in 2003, on May 19. I remember the day because when I arrived there I was the only representative from the developing nations; there was Robert from the United States among others, and Mr Ian Johnson was the Vice President of World Bank.

At the time FAO was very active on that Global Challenge Programme, we endorsed that, first. The second one was biofortification. After 20 years, we endorsed four or five at the same time, in one meeting in Paris.

At the time, we were focused on water and food. But now it is not only on food, and that is why I mentioned the Four Betters.

We will use the UN Water Conference as a catalyst, as a new political momentum, to move ahead all the challenges we are facing for a stronger and better recovery. This is FAO's real core business. So, please look at it in a holistic way. I mentioned three aspects - flooding, water scarcity and polluted water, how to use it by recycling, reducing and replacing, the '4Rs' approach.

We will work with other UN Agencies and their partners together. The Council's endorsement of the priorities arising from the reports of the FAO Technical Committees will continue to guide the Organization's technical work related to agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture, and forestry, as well as commodities.

Regarding commodities, we have to restrain ourselves from excessive action. When FAO established the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP), we did not have the World Trade Organization (WTO) at the time. Now we still have to look at these issues, but WTO's main function is food, stock, and trade. In the Member Countries there are economic ministers or ministers of trade or commerce - whatever they are called- so if any doubts arise, please consult with the Legal Office.

We have to focus on our own mandate, otherwise problems arise with other sister agencies -because WTO is not a UN Agency. Be careful: it is an international economic body, not a UN Agency. So, they cannot implement our decisions. They are independent. I do not know if everyone has realized that.

So please, look at how to deal with food production from FAO's mandate first, and then on the related policies on trade and other topics. Otherwise, WTO will start to blame us -me especially, because I am FAO's Director-General. I say this publicly because at least the WTO's Director-General will not complain with me.

Dear Colleagues,

The guidance and recommendations provided by this Session of the Council will provide further overarching guidance to the Organization as we move forward.

The current global food security situation calls upon us to act swiftly, concretely, and together.

Let us continue to make extraordinary efforts to overcome these overlapping challenges for people, planet, and prosperity.

Through these 14 months, I have convinced you, most of the Members, and hopefully you have no regret the decision to elect me as FAO's Director-General. I am willing to continue to work for you in the coming years ahead. Let us work together, learn together, contribute together, build a better world for the future.

Thank you.

Applause
Applaudissements
Aplausos

Mr GUANG Defu (China) (Original Language Chinese)

I would like to congratulate you on your excellent leadership, thanks to which this Council successfully completed all Items of the Agenda. China appreciates the collaborative spirit demonstrated during this Session. Thanks to our tireless efforts, this Council has been effective and fruitful.

I would also like to thank FAO's Management and Secretariat for their support to the meeting, as well as all the interpreters for their hard work. The Chinese Government will continue to firmly support the Director-General QU Dongyu in the years to come. We will provide our solid support to the Director-General in his implementation of the mandate in order to build a more inclusive and more transparent as well as more dynamic, pragmatic, and innovative FAO.

We hope and believe that Members will continue to firmly support Director-General QU Dongyu in the years to come.

Mr Purnajaya TRI (Indonesia)

I wish to join others in thanking FAO Director-General, Secretariat, and the whole team -and especially you Chairperson, for your able and decisive leadership and impartiality in leading us to this finish line for the Adoption of the Report this afternoon.

We believe that the challenges we face today are far more complex than we imagined. We were reminded by one of the Council Members in this room who said, *“the worst is yet to come.”* Therefore, Indonesia urges all Council Members to redouble our efforts to put our differences aside in our future work. Let us not undermine what our leaders and international organizations have accomplished at last month’s Group of Twenty (G20), let us also be guided by their hard work and commitments.

The Leaders’ Declaration made numerous references to FAO, the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), and other world Governing Bodies in addressing food security and agriculture. We have achieved something this week, however we believe our work is far from over on at least two things.

First is on the unity of the Council. After five days of deliberation and sitting at this Council, I see a lot of division among us. It was clear to me at least some of the issues that we had to deal with were either outside FAO’s mandate or on matters that were unrelated. Building trust is a *sine qua non* in addressing our challenges. For this reason, we support the Director-General’s call for FAO to remain focused in fulfilling FAO’s mandate, guided by FAO’s Strategic Framework in support of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Second, Indonesia is of the view that we need to shift our focus from food crisis response to prevention. This is why Indonesia supports the foresight approach of FAO through their findings, initiatives, assessments, and long-term responses to better inform our decision-making. I thank you and we look forward to a more fruitful deliberation in our next Council meeting.

CHAIRPERSON

We do not have a tradition here within FAO to farewell those for whom it will be the last Council. So, we are not going to change that tradition. I have seen so much dedication from all of you this week here in the room, but I have seen one remarkable dedication of a person who went beyond their duty, who had serious surgery last week, and was sitting on Monday at 9:15 hours here in the Council, throughout the whole week. And she was very active, not only in this Council, but in all Councils. Seeing that dedication of a person after serious surgery, working so hard, it is amazing - and it is Ms Lynda Hayden of Australia.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Mr Carlos Bernardo CHERNIAK (Argentina)

I need to recognize that everything was in general very positive this week. Thank you all for everything you did and, what the Secretariat did, the interpreters, and everybody else which really worked a lot. But I asked the floor to say what you expressed just one minute ago: this is not only the successful end of this Council, it is the successful end of Ms Lynda Hayden's mission in Rome, and I am sure that all of us believe that Lynda was always part of the solution.

She was a bridge builder and a friend of all. Thank you, Lynda, for everything you have done, for your friendship, for your help, and in particular because I really think with you, this Organization is really better. Thank you very much. If you let me do something that is not allowed by the rules, I will give her, in representation of all, I guess, this present, which represents the friendship of all of the delegates, all the missions, all the management -everything- with you.

Applause

Applaudissements

*Aplausos***Ms Lynda HAYDEN (Australia)**

This is where you find out I am a very emotional person. I am almost lost for words, and I graciously accept this gift on behalf of everybody, because I am a part of the Council and it has been an honour to work alongside everyone, and I think you can only be inspired by those that are around you. And those that are around me -Members, Management, friends- made me want to work hard, made me want to come in after serious surgery. Maybe I am also a little crazy. However, I will take the fondest memories back to Australia with me of my three and a half years here, and I really hope that all of you will be a part of my life in the future. Thank you.

*Applause**Applaudissements**Aplausos***Mr Jiri JILEK (Czechia)**

It is my last intervention on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States because we have only a six month rotating Presidency, so I will be leaving my duties on 31 December. I did really enjoy.

What we did during this whole week is not the end, it is just the beginning of new work. We should strive to get better and better. I would say not just *four betters*, I can find at least an additional six betters, so we can call it even 10+betters.

Of course, it is time to thank everybody here. The plenary behind the screens, starting with you, Chairperson. You did an excellent job, both in your leadership and excellent conduct of all these sessions with excellent timing.

All the Vice-Chairperson of the Council, the Secretary, and the whole team actually who did the 'hand work', which is not always seen, but it is always very well done. Ms Donata Rugarabamu, Legal Counsel, we actually gave you a bit more time to give us advice, and we appreciate your excellent dutiful job.

FAO Management who spent the time here sitting on the seats and waiting to give us some advice and the complex replies to our questions, and of course the Director-General who we really want to see even more often during the sessions. Perhaps during next Council there will be time to see you more.

The Chairperson of the Drafting Committee and all the Members of the Drafting Committee who spent this morning working to go through the Report when we had free time. Thank you very much.

Of course, all the Members who were working relentlessly and tirelessly to get the report, and more specifically the future orientation of the work, done. The translators and interpreters who spent time with us on getting the job done, and the people standing the whole week at the door, our dear messengers, and the whole logistical team we have not seen too much but which ensure the show ran smoothly.

And Ms Lynda Hayden, thank you very much for being here with us, and I think that all of us will enjoy the upcoming weekend, Christmas, and end of the year.

Mr Abdul Malik Melvin CASTELINO BIN ANTHONY (Malaysia)

I speak here on behalf of the Asia Regional Group. First of all, my thanks and our thanks to the Director-General, FAO Management, who have relentlessly worked hard to achieve what we have achieved today. We must acknowledge what the Chairperson has done with all his smiles and patience and perseverance in making us get to the end of this day, with the adoption of the Report.

I know in the weeks preceding the Council he has been working hard in trying to get some consensus on many issues, and I must thank you for this; I think we would not have been able to achieve what we have achieved today.

Thank you to the others, the interpreters, the messengers and everybody else, it has been a pleasure being here. Although we worked under stress, I can see that at the end of the day we went out with

smiling faces. And thank you very much messengers for your wonderful tea, I think some of us came back smiling but also a bit guilty because we ate more than what we were supposed to be eating - especially me.

Last but not least, thank you to all the Council Members -I think we came together. It was difficult, it was not easy I must say, but unity eventually prevailed and that is very important. I hope this can be replicated in the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), which will be held on 19 December. It is another important milestone for us, and I hope we can achieve what we achieved at the Council.

Finally, I must again thank Ms Lynda Hayden. We are going to miss you. I always looked forward to your intervention, especially your conclusions, I think your wise counsel will be missed. And thank you for your invitation. Do not be surprised if I end up in Australia coming to meet you.

Mr Winston PINNOCK (Bahamas)

On behalf of the Bahamas and the Countries of the Caribbean region, I wish to thank you Chairperson. I did not know I had come to Rome to learn patience over the last three Councils, but I certainly admire your leadership and your patience with the Council. I would like to thank all of you team for the job done this week. I did not know we would be out of here so early.

I want to thank the Director-General for his leadership and remind him that in our small region we are going to hold him accountable to the promises that he has made, and the commitments, and look forward to seeing him, hopefully in the first quarter, in the Bahamas.

I want to also say a special thanks in their absence to our new Assistant Director-General which has taken office recently, Mr Mario Lubetkin, that I think is doing remarkable work in trying to pull our region together. There is a very strong presence from the Latin American countries -Argentina and Brazil- in the Council, and we will make sure that the Caribbean region is playing its part moving forward.

I thank all of your assistant Deputy Director-Generals and all the people we have met whom have given us guidance. Again, we look forward to the future, we think it is bright, and there will be a strong presence from our region.

Ms Yael RUBINSTEIN (Israel)

I just want to really say thank you for your leadership, for the amazing Council you conducted, it was a really great one and you were responsible for the friendly atmosphere during our meetings and discussions.

I would like to thank the Director-General and Management for the great help, and last but not least to Ms Lynda Hayden of course. We started missing her during the last Joint Meeting we had, and we keep missing her; hopefully she will be healthier in Australia.

M. Sébastien FOUMANE (Cameroon)

Je prends donc la parole au nom du Cameroun et du Groupe régional Afrique. Pour joindre ma voix à celle des précédents orateurs qui ont dit toute leur appréciation du bon déroulement de la Session du Conseil. En particulier la manière dont vous, Monsieur le Président, avez mené les débats et les travaux pour que nous arrivions au résultat que nous connaissons, dans les délais cet après-midi.

Je voudrais dire en même temps que le Groupe régional Afrique apprécie à sa juste mesure les conclusions et le rapport tel qu'il a été adopté et qui sauvegarde pour l'essentiel les intérêts de notre groupe, de notre continent. Vous pouvez certainement continuer à compter sur le Groupe africain pour accompagner les travaux de la FAO pour l'avenir. Je voudrais dire merci au nom du Groupe africain à toute votre équipe, aux interprètes, et à tous ceux qui ont travaillé dans l'ombre pour la réussite de ces travaux.

Maintenant, nous comptons pouvoir continuer ce même travail pour l'avenir et nous retrouver prochainement pour la prochaine Session de notre Conseil.

CHAIRPERSON

I now turn the floor to the Observer, Venezuela.

Sra. Haifa Aissami MADAH (Venezuela, República Bolivariana de) (Observador)

Desearía sumarme a lo expresado por quienes me antecedieron en el uso de la palabra para encomiar su labor, Presidente, la cual es muy apreciada por todos nosotros y, particularmente, por mi Delegación. Agradecemos los esfuerzos colectivos de todos los que han participado en esta reunión del Consejo y que nos han permitido llegar a feliz término. Valoramos su paciencia, su buen sentido del humor y todo su profesionalismo del que ha hecho gala en esta reunión del Consejo para hacernos llegar a feliz puerto. Muchísimas gracias, Mr Hans Hoogeveen.

CHAIRPERSON

As there are no other speakers from the floor, I am going to close to make sure that we achieve our target. Dear friends, there is no peace without food security, and there is no food security without peace. We, as Members of FAO, can contribute to peace by honouring FAO's mandate and working even harder to achieve food security.

As I said at the opening of this meeting we need solidarity, we need dedication, and we need hope. This is the only way we can face our challenges, This is the only way we can be inclusive and forward looking.

Let us not forget why we have “United” within United Nations, and why the most important principle of United Nations is One Country, One Vote -not because of the vote, but because it clearly shows that we are equal and we have to unite. It symbolizes the most important principle, which is that we have to work by consensus. Only then can we come nearer to achieving Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals, and nearer to the implementation of the FAO Strategic Framework.

Yes, we had a difficult start of this Council, but eventually the most important principle prevailed again during the rest of the week. It was great to see that we had several Ministers in the Council, because it shows that we have clear political commitment to what we are working on. But it also shows and showed, that we have to roll up our sleeves to start promptly implementing the decisions. For instance, the action plans of FAO Strategy on Climate Change and the Science and Innovation Strategy -and many more actions.

Dear friends, what a week. We had our moments of frustration, we had hiccups, but we also laughed a lot, and we had the shortest statement ever, 11 seconds. And not only, as I said before, we finished a half a day ahead of schedule, but we also achieved our target. I have to thank you all, Members of the Council, but also all Observers, all Members of FAO, to work in the spirit, because only then can we be successful, as we showed this week.

I have been proud -I was and am proud- to work with you, to serve you, and to facilitate this process to achieve a successful Council- and we indeed have seen success this week.

Let me first thank the interpreters and the translators for the excellent work in the course of this week. Let us give them a big applause.

Applause

Applaudissements

Aplausos

Let me also thank Mr Sergio Ferraro and his team, including the guards -who make sure that we are safe in this building - as well as Ms Donata Rugarabamu, on whom we could rely in difficult moments. Thank you so much.

Let me thank the technicians and all the staff behind the scenes, especially the messengers, because they always served us with a smile. Thank you so much.

But most important, I would like to thank Mr Rakesh Muthoo and all of his team, which is sitting here and behind us for the amazing work they have done this week. Without them, this Council could not have been a success.

Dear friends, it is now time to relax after an intense week. As we come back in the New Year, I hope that we have rolled up our sleeves, that we unite behind each other, that we work with the message of

hope, with dedication, inclusion, with trust, and within the crucial UN principle of consensus: work within the mandate of our great FAO for those who need the most, leaving nobody behind.

I wish you and your families and all your beloved ones a great and beautiful holiday season. With this, I close the successful 171st Session of the Council.

The meeting rose at 15:19 hours

La séance est levée à 15 h 19

Se levanta la sesión a las 15.19